

# SWANSEA CITY CENTRE:

Strategic Framework Review

CONSULTATION DRAFT

*'Framework for Regeneration and Movement'*

JANUARY 2015



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# SWANSEA CITY CENTRE MASTERPLAN

## Strategic Framework Review

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# FORWARD

DTZ, Chapman Taylor, Vectos and Emotional Logic and the Owen Griffiths team have been appointed by the City & County of Swansea (the Council) and the Welsh Government (WG) to review the Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework, which was published in 2007 and adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in 2009. The aim is to develop a new preferred framework that takes full account of the changes in circumstance since the previous Framework's completion.

The purpose of producing a revised Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework is to provide an up to date guidance document to facilitate future development and investment, and provide a robust evidence base and sound principles on which to plan future regeneration. The review will inform and supplement emerging LDP policy and protect the City Centre from development that may compromise its future as a vibrant mixed use destination. The review will provide confidence and certainty to the public, stakeholders and developers, by

ensuring the Council's policy for key sites and the overall future direction of the City Centre is current, relevant and evidence based. A clear strategic policy position will play a significant role in supporting future funding bids by confirming the Council's commitment and policy position.

Since the preparation of the Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework in 2007, there have been a number of development successes and improvements to the City Centre, particularly in terms of making the centre more attractive and accessible through transport and public realm improvements. However, the financial crisis of 2008 and the subsequent recession have impacted the ability to deliver many of the initiatives and proposals envisaged for the City Centre by the current Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework. Therefore, an updated Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework Review that reflects current and foreseeable market conditions is essential to ensure future development and investment is targeted appropriately, in a way that has maximum benefit for the city centre and wider region.

Swansea City Centre still represents an opportunity for economic growth, which would benefit not just the City but also the region. The Swansea Bay City Region was established in July 2013 and encompasses the Local Authority areas of Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, City and County of Swansea and Neath Port Talbot. Its aim is to support the economic development of the region, particularly in terms of business growth, maximising job creation and encouraging growth in a knowledge / innovation economy. As the economic driver for the Swansea Bay City Region, Swansea needs to perform as a regional shopping and leisure destination, and also offer good quality employment opportunities and city centre living. In its role as the gateway to the Gower Peninsula, Swansea should be a key driver for tourism, offering good quality accommodation and dining options for visitors.



# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

## Background

1.1 Swansea is a thriving urban area with an enviable waterfront setting and an extensive rural hinterland. It has a strong, proud identity and acts as the economic driver for the Swansea Bay City Region. The City Centre is the public face of Swansea, being the focus of community, business, civic and cultural life and its character, profile and performance are hugely important to the future of the area.

1.2 Swansea City Centre has the potential to create extensive economic growth, and is a key driver of economic prosperity which is reflected in the Swansea Bay City Region Economic Regeneration Strategy.

1.3 There has recently been considerable investment in the City Centre (CC). A number of developments have been delivered, in conjunction with a wide range of public realm enhancements and accessibility improvements. This regeneration activity needs to be capitalised upon and promoted further.

1.4 Swansea City Centre is at a critical point in its evolution. The Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework (2007) provided a robust evidence base on which to plan future regeneration, and there were some significant early interventions on development, accessibility and on the quality of the City Centre environment. Regrettably, the economic recession severely affected the prospect of delivering further development

successes. The Council and its partners have recognised the need for a more radical review that will influence the direction of future uses and fundamentally affect the way in which the City Centre will change is now required.

1.5 The Council and the WG are the two primary public sector bodies responsible for delivering the regeneration of the City Centre, and have continued to work in partnership since 2007 to that end. In particular, Swansea has benefitted from WG Regeneration Area status and significant European funding and as a result, there has been a commitment to holistic regeneration through a wide range of projects. Other WG departments have also contributed widely to development and transportation projects since the 2007 Strategic Framework was launched.

1.6 The City Centre is currently not meeting its potential. The CC suffers from: a small resident population; a limited number of jobs; poor quality office accommodation which delivers low rents; low footfall; a limited retail offer with significant vacant floorspace; and the lack of major attractions to make it a destination. The catchment perceive the CC as tired, dated and declining with an average offer, coupled with a complex traffic system, congestion and poor/expensive car parking. The ambition of the catchment remains strong for an, integrated and

coherent CC capable of supporting city region status and delivering a 24 hour economy.

1.7 However the CC remains a place of opportunity for developers with a strong established, supportive planning policy framework, a number of development sites in Council ownership, a proactive and supportive public sector, established, effective partnership working and the availability of public funding as a pump primer.

1.8 The Council and the WG have commissioned a review of the Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework to ensure the City Centre realises its potential.



## Context for Review

- 1.9 In order to maximise its potential and ensure it competes in the local and global marketplace, the Council and its partners aspire to make Swansea City Centre a destination where people want to live, work and visit. Through this, the City strives to become an exemplar for how it approaches post-recession, mixed use, city centre regeneration. It needs a vibrant mix of leisure, culture, retail, office and residential uses all delivered in a legible way with high quality buildings alongside public spaces which exhibit and celebrate the culture which differentiates Swansea from other cities.
- 1.10 A current and relevant Strategic Framework for the City Centre is seen as being essential to guide future new development and investment, and provide a robust evidence base on which to plan future regeneration. An updated, and evidence based Strategic Framework Review will help to inform emerging policy and will provide the confidence and certainty in the Council's policy for key sites in the City Centre that developers and investors require. The outputs of this review are also important to ensure that all resources including WG and potential European Union (EU) funding opportunities are appropriately targeted and refocused through demonstrating the Council's commitment to a clear set of objectives for its City Centre.
- 1.11 Swansea is not alone in re-thinking its strategic approach to regeneration within its City Centre. Other cities across the UK are currently reviewing their policy positions. The approach being adopted by the UK's leading cities is also evidence based, utilising land use planning, development economics, place audits and accessibility assessments to identify transparent cases for investment. Those cities with a clear and deliverable plan will be the first to benefit from an improving economy.
- 1.12 Swansea has significant potential to further economic growth in the City Centre, to reinforce its commercial, shopping and leisure role as the key driver of economic prosperity in the Swansea Bay City Region. The 'Retail Capacity, Investment Potential and Strategy prepared for the Council in 2013 confirms the importance of broadening the mix of uses across all sectors in order to maximise catchment spend, and creating a 'ten till ten' economy. This is a key stepping stone to becoming a thriving retail and leisure and evening economy
- 1.13 The City Centre continues to underperform in relation to direct jobs supported within the centre. There are not enough knowledge-based employers and office provision and take-up is poor. However, the City Centre has potential to provide a platform for growth in key sectors such as creative industries, professional business services and ICT. Clustering opportunities are realistic and links to academia and businesses at SA1 are achievable which will maximise local agglomeration effects. The provision for skills development to assist the availability of suitably qualified labour markets is currently available within Swansea and the region.
- 1.14 The Council is in the process of preparing a Local Development Plan (LDP) which will ultimately supersede the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). The Revised Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework will play a key role in informing policy for the LDP, as well as the identification of site specific policy for key sites in the city centre. The Framework will also be used to protect the City Centre from development that would potentially compromise its future as a vibrant and distinctive mixed use centre.
- 1.15 This document needs to be read in conjunction with the Part 1: Baseline Analysis which sets out the relevant background information on the City Centre including socio-economic profile. This document outlines the opportunities and constraints in terms of urban analysis, transportation, image and perception, a review of the existing planning policy and the current commercial property market conditions. The Baseline Analysis forms the evidence base for the Vision and Masterplan.

# Key Requirements of the Review

1.16 The Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework Review considers the original initiatives set out in the 2007 Strategic Framework, and taking into account the changes in market conditions and where appropriate, proposes alternative means of regenerating particular areas of the City Centre.

1.17 The key requirements of the Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework Review are to:

a. **Deliver a Vision and Masterplan Design Framework for the City Centre.**

The rationale for this objective is that a high quality environment for the City Centre will be a major contributor to its vitality and viability. Improved areas of public realm have been delivered, but there is considerable scope for further enhancement, and the potential introduction of new public spaces and greening opportunities. Coupled with improvements to buildings and new developments, there is the potential to radically change “the face” of the City Centre, creating distinctive places where people will congregate around clearly defined uses.

b. **Identify the future role and function of Swansea City Centre focusing specifically the key development opportunities but also Complementary Areas of the City.**

Swansea City Centre has the potential to

accommodate considerable development and to attract business activity across a number of sectors. Within the City Centre, uses associated with food and drink activities, retailing, residential development, leisure and entertainment have prospered and continue to do so. However, there have been difficulties extending the retail and leisure offer, compounded in part by development progress outside the City Centre but also through competition from other towns and cities, the growth of internet shopping and the economic climate generally. There is, therefore, a perception that the role of the City Centre needs to evolve whilst recognizing a high quality, sustainable mixed use centre need to be underpinned by a successful retail and leisure core. Whilst the role of the retail core is becoming clearer the challenge with regard to Complementary Areas around the retail core remains and a key objective of this review is to establish a role for those Complementary Areas, so that they contribute to a sense of place as part of the wider destination.

In considering a future role for City Centre areas, proposals also need to be future proof, and have full regard to the future needs of the community and visitors to the City Centre. This might include the impacts of an ageing population, and the potential impacts of technology in the future.

The Review also needs to address key adjacent areas which have a close

relationship to the City Centre. This includes SA1 which will become the ‘Innovation Quarter’ of University of Wales Trinity St Davids; the River Tawe corridor where a new riverside community is emerging on former industrial sites within walking distance of the City Centre; the Mount Pleasant area that will become surplus as the SA1 innovation quarter becomes established and the Sandfields area which accommodates further complementary uses plus a significant residential population in close proximity to the City Centre.

c. **Identify opportunities for improving the public realm and spaces, legibility and connectivity with the City Centre**

The strategic context for this has been well developed in Swansea, and significant investment has been undertaken in both networks and facilities. Whilst there is still a disconnection between the City Centre and the seafront, significant improvements have been made to linkages between the Sailbridge, Maritime Quarter and SA1 as a result of the Boulevard project which has seen a more legible connectivity emerging. However, key challenges still remain and a key objective of the Strategic Framework Review is demonstrate deliverable solutions for strong pedestrian connections to the waterfront and wider permeability and legibility within the City Centre.

d. **Regeneration based upon Quality and Distinctiveness**

The quality of proposals and initiatives set out in the Strategic Framework Review is important. This goes hand in hand with promoting distinctiveness by design reference or using the character and cultural uniqueness which is particular to Swansea. The Council and WG are committed to the principles of sustainable development, integrating economic, social and environmental objectives which help drive quality and innovative proposals. What is essential is maintaining quality and whilst the capital cost of undertaking improvements and delivering developments are intended to be met from public and private sector sources, management and maintenance costs are important considerations if quality is to be maintained.

e. **Be Visionary but Deliverable**

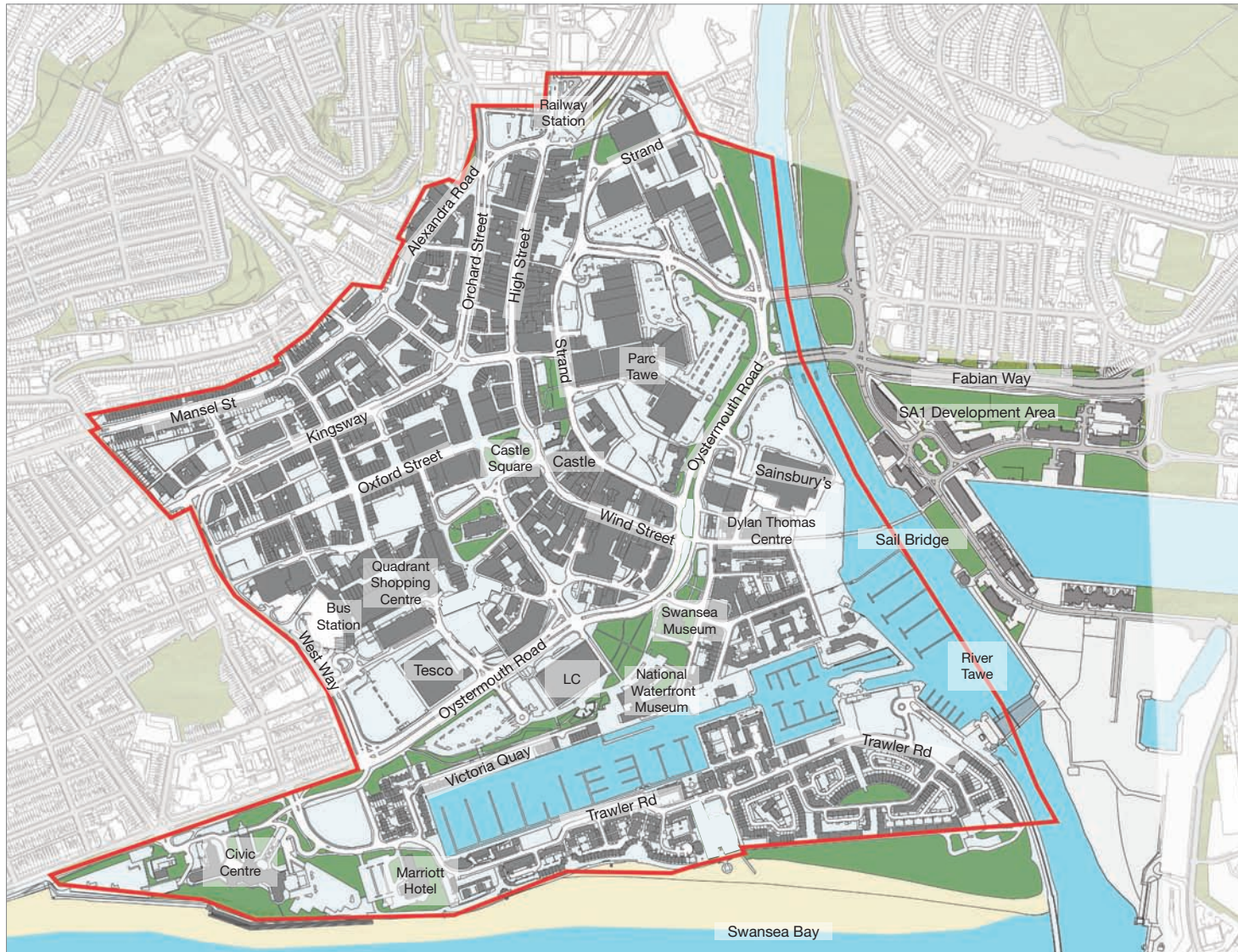
The Strategic Framework Review is to be Visionary and the outline the principles of best practice and innovation. Whilst this is important, delivering the Vision and Masterplan is critical. Proposals are therefore based on sound economic and implementation principles but flexible enough to facilitate the delivery of the proposals. Delivery is also underpinned by the strong ethos in Partnership working (between the public and private sectors) which has already been fundamental to the delivery of Strategic Framework actions. This is expected to continue

## Study Area

- 1.18 The Study Area is defined on the Map below and encompass all of the main retail and commercial areas of the City Centre.
- 1.19 The main focus of the City Centre is the area around Oxford Street, Castle Square, St David's and the Quadrant Shopping Centre. It is constrained by key transport corridors at The Kingsway, West Way, Oystermouth Road/Victoria Road and Wind Street. It also includes more established areas around Alexandra Road, High Street, Wind Street and the Castle. A more recently developed bulky goods retail and leisure area is situated to the east at Parc Tawe.
- 1.20 The City Centre also includes the Maritime Quarter extending down to the seafront, developed around the old South Dock. Although predominantly a residential area currently, it includes some important heritage buildings and structures and is also an important leisure and cultural part of the City Centre, linking to the beach and promenade. Swansea Museum, the Leisure Centre and the new National Waterfront Museum now comprise an important group of facilities which serve the City and surrounding areas.
- 1.21 The 2007 Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework excluded the Civic Centre site however it is incorporated within this Review.
- 1.22 Proposals in the Strategic Framework are fundamentally intended to secure the future of each of the component parts of the City Centre, to enhance the synergy between them, and to integrate them into a vibrant, successful City Centre



## Study Area









# 2.0 ANALYSIS AND APPRAISAL

## 2.1 Key Statistics

### i. The Administrative Area

The travel-to-work area of Swansea, which represents its immediate catchment and labour market area, contains 272,172 people. An estimated 1.5 million people live within an hour's drive of the City Centre. The local authority area of Swansea includes the highly attractive and distinctive environment of the Gower Peninsula, and the wider catchment area comprises rural areas of Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire, with a number of important local towns, such as Neath, Port Talbot, Llanelli and Carmarthen.

### ii. Location

Swansea is well connected to the regional highways network, with good connections via the M4 to Cardiff, Bristol and London (some 188 miles distant). Swansea is also connected along this corridor by regular direct train services to London (via Cardiff and Bristol), regular and frequent services west to Pembrokeshire and via mid Wales to Birmingham and the north west of England. Cardiff is the nearest international airport which is 45 miles away. It has been acquired by WG to generate new routes and increased passenger numbers, as part of the aim to increase the level of tourism in Wales.

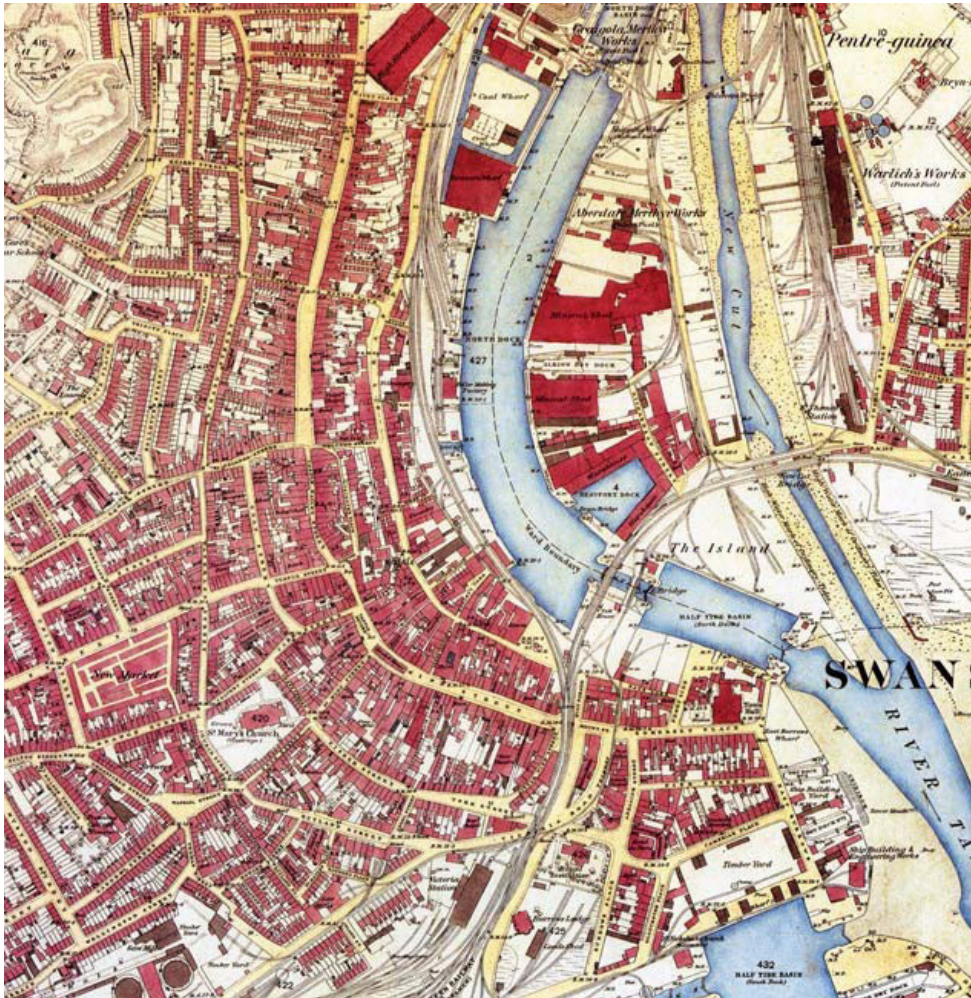
### iii. The Urban Economy

The latest estimate of the population of the City and County of Swansea stands at 240,300 (Mid Year Estimate, 2013). Swansea now has the second highest population of the 22 Welsh Unitary Authorities, representing almost 8% of the total population of Wales (3.1 million). Swansea has a number of key assets most notably the unique quality of its setting on Swansea Bay and its surrounding landscape. Its historic legacy of industrial pollution and contamination has substantially been dealt with and there has been significant investment in redevelopment projects around the City Centre, at SA1 and at Swansea Waterfront which have changed the urban environment, economic context and perceptions of the City. Swansea has the catchment population and comparison goods spend capacity that is capable of supporting a successful, regionally dominant retail scheme that benefits from integral leisure uses. The identified trading gap also indicates a significant investment opportunity. The City Centre is however underperforming, and the Strategic Framework Review needs to address the following to ensure growth, the creation of jobs and an improved experience.

The extent of the City's issues is highlighted in some of the key facts and figures set out below:

- There are a low numbers of people living and working in the City Centre. Urban employment is estimated at only 18%- 24,000. Comparators have 30%+
- There is limited office floorspace in the core City Centre (with limited Grade A space). This is emphasised by low office rents which affect investment decisions and development viability
- 20% of commercial properties are vacant in the City Centre.
- There is low average spend per shopping visit (£50) compared to competing centres such as Cardiff (£77)
- Footfall has decreased by 26% between 2009 and 2012.
- Whilst Swansea has the catchment population and comparison goods spend capacity there is significant leakage to other centres and to out of town retail parks in particular.

## 2.2 Historic Evolution of Swansea



Historical map of Swansea dated 1878  
(not to scale)

Prior to the Industrial Revolution, Swansea was a relatively small town surrounded by farmland. The plan below illustrates Swansea's street layout in the 14th century and shows the original route of the river Tawe and the High Street and Wind Street forming a central spine.

From 1720 onwards, industrial development built up along the River Tawe and the town developed at the forefront of industrial endeavor due to its proximity to the mines, the railway and the docks. Consequently, Swansea's population increased rapidly during the 19th century; from 6,000 in 1801 to 17,000 in 1851 and by 1881, the borough's population was over 65,000. At that time, most of the workers lived in poor conditions along the banks of the Tawe, with the owners of industries living in better conditions in the area which is now Brynmill, Sketty, the Uplands and the University campus.

Early urban growth of Swansea is still evident in the smaller area of Georgian streets and buildings near the Old Town Hall (now the Dylan Thomas Centre), and the civic pride of later phases is evident in some surviving public buildings such as the former Head Post Office in Wind Street (now a café bar/restaurant, offices and housing by Swansea Housing Association), the Swansea Harbour Trust Office (now Morgan's Hotel), and the Carlton Cinema in Oxford Street (now Waterstone's bookshop).

Despite increased competition from overseas leading to the beginning of the decline in Swansea's industry during the 19th century its retained industries, docks and railways meant that Swansea was still a key target for bombing in the Second World War and the City Centre was largely destroyed. The 'new' City Centre, planned on a grid-pattern of roads including the main thoroughfares of The Kingsway, Princess Way, West Way and Oystermouth Road, created an urban structure which is still a major influence on the functions, environment and perceptions of the City Centre. This new plan shifted the emphasis from the pre-war axis around High Street and Wind Street towards Oxford Street and the Kingsway.

Other areas such as the River Tawe riverfront and the South Dock (now the Maritime Quarter) remained very much port and industrial areas, separated then from the City Centre by railway viaducts and roads. However, by the 1960s, industry in the region was in steep decline and a number of developments for alternative uses were brought forward during the 1980s as a consequence. The Enterprise Park at Llansamlet was established on reclaimed land in 1981 and has grown into a successful industrial estate, business park and retail park. Whilst the achievements of dealing with industrial dereliction and regenerating the Lower Swansea Valley cannot be underestimated the 1980's

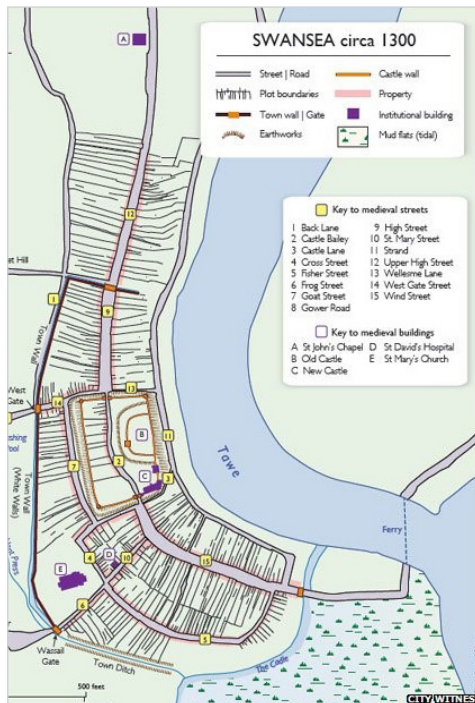


Enterprise Zone displaced significant numbers of retail and office occupiers from the City Centre and this underpinned the decline of the City Centre as the incentives on offer in the EZ swayed locational decisions away from the City Centre for a generation. This resulted in a weak centre which was compounded by out further out of town retail being developed at Fforesfach and Morfa in the 1990's.

Swansea's South Dock closed in 1971 but the area was redeveloped in the 1980s and has emerged as the Maritime Quarter, where many of Swansea's cultural and leisure attractions are located. The North Dock closed in 1930 and was subsequently filled in, with Parc Tawe being developed on the site in the late 1980s.

In the City Centre, developments during the 1970s and 1980s included the Quadrant

Shopping Centre and the St David's Centre, which reinforced the City Centre's role as a largely retail centre (with only limited office accommodation and housing) based on the post-war road grid. More recently, the introduction of leisure based uses such as in Wind Street, Salubrious Place, the National Waterfront Museum and the Leisure Centre (LC), and the residential developments in the Maritime Quarter, have all helped to drive footfall and opportunities to dwell for longer in the City Centre. The increase in residential and office development at SA1 and more recent 'innovation quarter' of University of Wales Trinity St Davids also represents an opportunity in close proximity to the City Centre. The pedestrian linkage provided by the Sailbridge crossing benefits both sides of the river and this needs to be reinforced by new developments with active frontages and public realm on either side of the River Tawe.



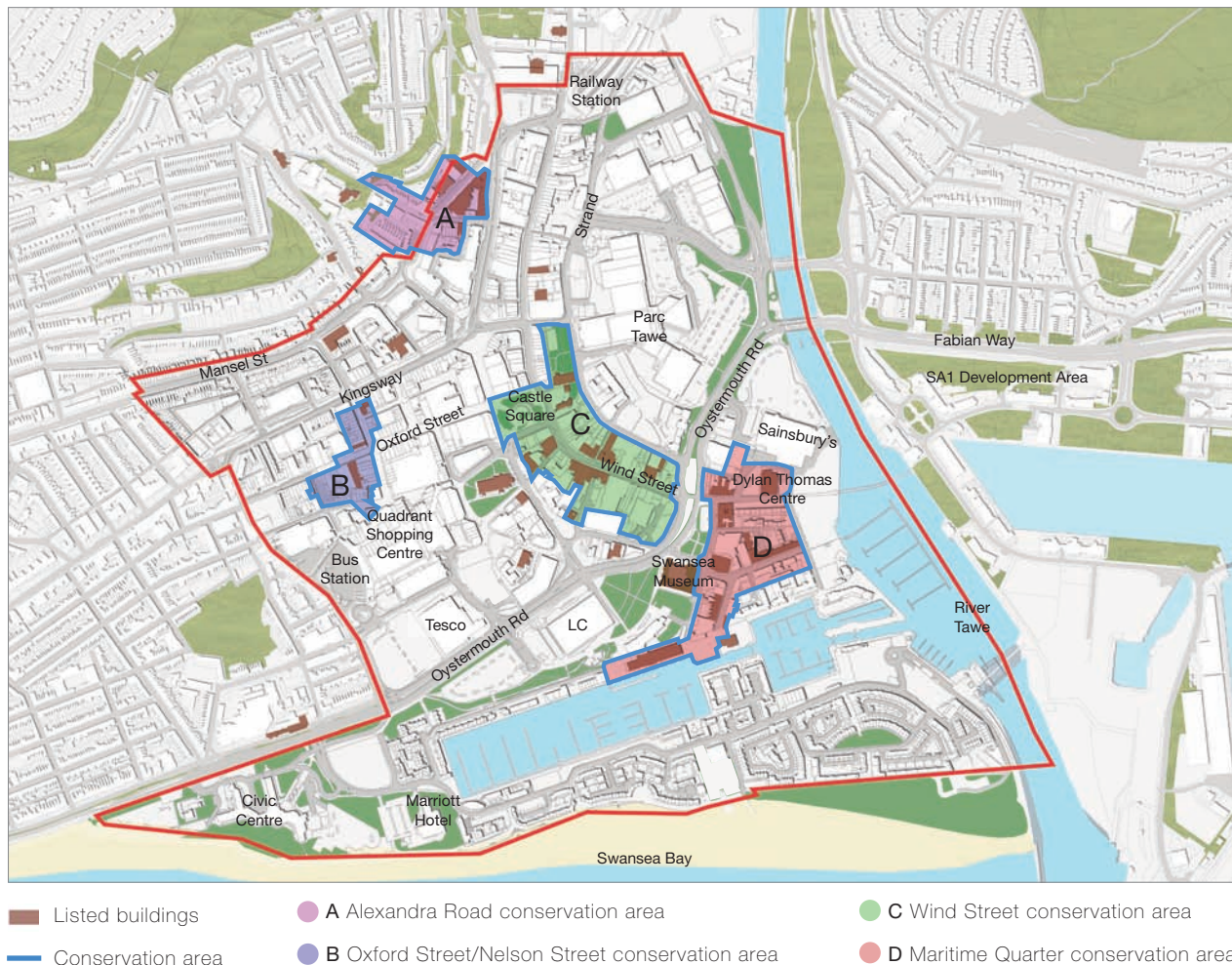
Source: City Witness



Swansea Street Plan 1880

## 2.3 Urban Design and Physical Characteristics

### Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas



### LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS

As a city with a history dating back to medieval times, Swansea has a range of significant historical buildings that have survived. This is despite the heavy bombing it suffered in the Second World War, and extensive post-war highway infrastructure works which in turn gave rise to the extensive rebuilding of the central retail area.

A number of buildings and areas of historical importance remain. These, and the Conservation Areas within the City Centre, are illustrated on the plan opposite.

Within 4 Conservation Areas Swansea has one Grade 1 Listed Building (and SAM); Swansea Castle and more than 70 Grade 2 Listed Buildings. They embrace examples of civic, residential and commercial buildings built since medieval times and as a consequence reflect a variety of architectural styles.



Overall, the City Centre is well stocked with Listed Buildings, such as the variety of Gothic and classical-styled churches. However with the exclusion of Wind Street and the historic maritime areas, the Listed Buildings are dispersed and do not form an identifiably historic City Centre. There are however a number of listed buildings that are considered to be at risk due to neglect and lack of use, this includes:

- **Albert Hall:** This former music hall was last used as a Bingo Hall in 2010. It is currently vacant in private ownership and starting to deteriorate. It has potential to be a catalyst project just off the Kingsway and was identified in the unsuccessful as a potential arts centre.
- **Castle Cinema:** This former cinema is still in use as a 'laser zone'. It has a significant maintenance backlog and an application is currently being considered for conversion and extension for student accommodation.



Alexandra Road Conservation Area

- **Palace Theatre:** This former theatre was last used over 10 years. The building is 'iconic' in Swansea and is deteriorating rapidly. It has the potential to be a catalyst project on the upper High Street.

The grade II listed Bush Hotel on Swansea High Street was demolished in the summer of 2015 due to structural concerns. At the time of writing a proposal is being



Oxford Street/Nelson Street Conservation Area

considered to redevelop this area for a mix of uses along with a recreating of the Bush Hotel façade.

This Review will consider ways in which the City Centre can be made more cohesive through creating roles for areas such as Wind Street, Maritime Quarter and Alexandra Road to ensure that the historic buildings in these areas can be occupied in



Wind Street

future, maintained and set within a context of appropriate quality. Vacant listed buildings such as Albert Hall should also be brought back into economic use to ensure their survival.



Wind Street

## 2.4 Existing Districts, Land Uses & Key Landmarks

The 2007 Strategic Framework set out the various districts and land uses in the City Centre and these have been considered as part of this Framework Review. A broad review of the existing districts and land uses is set out below:



Oxford Street/Princess Way

- **Retail Core:** predominantly post Second World War 2-3 storey retail development. The edges of the retail core, particularly to the north and west are of low quality, are secondary retail at best. In recent years discrete new developments have come forward in the retail core, for example at the north end of Princess Way and sites have been made available for new development at the St David's Centre which has been recently demolished.



Parc Tawe

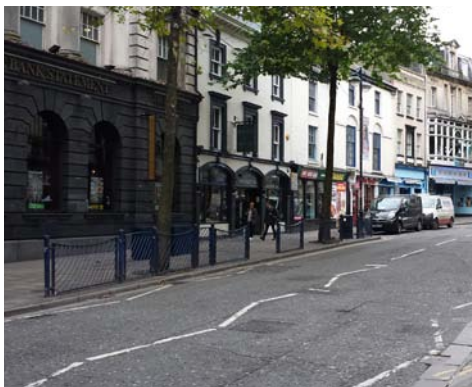
- **Parc Tawe:** located immediately to the east of the City Centre on flat lower lying land separated by its topography from the retail core. It does not in design terms, optimise the use for this prime gateway location in the City Centre and has no direct relationship with the river. To the north east of this area a new residential district is emerging alongside the River Tawe. This comprises houses, apartments and student accommodation alongside outdated industrial developments. During the period of the Strategic Framework Review, further residential redevelopments are likely in this area however the pedestrian linkages back into the City Centre are poor.



Sailbridge Site

- **Maritime Quarter/ Sailbridge:** incorporates a mix of uses within new residential developments, including all the maritime characteristics of restored docks, moored boats and views of Swansea's waterfronts. Some commercial uses have been delivered. Former maritime industrial buildings have been brought back into use in recent years and a number of key development sites remain. The SA1 area that is within walking distance of the City Centre had the potential to compete with the regeneration aspirations due to the significant quantum of leisure development that was approved as part of the masterplan for the former dock area. However the change in focus of SA1 to accommodate the 'innovation campus' of University of Wales Trinity St Davids and the re-masterplanning of the area will complement the City Centre through the mix of uses and will remove the potential for large scale leisure development





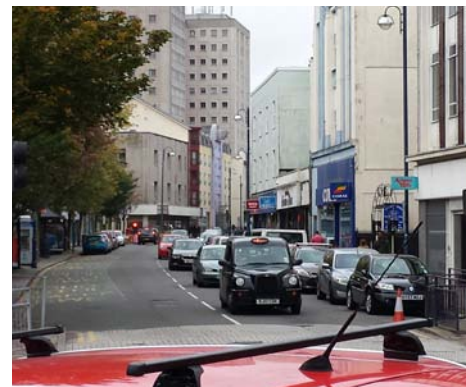
Wind Street

- **Leisure Districts:** Wind Street is Swansea's primary evening entertainment district. The street is made up of high quality Victorian buildings, which have been converted into bars and restaurants, and there has been further leisure development at Salubrious Place. It continues to form a key link to the Maritime Quarter and further to the Sailbridge crossing to SA1



Kingsway

- **Kingsway:** has been a focus for evening entertainment, but the number of leisure businesses in this area has declined and relocated to other areas like WindStreet. Having had its retail and commercial heyday in the 1950s, The Kingsway has become a street now dominated by traffic and as a result creates a further barrier to connectivity into the core retail area from the north.



High Street

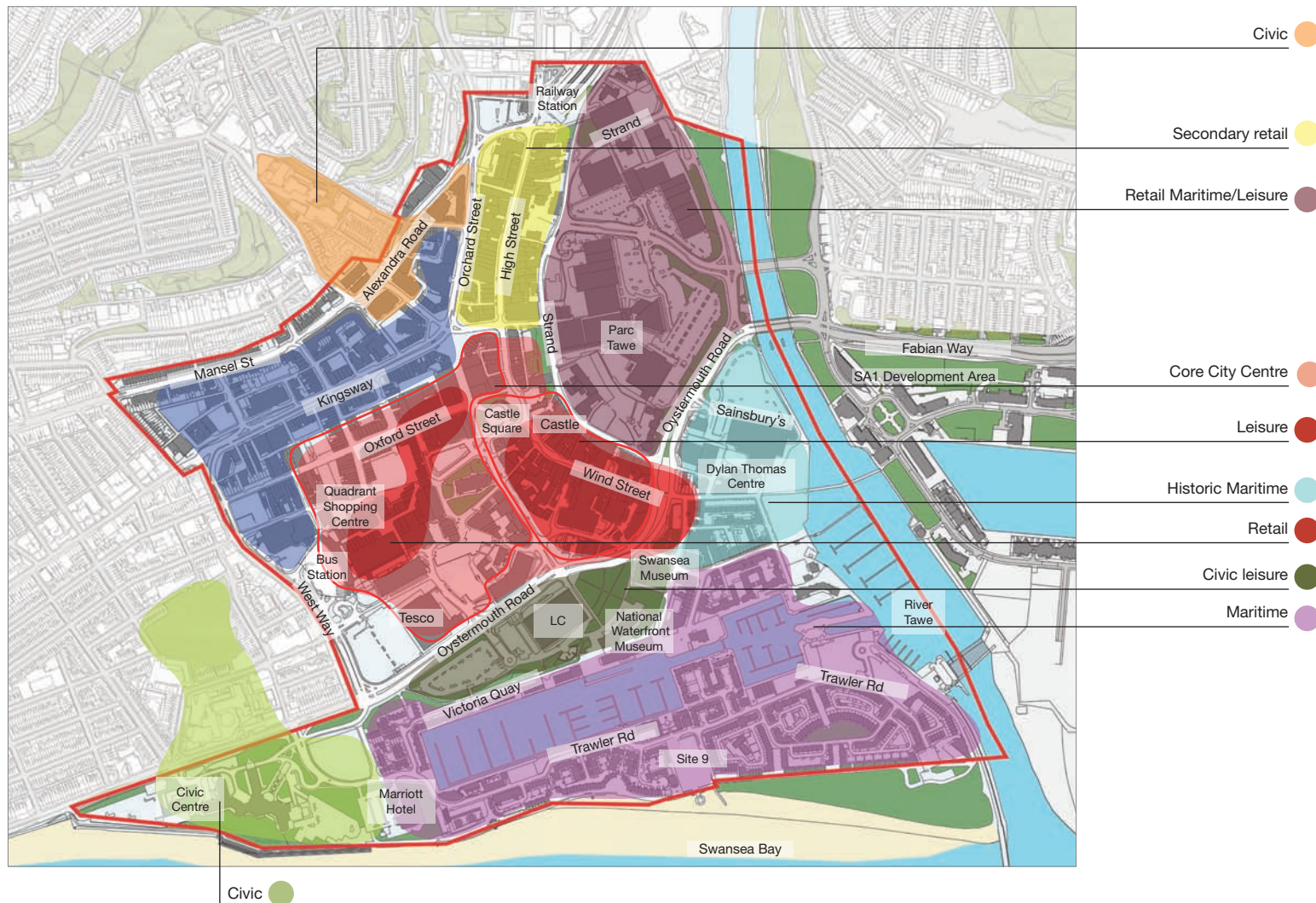
- **High Street:** this is described in the Strategic Framework as a secondary retail district and forms the main pedestrian link from the railway station to the City Centre. The street has benefitted from a number of regeneration schemes including the addition of the Urban Village development, but the issue of poor quality and neglected buildings remains. The cut off of the City Centre at Swansea Rail Station is an artificial construct, in reality this is the middle point of the High Street with significant activities and problems to the north. The tower blocks to the north of the rail station accommodate a significant number of homes immediately adjacent to the city centre, whilst historic buildings such as St Matthews Church the Palace Theatre are central to the history and evolution of Swansea.



Civic Centre

- **Civic Districts:** there are two predominantly civic areas in the City Centre. Alexandra Road comprises the Glyn Vivian Art Gallery, the police station and magistrate's court as well as educational buildings as part of the University of Wales Trinity St Davids that will become surplus at some point in the future. The Council's Civic Centre, incorporating the library, and the prison on the north side of Oystermouth Road form the other civic area to the south of the City Centre. This area continues to be isolated and poorly connected to the rest of the City Centre, and is an underused brownfield resource making a minimal contribution to the City Centre.

## Existing Defined City Centre Districts





## 2.5 Quality of Public Spaces, Routes and Public Realm

The quality of public realm plays a vital role in influencing impressions of any city centre. The public realm is generally defined by the buildings and uses which occupy them, and the spaces between the buildings which connect different parts of the city.

While there have been significant highways improvements to Oystermouth Road through the Boulevard initiative, Parc Tawe and The Kingsway remain poor quality urban environments. The demolition of the St. David's Centre whilst a positive contribution, has yet to be fully realised as a contributor to the urban fabric of the City.

Within the City Centre retail core Wind Street remains a street of good quality, retaining its medieval urban grain, has evolved an identity through its destination as an entertainment street, and a significant contributor to the night-time economy. The High Street is a well-proportioned street, but the quality of the buildings lowers its visual appearance and, despite some improvements, notably with the ongoing Urban Village initiatives, the disparate ownership prohibits a more comprehensive approach to regeneration. Consequently, maintenance of existing buildings, temporary and pop-up uses and improvements to the parking regime could be opportunities for deliverable change.

Elsewhere in the retail core, Oxford Street is correctly proportioned for its role as the City's main pedestrianised retail street but in places the building quality is poor. In contrast, The Kingsway which was once a vibrant shopping street has largely been given over to vehicular traffic and although spacious does not have the height to width proportion which is conducive to a feeling of comfort for pedestrians. The retail offer is marginal in terms of quality and really has no critical mass to sustain it. Its once thriving leisure offer have decanted to Wind Street leaving buildings such as Oceana vacant and increasingly tired.

Oystermouth Road and WestWay have been designed predominantly to cater for vehicles, not people. They are framed by car parks, the rear of buildings, footbridges, underused open spaces, and large single use buildings that whilst fulfilling their primary function, fail to provide active frontages. As a result, they present largely ineffective and inconsistent edges and spaces. Recent technical and visual improvements along Oystermouth Road as part of the Boulevard initiative have in specific locations provided a more pedestrian friendly and safer environment for crossing the road.

### Principle Public Spaces

- **Castle Square/ The Castle:** Castle Square is the City's most central and prominent space. It steps down from Castle Street and the Castle into the retail core of Oxford Street, but is also a nodal point at the intersection of High Street, Wind Street and Princess Way. Although considered to be the heart of the City Centre and quite innovative in dealing with challenging levels Castle Square today adds little to the notion of place making through positive interventions into the urban fabric. Its setting has benefitted recently from hard and soft landscaping works around Swansea Castle but it does not reciprocate. As a statement feature it obstructs rather than encourages intuitive connectivity from High Street to St. Mary's Church and whilst there is today a place for a large TV screen for film screenings and sporting



Castle Square/ The Castle

events what could be a green, landscaped, urban park is unfortunately a harsh and sometimes threatening environment. It lacks direct connections to active edges and is underused as an events space.

- **The Kingsway Circle:** this area is dominated by traffic movement as it's the crossing point between The Kingsway, Orchard Street and Bellevue Way. The public realm space is too large, with no comfortable proportion to be derived from buildings of the right size or proximity to each other. The southern side of the circle, at the top of Princess Way provides perhaps the best opportunity to infill a 'gap' in the streetscape. It has buildings around the edges, but these do not accommodate active uses that spill out into the space.



The Kingsway Circle

- **St David's:** the area around the former St David's Shopping Centre is currently used as a surface park. It has been prepared as a development site but there is potential for temporary uses to come forward in the space in the interim. The immediate space around the church defined by railings is part of the historic curtilage.



St. David's Site

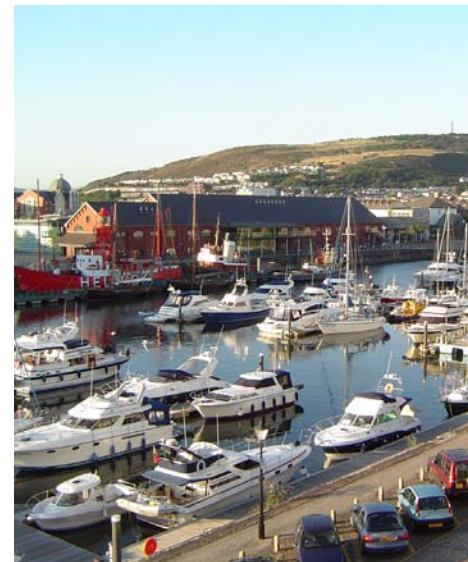
- **St Marys Church:** this substantial historic church occupies a central location in the City, and its character contrasts sharply with the post war re construction around it. The space around the church is occupied by traditional planted flower beds and grass fronting Whitewalls and Princess Way, a historic lych gate to Whitewalls and large mature trees provide shade and shelter to many of the surrounding streets. The wall surrounding the church grounds and slight level change dissuade public access and the area as a

result is under used and lacks in maintenance or street furniture. Whilst this space is defined by buildings of an urban scale, these buildings lack active uses and frontages and as a result the space feels dead and lifeless.

- **Museum Park:** This green landscaped area is a key link between the City Centre and the waterfront. It also provides a high quality setting for the National Waterfront Museum, Marina and Leisure Centre. The entrance to the National Waterfront Museum is of high quality and is a well-considered space providing areas for lounging and relaxing in front of the museum. The space incorporating greenery into the City Centre strengthens connectivity and is a good example of what is achievable The new Oystermouth Road crossings at the southern end of Princess Way and Wind Street have improved the connectivity to this area from the City Centre and reinforce it as a link to the Maritime area and via Sailbridge to SA1. This space is used for a number of events during the course of the year.

- **Museum Green:** This smaller green landscaped area forms a setting to surrounding historic buildings such as Swansea Museum, former port officers (now Morgan's Hotel) and the former Exchange Building. The recent public realm works that has created shared space on two sides of the space has made the area far more accessible. Public art proposals in this area will add a focal point within the space that may help generate informal activities.

- **Swansea Marina and Tawe Basin:** has an inherent quality of space provided by the historic docks around which they are built. Hard landscaping reflects the nature of the space and their historic use but this does not in any way detract from the quality of the spaces, rather it complements the maritime heritage associated with historic uses.



Swansea Marina

In Swansea City Centre, whilst there has been significant investment in the spaces between the buildings, in many instances this hasn't been matched by enhancements to the privately owned buildings and has not been sufficient to instill confidence for new

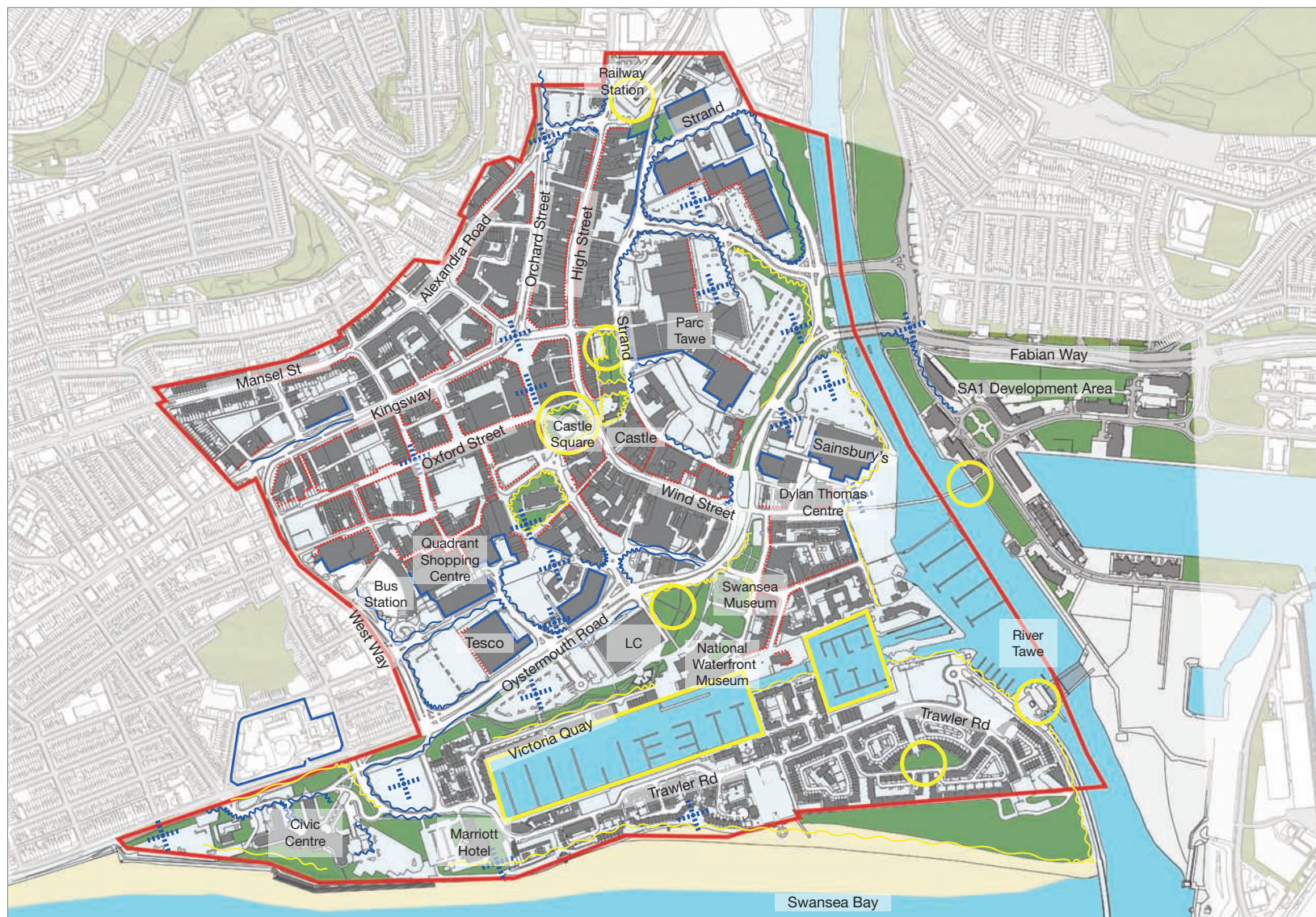
businesses to establish, bringing life and activity to the public realm. Therefore this Review takes a more holistic view of public realm and also addresses the quality of buildings and the importance of ground level activities in the building activities that bring the public realm to life.



Victoria Quay



## Strategic Site Plan



Spaces and edges (1:7500)



Negative spatial edges



Negative built edges



Negative spaces



Active/positive edges



Green/positive spatial edges



Positive spaces



Ice House Square, SA1

## PUBLIC REALM COMPONENTS

The quality of the public realm plays a vital role in influencing impressions of the City Centre and is defined by buildings and uses, but can be broken down into components including street furniture, lighting, surface materials, landscape, signage and public art all of which define at a more human scale the quality of spaces, routes and linkages.

- **Street furniture:** influences the users of public space and is the most interactive feature in the street. Swansea has invested considerably in good quality steel street furniture over a period of time which requires minimal maintenance. There is a new sense of continuity in the form of furniture in areas such as Oxford Street, and there have also been significant improvements in the design quality, relevance and functionality of new street furniture interventions along the Boulevard and Seafront and in connections to the waterfront which include new lighting, signing and seats and bins. New public spaces in SA1 provide a good example of the level of quality which should be a baseline for the rest of the City.
- **Signing:** The statutory requirements for highway signage means that there is a multitude of highway signs littering the streetscape. These can be consolidated with careful thought. A number of new schemes including the retail core and Boulevard have rationalized signage and



clutter. On Boulevard some LED lit highway signage has been introduced, whilst high quality strategic directional signage assist drivers navigate the route. Proposed wayfinding elements incorporating maps and additional directional fingerposts at key locations will assist better pedestrian navigation around the City Centre.

- **Lighting:** In the City Centre lighting is generally of good quality. In many locations the street is lit by building mounted lights and this frees space at ground level and reduces clutter. The Conservation Areas of Wind Street and the Historic Maritime area have appropriate low level lantern type light which sit well against the quality building backdrop. The feature lighting is also well handled, specifically at the Castle, Morgan's Hotel and the Sailbridge. The use of lighting whether of buildings or landscape has become increasingly sophisticated and can itself be a draw especially if it has an interactive quality or the ability to be linked to other components. A good example of this already in Swansea is at Ice house Square in SA1. This lighting artwork works to both energise and ornament the square at night and encourages people to interact with it. It is frequently a cost effective way of improving streets and building frontages and can be incorporated into floor surfaces, public art as well as buildings themselves.

- **Materials:** If buildings form the backdrop to the public realm, surface materials are also a significant contributor to its perceived quality. Since the last Framework was produced, significant improvements using natural paving has been achieved within the retail core, the lower Oxford Street area, along the Boulevard and at its intersection with the Tawe Bridges. These reflect the high quality materials within Wind Street and Princess Way, the latter which was refreshed in 2004. Some areas of the City Centre remain typically uncoordinated in its approach, creating a patchwork of materials and surface textures as is common in many cities. . The introduction of natural materials has brought different shades, texture, size and shape to the street scene creating visual interest. The 'Boulevard' improvements have been innovative in its use of new materials, for example at pedestrian crossing points where Duratherm imprinted tarmac has been used to give the effect of granite setts but without significant potential future maintenance implications. The pedestrianised area of Oxford Street has a degree of consistency in design terms – reflecting pavement, kerb and carriageway aesthetic using a range of natural stone paving elements.

As might be expected, the materials used in the Conservation Area of Wind Street are high quality and if a shared surface approach is implemented the choice

of materials will be important as will the workmanship in installing them. Total uniformity of materials across the whole City Centre is neither unachievable nor desirable. But the quality of design and implementation and the co ordination of colour, tone, lighting, style and scale should reflect the specific context of the location. The choice of materials also needs to have regard to future maintenance implications

- **Green Space:** Green areas in the City Centre are limited. It is noticeable how the new soft landscaping around the Castle has drawn attention to the harsh nature of Castle Square. Greening the City through the infilling of areas such as the north end of Princess Way within The Kingsway Circle (e.g. with a "pocket park") or the development of green roofs on buildings as part of redevelopment of The Kingsway could assist. There are also numerous examples in city centres where green walls or roofs have been incorporated into multi storey car parks.

- **Public Art:** Public Art can make a significant statement regarding a city centre. Swansea has a tradition of public art and have elements which genuinely contribute to the image and distinctive character of the City. There was a planned approach towards the inclusion of art in the Maritime Quarter, with art on building facades and in public spaces reflecting the City's maritime, industrial and cultural identity. More recently

contemporary art has been used with lighting in Princess Way, and in SA1. The Council's "Percent for Art" policy seeks to ensure that Public Art contributions are sought from developers.

Maintenance of public art is a significant issue for the City. Proposed public art for the Boulevard and Waterfront Connections project have a designated Public Art Maintenance Fund to ensure finance is available to cover damage, wear and tear. However, consideration should be given to an ongoing revenue budget for such requirements. Currently no specific maintenance fund is available for the wide range of art elements within the City, and ownership and responsibility for their upkeep needs to be agreed to ensure their longevity.

'Art Across the City' is a public art programme in Swansea designed and delivered by an artist-led charity. They have produced a broad range of contemporary permanent and temporary artworks for accessible public spaces across the City which have captured public attention. They have also been involved in an inner city regeneration project on the City's High Street on long term disused retail units

### PEDESTRIAN LINKAGES

There are many areas of full/part pedestrianisation such as Princess Way and Oxford Street and shared surface streets from Castle Square along Oxford Street and its neighbouring streets. In these areas, there is generally a good standard of public space/urban realm although there is a lack of clear way finding and signage within the City Centre as a whole, which is slowly being addressed.

The Kingsway to the north is a wide street which now presents a barrier to the adjacent residential areas. Traffic engineering at West Way also presents a significant road barrier on the western edge of the City Centre.

The strong east west alignment of the core area's main shopping streets means that north-south permeability to the Quadrant and the core is somewhat limited. The northern section of streets such as Union Street and Portland Street are used by vehicles to

access small but important servicing areas and car parks adjacent the core area. Other significant north-south routes, such as the Picton and Shoppers Walk Arcades have little sense of presence on The Kingsway and poor quality entrances to Oxford Street that do little to attract or encourage pedestrians to visit or walk through.

The main line railway station sits at the top of the historic embankment at the end of the High Street and overlooking Parc Tawe and the River Tawe to the east. This is a somewhat peripheral location in relation to the retail core, but the bus station is located immediately adjacent to the west of the core retail area. The separation of the bus station from the railway station is such that interchange between transport modes is difficult although bus routes north out of the City do provide some link between bus and railway station.

There is a sharp change in the topography between High Street and The Strand and this change in level is poorly negotiated by existing pedestrian routes. The main current access to Parc Tawe from the Castle and City Centre retail core is via a pedestrian route through Worcester Place, and across a poor quality pedestrian footbridge, and via stepped and ramped access routes within the Parc Tawe retail complex down to the ground floor levels of the buildings and its extensive surrounding surface car parks. The existing retail park at Parc Tawe does not align well with established pedestrian

routes from High Street such as Kings Lane and Welcome Lane or provide for pedestrian connection to the riverside and communities further east, such as St Thomas.

A problem in Swansea over many years has been the focus on enhancements as 'islands'. As a result there has never been a focus on 'routes' and as a result the City Centre can feel disjointed and unco-ordinated. This is exemplified by the lack of a wayfinding strategy that provides up-to-date pedestrian signage and street maps.

Therefore this Review takes a more user focused and holistic approach to public realm. Therefore the focus is no longer 'islands of enhancement' and instead the focus will be on 'stepping stones' comprising key pedestrian routes between destinations and sequences of spaces.

### CITY CENTRE MARITIME CONNECTIVITY

Swansea has three distinct waterfronts; the sandy Swansea Bay; the regenerated former South Dock (now Swansea Marina) and the River Tawe. They all offer different experiences and the pedestrian connections to them and the visibility of them to the visitor are variable. These waterfronts are described below:

**River Tawe:** The Sailbridge provides a direct and legible connection to SA1 on the strong spine set up by the historic alignment of

Wind Street and High Street. The immediate banks of the Tawe between the Sailbridge and Trafalgar Bridge to the south are becoming established as an activity loop with high quality public realm along both banks. However to the north of the road bridges the River Tawe is severed from the city by further roads and a lack of activity. Even further to the north, the emerging Tawe Corridor regeneration area will create a new riverside walkway and offers the opportunity for new active uses facing the river.

**Swansea Marina:** the area around the former South Dock was regenerated in the 1980s and now accommodates a significant residential population as well as cultural uses such as the National Waterfront Museum. There are a number of commercial units around the dock and many have struggled to survive due to the lack of footfall. Although this waterfront area is some 100m away from the main retail streets it has always suffered from the lack of a legible connection and the lack of a significant draw or critical mass of active uses. The current pedestrian bridge just west of the LC offers glimpses of the water just south beyond the listed former railway viaduct which runs parallel with Oystermouth Road and the Dock. Though the South Dock itself is also a barrier in getting to the seafront, the Maritime Quarter area was developed in a layout which allows pedestrian permeability between the building blocks through a series of arches and interesting public spaces.

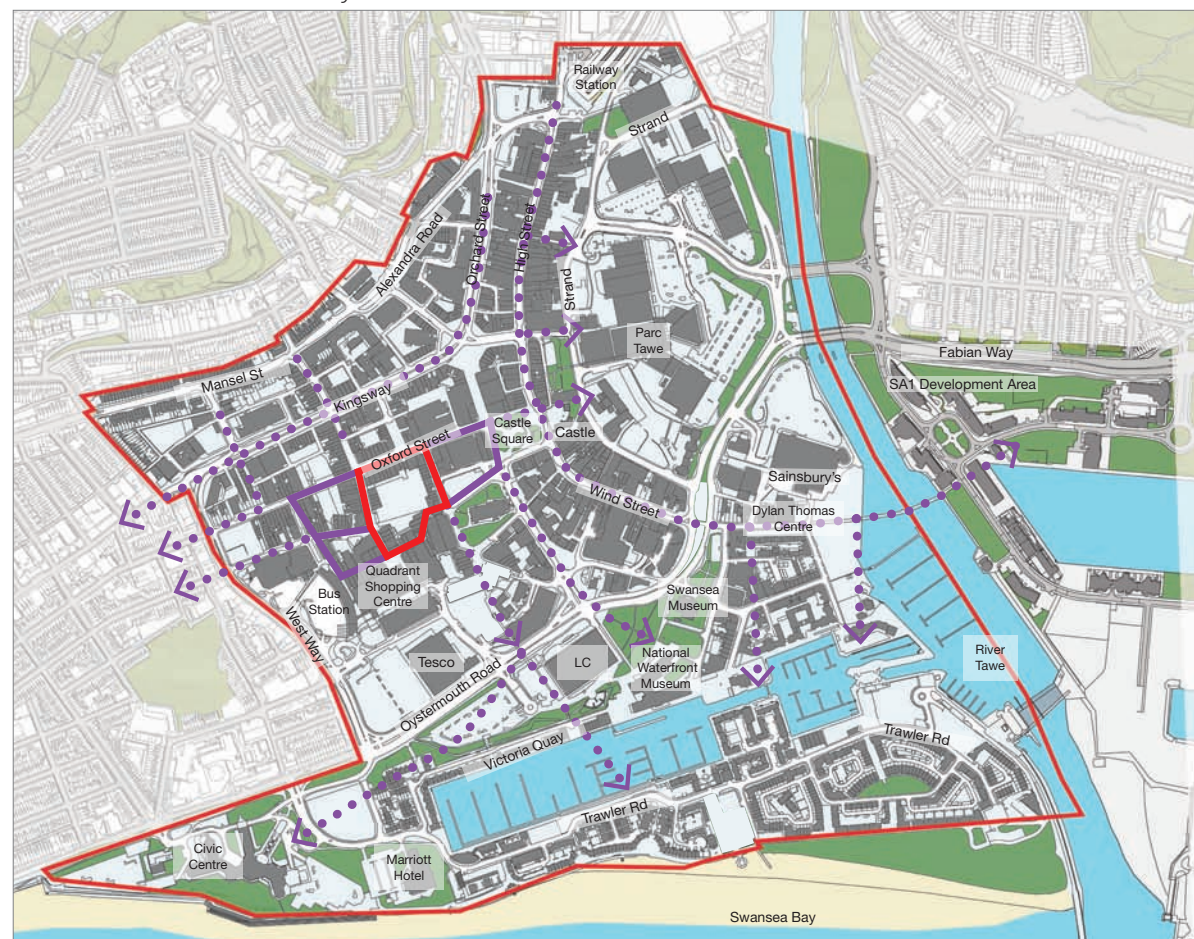


Seafront Promenade

**Swansea Bay:** this is a distinct destination with 10km of beach and promenade leading around to Mumbles. It is an iconic place with views across the Bay to the rocks of the Mumbles. However the linkages between the City Centre and Bay are poor. Oystermouth Road historically gave little consideration to the pedestrian and no immediate views over the Bay, segregated by The Mumbles Railway line which has long since gone. The psychological impact of the Oystermouth Road barrier is increased by the looseness of the space around it - lack of enclosure, blank facades and car parking dominate perceptions of this road. The City turned its back on the Bay in the past, but the challenge is now to create new legible connections to destinations fronting Swansea Bay where people will want to be.

The Waterfront Connections project and Boulevard Advance Works, have improved pedestrian connections, enhanced by new surfacing, signing, lighting and a new link to the seafront. The promenade has also been improved with new high quality railings and street furniture between the Observatory and the Civic Centre. These projects are likely to assist changing perceptions of the Oystermouth Road/Victoria Road corridor being a barrier to movement between the City Centre retail core and the waterfront. Future proposals therefore need to build on the recent Boulevard improvements and deliver better connection and City Centre profile.

### *Pedestrian Connectivity*



- Primary retail circuit
- Secondary retail circuit
- Wider connectivity



## 2.6 Connectivity and Accessibility

### KEY VEHICULAR ROUTES INTO THE CITY

Swansea is well served from the M4 motorway, with junctions 42-47 all linking to the City Centre via radial routes. These main traffic routes into the City Centre are:

- 1. Fabian Way (A4067)** which provides the principal link into the City Centre from the east. Circa 30,000 vehicles use this route into and out of the City centre, and the corridor is expected to experience significant traffic growth as a consequence of redevelopment in the coming years.
- 2. Carmarthen Road (A483)** from the north west which provides the primary arterial route into the City Centre for destinations to the west of Swansea.
- 3. Ffordd Cwm Tawe (A4067)** from the north via Neath Road through Hafod or via Pentreguinea Road which connects into The Tawe Bridge gyratory. The new Morfa Distributor Road is currently under construction which will provide a new link on the western side of the Tawe from the A4217 at Pentre-chwyth.
- 4. Oystermouth Road (Mumbles Road)** which, although it does not connect directly with the M4, provides an important link into the City Centre along an east-west corridor

via Fabian Way. It is a strategic section of dual carriageway carrying circa 40,000 vehicles per day. The difficulty in balancing the throughput of such large volumes of traffic, whilst also providing the means to service the city centre, can lead to peak hour congestion on this corridor.

Other traffic hotspots within the City Centre network include; Carmarthen Road/Neath Road junctions at Dyfatty and key junctions between Orchard Street and St Helens Road via the Kingsway. The Kingsway is also perceived as a complex and highway dominated environment.

Whilst there are certainly issues of peak hour traffic congestion in and around Swansea City Centre, this should be considered in comparison and context with other large urban centres around the U.K., all of which also experience peak hour traffic congestion. In addition, traffic within and on the approaches to the City Centre causes noise and air quality issues which could ultimately impact adversely on the delivery of further housing development without mitigation.

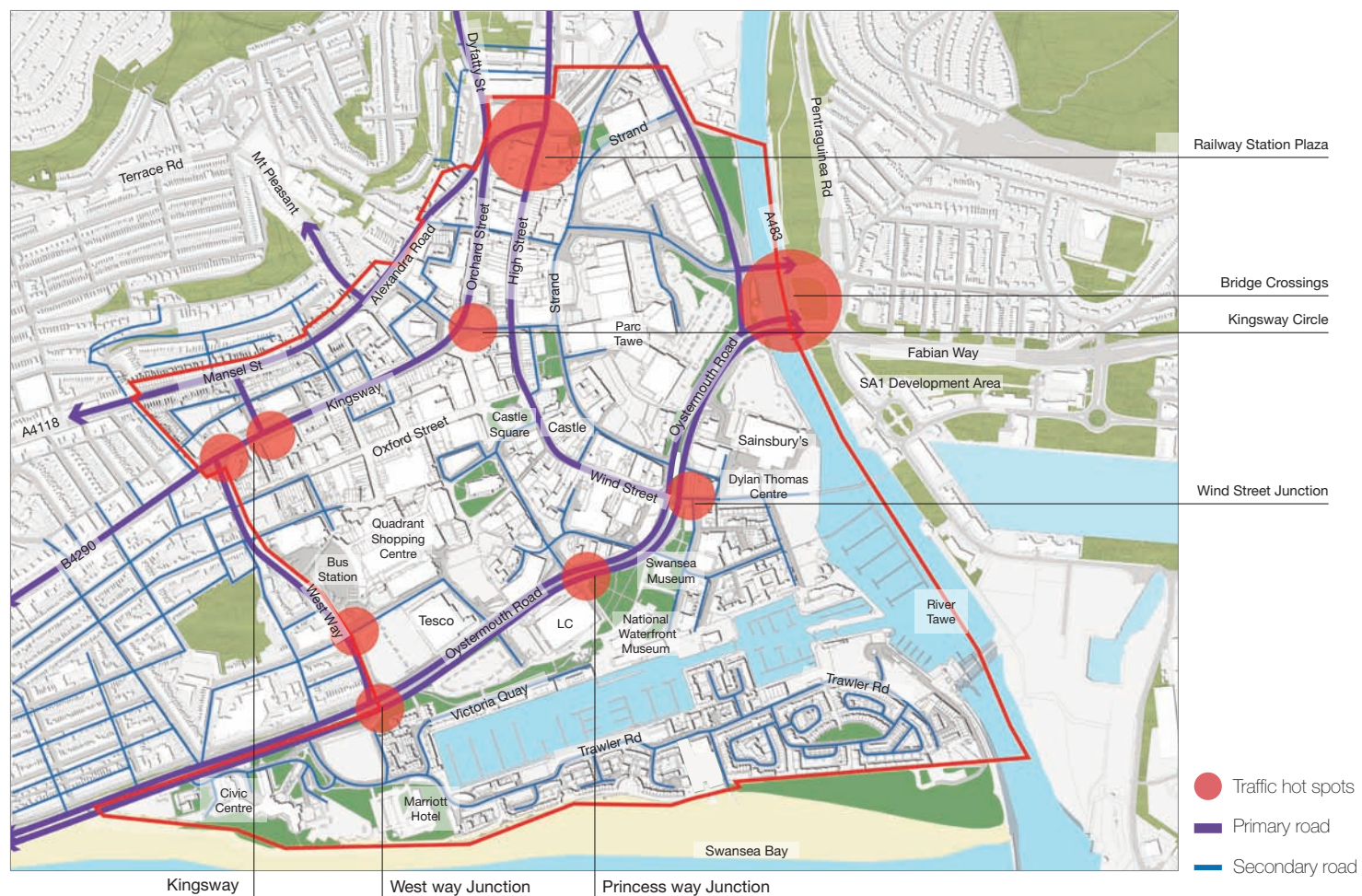
### CYCLE LINKAGES

The City Centre benefits from good quality walking and cycling routes between some of its key destinations. The strategic routes are of particularly good quality, serving Swansea Marina the river and along the seafront promenade which is part of the National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 4 and Route 43 to the Swansea Valley. New wide pedestrian and cycle crossings as part of the Boulevard scheme have strengthened the connectivity to the Sailbridge, Maritime Quarter SA1 and the seafront promenade. As referred to in previous sections, the Waterfront Connections and prior projects have assisted raise the quality of the waterside cycle routes between the Tawe Bridges (along the Tawe River) and between the Swansea Point Development and the Civic Centre. Whilst the strategic cycle network and links are generally of very good quality, provision for cyclists within the City Centre lacks consistency and continuity in provision and form.

Cycling is an important means of transport and its many benefits, in terms of promoting sustainable and healthy travel whilst also reducing city centre traffic congestion and contributing to improvements in air quality are well documented. A proposed network of cycle routes for the City Centre has

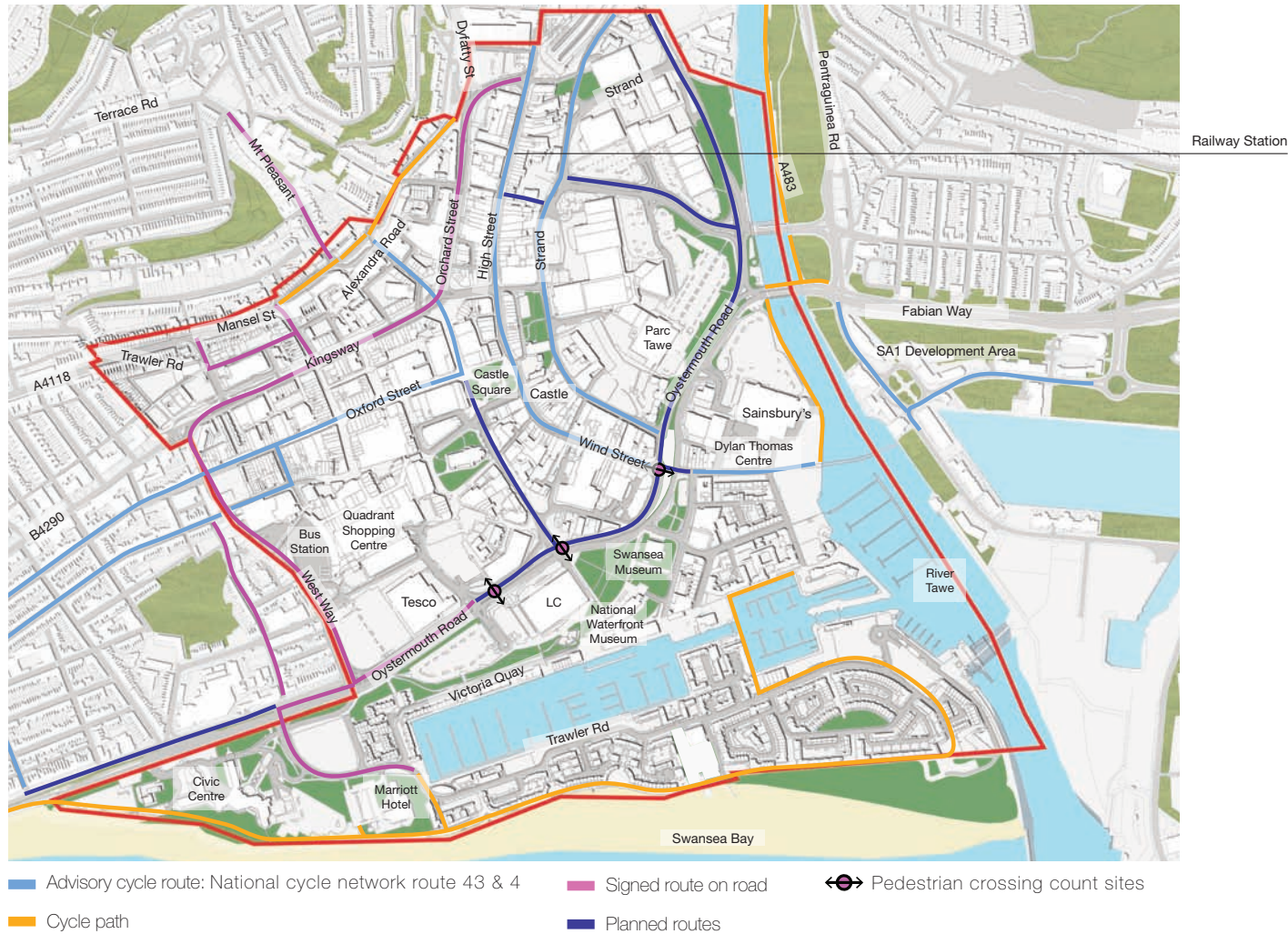
been developed by the Council and is in the early stages of delivery. It is recognized that a strong emphasis on connectivity and permeability for pedestrians and cyclists is key to achieving a vibrant City Centre public realm.

## Swansea City Centre: Vehicular Routes





## Assessment of Connectivity Legibility Cycling Plan





## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The City Centre is well served by public transport, and there has been significant investment in public transport infrastructure over the last decade which has delivered many enhancements, including a new bus station and Metro bus services in the City. The Railway station, which provides access to local and national rail networks, has recently been refurbished and the forecourt improved. The station is perceived as being somewhat remote from the retail core, however, in reality, the distance between the railway station and The Kingsway is only some 500m. It is considered that this perception is largely a reflection of the poor built form and social problems concentrated in the upper areas of High Street.

Recent regeneration projects at High Street such as the Urban Village by Coastal Housing have introduced new commercial frontages, increased footfall and made the route from the station to the retail centre more attractive, but more needs to be done to improve the connectivity and linkages between City Centre and the railway station.

The new Swansea bus station which was completed in 2011 adjoins the Quadrant Shopping Centre. This development has successfully created a public transport node within a City Centre retail core and which caters for local and national bus and coach

services. It provides an enclosed concourse environment which is an extension to the retail environment.

## PARK AND RIDE

Swansea has three Park and Ride (P&R) sites; Fabian Way 1.5 miles to the east of the City Centre, Fforestfach 3 miles north west of the City Centre and Llandore P&R 1.5 miles north of the City Centre. These services provide frequent bus linkages into the City Centre and the pricing structure for park and ride and City Centre car parking has been established in order to incentivise the use of park and ride with a view to displacing private motor vehicles from the City Centre. Whilst park and ride can provide a good alternative for short stay parking demand (e.g. retail), it should also and perhaps most importantly be a primary means of displacing users of long term parking (e.g. employment) from the City Centre.

## CAR PARKING

There are many Council operated car parks situated within and on the edge of the City Centre. These car parks vary in type and scale from small surface car parks to larger multi-storey car parks in addition to which on-street parking is available throughout the City.

Parking studies undertaken by the Council, in recent years have concluded that City Centre parking supply is broadly sufficient for the current and forecast growth in demand for parking.

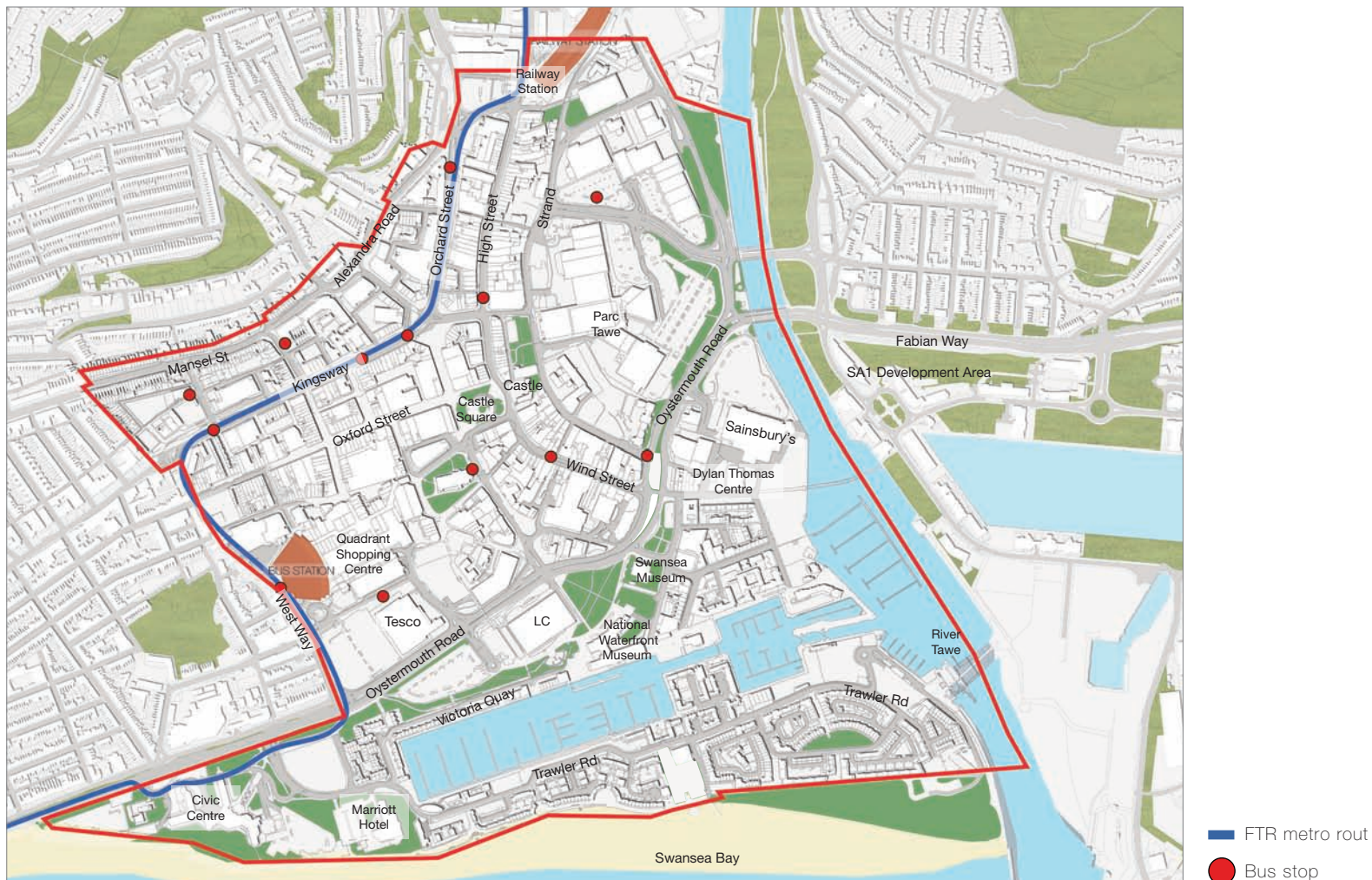
However, there is a clear disparity in the usage of the City Centre car parks. Many of the smaller surface car parks are over utilised, whilst the multi-storey car parks experience poorer levels of occupancy. There is a need to rationalise the supply of parking in key areas of the City Centre, by establishing good quality strategic multi-storey car park sites placed around the City Centre whilst disposing of the smaller surface car parks as development sites. City Centre car parking would benefit from an improved provision of clear and specific Variable Message Signs (VMS), directing shoppers to the most appropriate car park available with spare capacity. This type of signing strategy would alleviate unnecessary journeys within the City Centre and assist in reducing congestion during peak times.

## DISABLED ACCESS

Swansea Mobility Hire (formerly Shopmobility) provides powered scooters, wheelchairs and manual wheelchairs to help people who have limited mobility, through permanent or temporary disablement to shop or to visit facilities within Swansea City centre.

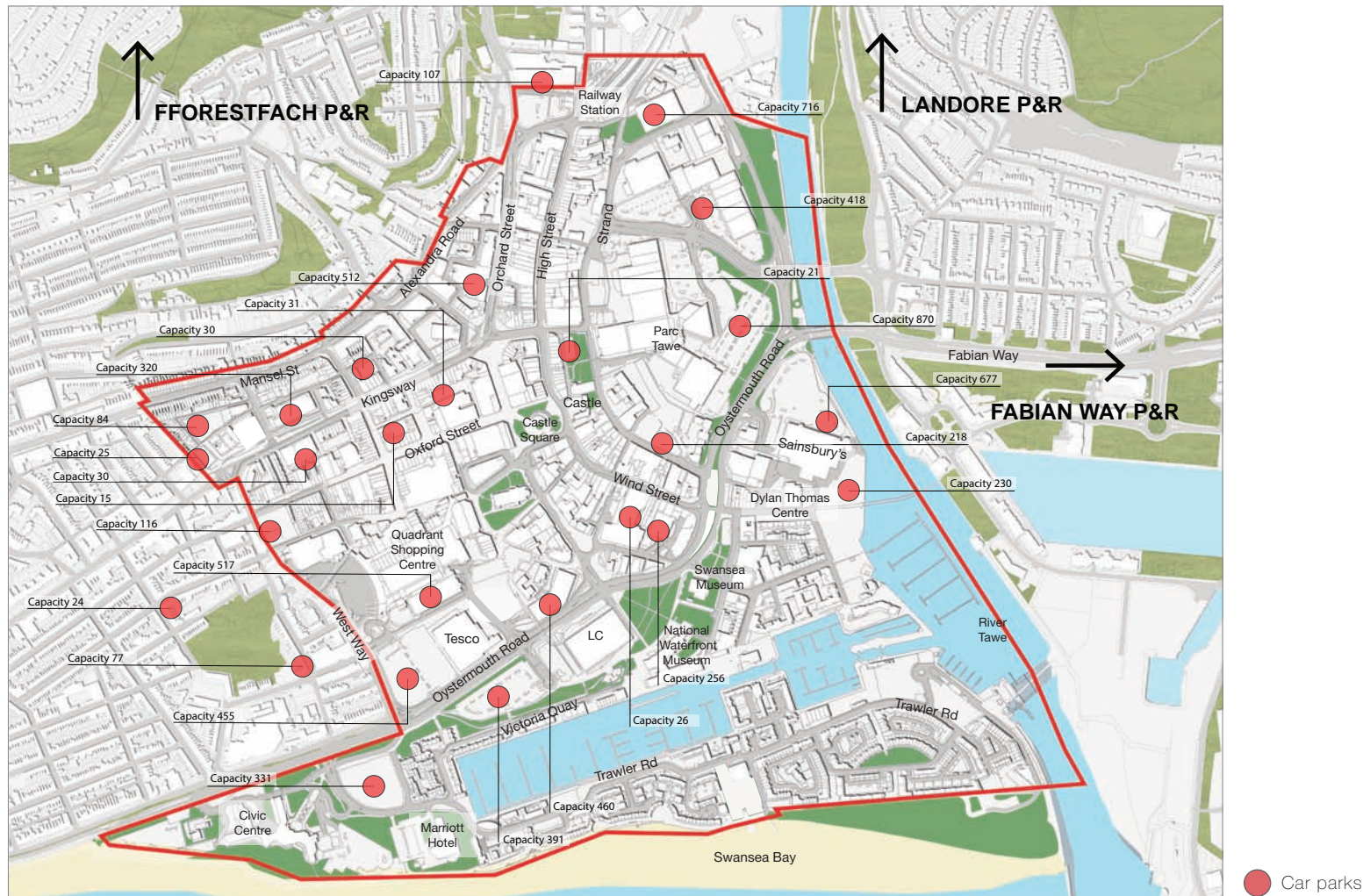
A tactile guidance path to assist blind and partially sighted people visiting and shopping in the City Centre was introduced some years ago and enhanced when the pedestrianised retail core was upgraded in 2008. The route uses a special type of paving which enables blind and partially sighted people to navigate the space helping them to travel safely and independently. The City has also produced a tactile map which is considered the first of its kind in Wales. Tactile paving is widely used to signify entry into a shared surface, such as within the new shared space at Adelaide Street and Cambrian Place and along the Waterfront Connections improvements to the promenade. RADAR key scheme facilities and changing places sites providing accessible toilet facilities for disabled people are available across the City Centre at five locations.

Swansea City Centre: FTR Metro Route and locations of key bus stops





Car Park Location and numbers







River Tawe and Sailbridge

## 2.7 Policy and Strategy Context

The Strategic Framework Review has been prepared within the context of an established framework of planning policies, technical guidance and wider strategies. This section of the report outlines elements of national and local planning policy, and other supporting documents, that are of particular relevance to Swansea City Centre. It summarises the key overarching principles that emanate from this prevailing context, which will underpin the revised Strategic Framework

### A. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

#### 1. Planning Policy Wales - Edition 7 July 2014

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the planning aims and policy objectives of the WG. It includes the following relevant guidance for the City Centre:

**Employment** - it identifies that the preferred location for significant new investment in retail and office uses is within town/city centres and is therefore supportive of the Council's aims of delivering employment and commercial floorspace within the City Centre.

**Transport** - it emphasises that planning authorities should allocate available sites near major public transport interchanges in city centres for uses that maximise the accessibility potential of the site, specifically highlighting high density residential development, employment, shopping and leisure uses.

**Housing** – WG's National Housing Strategy seeks to provide more housing of the right type and offer more choice, improve homes and communities, and improve housing-related services and support.

**Retailing and Town Centres** - it supports accessible, efficient, competitive and innovative retail provision for all the communities of Wales, by promoting established town, district, local and village centres as the most appropriate locations for retailing, leisure and other complementary functions, by enhancing the vitality, attractiveness and viability of town, district, local and village centres and by promoting access to these centres by public transport, walking and cycling. It emphasises that mixed use developments, should be encouraged so as to promote lively centres as well as to reduce the

need to travel to visit a range of facilities. The 'town centres first' approach is a fundamental facet of PPW, and is also overarching objective of local planning policies.

**Tourism** – it seeks to promote: (i) a more sustainable pattern of development, creating and maintaining networks of facilities and open spaces in places well served by sustainable means of travel; (ii) social inclusion, improved health and well-being by ensuring that everyone has easy access to the natural environment and to good attractive places

**2. Technical Advice Note 2 (Wales) – Affordable Housing 2006:** Requires local authorities to include an affordable housing target in the development plan based on housing needs set out in the local housing market assessment.

**3. Technical Advice Note 4 (Wales) – Retailing and Town Centres – 1996:** Requires applications for retail developments over 2,500sqm gross floor space to be supported by an impact assessment providing a range of evidence.

**4. Technical Advice Note 12 (Wales) – Design TAN12 (2014)** contains specific guidance regarding design, layout and public realm. It spells out the principles of good design based on an understanding of what makes existing places attractive, successful and sustainable. It sets out a quality test for all new developments in paragraph 2.6: Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to grasp opportunities to enhance the character, quality and function of an area, should not be accepted, as these have detrimental effects on existing development.

**5. Technical Advice Note 13 (Wales) – Tourism 1997:** promotes hotel developments. Where either new hotels or extensions to existing hotels are proposed, these should not adversely affect the historic fabric or character of a building, recognises the benefit of adapting redundant or obsolete buildings to hotel or restaurant use and enabling viable hotel businesses to extend.

## 6. Technical Advice Note 15 (Wales)

**Development and Flood Risk** Flood risk is a potentially significant issue in parts of the City centre, and parts of the study area is designated as being at risk of flooding. However Flood Consequence Assessments have been prepared for key City centre locations, and these show that extreme events would be localised around the bank of the River Tawe.

## 7. Technical Advice Note 18 (Wales) –

**Transport** TAN 18 (2007) requires transport and movement to be considered at the strategic and detailed level. In strategic terms this includes- (i) locating major generators of travel demand in city centres near public transport interchanges (ii) focusing residential development at locations with good access by walking and cycling to schools and public transport stops, employment opportunities, shopping and leisure; (iii) layouts and densities, which maximise the opportunity for residents to walk and cycle to local facilities and public transport stops. Transport infrastructure should contribute to a sense of place and community and the five principle functions of streets should generally be considered including (i) place (ii) movement; (iii) access; (iv) parking; and utilities The TAN links to the detailed guidance which is contained in the

Manual for Streets

**8. Technical Advice Note 23 (Wales) – Economic Development** TAN 23 February 2014 In accordance with PPW, the TAN states that when identifying land for economic use in development plans, first preference should be given to sites within the boundaries of settlements, second preference should be given to edge of settlement sites and third preference should be given to land in the open countryside.

## B. LOCAL PLANNING POLICY AND STRATEGIES

**1. Swansea Unitary Development Plan (November 2008)** The City and County of Swansea Unitary Development Plan (UDP) is the extant development plan for the County and is currently the adopted policy framework for determining planning applications.

A key objective for the UDP is “to reinforce and improve the City Centre as a vibrant regional focus for business and administration, shopping, culture and leisure”. The key policies relating to the City Centre and which are particularly relevant for the Strategic Framework Review are set out briefly below:

## Chapter 1 Creating a Quality

**Environment-** City Centre Mixed use development(CC1), City centre retail core (CC2), St David's Quadrant Area (CC3), Parc Tawe (CC4), Creating an attractive City centre environment( CC5), Delivering improvements in City Centre accessibility(CC6), City Centre Car parking (CC7).

**Chapter 2 Developing the Economy-** New Retail Development (EC4), Out of Town Retailing (EC9), Urban Tourism (EC15),

## Chapter 3 Providing Homes and

**Communities:** Flat Conversions (HC6), Over the Shop Housing (HC8) Leisure Facilities and Housing (HC 18).

**2. Swansea Local Development Plan Preferred Strategy (July 2014)** - The Swansea Local Development Plan (LDP) is well into production and will replace the UDP as the overall development blueprint for Swansea for the period 2010-2025. The LDP Preferred Strategy (August 2014) has been approved by the Council and sets out the broad approach the Council intends to take to ensure the City and County of Swansea (the County) is developed in a

sustainable manner over the plan period. The Preferred Strategy outlines a number of strategic policies that provide a context for more detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations to be developed. These detailed policies and allocations will subsequently be included in the Deposit LDP, which in turn will be supported by relevant strategy documents for the City Centre, including the Strategic Framework and Strategic Framework Review.

The Council has now published its Draft Deposit Proposals Map (December 2014) for consultation, which confirms the status of the City Centre and Waterfront as a Strategic Site to be augmented by a more detailed Masterplan/Framework. The Strategic Framework Review Document will serve as that master plan.

## 3. Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

The City and County of Swansea has a range of SPG adopted by the Council in support of UDP policies which are relevant to the City Centre. These are summarised briefly below and can be found on the attached web link <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/spg>



**Planning Obligations (2010)** This guidance has been prepared in order to set out how the Council will use obligations to ensure that, where necessary, the impact of development is mitigated by appropriate improvements to local infrastructure, facilities or services.

**Non-Retail Uses in Swansea City Centre (2010)** - controls change of use applications in response to the loss of A1 retail units to A2 (financial and professional services) and A3 (restaurant, cafe, take-away) uses in particular, which has had the effect of diluting the retail focus of the City Centre.

**Tall Buildings Strategy (2008)** – This guidance identifies appropriate locations where tall buildings may be located. However in order to implement the new Vision highlighted in the Strategic Framework Review, there is considered to be a need to revisit the extent of the areas where tall buildings would be supported. Most notably for the Kingsway and its future in terms of a mixed use area for City living working and learning, may benefit from the adoption a more flexible approach towards tall buildings.

#### **City Centre Parking Standards(2012)**

These adopted standards seek to ensure a transparent and consistent approach to the provision of parking, submission of travel plans and sustainability considerations that inform developers designers and builders of what is expected of them in terms of parking provision at an early stage in the development process. The policy defines two zones for Swansea City Centre, a central core and central area where different parking requirements apply for different land uses.

#### **Swansea Bay Strategy (February 2008)**

- The Swansea Bay Strategy provides a vision for Swansea Bay and details potential new development and enhancement in order to achieve this vision. The Vision for Swansea Bay is to create a destination for culture, art, food, quality places and a space to meet people, through a series of Bay wide Initiatives and focusing development opportunities on 6 key locations including the City's waterfront.

#### **Places to live: Residential Design Guide (January 2014)**

This SPG was introduced to raise the standards of residential design in everyday places. Whilst it is focused on 'residential estates' it is also applicable to city living projects. It sets out a range of relevant considerations and is a material consideration for all residential schemes of 10 or more homes.

### **C. OTHER RELEVANT STRATEGIES, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORTING STUDIES**

#### **1.“One Wales: One Planet, the sustainable development scheme of the Welsh Assembly Government” 2009.**

Within this document, the Vision of a Sustainable Wales is one where Wales:

- “lives within its environmental limits, using only its fair share of the earth's resources so that our ecological footprint is reduced to the global average availability of resources, and we are resilient to the impacts of climate change;
- has healthy, biologically diverse and productive ecosystems that are managed sustainably;

- has a resilient and sustainable economy that is able to develop whilst stabilising, then reducing, its use of natural resources and reducing its contribution to climate change;
- has communities which are safe, sustainable, and attractive places for people to live and work, where people have access to services, and enjoy good health;
- is a fair, just and bilingual nation, in which citizens of all ages and backgrounds are empowered to determine their own lives, shape their communities and achieve their full potential”.

**2. Draft Future Generations Bill** will aim to make sustainable development a statutory responsibility across the devolved public sector in Wales, considering long term economic, social and environmental wellbeing in all aspects of decision making. The key purposes of the Bill are to:

- set a framework within which specified Welsh public authorities will seek to ensure the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability

of future generations to meet their own needs (the sustainable development principle),

- put into place well-being goals which those authorities are to seek to achieve in order to improve wellbeing both now and in the future,
- set out how those authorities are to show they are working towards the well-being goals,
- put Public Services Boards and local well-being plans on a statutory basis and, in doing so, simplify current requirements as regards integrated community planning, and
- establish a Future Generations Commissioner for Wales to be an advocate for future generations who will advise and support Welsh public authorities in carrying out their duties under the Bill.

The Bill is due to be adopted in April 2015 and will apply to the City and County of Swansea from April 2016.

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/article/8061/Swansea-Bay-City-Region-Economic-Regeneration-Strategy>

### 3. Swansea Bay City Region Economic Regeneration Strategy

This is ambitious strategic framework to support South West Wales and its future economic development. It sets out a bold new vision for a 'confident, ambitious and connected City Region recognized internationally for its emerging knowledge and innovation'. Along with 4 cross cutting themes it sets out 5 strategic aims for

- Business growth, retention and specialization
- Skilled and ambitious for long term success
- Maximising job creation
- Knowledge economy and innovation
- Distinctive places and competitive infrastructure.

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/article/8061/Swansea-Bay-City-Region-Economic-Regeneration-Strategy>

**4. Health, Social Care and well being Strategy 2011-2014 Making Swansea a Healthier City** - Swansea was designated by the World Health Organisation as a Healthy City in September 2010. The European Healthy City network sets criteria in phases, the current Phase (Phase VI) is on Health 2020 - the European policy framework supporting action across government and society for health and well-being. Phase VI has 4 core themes focusing on investing in health through a life-course, tackling the challenges of infectious and non-communicable diseases; strengthening people-centered systems and public health capacity, and creating resilient communities and supportive environments.

The Council's Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy sets out a number of themes that are relevant to new residential developments.

**5. The One Swansea Plan Single Integrated Plan; Places People Challenges and Change** The purpose of this plan is to improve the wellbeing of people in Swansea by ensuring that professionals and

the public work together on a shared set of outcomes and challenges. It has been developed by Swansea Local Service Board which includes the main public service agencies for the area and representatives of the voluntary and business sectors.

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/oneswansea>

**6. Review of Retail Capacity, Investment Potential and Strategy for the City & County of Swansea (2014)** This concludes that "Swansea is currently failing in both its retail and leisure offer with poorly configured retail space, lack of complementary leisure opportunities, dated environment and relatively weak tenant profile for what is Wales's second city". Positively however, it identifies Swansea City Centre's catchment as being capable of supporting a regionally dominant leisure and retail scheme in keeping with the needs of a city region. The document also states that broadening out the mix of uses in order to deliver office worker, residential, tourism and retail and leisure/catering catchment spend is a requirement of delivering a 'ten-till-ten economy'.

**7. Town Centres and Retail Dynamics: Towards A Revised Retail Planning Policy For Wales** - This report sets out recommendations for planning policy in Wales to adapt to the changes in the sector in terms of protecting and promoting town and city centres.

#### **8. Sustainable Development Policy**

The Council has a corporate Sustainable Development Policy (adopted Jan 2012). The policy provides guidelines which help the Council to deliver sustainable outcomes for the counties communities. The Council is committed to embedding sustainable development as its central organising principle. Development on a sustainable basis considers long term economic, social and environmental wellbeing in all aspects of decision making. The objective being to develop a strong, healthy and just society that lives within environmental limits, based on a sustainable economy, good governance and sound evidence.

More information on sustainable development and the Council can be found [here](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/sustainabledevelopment)

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/sustainabledevelopment>

**9. Manual for Streets 2007** This document was produced to counter the dominance of vehicles and highways in streets and is a companion guide to TAN 18. The main aim of this document is to facilitate the creation of streets that promote greater social interaction and enjoyment while still performing successfully as conduits for movement.

#### **10. Manual for Streets 2: Wider Application of the Principles' 2010**

forms a companion guide to 'Manual for Streets'. With regard to city centre streets, arterial routes and High Streets it stresses that these areas must be 'walkable' and provides further detailed guidance and demonstrated how these areas should pre-eminently be 'places' but recognizes that these areas are also focal areas for movement.

#### **11. Beyond Bricks and Mortar**

Beyond bricks and mortar is an important initiative to secure social benefits from procurement and regeneration activity in the City and County of Swansea for the lasting benefits of the community.

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/article/4725/Beyond-bricks-and-mortar>

**12. Pavements are for People Policy** - sets out how CCS will design, manage and maintain pathways to make sure they are safe for all users.

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/article/3680/Pavements-are-for-People-Policy>

**13. Local Biodiversity Action Plan** - This is a strategy and action plan for the protection, management, enhancement and promotion of Swansea's outstanding natural environment and biodiversity. It outlines a number of strategic actions required for the conservation of the wider biodiversity resource together with a set of detailed actions for the protection of priority habitats and species.

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/article/10113/Swansea-Local-Biodiversity-Action-Plan>

#### **14. Destination Management Plan**

'Destination Swansea Bay 2013-2016' addresses the vital role tourism plays in the economy and sets a strategic direction for Swansea Bay as a visitor destination. Produced by CCS in consultation with major tourism stakeholders, it is a shared statement of intent between the public, private and third sectors on how to manage, develop and promote Swansea Bay over the next three years.

<http://www.swansea.gov.uk/dmp>

**Planning Status of the Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework Review**- It is intended that a final version of the Revised Strategic Framework will be approved by the Council as new strategic guidance to re-set the regeneration agenda and inform decision making. An appropriate version of the document will ultimately be adopted as SPG in support of policies set out in the emerging Swansea LDP. The Revised Strategic Framework will be a material consideration in the consideration of planning proposals within the City Centre area, and equally for schemes outside the city centre which, by their nature, will have an impact upon it.





Oxford Street



# 3.0 FRAMEWORK FOR REGENERATION AND MOVEMENT

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

- i. The key aim of the Review of the Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework is to:
  - provide strategic planning guidance to guide decisions on future planning applications;
  - to identify a programme of key infrastructure interventions to allow physical changes to the built environment and landscape of the City in support of wider economic regeneration of the City Centre;
  - to promote and facilitate deliverable schemes on City centre sites.
  - To achieve this using sustainable development principles.
- ii. The Review is based on analysis of prevailing economic and social conditions and predicted future trends and reflects social, economic, environmental and cultural priorities over the short, medium and longer term. Schemes will be a balance of both 'quick win' and longer term strategic projects to stimulate regeneration funded through a combination of both public sector capital initiatives and private sector investment.

### Vision

- iii. The Review restates the Vision identified in the 2007 Framework:

“to create a mixed-use location with a strong retail, commercial and leisure heart supported by a vibrant resident population.”
- iii. The 2007 - Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework outlined a number of Strategic Objectives, which are again are still relevant to this Review:
  - Building a Competitive City Centre Economy
  - Creating a Quality Regional Shopping Centre
  - Achieving a High Quality Environment
  - Developing City Living
  - Making a Waterfront City
  - Improving Accessibility and Movement
  - Creating a Destination City
  - Affirming a Regional Role
  - Expressing a Distinctive Identity

## 3.2 THEMES AND OBJECTIVES

- i.. The Framework for Regeneration and Movement is divided into the following four generic themes:

- **Sustainability**
- **Design**
- **Accessibility and Movement**
- **Distinctiveness**

# 1. Sustainability

**Objective – to create a resilient City Centre by reinforcing its regional role for commerce, shopping and leisure and to increase city living, from which there will be economic longevity, social inclusivity and environmental equilibrium for existing and future residents and visitors.**

Sustainable development is a process of development that *“meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”* (Brundtland Report, UN, 1987). A key factor in achieving sustainability is developing resilient communities; places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. Places which meet the diverse needs of residents, are sensitive to their environment

and contribute to a high quality health and wellbeing. They are safe and inclusive, well planned built and run, provide a flourishing economy and offer equality of opportunity and good services and facilities for all. Central to the regeneration of the City Centre being truly ‘sustainable’ is the need for the redevelopment build the foundations for vibrant generations in the decades ahead. Key areas to consider in the regeneration of Swansea City Centre include:

- **Urban environment** - creating a high quality, attractive environment through development of the City Centre both in terms of the quality and aesthetics of new

and refurbished buildings and the use of public realm and horizontal and vertical green and blue space.

- **Carbon reduction and energy efficiency** - making more efficient use of energy and resources infrastructure development and operation, and in exploring opportunities for incorporating energy production into the development to help future proof against potential longer term issues in the supply of conventional energy i.e. renewables and community energy.

- **Climate Change (Mitigation and Adaptation)**

- **Social development:** by creating a City Centre which provides a context to reduce inequality and achieve social inclusion, and meets the diverse needs of residents, including good quality housing, employment opportunities, civic, cultural, leisure and entertainment facilities

- **Economic development:** by reflecting the role of the City Centre as a major focus of the local economy and a driver for sustainable growth of the wider region

- **Integrated solutions:** accommodating a concentration and density of activities - housing, retailing, entertainment and employment which will encourage a more sustainable use of energy and resources, and reduce the need to travel by private vehicles.

- **Sustainable transport:** The City Centre will also act as a hub for the city-region, stimulating use of more sustainable forms of transport and development

The City Centre is particularly important in developing integrated solutions as it will: accommodate a concentration and density of activities - housing, retailing, entertainment and employment which will encourage a more sustainable use of energy and resources, and reduce the need to



Fareham High Street - a place with identity





Peace Garden, Sheffield - a community centre



Encouraging green architecture - using green roofs

travel by private vehicles. The City Centre will also act as a hub for the city-region, stimulating use of more sustainable forms of transport and development

The Strategic Framework will provide a structured approach to the promotion of a high standard of design for all new developments which will:

#### (i) Sustainable transport

- ensuring the City Centre acts as a hub for the city-region and stimulates the use of more sustainable forms of transport e.g. good public transport links, reducing car dependency, creating safe people-friendly environments with direct walking and cycle routes.



BedZED - an energy efficient development

#### (ii) Provide a sense of place which:

- Fosters a sense of identity and local distinctiveness
- Responds to the local character of the built environment
- Integrates with adjoining landscapes of Swansea Bay and the hills and valleys behind
- Creates distinctive skylines, focal points, and landmarks
- Includes variety and surprise within a unified design,
- Includes streets, squares and other public spaces with a defined sense of enclosure
- Pays attention to the detail of forms, massing, textures, colours and landscaping
- Conserves and enhances important environmental assets of the site
- Includes attractive green spaces for recreation and biodiversity

**(iii) Build a new urban economy which:**

- Creates a more diverse, stable economic structure and role for the City Centre
- Creates good quality, well-paid jobs, especially in knowledge based and growing service industries
- Provides an environment and transport system which sustains competitive businesses

**(iv) Meet community requirements:**

– ensures that regeneration addresses the needs of existing and future residents and users by involving the existing community and the providers of community services in the design process, ensuring the infrastructure will meet ongoing telecommunications and information technology needs

**Sustainable Energy and Resource Plan for the City Centre**

Climate change is one of the biggest environmental threats to our quality of life and the environment. The City Centre Strategic Framework Review will play a central role in helping to reduce carbon emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change. Many of the most important benefits of sustainable development will depend on the detailed design and

construction of new buildings and transport infrastructure.

**Sustainable Urban Design**

The Council's "Sustainable Developer Guide" is to be reviewed and will provide a mechanism for delivery of sustainability objectives. It provides detailed advice on building design and specifications, to ensure sustainable "whole life" use of energy and other resources in development. The Guide will be monitored to ensure that it can focus explicitly on the implementation of the following key principles throughout the City Centre:

- Monolithic urban blocks should be avoided – height and mass should be well considered as should permeability to allow for flexibility and adaptability of use in the future
- New designs should be based on well considered street layouts with appropriate proportion and scale with height being used to redefine scale if required
- New development in the City Centre should be informed by the principles of sustainable design, layout and construction.
- Mixed-use as a principle will also give greater security and vitality to the City Centre.

- Vertical and horizontal mixed-uses which increase the density of population and provide greater / improved services and facilities for adjacent communities.

- A high quality built environment well integrated with existing residential and commercial areas

- Development that is flexible in design to allow the site and buildings to adapt to any changing spatial requirements of occupiers

- An integrated design approach promoting optimum energy performance in high energy efficient buildings encouraging the use of low carbon technologies and fuels

- The sustainable use and re-use of materials, such as natural, low-maintenance, durable products or waste from demolition

- Flexible and innovative public realm incorporating accessible green space, public art features and landmarks

- Informal public and private spaces to encourage social interaction accommodating the opportunity to 'design out crime' and anti-social behaviour.

- Improved accessibility of services and facilities to the wider Swansea area, developing a greater range and quality of sustainable transport options

- Sustainable transport solutions, including bus routes, park and ride, car sharing, cycling and walking, all of which are fully integrated with clear legible and recognisable routes to and from the City Centre and surrounding areas

- Development which considers the implications of local climate and possibilities arising from the efficient use of wind, water and solar

- Development that is interdependent and interconnected with the landscape and natural systems within individual sites and beyond their boundaries

- Green spaces and corridors which support indigenous species and enable migration and movement of species.

## 2. Design

**Objective – to create new or regenerated high quality urban environments which encourage:**

- high quality new buildings with the spaces between them contributing as much to the quality of the City Centre as the buildings themselves
- distinctive and iconic buildings
- attractive gateways
- quality public realm and greening
- regenerated historic areas and important buildings

The Strategic Framework Review will ensure that the principles of good design highlighted in Government policy are applied to the regeneration of the City Centre. They should also be embedded in the design brief for each of the development opportunities as they come forward and those developments judged by this criteria.

The urban design principles set out in the 2007 Strategic Framework remain largely valid and are reiterated, reviewed and reinforced below:

### **Sustaining and enhancing character**

The existing character of Swansea is diverse and this diversity should be reflected in the development of new schemes and reflected in refurbishment throughout the City. The

use of Vision Themes across Priority and Complementary Areas should be developed to strengthen identified distinctive and appropriate character and ensure variety and interest is maintained. Architectural character where of quality should be retained and enhanced and unimaginative or patently low quality architecture should not be permitted. Innovation in design thinking will be encouraged as will architecture with design integrity whether stylistically contemporary or contextual.

### **Promoting Innovative thinking and quality design**

As a corollary to the definition of Vision Themes for specific areas, innovative design, from the point of view of exciting, contemporary and thought provoking solutions, should be promoted. The innovations could take the form of new mixtures of uses, utilisation of existing buildings juxtaposed to the new, integration of sustainability principles including new materials or the development of strongly branded design or theme. Where design quality in the fabric of buildings or their elevations exists, seek to retain. If this is not possible, alternative viable uses or replacements should be considered with new, 'statement' architecture.

### **Promoting successful relationships between public and private space**

Public realm in the City Centre is largely accessible to the public. However, there is scope to introduce clearly defined private space that adds to the amenity of future residents and users. This can be in the use of roof top gardens and balconies which can add vitality and interest to the architecture of the City and is appropriate to the maritime climate of Swansea. Mixed-use development will in most cases incorporate a mix of public and private space and this should be encouraged to provide activity during the daytime and evening and in so doing provide a self-policing city centre which benefits from 'community'.

### **Promoting High Quality in the public realm**

A key element of the future success of Swansea City Centre is a comprehensively designed high quality public realm, easily maintained 'by design', with systems in place to ensure that its quality is not lost or eroded over time by inappropriate repairs replacements or poor standards of maintenance. New public realm needs to deliver long term quality of spaces and help redefine and strengthen distinctive character of Swansea introducing new and enhanced green or blue space. Greenspace in the form of 'pocket parks' can assist in softening the streetscape, provide shade, wildlife habitats and improve legibility. Statement projects such as a 'high-line' park

across Oystermouth Road connecting to the discussed railway arches would set a new benchmark for quality and innovation. Blue space or sustainable urban drainage; such as rain gardens and public space with water features can be multipurpose. They can form part of a green space supporting biodiversity and pocket parks or be incorporated into hard surfaced public realm where it provides water attenuation, and can make statement as part of public art installations or the surface design itself.

### **Ensuring ease of access for all**

All future development and design for the City Centre should take into account the latest thinking and recommendations for access to streets, places and buildings by everyone.

### **Promoting legible development**

The legibility of Swansea City Centre is inhibited by its lack of visual and physical connection to the waterfront in particular. Linkages and therefore legibility has been improved by the new pedestrian crossings along Oystermouth Road. Intuitive connectivity to the seafront is however still lacking and this must be addressed in future developments, to improve the legibility of the City Centre as a whole.

Redevelopment of key areas such as St. Davids/Quadrant site should concentrate on achieving better legibility with the inclusion



of local landmarks, the opening up of potential views and the development of local district character. It will also be improved by the development of public squares and green spaces, in conjunction with key buildings and uses at locations defined in the accessibility patterns of the City Centre.

### Designing for change

Flexibility and adaptability of the urban fabric has already been highlighted as a feature of good sustainability. The principles of good street and urban block design will allow for the maximum future flexibility in built fabric.

### Promoting quality, choice and variety

Quality of development is often difficult to achieve in the face of commercial pressures to achieve 'acceptable' levels of viability and it is imperative that the Council defines qualitative benchmarks for new development from the outset of the adoption of the City Centre Strategic Framework. Choice is also a difficult element to promote as it also depends to a large extent on economic and market forces. The best city centres generate choice of leisure, retail, economic and workplace activity by ensuring that there is a sufficient critical mass and variety of uses to allow choices to develop freely. It is essential to ensure that the City Centre embraces a vibrant mix of land use activity to complement the significant enhancement of the retail offer.

### Streets

New streets and linkages will be formed through proposals identified in the Strategic Framework, building on the existing network of streets in the City Centre. There will be a need to maximise active frontages, add vitality, allow permeability and contribute to the creation of a sense of place. Where opportunities exist in line with the urban design principles streets could be substantially remodeled to improve scale, massing and quality of the public realm.

Public realm will need to be well designed ensuring that the spaces between the buildings respond to and help create a new urban fabric. Street furniture should be designed with the space in mind and integral to the overall layout of development and complying with the Equalities Act. Public realm solutions must be robust and take into account the general principles of Safety by Design with new lighting being energy-efficient and operating on less energy than existing units.

Signage and wayfinding design should consider cyclist and pedestrian desire lines and strengthen links between the key areas of the City Centre. This will be essential in linking the City with the waterfront. Any approach should adopt the principles of the City Centre Wayfinding Strategy with materials being of a high quality. Consistency of materials across the City Centre may assist future maintenance but any solutions must be durable, fit for purpose and sensitive to their location.

### Mixed-Uses

In and immediately adjacent to the City Centre retail core, retail-led mixed-use development to a scale appropriate to each location should predominate for refurbishment or redevelopment projects. Retail should be the predominant ground floor use. Upper floors should include a range of uses which can include retail, residential, commercial leisure, office, hotel and civic uses. A successful mix of uses can, through generating a community feel, provide security and surveillance at night in the City Centre. Residential uses on upper floors can also help animate facades with balconies and roof gardens, providing private space to complement high quality public space.

A mixed-use approach will therefore help to ensure the necessary range of uses and variety required within the City Centre. Opportunities to provide office accommodation should be encouraged and where possible directed to the City Centre Core. This will help ensure that the vitality and range of uses required within the City Centre is delivered.

### Leisure/Cultural

Elements of further cultural and leisure provision should be provided and this should integrate wherever possible with other uses, and encourage pedestrian movement through the City Centre by acting as destinations.

### Meanwhile or Temporary uses

Temporary use of vacant buildings and temporary interventions in public space can bring life and vitality to areas, raise their longer term profile, change perspectives of an area and attract investment and the character and distinctiveness of an area. Such projects can allow experimentation with public spaces, offer a platform for designers to show their work and ideas, offer the chance to prototype and experiment with the way that different parts of the City are defined and get feedback and ideas, they can provide incubator space for young people and business start ups and provide a quick win in the longer term process of an urban development.

Temporary projects can also help to demonstrate that something is really happening and starting to change the view of a site and an area. Commitment required for a project is relatively low, but they allow important relationships to be built, establishing contacts and necessary relationships to do further permanent projects.

Despite the growing popularity of temporary projects there are as yet no established models for carrying them out, and obtaining the relevant permissions can be complex and time consuming. Further guidance should be prepared to facilitate temporary projects in the City Centre, to explore funding mechanisms, stakeholder interest and resources and identify sites and

properties that could be suitable and which serve wider regeneration aims.

### Sequence of City spaces

A network of further high quality spaces is required to give a cohesive and strong image to the City Centre. Such spaces are intended to create vibrant places, forming 'stepping stones' that link together existing and proposed areas of concentrated activity. The future development of the Quadrant/St David's site will provide an opportunity through the design of a new streetscape to create new city spaces as well as mending and strengthening those around St Mary's and St David's churches. New public spaces should also be created in the form of courtyards within new urban regeneration projects, for example on The Kingsway, potentially as part of a comprehensive redevelopment certain underused buildings. New public spaces might also be part of the creation of a new crossing to link the St David's site with the south side of Oystermouth road. As part of the new 'green artery' these spaces may occur at "high level" as well as "at-grade".

### Conservation Areas

The Conservation Areas noted previously in the Review are well defined and encompass most of the quality buildings in the City Centre. Statutory requirements dictate that the local authority has a duty to fully

interpret, preserve and enhance these areas. A key element in their protection is to ensure that new development does not overwhelm their character. New buildings should complement the old architecture and reinforce character rather than competing and diminishing it.

### Nodes

The City Centre currently has a number of significant nodes such as the station forecourt where activity and movement coincide. These do not always have to be grand spaces but do need to be marked and celebrated as part of the movement hierarchy of the City Centre. Individual landscape treatment and careful design of the public realm in these areas should be developed to support their significance.

### Gateways

The City Centre has several existing gateways – West Way and the Tawe Bridges at each end of Oystermouth Road, at the Station and Alexandra Road in the north of the City Centre, and at the western end of the Kingsway. These are not well marked and where an opportunity exists they should be properly expressed, to indicate that you are entering the City Centre at these points. This does not necessarily need to be done by creating obvious gateway structures or new buildings alone, but can be achieved

by other forms of emphasis and change, such as attractive frontage buildings and/or a distinctive landscape design.

### Landmarks

As with most city centres, Swansea has a number of poor quality landmark buildings. However, there are others which contribute to a strong network of potentially well related structures. It is important that these are framed and emphasised wherever possible, and new landmarks should relate to the better historic landmarks rather than the lower quality modern buildings. Careful consideration should be given, in particular, to the design and location of tall buildings, to ensure that they do not conflict with the higher quality historic landmarks and the Conservation Areas.

### Destinations and attractions

The Priority and Complementary Areas identify a number of opportunities to create destinations within the City Centre. Destinations, with leisure activities and events are fundamental to the broader success of the City Centre. These might be new leisure attractions, food and drink outlets, public spaces which include play, activity, public art, interpretation or events. Destinations need to have good access for all and facilities for visitors, and take account of weather and seasonal conditions.

### Greening the City

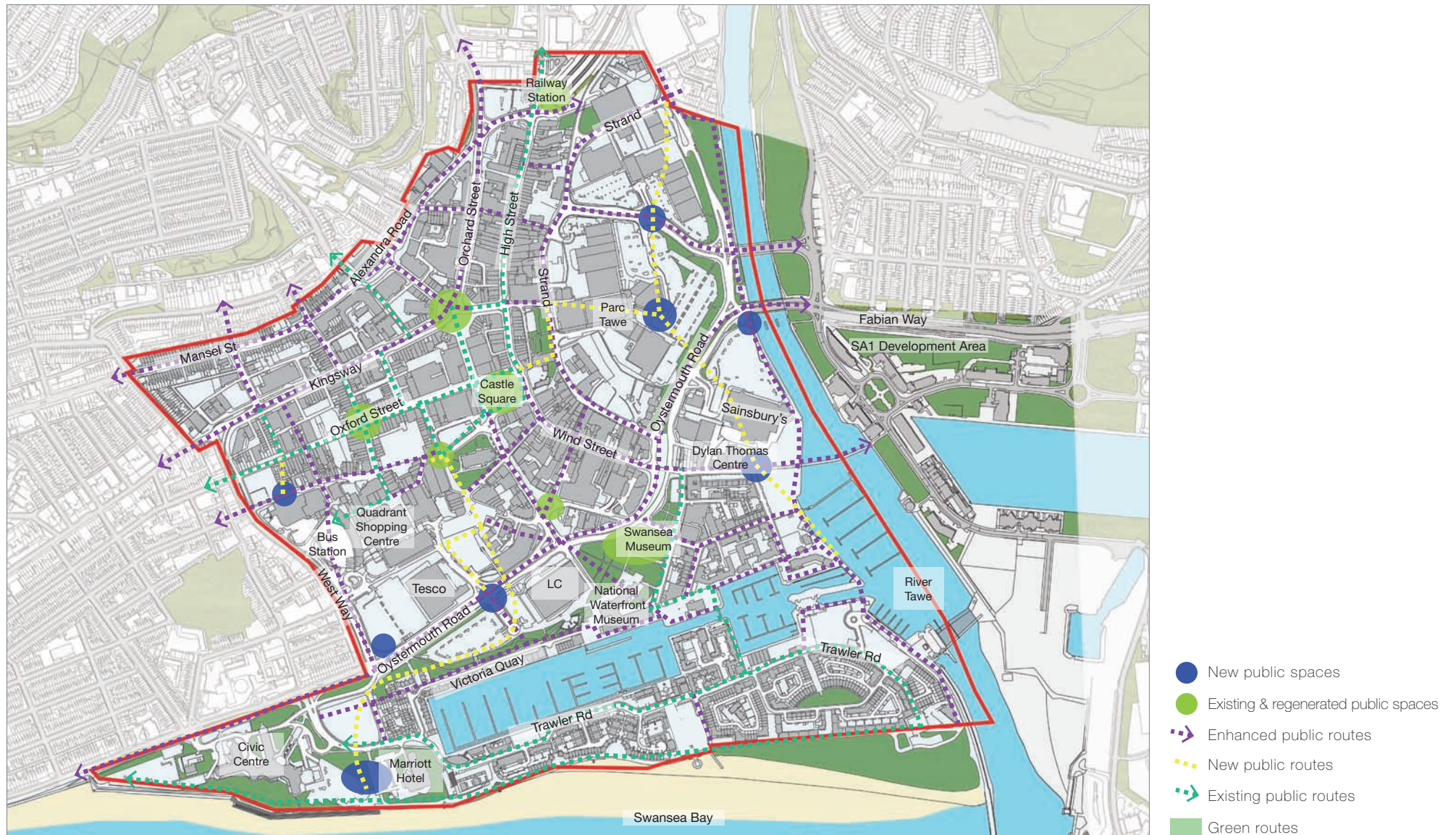
This should be achieved by developing the theme of a connecting 'Green' Artery and Public Realm and specifically through the introduction of 'pocket parks' in locations such as the Kingsway junction with Princess Way. Opportunities also exist for elevated landscape adjacent to LC and connecting with the railway arches, and enhancement of existing green spaces throughout the City Centre. Public realm designs for new public spaces need to review opportunities for tree planting.

The use of green roofs and walls can combine design scope with ecological and performance benefits. They can improve aesthetics, refresh tired facades, disguise car parks, add colour and texture, and provide wildlife habitats. They also have more practical applications of reducing noise and improving air quality. There may be scope for this approach particularly in areas such as Kingsway and between High Street and the Strand. Sustainable urban drainage systems can form part of green space helping to future proof the city against increased rainfall and flooding.

### Places and Movement

The success of the future City Centre will depend on a comprehensive network of pedestrian routes that links it together. A pattern of new spaces complementing the existing ones should be created to give people local destinations in specific districts and developments.





Places and Movement (1:7500)



### 3 Accessibility and Connectivity Strategy for the City Centre

#### Objectives:

- to improve accessibility and movement for pedestrian and vehicular both to and within the City Centre
- to re establish connections to the waterfront and strengthen the links to the river and seafront through intuitive routes which are designed to put pedestrians first.
- to provide high quality public transport access to the City Centre
- to provide sufficient car parking to meet the City Centre's growth needs

#### General Principles

Improving accessibility and movement in accordance with the Manual for Streets is a key Strategic Objective for the City Centre. It links closely to environmental, retail and economic objectives, and proposals consequently need to be properly integrated with this objective. Following recent transport initiatives and investment, Swansea City Centre is relatively well served by all the main modes for everyday travel, however, it is essential that continued improvement is maintained in order to meet the future travel demands of Swansea, in its role as a modern regional centre for working, shopping, and living.

Accessibility for all users of the City Centre whether on foot, in a wheelchair or on public transport is a fundamental requirement of all accessibility principles and will be embedded in any highways and transport focused proposals as well as those involving public realm improvements to streets and public spaces. The Accessibility Strategy contained in the 2007 Strategic Framework identifies general principles for addressing the future needs of the City Centre and those general principles remain relevant and include:

- To establish a truly walkable City centre
- To ensure that the City Centre is served with good public transport services and facilities, encouraging people to use public transport rather than private cars
- To provide good quality Park & Ride facilities, bus routes and priority lanes on routes serving the City Centre to support public transport
- To provide a balanced distribution of well managed and accessible City Centre car parking facilities. This involves consolidating provision at strategic locations to serve the City Centre
- To manage and develop the road network to ensure that traffic flows around the City Centre as efficiently as possible and with minimum environmental impact

- To create attractive streets and spaces for pedestrians and cyclists, including "shopper circuits" to make the whole City Centre more accessible, enjoyable and successful
- To improve pedestrian and cycle links between the City Centre and areas around it by providing crossing points at key locations, particularly across Oystermouth Road/ Victoria Road, West Way and the Kingsway
- To ensure that pedestrian and cycle accessibility improvements are designed to be pedestrian-friendly and include high quality works which improve the public realm

#### Draft Accessibility Proposals

As part of this draft Review and following a transportation study undertaken earlier this year, a series of broad highway recommendations are proposed for a number of areas of the City Centre.

At this stage these proposals are presented subject to further testing by more detailed highway modeling, and as part of the proposed public consultation exercise on this draft document views will be sought from traders, members of the public and other partners and City Centre Stakeholders.

These recommendations are set out below and are also integrated into the draft proposals for the Priority and Complementary area studies later in this document in section 4.0.

#### 1. Wind Street - To introduce a shared surface or pedestrianisation

Wind Street is regularly already closed to traffic during some weekend evenings and during seasonal periods. A recent pedestrian count at the crossing point at the southern end of Wind Street shows the daily flow of pedestrians to/from Wind Street is significant, demonstrating the strong pedestrian desire lines between the City Centre via Wind Street to Somerset Place, the Sail Bridge and SA1. There is however a negligible quantum of traffic using Wind Street.

There is therefore considered to be potential for Wind Street to be either permanently closed to traffic (with the relevant measures in place to allow servicing and emergency access) or partially pedestrianised with a shared surface arrangement being introduced. Partial pedestrianisation would allow traffic access along Wind Street outside specifically defined hours, during which access would be physically prohibited. The carriageway would be designed as an extension to the public realm than a road carriageway. Such a

measure would future-proof what is an already strong desire line to Sailbridge and SA1 and would safeguard activity and ease of access outside the busiest periods. Closure or partial closure measures could deliver slight improvements to highway network on the main Oystermouth Road corridor.

## **2. The Kingsway- To reduce traffic levels and review bus use on this part of the network**

The highway traffic movements on The Kingsway have generated much negative publicity due to its unconventional layout, and also more significantly concerns following a number of pedestrian/ vehicle conflict incidents. There are also issues with noise and air quality on The Kingsway, which is a consequence of high traffic volumes, which without active remediation measures will potentially impact on potential future land use and regeneration aspirations. The potential for reducing traffic levels, using this part of the network, will be key to improving the area as a place to live and work, and will enhance its potential as a key area for regeneration as a business district.

Existing traffic data suggests that approximately a third of the daily westbound traffic along The Kingsway has a destination on Walter Road, Mansel Street, Uplands, Sketty and beyond. There is therefore a significant amount of through traffic which could be displaced to an alternative West bound route. This might involve redirecting extraneous west bound traffic to Alexandra Road, De La Beche Street and Mansel Street and reverting traffic flows back to original two way working to the junction with Christina Street. There are a number of options which will need to be subject to further testing and cost assessments in order to determine its feasibility and performance.

There is also the potential to simplify bus movements on the Kingsway by providing a alternative for existing northbound bus movement. One potential solution is to route buses leaving the bus station via Oystermouth Road, Princess Way, Caer Street, and High Street. This option allows a direct interface with the redeveloped St David's/Quadrant site, and this will bring the bus route closer to High Street and will not add significantly to journey times. Any alteration to bus routes will be done in conjunction and discussion with public transport operators. A review of the

enforcement of both loading and parking restrictions on High Street would also be required with a view to adopting short term parking policy for the benefit of High Street retailers.

## **3. Paxton Street / Civic Centre- Rationalising the highway network arrangements**

At present Paxton Street is a surface public car park and the Civic centre is both offices for various departments of the Council and a Civic / Library facility for the City. The road network surrounding the site is convoluted and traffic congestion on Oystermouth Road exists partially due to the proximity of signal controlled junctions between Westway / Paxton Street and Argyle Street. The Metro also routes through Civic Centre in both directions adding to the congestion and complexity of junctions in this part of the City.

Rationalisation of the existing road system adjacent to the Civic Centre could potentially give rise to benefits on the network and particularly the free flow of traffic along Oystermouth Road. This might involve the removal of the Duvant Place junction, and the re instatement of the

Bathurst Street/Oystermouth Road junction as the primary access to the Maritime Quarter and City seafront site. Detailed traffic modelling would be required to support such proposals.

## **4. Oystermouth Road / Boulevard- Improving strategic pedestrian/cycle crossing points between the City Centre and Seafront**

Works to the Boulevard scheme are complete and address a need for pedestrians and cyclists to safely cross Oystermouth Road, whilst balancing the competing traffic demands. New Toucan crossings have been introduced at Wind Street, Princess Way and Westway. Pedestrian count data undertaken during July 2014 has shown that these and the existing LC footbridge are very well used. There is there is a clear need to facilitate connection to these crossing points and in particular to retain and enhance the link between the City centre core and Victoria Quay and the waterside public spaces of the Maritime Quarter. This is considered in more detail in the St Davids Quadrant Complementary area.

### 5. Consider a range of options for The Kingsway's tertiary streets to rationalise the turning movements at junctions on The Kingsway

The proximity of the junctions on The Kingsway leads to a proliferation of stop-start traffic which affects both congestion and air quality. Consideration should therefore be given to the rationalisation of junctions along The Kingsway in order to improve throughput and avoid re-circulation of traffic. There are other potential benefits which need to be explored further, in terms of creating space for activity and regeneration, and improving direct pedestrian and cycle linkages to the core and provide more dwell space, whilst maintaining servicing access to shops.

However, altering traffic movement on these streets has a direct bearing on the current vehicular access arrangement to other streets in the area such as Craddock Street, Union Street, Park Street and Portland Street and these need further detailed consideration and consultation. The options might include part pedestrianisation, changed traffic priorities, shared surfaces

### 6. Oxford Street /Westway- Review access arrangements

Consider alternative access to the Oxford Street school site for Westway northbound traffic, possibly via Singleton Street. Currently the area is only accessible to southbound traffic, meaning a long City Centre detour for northbound traffic.

Removal of the northbound bus lane on The Kingsway/Westway may provide an opportunity to provide a revised junction arrangement at The Kingsway/Westway junction or to provide a right turn lane from Westway into Singleton Street, although detailed traffic modelling would be required to support such a proposal. Introducing better opportunities for safe crossing from the Sandfields community to the City Centre need to be explored to reduce the physical segregation at this location.

### 7. Consider the potential of Strategic Highway Connections

Consider the potential of a City Centre Ring Road to remove unnecessary through traffic from the City Centre. To facilitate the completion of part of this ring road, a

new link road would be routed between the northern end of West Way and Mansel Street. This would need to be supported by appropriate traffic modelling to understand the effect within the City Centre and the adjoining local and strategic highway network.

### 8. City Centre Car Parks

Car park provision should be adequate to meet the needs of shoppers and other visitors, and be well distributed across the City Centre. It should complement Park & Ride facilities to meet the needs of commuters during the week, and a pricing policy which favours short stay within the City Centre should be adhered to.

All car parks should provide a safe, secure, efficient and convenient environment for drivers and passengers. They should be located to be readily accessible from the main distributor network and at convenient entry points to the City Centre. This will avoid the need for drivers to circulate within the City Centre, and reduce congestion. The existing Variable Message Sign

(VMS) system should be upgraded to give information on new parking locations, to assist in this respect.

Car parking should support priorities for development identified in the City Centre Framework Review. Small-scale car park sites should be used for new development or designated for a specific use, and lost spaces compensated elsewhere with consideration made for provision of spaces for disabled persons. A mixture of existing, improved and new development-related Multi Storey Car Parks (MSCPs) should therefore provide a City-wide network of car parks appropriately located to serve the needs of shoppers. The overall aim being to maintain the current number of parking spaces, but to change the balance of uses, with MSCP facilities for short stay, and Park & Ride for long stay.

Key MSCPs should remain open in the evening to support and emerging night-time economy. They should be well lit, with CCTV, whilst pedestrian linkages to the City Centre should be of a high quality in order to increase their attractiveness. Replacement of existing parking stock



would be beneficial through new development, provided that car parks are well sited and well managed. In addition, parking spaces for City Centre residential development should be appropriately limited.

Consideration should be given to revisiting the Strategic Parking Study (2009) in view of parking requirements for The Kingsway and the current imbalance between utilisation within the existing centre surface and MSCPs.

## 9. City Centre Car Parking Standards

The City and County of Swansea adopted car parking standards for the City centre as supplementary planning guidance in 2012. These standards seek to ensure a transparent and consistent approach to the provision of parking, submission of travel plans and sustainability considerations that inform developers designers and builders of what is expected of them in terms of parking provision at an early stage in the development process. The policy defines two zones for Swansea City Centre, a central core and central area where different parking requirements apply for different

land uses. It is anticipated that this policy will need to be reviewed to facilitate new land uses within Complementary City Centre areas, in particular in promoting the re use of vacant upper floors and vacant underused buildings for residential use.

## 10. Park and Ride

The City and County Council and WG are committed to the Park & Ride programme, and it is now gaining momentum and increasing patronage. To progress it further, the following proposals need to be implemented:

- Seek to expand the existing Park & Ride sites in line with demand;
- Service a third Park & Ride site, from the north-west on Carmarthen Road;
- Develop proposals for a fourth site from the south-west on the Mumbles Road corridor. This fourth site will bring the total Park & Ride network capacity to over 2,000 spaces;
- Expand the provision of bus priority along Park & Ride routes, and where possible, promote their use by scheduled bus services.;

## 4. Delivering Distinctiveness

### Objectives:

- to capitalise on Swansea's natural environment and Waterfront development opportunities
- to ensure that the qualities, history and associations whether cultural, social, industrial, community or physical are considered in each and every development opportunity or intervention
- to provide the attractions to support Swansea as a destination City
- to enhance commercial, shopping and leisure provision to reinforce Swansea's role as the regional economic centre

The City Centre has a breadth of history, culture and distinctive associations. Redevelopment opportunities offer the opportunity to reflect the following themes of local distinctiveness in building and public realm design;

- **Copper** - Swansea's prosperity was founded on the copper industry. This could be reflected in materials and colours of new development or enhancement schemes..
- **Water** - Swansea's status as a waterfront city by the sea, alongside the River Tawe, could be reflected in a number of ways. Examples include water sculptures, tidal clocks, seaside colours, and provision of viewing points.

- **Beach and Swansea Bay** - There are very few cities in the UK which offer direct access to 8km of expansive sandy beach. This should be celebrated in building and public realm design.

- **Cultural Distinctiveness** - as a principal Welsh City, it is important for significant new development schemes in Swansea to incorporate elements of cultural expression and, where appropriate, showcase the nation's and City's rich heritage.

- **Welsh language and culture** -A recognition of distinctiveness and cultural identity must include an appreciation of the Welsh language (which in parts of Swansea is spoken by more than 40% of residents), and can also include taking design inspiration from aspects of heritage, such as the use of local materials where appropriate.

- **Multiculturalism** - the Sandfields/St Helens Road area immediately to the west of the City Centre is one the most culturally diverse parts of the city and this could be recognised in the redevelopment of some sites;

- **Lost Character** - as would be expected of a city which has been evolving since Georgian times, the pre-WWII central area displayed richness and diversity in buildings by virtue of scale, design, materials and uses. However the post

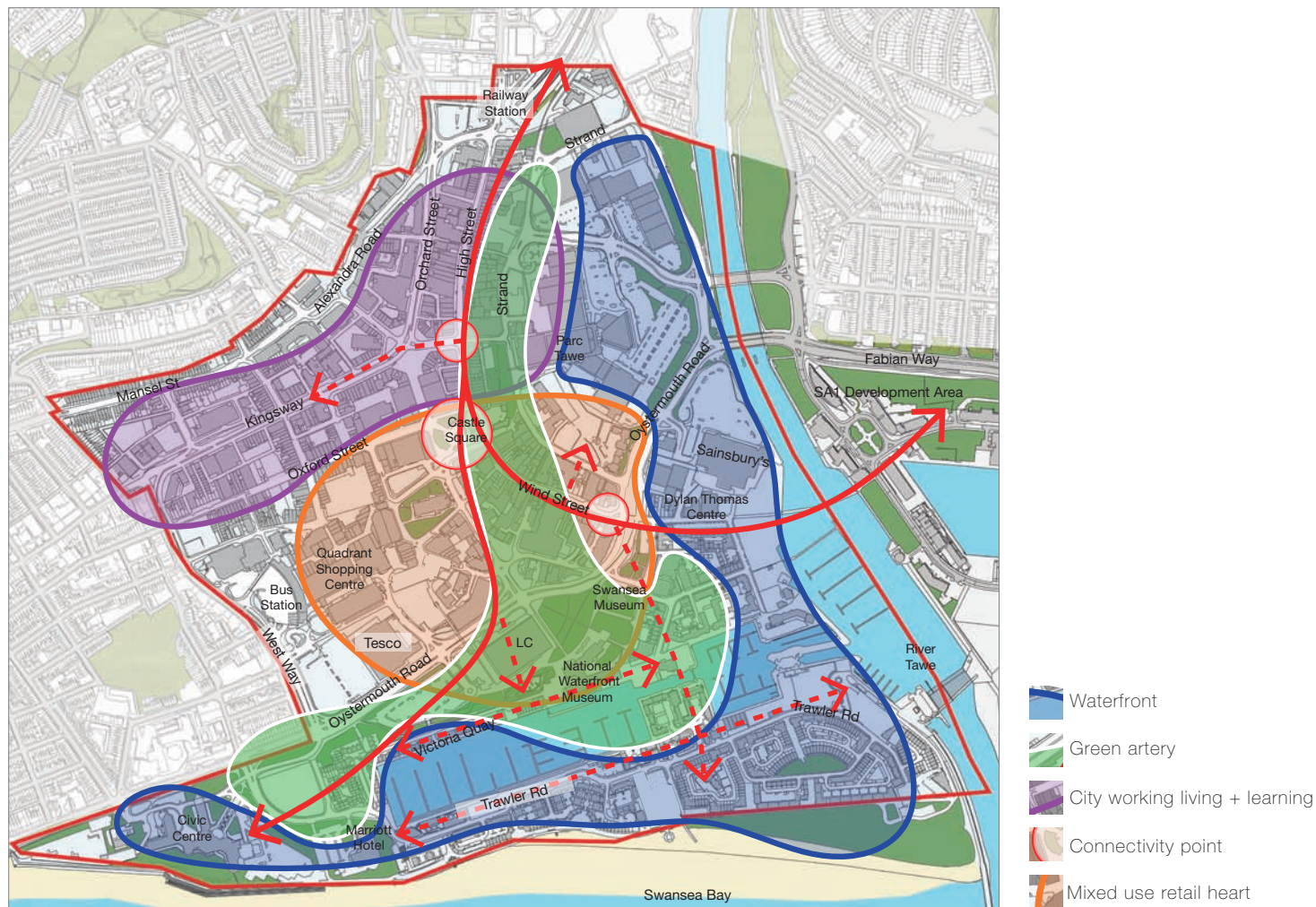
war rebuilding lacks diversity and the building stock is aging at the same rate. Therefore there may be an opportunity to draw on some of the lost buildings in a contemporary manner;

- **Swansea Market** - the largest indoor market in Wales is a major asset to the City Centre. However the presence of the market building is limited by the buildings encasing it. Therefore there is an opportunity to signal the presence and vibrancy of the market in the surrounding streets and spaces;

- **Meanwhile and Temporary uses** Temporary use of vacant buildings and temporary interventions in public space can bring life and vitality to an area, change perspectives of an area, and influence the character and distinctiveness of an area.

Further work is being undertaken by the Owen Griffiths Team to explore Swansea's distinctiveness as part of the initial public consultations undertaken to inform the preparation of this Strategy. The interim outputs of their work are summarised briefly in the Baseline report and more detailed recommendations will be incorporated into the final version of this Framework.

### 3.3 Area Vision Themes



The Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework Review identifies four Area based Vision themes and will serve the objectives identified in the generic themes in section 3.2':

Each of the proposals set out in the Priority and Complementary Areas in the subsequent sections will be linked to one or more of these key themes. Ultimately these four Vision themes are interlinked and related. The principles behind these themes are set out below:

#### 1. CITY WORKING, LIVING AND LEARNING

One of the key strategic objectives for the City Centre is to increase employment opportunities, inject a wider mix of uses into the City Centre and add to the vibrancy of the City Centre. Improved worker expenditure within the City Centre will also improve retail and leisure performance. The creation of an employment hub within the City Centre is therefore critical.

The aim will not be to create a traditional Central Business District (CBD) There are national employers who have confirmed that they are currently seeking new office space in the City Centre, but the majority of demand for floorspace is assumed to come from small to medium sized enterprises.

Increasing the level of residential use by new build or conversion of existing buildings in the City Centre can provide greater



diversity to help support and enhance retail and leisure uses to create a more vibrant destination in its own right. The current resident population in the City Centre is low in comparison to other cities and there is a desire to grow City Centre residential numbers as part of the LDP's Spatial Strategy.

Alongside this, education would support this concept for the City Centre, particularly in the context of diversifying land uses (including housing) and through evidence that student and Higher Education Institutions significantly contribute to the UK economy at national, regional and local levels. The current expansion plans of Swansea University and UWTSD provide an opportunity for the City Centre to capture the benefits of such investment.

## 2. MIXED USE RETAIL / LEISURE HEART

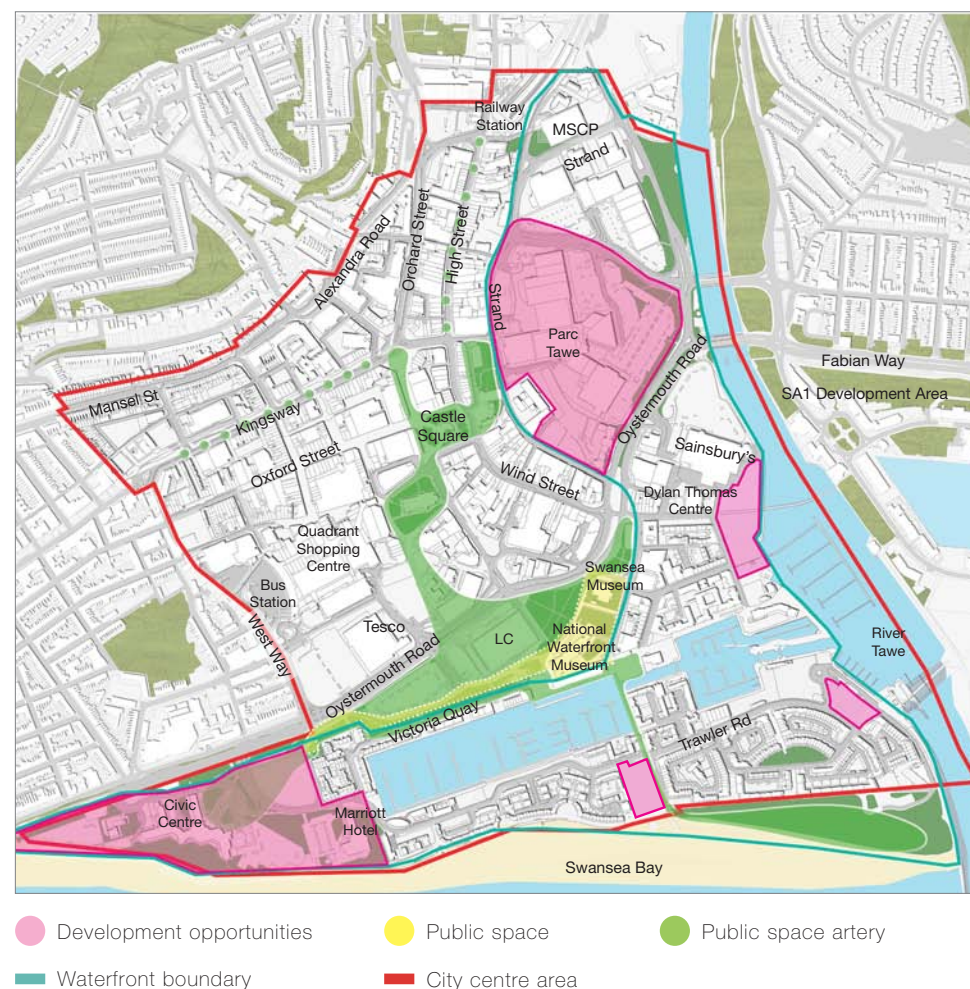
Delivering a mixed use retail/leisure heart is of strategic importance to the wider City Region as it will seek to address the underperformance of the City Centre as a retail and leisure destination.

Retail and leisure based uses can complement and diversify the economy and also provide residents with a greater variety of uses. Further enhancement of this would improve the 'the City Centre experience' and increasing dwell times, particularly around leisure, food and beverage and an evening economy.

## 3. CONNECTING THE CITY TO THE WATERFRONT

At present the waterfront, defined as both the sea front and the River Tawe is disconnected from the City Centre. Whilst improvements have been made since the Strategic Framework (such as the Boulevard) it remains a key objective of the Vision to improve north south connections to reconnect the City Centre to the Waterfront. Such a strategy is interlinked with the other Vision Themes but it will be important deliver connections using existing and proposed City Centre regeneration and new attractions as important 'building blocks' or 'stepping stones'.

## Waterfront Opportunities Plan

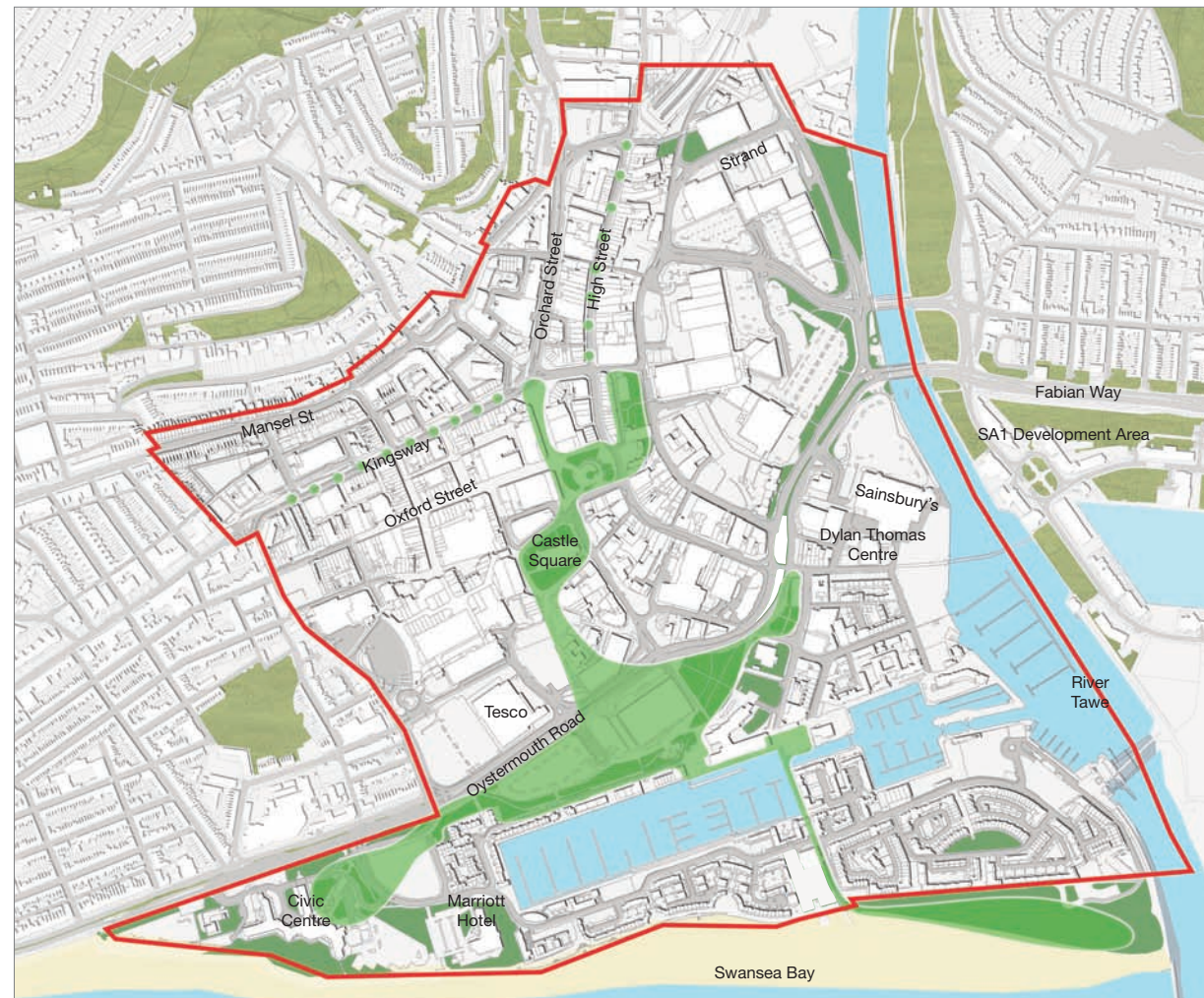


#### 4. GREEN ARTERY & PUBLIC REALM

A 'Green Artery' is proposed as a new vision concept for the City Centre. This proposal largely takes as its starting point the current street pattern of the City and established green areas and public spaces. Desire lines, nodal points, and connections, destinations (both existing and proposed) are overlayed on to the existing pattern of streets and together they establish a network of green access routes and connectivity throughout the City Centre.

The artery represents a series of public, pedestrian dominated routes, and interventions to increase greenspace and biodiversity in these areas can bring the City to life and provide a context for a series of new places and experiences. As well as improving connectivity, these places can provide new opportunities for interpretation, play, activity, culture, arts, community and events. Future maintenance responsibilities are a key consideration.

#### Green Artery







Bishop's Square, Spitalfields:  
- High quality dwell spaces within retail and business districts



High Line, New York City  
New green artery crossing to Oystermouth road



Avenida de Portugal, Madrid:  
- Soft and hard landscape treatment for busy roads boulevard



Burnley Living Roofs, Melbourne:  
- Roof top greening to upper level residential



## 3.4 Defining the Priority and Complementary Areas

The Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework (2007) identified a number of key development locations. Some of these are still valid as they are areas which still have the potential to make the greatest impact in bringing the new Vision proposals to life and delivering the objectives of the Framework Review.

Priority Areas are identified because their role is being redefined and there is an urgent need for intervention. The four priority areas each have particular potential in terms of their current land ownership, availability or condition and ability for development to be delivered in phases. The Priority Areas are intended to be delivered through a structured development programme with a focus on the most significant, but through a process which is robust and flexible enough to allow for some adaptation of timing, scale or uses within each site or area.

Alongside development proposals there is the opportunity for strategic improvements to highway accessibility to improve connectivity within the public realm environment and support wider environmental improvement. In short, these areas present clear opportunities for development, regeneration and/or improvement which will provide maximum impact across the City Centre. The 4 Priority Areas for this are:

- Kingsway and Orchard Street
- The High Street
- St. David's / Quadrant
- City Seafront

The 2007 Strategic Framework identified areas within the City Centre which were seen as having attributes and functions that complemented the role of the core area of the City Centre. The Review continues this approach and the following 5 Complementary Areas are identified:

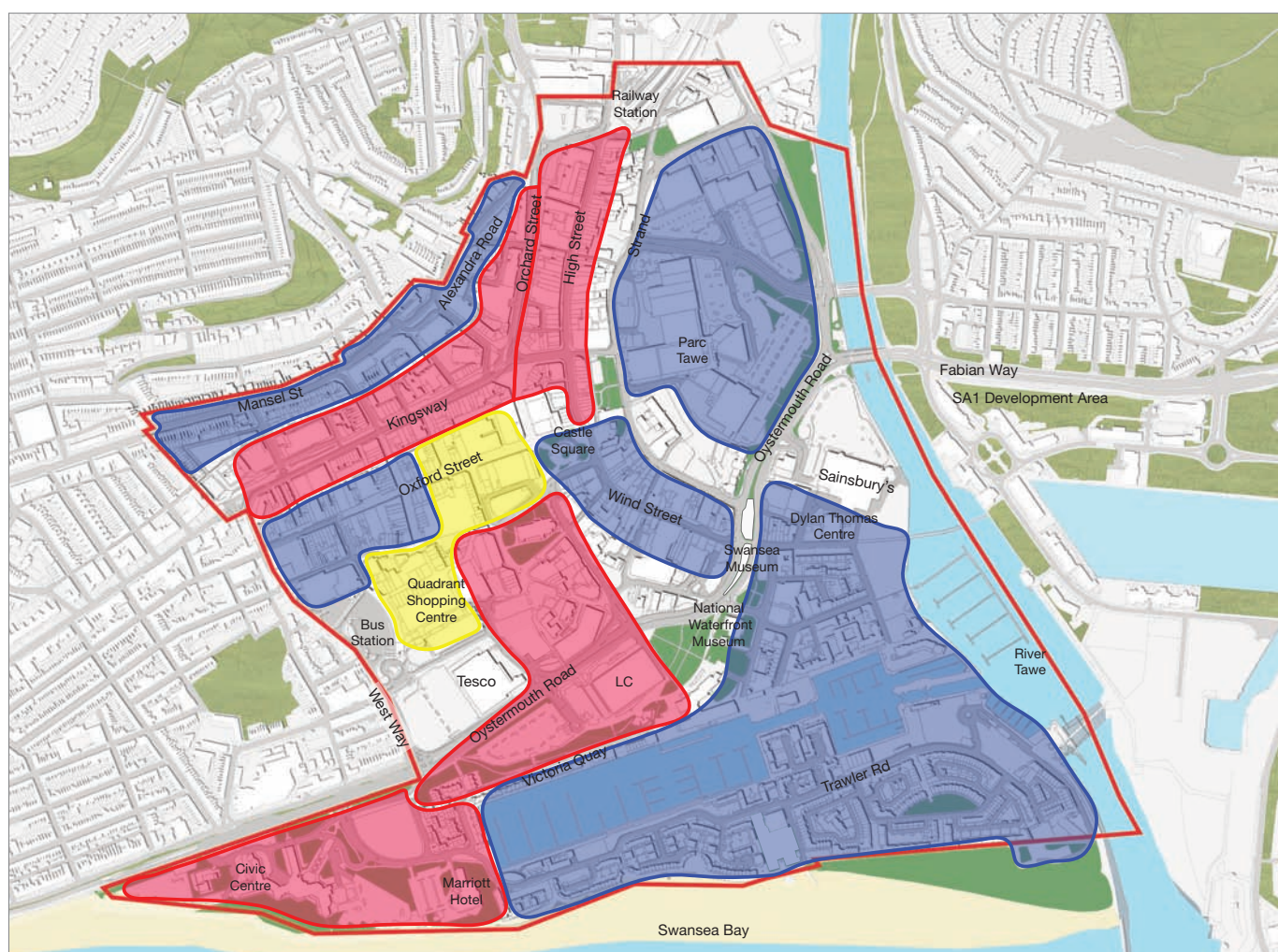
- Mansel Street and Alexandra Road
- Lower Oxford Street
- Wind Street
- Parc Tawe
- Maritime Quarter/ and Sailbridge

This Review also identifies five key adjacent areas that lie immediately outside the City Centre:

- SA1
- Tawe Corridor
- Upper High Street
- UWTSD Mount Pleasant site
- Sandfields

These areas are addressed in this Review because they are either undergoing change at present or have future potential and will have a significant influence on the City Centre.

## Consolidated Priority and Complementary Areas Plan



- Priority areas
- Complementary areas
- Retail core

## 4.0 PRIORITY AND COMPLEMENTARY AREAS

### The Kingsway/Orchard Street - Priority Area

#### THE AREA

The Kingsway was once a vibrant shopping street, but with Orchard Street they currently combine to form an increasingly busy thoroughfare where buses, cars, cyclists and pedestrians all vie for priority. This is an environment which has been largely redesigned to accommodate the FTR Metro, in bound and out bound bus routes, and double lanes of west bound vehicle movement. The result has been a poor environment for pedestrians and cyclists, and a confusing network for car drivers, with issues of increased noise and air-quality which could have longer term implications for the regeneration of the area.

Although bounded to the North by a Conservation area and listed buildings with civic and cultural uses which front Alexandra Road, Orchard Street is generally an unattractive street with poor quality public realm, and many inactive frontages in poor condition on its south eastern side. Despite this, it continues to provide public sector and health board office accommodation together with a multi-storey car park (MSCP) which although centrally located remains under utilised.

The urban fabric of both The Kingsway and Orchard Street is dated with many buildings and frontages neglected and vacant. Upper floors are generally used for offices and storage but much is currently vacant, though there have been a number of recent

proposals for the conversions of upper floors to residential use which will bring increased life and vitality. There are clues to The Kingsway's 1950's heritage and a former cafe culture in some of the remaining facades, and these are capable of playing a role in supporting variety in the architectural composition of the area and encouraging new roles and activity in the area.

The public realm of the Kingsway is largely designed around functional highway requirements, and the infilling and reconfiguration of the Kingsway Circle area has left a large sterile space, out of scale with the surrounding post war buildings. There is an opportunity for significant landscape intervention in this public space, such as the creation of a pocket park or new high quality greenspace to link Kingsway to Castle Square and create a new sense of place and reference.

The once thriving bar and club scene along The Kingsway, particularly at its western end has largely dissipated in favour of Wind Street. This decline and the vacancies it has created such as the former Oceana building has shown clearly that the role of the area needs to adapt and change, respond to the redevelopment opportunities being presented and define a new role and direction for Kingsway.

#### VISION THEME FOR THE AREA

**The Key Vision Theme for this Area is City Living, Working and Learning.**

The Vision for The Kingsway and Orchard Street is centred on its potential to provide the City Centre with a new defined City working, living and learning theme. In effect a vision for a new business district. The Kingsway could become a more attractive location in the heart of the City Centre for employment and upper floor residential development. New-mixed use development with active frontages at street level will be encouraged around a new streetscape and public realm made possible by the removal of two lanes of traffic from The Kingsway.

#### KEY REGENERATION PROPOSALS

- Rerouting of traffic as part of a comprehensive and sustainable approach to traffic management. Wider pavements and reduced traffic on a narrower carriageway in accordance with Manual for Streets, with at grade pedestrian crossings and a greater use of planting and greening will offer greater opportunity for activity and protection at pavement level and will visually re-connect the two sides of the street;



- There should be specific emphasis on the area around the former Oceana building for redevelopment to provide additional depth and more useable and useful floor-plates. The Oceana area together with other adjacent land through to Oxford Street will present a key opportunity to provide a catalyst, employment led development, which kick starts a regeneration process and helps to support residential, retail and leisure uses in the City Centre.
- The redevelopment of the City Waterfront area will require the relocation of the Civic Centre offices and Library, ideally to a location within the Kingsway Area, where as a major, employment led office occupier it will actively support footfall and economic activity and act as pump-prime for the new business district



## DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The key regeneration principles are:

- Add scale to existing buildings and encourage design solutions of at least four storeys which (vertically) integrate complementary uses and occupation;
- Promote the improvement in existing built frontages and use section 215 powers from the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 if necessary to ensure improvements
- Ensure all developments incorporate active frontages to bring vitality to the streetscene and help create a sense of place and reference;
- Encourage a diverse range of occupiers and uses including city living on upper floors;
- Substantially increase green space through planting, pocket parks within the streetscape and 'green architecture';
- Encourage new uses which generate and attract pedestrian movement';
- All new development must have active frontages at street level. Where there is scope for new development to abut Oxford Street, then the active frontage should be retail space, whilst on Kingsway the active frontages could be office lobbys and public facing elements such as staff facilities/ break out space.
- There is potential to expand or re-develop The Kingsway NCP Car Park with active frontage and appropriate parking provision concealed behind;
- Add scale to existing buildings and explore the potential for new tall buildings (subject to the review of the Tall Buildings Strategy).
- New development should create routes and enhanced legibility to reinforce north/south connections to Oxford Street and beyond;
- There is scope for some new developments to step forward to a new building line utilising the reduced carriageway to break up the linear nature of Kingsway;
- Reinforce and reference existing modernist character in approach to building design;
- Promote the use of high quality materials and workmanship and design which requires less maintenance without sacrificing quality;
- Reduce the appearance of scale of the space of The Kingsway Circle by developing a high quality public spaces such as a pocket park with height (trees) on the south side and introducing soft and hard landscaping in other areas to create more definitive 'pathways', linkages and dwell or performance areas.
- Increase the amount of greenery in the area through new planting and surfaces;
- Include public art to enhance the attractiveness of the area
- Introduce improvements to pavements including planting, feature lighting and other elements of public realm, to reflect the role and investment in adjacent City centre areas.

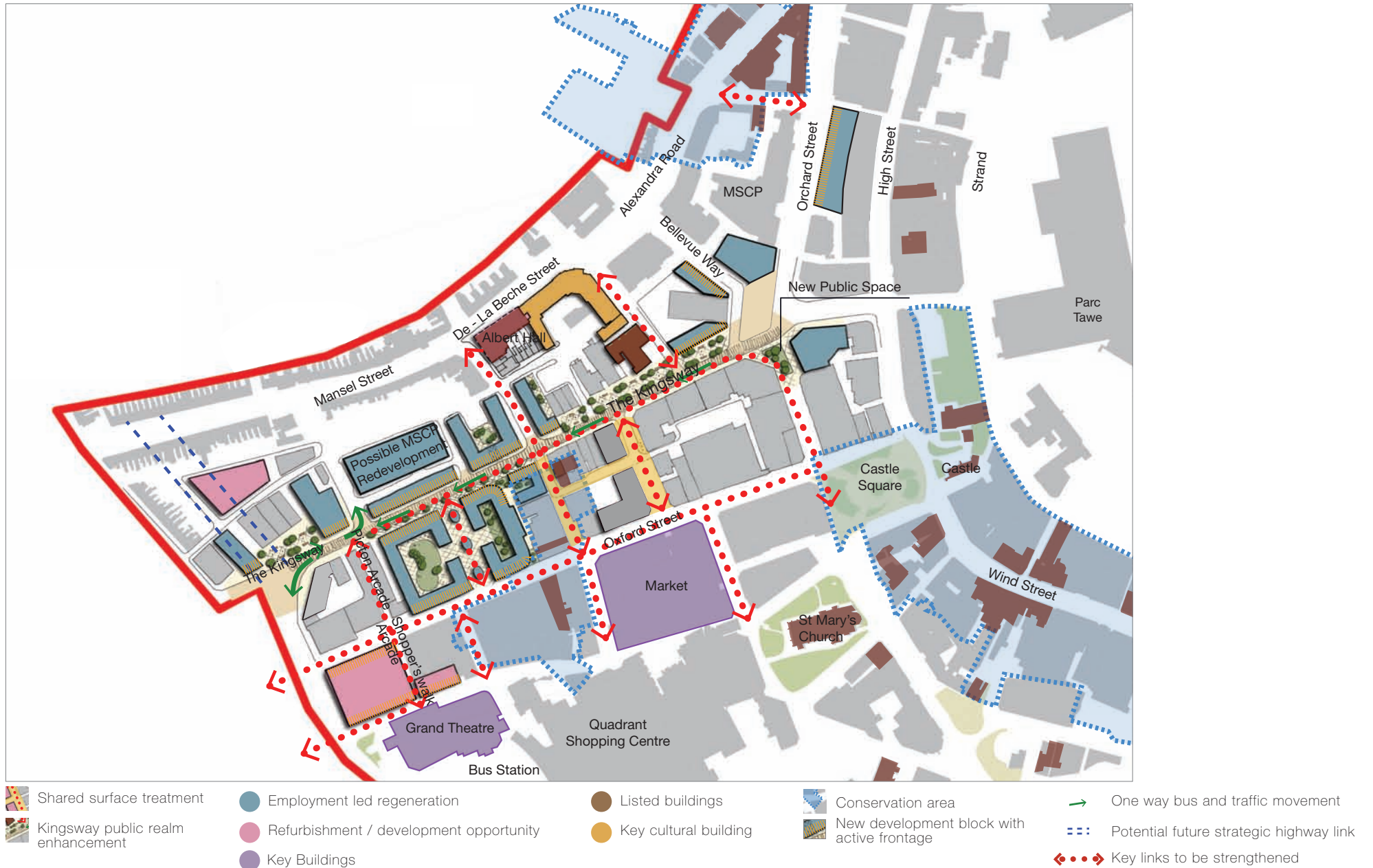
## ACCESSIBILITY AND MOVEMENT PRINCIPLES

The key access and movement principles are:

- Reviewing access and movement arrangements on the Kingsway, by considering the potential for reducing the number of traffic lanes on the Kingsway from four lanes to two lanes (one west bound lane for traffic and one lane for the Metro service). Also to consider if there is scope to re-route the north bound Metro route to free up carriageway space and improve safety by simplifying the range of traffic movements;
- A number of further related amendments to the highway network could be considered, including redirecting traffic from Orchard Street to Alexandra Road and reinstating two way movements along part of Mansel Street;
- Streets running perpendicular to The Kingsway such as Craddock Street and Union Street might benefit from traffic reductions and treatment as shared spaces to downgrading to help reduce stop-start traffic and so help improve air quality;
- The reduction of carriageway and traffic movements on Kingsway will provide an opportunity to widen pavements and introduce a shared space approach to accommodate, vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians together and with increased landscaping encourage more static uses such as pavement cafes;
- Establish new pedestrian priority at grade crossing points which complement uses and existing connectivity;
- Use design to encourage moderation of traffic speed and awareness of pedestrian priority areas;
- Ensure that servicing requirements do not detract from the public realm or active frontages.



The Kingsway / Orchard Street Indicative Concept Plan



## KINGSWAY

### Key messages from the Baseline Review

- The Strategic Framework envisaged the area as a mixed use commercial area, with environmental improvements. However, the street remains poor quality and blighted by traffic, noise and air quality issues;
- The remaining leisure uses on the street have closed down and the area has no strong identity. It is currently a tertiary commercial area with high vacancies, particularly at upper floor level;
- There is an identified need for significant employment space in Swansea in order to meet economic forecasts, and there is currently little provision in the City Centre. The Kingsway could therefore be redefined as the business hub for the City Centre;
- The former Oceana building represents a key development opportunity and one which could accommodate a key employer in Swansea, to act as the catalyst to redefine the area;
- Highway network analysis instigated as part of this review has highlighted that a substantial proportion of traffic is through traffic, and is entering The Kingsway not as a destination but as part of a route which leads on to areas beyond.

### Next steps

- Undertake a review of highway network arrangements and traffic infrastructure on The Kingsway.
- Prepare a public realm and landscape strategy to guide a package of improvements which improve environmental quality along The Kingsway and Orchard Street;
- Define a development brief for a new flexible use, urban office block to replace the Oceana building to accommodate through design integration a single catalyst user/employer, active ground floor accommodation and residential upper levels;
- Undertake traffic modelling to underpin traffic reductions on Kings Way and redistribution of space to public realm and development.



The Kingsway 1956



Kingsway Aereal Photo



Kingsway

Oceana Block

## The High Street - Priority Area

### THE AREA

High Street is the historic north-south link in the City Centre but became less important as a retail street following the development of the Quadrant, and the popularity of the areas around Oxford Street. It has become a very much a secondary area for shopping, and as a consequence has a high number of vacant units and inactive upper floors. Some of the older buildings in the street retain character and uniqueness but increasingly they are not maintained sufficiently and their physical decline is evident.

High Street remains however a key route from the Railway Station towards the City Centre and thereafter to the river, Parc Tawe and the seafront. The Railway Station has had recent investment and improvement and is a design and functional nodal point in the city providing unrivalled accessibility for businesses and workers arriving by train and visitors to the city.

Improvements in the built fabric of the area have been stimulated by the Urban Village scheme frontage to High Street, and new infill developments on derelict sites below along The Strand have begun to redefine the character the area based on mixed uses including the arts and creative industries, with live/ work opportunities for start-up and artisan businesses. Some ground floor space has also been let to new retail and commercial businesses, but more is required to encourage appropriate upper floor residential uses which to generate

a new community as well as ground floor commercial occupation. The major development opportunity on High Street is the Mariner Street surface car park which has potential to accommodate a significant new development in the form of tall building that will help generate life and activity on High Street.

The 2007 Strategic Framework only tackled half the High Street, whereas there is now recognition that the upper High Street to the north of the rail station has significant problems as well as potential. The various tower blocks accommodate a significant number of homes effectively within the City Centre, whilst the derelict Palace Theatre could be a catalyst project in the area.

High Street lies in multiple ownerships within which it is challenging to generate a unifying development strategy for the street and in many cases interest in maintaining buildings as a minimum. The Council's Building Enhancement Programme (BEP) has brought some changes to the area, but the 50% intervention rate is too low for independent retailers to tackle the scale of the problem. However further phases of Urban Village development are also proposed which may act as a significant catalyst for further investment and enhancement in the vacant sites and buildings in the area. Temporary uses such as pop up shops, regeneration events, cultural, arts activities have also contributed to enhanced perceptions of High

Street and a renewed interest in bringing empty shops into positive use.

To the north east of the area beyond Parc Tawe a new community is establishing along the banks of the River Tawe on former industrial land. This comprises of houses, apartments and student accommodation. Whilst these new developments benefit from an outlook over the River Tawe and a new riverside walkway the linkage to the City Centre is very poor and virtually non-existent. Therefore the evolution of the Parc Tawe area and the eastern side of the High Street offers the opportunity to create new pedestrian and cycle linkages. This relationship works both ways and provides the City Centre with a key link to what is in effect a linear park along the Tawe.

### VISION THEME FOR THE AREA

**The Key Vision Theme for this Area is City Living, Working and Learning.**

High Street is actively developing as a mixed use area of distinctive character which includes variety and counterpoint to The Kingsway and Orchard Street within the City-living, working and learning vision theme. It can provide small scale live/work/student occupier opportunities in a tighter urban context where people are able to live and work in a more traditional manner and this will build a resident community which supports a thriving economy. Its proximity to the Orchard Street/Alexandra Road triangle and the

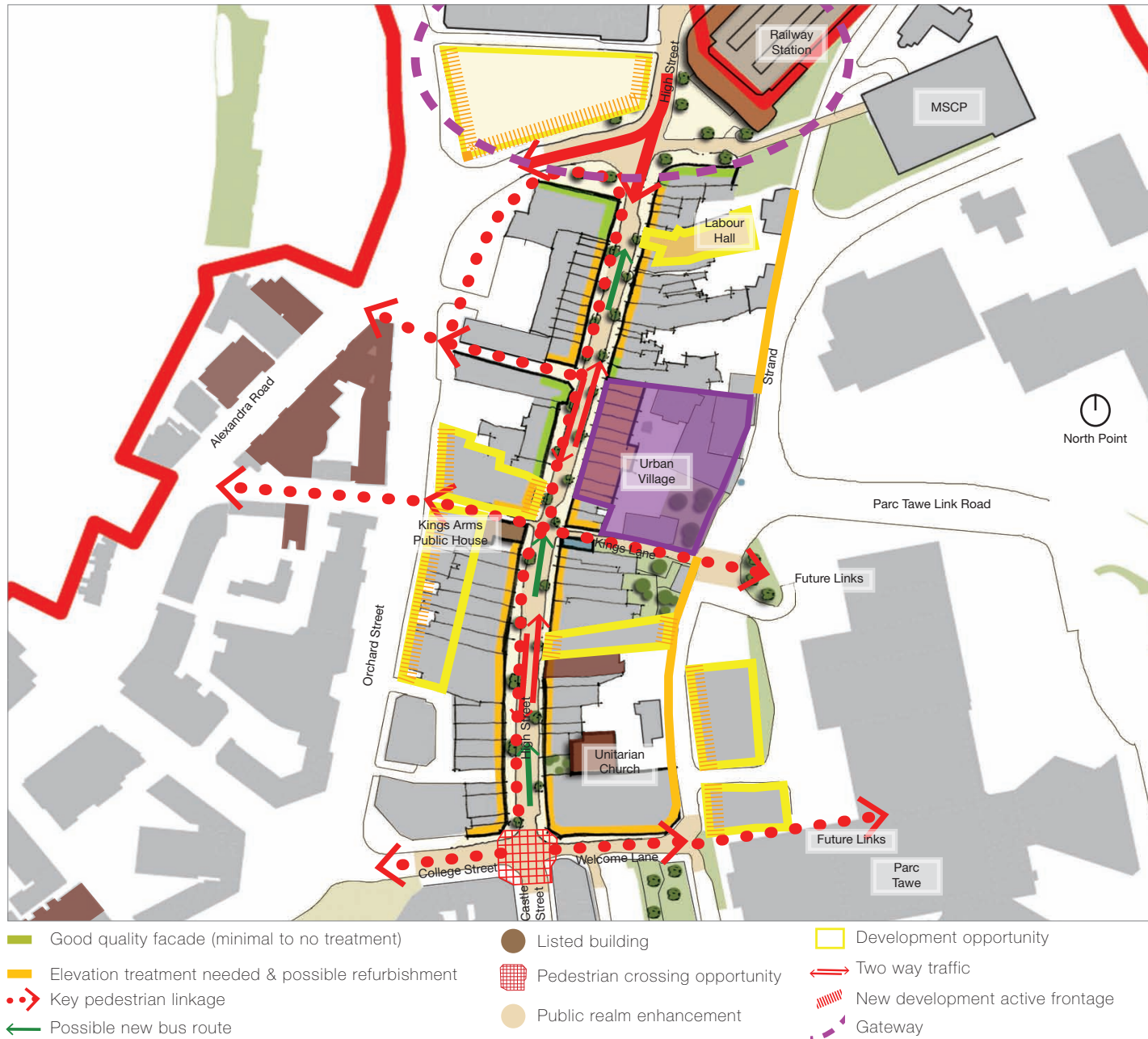


cultural, arts and educational facilities located there can be further strengthened through upgrading the public realm of existing east/west routes such as King's Lane. Linkages to the East to Parc Tawe will have a more fundamental role to play in the future should a redevelopment scheme progress in that area, and it is important therefore that these routes and retained and enhanced.

The Urban Village development has set a positive benchmark for quality of design and for unique local businesses but a critical mass is required to generate the revitalisation necessary to make it a busy, vibrant street. The Alexandra Road/ Mariner Street site directly opposite Swansea Railway Station presents a significant opportunity for commercial and or residential development which will generate activity and footfall, and should be developed to a quality that reflects its significant gateway location with active frontages to its prominent street frontages.



## The High Street Indicative Concept Plan



### KEY REGENERATION PROPOSALS FOR HIGH STREET

- Complete the creative cluster development of the Urban Village and associated workshop/ making spaces on Kings Lane.
- Redevelop Mariner Street car park to improve the sense of arrival on exiting Swansea Rail Station and introduce new uses with significant amounts of living accommodation that will add to the reinvigoration of High Street.
- Undertake development and environmental enhancements relating to Alexandra House and Oldway House
- Tackle poor quality shop fronts and building frontages using grants and section 215 powers from the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 if necessary to ensure improvements
- Support further temporary and 'pop-up' activities in buildings and the public realm
- Prioritise the Palace Theatre as a catalyst project on the upper part of the High Street.



## DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The key development principles are:

- Retain existing buildings and facades which help create a sense of place and reference;
- Ensure that new developments include reference to the medieval burgage plots that underlie the area by means of vertical frontages of joined buildings;
- Promote new frontage designs or enhancements that draw on the 'creative' nature of the area;
- Ensure that all developments along High Street include active frontages to bring vitality to the street;
- Continue to promote the establishment of a true mixed-use, urban character 'high street' with individual buildings of an appropriate scale reflecting the existing pattern of development;
- Encourage further housing development on upper floors and around rear courtyards as part of a mixed use schemes which



High Street;  
Coastal scheme



High Street - Volcano theatre

could include offices, live work specialist or service retail and education, culture and the arts;

- Ensure that all new buildings have an urban scale of at least three storeys. The Mariner Street site has potential for a tall building development as suggested in the Tall Building Strategy;
- Ensure development and refurbishment achieves a positive impression and points of activity to Orchard Street and the Strand;
- Substantially increase green space within the area through enhanced public realm, widened pavements, courtyards and 'green architecture';
- Encourage development which reinforces connectivity east and west from the High street;
- Explore the potential to change the letting strategy for the various tower blocks in Council control to help bring about wider changes in the area. Also explore the potential to utilise some of the underutilised space around the towers for new low-rise residential development;
- Promote the use of high quality materials and workmanship and design which requires less maintenance without sacrificing quality.

## ACCESSIBILITY AND MOVEMENT PRINCIPLES

The key access and movement principles are to:

- Accommodate a rerouted north-bound Metro/ bus route on High Street which has the benefit of passing directly adjacent to the core retail area and links with the other modes of transport at the railway station with provision for cyclists and pedestrians;
- Amend loading and parking restrictions on High Street to ensure short term parking as well as widening pavements with scope for increased planting/ greening whilst encourage more spill out uses such as pavement cafes;
- Establish new pedestrian priority crossing points which complement uses and existing connectivity. Introduce a new diagonal pedestrian crossing for the crossroads at High Street/Castle Street/Welcome Lane/ College St;
- Improve pedestrian linkages between High Street and Parc Tawe, in particular King's Lane and linkages to Orchard Street;
- Improve pedestrian and cycle linkages between High Street and the emerging community along the River Tawe Corridor. This will require a creative solution to overcome the levels between High Street and the Strand;
- Use design to encourage moderation of traffic speed.

## HIGH STREET

### Key messages from the Baseline Review

- An important route from the Rail Station to the City Centre, but the quality of the buildings is poor and there are a number of vacant units;
- The Urban Village development is a catalyst development and continues to have a positive impact on the street - there is the opportunity to build on this;
- There is a need to attract new occupiers to the vacant buildings;
- There are opportunities for existing landowners to consider alternative lease arrangements to encourage occupation of vacant units by emerging new businesses;
- There is potential to improve the east-west pedestrian links across High Street to Orchard Street and Parc Tawe.

### Next Steps

- Develop flexible design briefs and practical guide for the (temporary) use of vacant buildings or plots for pop-up shops, pocket parks or events;
- Prepare a public realm and landscape strategy in line in line with Green Artery vision theme and increase the element of green space in the High Street;
- Prepare site specific design guidance for the Alexandra Road/Mariner Street site

## Quadrant/ St.David's - Priority Area

### THE AREA

This Area comprises land to the north and south of Oystermouth Road, bounded to the north by the Quadrant Centre and St. Mary's Church and Tesco, to the east by Princess Way and the LC, and to the south by the Maritime Quarter

The St David's/Quadrant area remains a strategic redevelopment opportunity as part of the regeneration of Swansea City Centre. The Quadrant is currently a key element of Swansea's retail offer and also provides a primary pedestrian link with the bus station, Oxford Street and Swansea Market.

The majority of the former St David's Shopping centre site has been demolished following an initiative led by the Council and Welsh Government. It is being temporarily used for surface car parking although the St. David's Multi Storey Car Park (MSCP)

remains in use but is of poor quality, both in terms of parking provision but also visually given its prominent gateway location. St David's Church (grade II listed) remains in active worship. It includes a space immediately around the church and attached Prebstry. Interestingly the historic maps show that St David's church was built with a street frontage facing north east onto Rutland Street as part of a city block, but with the post war redevelopment has become an isolated and standalone building.

St. Mary's Church just to the north of St David's, is the other principal historic building in the areas and sits at the centre of what was a vibrant heart to the city but is now surrounded by a poor quality urban environment lacking in active frontages. There is little if any positive connectivity between the Quadrant Shopping Centre and the LC and waterfront and due to the

positioning of functional uses such as the car park and delivery areas this Priority Area largely turns its back on its southern aspect overlooking Oystermouth Road.

The Quadrant Shopping Centre forms the heart of the City's retail circuit, and is bookended with the bus station at the western end with connecting shopping streets running north through Union Street, the Market, Whitewalls and Princess Way to Oxford Street.

The St David's Shopping Centre site was previously marketed (as part of a wider area) in 2007, along with the Quadrant and Tesco's. Due the increasing impact of the economic climate any future option is based principally on these current uses remaining and the St David's site being the focus for development. Any development solution will need to allow for the necessary linkages into these adjoining uses and allow for any possible redevelopment in the future,

### VISION THEME FOR THE AREA

**The Key Vision Theme for this Area is Mixed Use Retail and Leisure Heart.**

This Area remains the only location in the core City Centre that can deliver a major retail and leisure-led mixed-use scheme of a quality, scale and critical mass appropriate for a regional city centre properly integrating, complementing and not competing with its City Centre.



LC2 Junction

As the centre of the City begins to re-connect with other Priority and Complementary Areas the vision for this area will be to function more than just a shopping and leisure destination but act as an important stepping stone" to other areas of the City Centre, particularly through to the waterfront and Oxford Street.

In addition a scheme will accommodate multiple use-classes within an overall design context which knits together what have become disparate but worthwhile elements of public space, streets and connections.

A new scheme will have high quality iconic design components as well as good 'ordinary' architecture which respect the setting of historic buildings creating a high quality streetscape with the flexibility to



Connectivity point across Oystermouth



LC2/St. David's bridge

accommodate one-off events, installations or displays as well as more permanent installations.

It will strengthen the retail and leisure circuit around existing offers such as the Quadrant, Oxford Street and the Market

Legible, intuitive and exciting connectivity through the City Centre from the railway station to the north down to the waterfront in the south gives the City Centre an unique dimension of direct connectivity to the waterfront. The proposal to create a new Oystermouth Road crossing is a key component of the concept of creating a 'Green Artery' connecting through the City.

**City living** should also be an integral element of the scheme in order to provide high levels of natural surveillance, vibrancy and interest, and create a distinctive sense of place both during the day and evening. This is particularly important in the vicinity of St David's and St Mary's Churches, where residential accommodation on upper floors can provide a more intimate sense of place around key spaces. Innovative forms of family and other housing on upper floors with roof gardens may be appropriate, as will associated community facilities that help to establish a diverse and stable community within the City Centre. Residential entrance halls should be carefully located such that they do not detract from active frontages at ground floor level.

## KEY REGENERATION PROPOSALS

- The site will be developed to create a major retail and leisure-led mixed-use place of a quality, scale and critical mass appropriate for a regional city centre properly integrating, complementing and not competing with its City Centre.
- The development will create new streets and spaces with active edges and an urban scale including a high quality built edge and active frontage along Oystermouth Road.
- New public realm will be innovative incorporating significant areas of greening.
- The development should be accessible throughout the day and night and support a 10 till 10 economy.
- North south pedestrian linkages will be strengthened with improved/ new crossing over Oystermouth Road to access the waterfront.
- St Mary's Church and St David's Church will be treated as focal points.
- Provision of high quality car parking for the redevelopment and wider city centre.

## DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The key design principles are:

- Adopting a place-making approach to develop a comprehensive vibrant viable retail and leisure mixed use place with a critical mass of development which offers at least one anchor store and associated high street retailing to create a step change in Swansea's retail offer.
- Create urban blocks with active frontages and an urban grain and scale which provides enclosure and setting for the two churches in particular, and continuity of streets and frontage elsewhere
- A new space should be created around or adjacent to St David's Church that respects the scale and setting of this listed building.



Connectivity to Marina



- Buildings should be high quality and contemporary, define vibrant new streets and spaces within the area, be innovative in design and an attractive 'shop window' for the City Centre along Oystermouth Road
- There should be a sense of cohesion and urban scale in the buildings. Elevations should generally be expressed as a series of individual joined buildings with a human scale to create visually rich and interesting townscape. Anchor store frontages augmented by the presence of smaller unit frontages and alternative uses above ground floor;
- Buildings should create a comfortable human scale to pedestrian streets and spaces. Buildings heights of up to six storeys will be generally appropriate along Oystermouth Road to provide a comfortable sense of enclosure relative to Boulevard width;
- Ground floor areas should have a positive relationship with the public realm. New buildings which address the street with active frontage at the ground floor and above, adopting a layout and scale that provide a good sense of continuity, enclosure and overlooking of the street, achieving high quality urban form;
- Dead frontages with entrances and/ or doors will not be allowed along the main streets and spaces. The visual impact of servicing requirements must be minimised.
- Upper floors should offer interest and natural surveillance through the accommodation of active uses such as residential on upper floors;
- Substantially increase green space through innovative design, pocket parks within the streetscape and 'green architecture' with appropriate maintenance resources allocated;
- The development must ensure new streets are permeability offering a choice of pedestrian routes, linkages to the existing streets and retail circuit. This should include an new reinforce north-south street that links across Oystermouth Road to the Marina (former South Dock) and former elevated rail lines as part of the Green Artery vision theme;
- Promote the use of high quality and sustainable materials and workmanship and design which requires less maintenance without sacrificing quality;
- A landmark building and features at key points and in public spaces to provide legibility and hierarchy. These could also provide a marker to the City Centre and the route to the waterfront on the Oystermouth Road frontage;
- The St. David's MSCP should be demolished to accommodate positive development that activates the space around St David's Church and which presents a positive active elevation to



St. David's Site

- Oystermouth Road. The parking provision should either be re-provided within the new St Davids development area or relocated to a new multi-storey car park on the LC car park site.
- Development on The St Davids/Quadrant and LC car park site should contribute to high quality built edge and activity along Oystermouth Road and other key public elevations
- Strengthen the retail circuit and connections to Swansea Market through enhancing existing entrances. This could include straightening the eastern Quadrant entrance and creation of a new space that brings Swansea Market out into St Mary's Square.
- Ensure new development which supports connectivity and generates legible linkages with the existing retail area and with the seafront.
- Create flexible design solutions which successfully integrate complementary uses and occupation including residential and community uses, and enable the site and buildings to be adapted to changing requirements of occupiers.
- Include residential component to accommodate all market sectors, ages and levels of mobility to create a city centre residential community possibly focussed around rooftop gardens;

- Work with existing landowners to ensure that all buildings around St Mary's Square have active frontage and a finer grain of uses with multiple entrances at street level.
- Retain and enhance those facades and buildings which help create a sense of place and reference

- Seek to rediscover the urban grain of the area, through for example retaining the historic alignment of Rutland Street.

### ACCESSIBILITY AND MOVEMENT

- Creating attractive streets and spaces for pedestrians will be paramount, to make

the area more accessible legible and enjoyable. Redevelopment must allow for improved integration of the City, extending the retail circuit and including a significant new link across Oystermouth Road to the waterfront;

- All new and improved pedestrian routes should be fully accessible and open

24hours. These should link to Oxford Street, Castle Square, Princessway and Oystermouth Road the Market, the Quadrant and existing Tesco store.

- The redevelopment of the St David's site will provide the opportunity to reduce and consolidate service arrangements improving the quality of the built environment and safety for pedestrians. Albert Row could potentially be retained for servicing only and the aim should be to minimise the visual impact of service yards and maximise space for ground floor active frontages.



Landmark waterfront building

### Connecting to the Waterfront

Proposals to enhance pedestrian and cycle movements between the City Centre and the waterfront could be achieved by Option 1 and/or Option 2 below:

#### Oystermouth Road Crossing Option 1:

This could be a high quality at-grade crossing, similar to the new, at-grade wide and 'straight across 'two stage' Toucan crossings constructed as part the Boulevard scheme at the bottom of Princess Way and Wind St. Albert Row would need to be shut to traffic in order to balance the needs for all users of Oystermouth Road and traffic existing the Quadrant Multi-storey car park would need to be re-routed to West Way.

#### Oystermouth Road Crossing Option 2:

This could be a high quality legible and accessible landmark bridge/ elevated pedestrian street over Oystermouth Road to replace the existing bridge, which would provide views to the waterfront, and surrounding area, and signal the principal pedestrian route to the waterfront from the city centre core. This option would need a considerable space to either side for accessible ramps and steps. Albert Row would still need to be shut to traffic in order to balance the needs for all users of Oystermouth Road and traffic existing the Quadrant Multi-storey car park would need to be re-routed to West Way.

The design of the Oystermouth Road crossing(s) at this location must be considered in the context of the form and uses proposed for the sites either side of Oystermouth Road at this location. The configuration of any new link across Oystermouth Road – whether at-grade or at high level, is not being pre-judged at this stage but should be determined as part of a considered approach to redevelopment of the sites outlined above.

There are two further options for connecting through to the waterfront and these are set out below:

#### Highline walkway running West –East

This could be formed along the listed GWR former railway revetment walls linking the City Centre to Paxton Street, Civic Centre and the waterfront. This elevated walkway has potential to offer a unique experience with glimpses to the water, however this approach requires continuity of the elevated route into the Civic Centre redevelopment area in order to ensure an attractive and useable route.

#### Opening up a direct route to the Marina:

The pedestrian tunnel through the railway revetment could potentially be widened to make a more attractive and legible route to the marina dockside, subject to consultation with Cadw as this forms part of the Listed

Structure. This would improve connections to the Marina including the heritage boats as well as increasing footfall to the commercial arcades along the north side. Ultimately there might be future potential to form a crossing over to the south side of the Dock. This could take the form of a pontoon or floating bridge but would need a lifting/ opening mechanism to allow boats to pass. Such a structure may have an impact on the operational nature of the Marina, potentially reducing mooring spaces and related income.

Whilst the west elevation of the LC is architecturally interesting with views to the leisure pool with water flumes inside, this area is a car park. Therefore a new public realm with activities is needed to create a 'stepping stone' on the route to the waterfront. This would need to be integrated with the potential multi-storey strategic car park on the adjacent LC car park.

### ST DAVIDS QUADRANT

#### Key messages from the Baseline Review

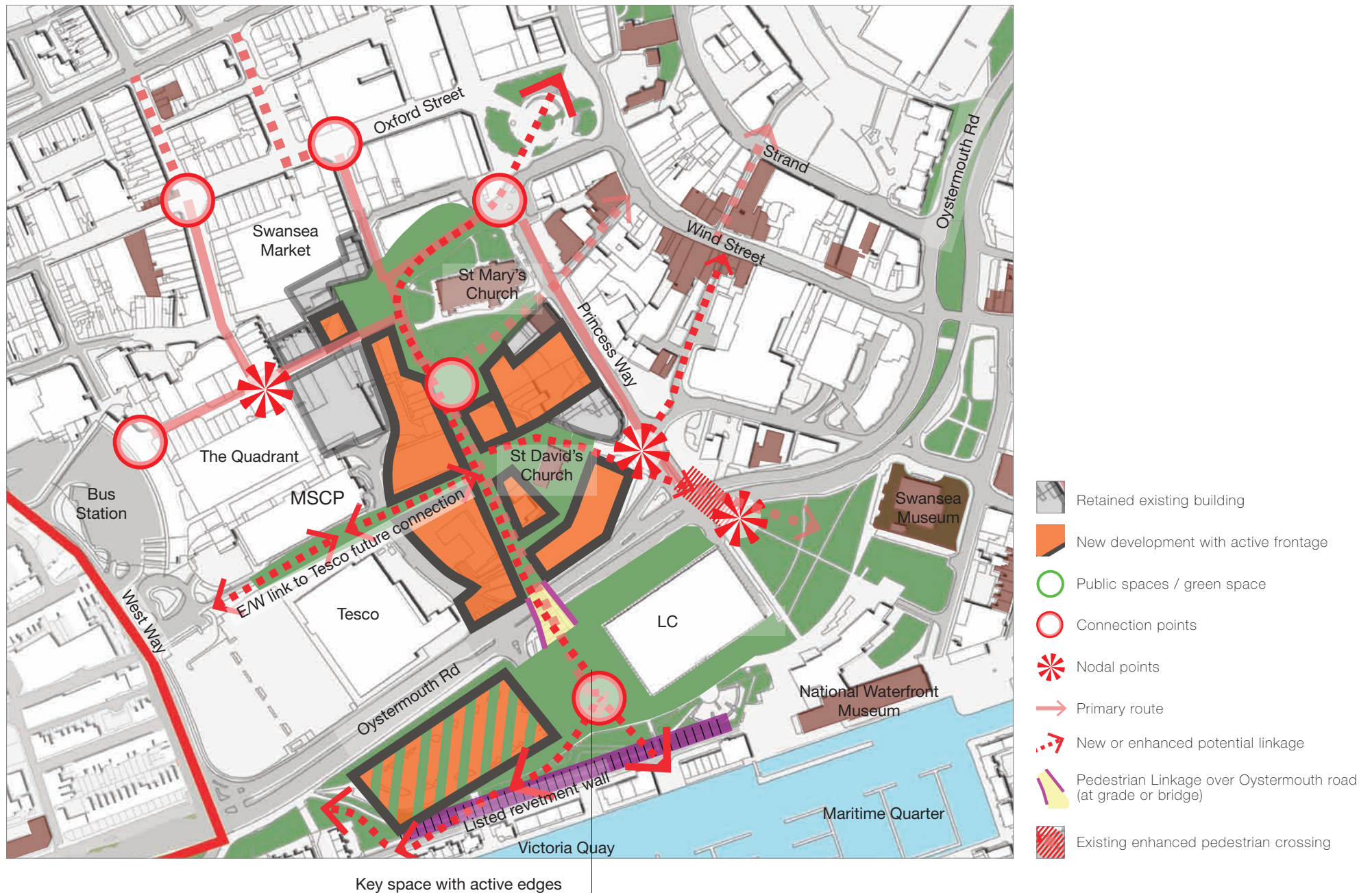
- Swansea's retail offer requires more breadth and depth given the size of its catchment and role as a City and Capital of the City Region.
- There is a significant trading gap and an identified need of an additional 200,000 sq ft – 250,000 sq ft of good quality retail floorspace.
- There is an opportunity for an improved leisure offer, with more family focused catering/ activities.
- The Quadrant is an inward facing shopping centre typical of its time so would benefit from refurbishment and animation to its exterior facades.
- The Quadrant and St David's have the potential to improve their relationship with the Market, a key anchor and visitor attraction within the City Centre.

#### Next Steps

- Prepare a development brief to deliver a complementary mix of uses to generate vibrancy and create distinctiveness on the St Davids site, along with a new high quality linkage integrating new uses and public realm in the area South of Oystermouth Road.
- Prepare a public realm and landscape strategy in line in line with Green Artery vision theme and increase the element of green space. throughout the City Centre;



## Quadrant and St David's Indicative Concept Plan



## City Waterfront - Civic Centre/ Paxton Street - Priority Area

### THE AREA

The City Waterfront area is located South of the City centre adjacent to Swansea Bay, and comprises of the Civic Centre building and its two surface car parks, the Marriott Hotel, and Paxton Street car park.

The role of the Council's Civic Centre offices has changed by it being opened up to the public and incorporating a Contact Centre, a relocated public library and visitor facilities which include a café and public conveniences. The Waterfront City programme has also delivered a number of improvements to improve pedestrian connectivity to this part of the City's seafront promenade and improved public transport links have been developed between the seafront and City Centre and Swansea Bay.

The Civic centre site is slightly elevated at the seafront promenade, with a steep stepped access to an extensive sandy beach and benefits from excellent views across the Bay. Being one of the few foreshore open spaces on Swansea Bay with direct beach access, the site is also a focus for significant City events including the Welsh Airshow.

However the City seafront area remains fairly isolated from the retail core, the area occupied by the Civic centre and the surface car parks is underutilised and the Civic Centre office building itself has long term maintenance and cost issues which

need to be considered. The whole site therefore has the potential to make a more significant contribution to the regeneration of the City Centre and as a destination on Swansea Bay. This is the only remaining site that can link the City Centre to the sea and is the only large seafront development site in the City and probably represents an unique development opportunity in the region.

### VISION THEME FOR THE AREA

**The Key Vision Theme for this Area is Connecting the City to the Waterfront.**

The Vision for the area is to redevelop the existing site, car parks and buildings at the City Seafront for a comprehensive iconic mixed use waterfront development that has sufficient critical mass to become a destination in its own right that complements the other priority areas. The development should put Swansea firmly on the map as a City of distinction and a memorable as a unique destination. The City's Seafront should be embraced as the area where City life meets the sea and where the hustle and bustle of urban living reacts with the sun, surf and sand of Swansea Bay.

As one of the last remaining opportunities to connect the City Centre to the sea it has the potential to create a quality unique profile for Swansea as a Waterfront City. A range

of uses are possible on the site including, residential, hotels, culture, leisure public attractions, aquatic sciences, visitor facilities and event spaces within a high quality innovative public realm that can generate high levels of activity that spill out on the promenade and make positive use of the beach.

Development of this area should be delivered on a phased basis, given the scale of the opportunity, and car parks could come forward in advance of the remainder of the site. The proposals should be an exemplary waterfront, mixed use scheme incorporating cultural, residential, leisure and hotel uses with high quality public spaces maximising the views of the bay.

### KEY REGENERATION PROPOSALS

- Create a high quality landmark development in a unique location, particularly serving to improve the visitor potential and competitive business profile of Swansea;
- Develop a high quality mixed use scheme providing a commercial and leisure focus, with residential and community uses. It is not intended for this to be merely a standard residential development in the city but a "destination" in its own right.



- High quality public realm linking the City Centre through to the site and along the seafront.
- The area must provide appropriate public facilities and support increased use of the beach whether for events or sports
- The relocation of the Civic Centre to another City Centre site is a pre requisite for a major new seafront scheme.

## DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The key design are:

- The development site has the opportunity for an iconic low rise building located within a public space, one which accommodates a high profile public use that does not compete with the City Centre such as the Hydro Hub aquarium.
- Create a waterfront public space and wider high quality promenade - for exhibitions, public art, pop-up uses, local events and access for all to the beach. The promenade has the potential to be an exceptional public space and green amenity space should be included as part of high quality public realm design;
- There is the opportunity to accommodate a carefully designed and positioned tall building or buildings such as a hotel or residential tower marking the foreshore and taking advantage of the views both to the sea and inland;
- Development generally should be three to four storeys high to create vibrancy and an urban character. However the scale of adjacent residential areas along Bathurst Street and the Sandfields area are two storey domestic scale and needs to be taken into account in any development proposals;
- Architectural design should reflect the seafront location in an innovative manner without resorting to pastiche and exploit the opportunity of being the only part of the city next to the sea, and the uniqueness of that quality for a city;
- Buildings should be joined to provide shelter from the prevailing winds and to create a sense of identity, place and vibrancy;
- Ground floors of the new development should create a positive relationship with the public realm and contain active commercial frontages where possible and elsewhere elevations which influence a well designed streetscape;
- Upper floors throughout the area should accommodate city living;
- An active frontage of urban scale should be achieved facing Oystermouth Road to enhance this key movement route and respond to the listed prison opposite.
- The new Green Artery and its integration with the high level railway arches as part of the new route to the Waterfront can, as well as improve connectivity to the existing residential communities, generate an exciting and entirely different experience, at an elevated level revealing new views to both the sea and back over the City Centre;
- The site is very exposed to south westerly winds and the public realm network should be subject to micro climatic testing which should inform the design development process. All spaces should be comfortably proportioned and capable of being used throughout the year. The exposed location and issues of sand movement and deposition on the site and adjacent promenade should also be addressed. The wind effects resulting from the Meridan Quay Tower must also be understood and addressed.
- Public art and way-finding should be used to identify the route to the waterfront and the location of the seafront possibly through referencing water, or water themes in the design of the public realm, buildings or maritime planting;
- The seafront location should be used to inspire a destination unique to Swansea which generates both formal and informal activity on the seafront, movement to and from the City Centre;
- Increase the amenities/usability of the seafront without detracting from its natural beauty. The area must provide appropriate public facilities such as toilets, first aid, showers, information points, equipment and opportunities for children's play. These uses would replace some of the facilities currently accommodated in the Civic centre but are in any event required to redefine the City beach;
- Potential for phased development of the site over time but with an initial critical mass and destination quality to support new linkage across Oystermouth Road;

## ACCESSIBILITY AND MOVEMENT PRINCIPLES

The key access and movement are:

- City Waterfront public space- will benefit from spectacular views of the of the Bay, it will be a vibrant destination encompassing the promenade and revetment, including event space, outdoor dining, children's play and access for all to the city beach;
- An exciting and legible route is needed to link the city core to the Waterfront. There are three options for this: (1) along the marina (former South Dock), but this becomes problematic at the western end; (2) alongside Oystermouth Road with widened footways, tree planting and active frontages as a continuation westward of the Boulevard concept; (3) as a 'high line' elevated walkway utilising the former rail lines but this will require continuity of approach to potentially cross Bathurst Street at high level.



- To develop a new waterfront highway route with layered uses to provide activity to the waterfront in all weathers. This would be for local vehicle access only and could take the form of a shared space so that it doesn't become a barrier;
- The proposed development should include a new MSCP to serve the new development, Maritime Quarter and Waterfront. Additional small scale surface car parks may be necessary to support informal use of the foreshore.;
- Closing the junction between Oystermouth Road/Paxton Street will benefit the existing network, reducing numbers of traffic controlled junctions on Oystermouth Road. Conversely, reinstating the Paxton Street and Dunvant Place junction will make better use of land in the area and improved junction arrangements for the new development site and wider Maritime Quarter;
- The Metro and buses should be re-routed onto Oystermouth Road to free up land for development.
- Provide direct links and access for all from the seafront promenade through the development area and enhance the promenade frontage.

## PAXTON STREET / CIVIC CENTRE

### Key messages from the Baseline Review

- The site is identified in the Strategic Framework as a prime waterfront development site, with a focus on business activity. The Strategic Framework Review considers the most appropriate location for business uses in the heart of the city centre and site offers the opportunity for a landmark waterfront development, with a focus on uses that capitalise on the seafront location, i.e. residential, culture, leisure, hotel, with an area of good quality public space, to draw people from the city centre.
- There is the opportunity to deliver a wider development than envisaged in the Strategic Framework, incorporating the Civic Centre and the Marriott Hotel.
- Opening up the link between the City and the bay to the west would strengthen the appeal to tourists.
- The site sits at the western gateway to the City Centre, on the approach from The Mumbles.

### Next steps

- Prepare a Development Brief for the City Waterfront sites.
- Work on other potential initiatives for the site such as:
  - Hydro Hub - the Council and Swansea University are working in partnership to deliver a hydro hub aquatic centre within Swansea as an educational, research and major waterfront attraction.
  - District Heating Proposals – the Council has commissioned feasibility work to deliver a low-carbon heat network, encompassing a long-term vision for a large-scale heat network connected around Swansea Bay.

## Swansea Beach



Development opportunity site



Simcoe Wavedeck, Toronto, Canada:  
- Iconic and distinct Public realm

# City Waterfront Indicative Concept Plan



## Mansel Street/ Alexandra Road – Complementary Area

### THE AREA

The Alexandra Road area runs between its junction with New Orchard Street west into Mansel Street. It comprises of a cluster of Edwardian and Victorian buildings set within a Conservation Area and includes some listed historic buildings such as the Albert Hall, Old Police Station and Glynn Vivian Art Gallery. The streetscape in Alexandra Road is of relatively good quality with established trees and together with Grove Road it accommodates a number of important cultural and educational buildings.

Mansel Street runs broadly east-west from Alexandra Road/Grove Place/De La Beche Street towards Walter Road and the Uplands residential area. The buildings are predominantly two storey former residential properties converted to commercial (office) floor space or service retail at ground floor. Many of the businesses are based on legal services and are therefore well located given the Courts and Police Headquarters nearby. In general the Mansel Street and Alexandra Road area underperforms as a commercial business district and the buildings are of undistinguished and marginal architectural quality.

A section of Mansel Street and Alexandra Road currently provides a one way route for East bound traffic from the City Centre and west Swansea, although both streets previously accommodated a two way strategic highway route.

The Albert Hall is situated between the two areas identified above and has potential to perform a catalyst role in the wider Kingsway area. The unsuccessful City of Culture bid in 2014 suggested that the Albert Hall could have a viable new use as an arts centre which would have significant benefits for the wider area.

### VISION THEME FOR THE AREA

**The Key Vision Theme for this area is the City Living, Working and Learning.**

The vision for Alexandra Road and Mansel Street is for it to play a role as part of the City Working Living and Learning theme. In this context, the Vision for Mansel Street will be delivered by encouraging business relocations to more central, modern well serviced locations as opportunities arise in the City's Kingsway Business District in support of Kingsway's new role. Conversely Mansel Street would revert ultimately to a predominantly residential street subject to satisfactory planning proposals for changes of use.

For Alexandra Road the objective is to reinforce the working and learning part of the vision theme. The area remains an important focus for civic, cultural and educational life in the City centre and will continue to develop in business and residential terms. It has the potential to extend this role complementing activities elsewhere in the City centre. It will

be an area of special character because of its historical and architectural merit, and because of its increasingly important role in the cultural quality of the City.

### KEY REGENERATION PROPOSALS

- Alexandra Road should be subject to a package of high quality environmental improvements specifically designed to complement the architectural quality and quieter civic life of the area.
- Existing business will be encouraged to relocate from predominantly two storey former residential properties on Mansel Street to new modern space in the City Centre.
- Prioritise the reuse of the Albert Hall as an arts centre and catalyst project.

### DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The key design objectives are:

- Conserve, enhance and protect and improve the character of the Alexandra Road area by improving buildings and supporting uses which contribute to culture and education;
- Whilst the Albert Hall is a grade II listed building it has potential for an innovative conversion to an arts or cultural use;

- Promote improvements to existing building frontages and where possible introduce active frontages into the street scene;
- Improve public spaces and streets to enhance the attractiveness of the area, increase greening and better integrate with adjacent areas such as Kingsway, Orchard Street and High Street;
- Integrate public art to enhance the attractiveness of the Alexandra Road area to reference its role and heritage within the City;
- Promote the relocation of business uses from Mansel Street as relocation opportunities arise to the new Kingsway business district. Enable the conversion of vacant commercial space to residential use, subject to relevant planning and highway considerations;
- Encourage good quality local service/ convenience retail with active frontages which meet the needs of the residents in the area;
- Ensure that the reuse of the Mount Pleasant University site complements the City Centre whilst retaining listed buildings and other buildings of character.



## ACCESSIBILITY AND MOVEMENT PRINCIPLES

The key access and movement principles are:

- Review traffic arrangements for Alexandra Road and Mansel Street. Subject to further junction modelling, west-bound traffic currently using The Kingsway could be re-routed at the Orchard St Alexandra Road, reverting De La Beche and Mansel Street back to a two way flow.
- Adjacent linking tertiary streets, in particular Craddock Street which crosses from Mansel Street to the Kingsway through into Union Street, Park Street and Portland Street may benefit from being redesigned as a shared surface streets where all road users co-exist in an area with low traffic speeds and an emphasis on pedestrian/cyclist movement. This would provide a better quality public realm and a more pedestrian friendly environment linking Mansel Street directly to the retail core, and support the potential re use of Albert Hall as an arts centre
- Consider the potential for a new link road between Westway and Mansel Street which would form part of a City Centre ring road to relieve the City centre of unnecessary through traffic. This would need to be subject to detailed traffic modelling.
- Better pedestrian crossing areas linking the Alexandra Road cultural circuit into adjacent areas, such as Orchard Street and High Street.



Mansel Street

## | Glyn Vivian Art Gallery





## MANSEL STREET AND ALEXANDRA ROAD

### Key messages from the Baseline Review

- Alexandra Road accommodates a number of important cultural and educational buildings, which are of good quality, and fulfils a key role in the City Centre.
- Mansel Street's residential buildings have been converted to business uses, but many of the buildings are of poor quality and do not allow for businesses to expand.
- The Strategic Framework envisaged Alexandra Road as a key civic, cultural and educational area, which is still the case and these uses should be supported.
- Mansel Street is not performing well as a commercial district and redevelopment/refurbishment/reinstatement of original uses should be considered.

### Next steps

- Review highway network arrangements on Alexandra Road and Mansel Street.



University Trinity Saint David's



Old Police Station



## Lower Oxford Street - Complementary Area

### THE AREA

The Lower Oxford Street area extends from the junction of Union Street with Oxford Street, includes Plymouth Street, Singleton Street and continues to West Way/Dillwyn Street. The area incorporates the Grand Theatre and the Picton Arcade and Shoppers Walk which provide a distinct character to the area as well as providing permeability from The Kingsway to Oxford Street. The area is close to Swansea Market, the busiest area of Oxford Street, the Quadrant Shopping Centre and Swansea Bay Bus Station. Part of the area also falls within the Oxford Street / Nelson Street / Union Street Conservation Area which is gradually being degraded through minor alterations and advertisements

The eastern end of Oxford Street has a mix of national retailers, but towards the western end of Oxford Street and in the arcades, there are predominantly independent retailers in smaller shop units. The arcades provide a popular undercover pedestrian linkage between Singleton Street Oxford Street and the Kingsway, with cafe seating and few vacant units, but the route through is closed during non-trading hours. Both arcades also have little sense of entrance on to the adjacent frontage and the current crossing points on the Kingsway do not align with the route through the arcades.

Although partially outside the area, Swansea Market is a key destination within the City Centre. However the entrances are neither legible or particularly welcoming. Therefore Swansea Market needs a greater presence in the streetscene both in terms of entrances and activity.

One of the greatest opportunities for change in this area is generated by the potential development of the former Oxford Street School site which is currently used as a surface car park. The site is within the ownership of the Council so there is significant scope to bring forward development to aid the regeneration of the area and generate momentum for wider improvement. This site along with the new development and new role for the Kingsway directly to the North, has the potential to generate an increased level of footfall that is required in this area. The right mix of uses will help to draw people into the area creating activity that will support existing shops.

### VISION THEME FOR THE AREA

#### The Key Vision Theme for this Area is Mixed Use Retail Leisure Heart

Lower Oxford Street has the potential to more fully contribute the mixed use heart of the City Centre providing unique

environment based around the Grand Theatre and its range of cultural activities and the two Arcades in which independent local specialist retailers currently thrive.

The lower Oxford Street area has an edgy, independent feel which is given impetus by its retailers and those of the Arcades. They exude an individual character and in spite of an unremarkable architectural environment and largely rudimentary public realm, the area already contains an emerging distinctive quality. The challenge is to re integrate the area back into the City Centre whilst maintaining a distinct identity individuality, creativity and independence of the area.

### KEY REGENERATION PROPOSALS

- Redevelop the Oxford Street surface car park, with active uses at ground floor and either residential/employment/creative/ cultural uses at upper level. This is a potential location for the relocation of the public library as a stand-alone public building. Alternatively if the quantity of accessible car parking is to be maintained, this could be provided at upper level behind a green wall;
- Improve the setting for the Grand Theatre and provide an active frontage of uses, to complement the theatre;
- Refurbish Shoppers Walk and Picton Arcade to retain and attract specialised independent retailers, pop-up spaces and retailers that manufacture their products on the premises, e.g. jewellery, ceramics.
- Upgrade the entrances to Swansea Market to make them more legible and welcoming whilst bringing some of the activity and vibrancy of the market out into the street.
- The proposed redevelopment incorporating the Oceana block on The Kingsway could also incorporate the existing buildings along the north side of Oxford Street. If this is the case, then active retail frontages onto Oxford Street must be provided with further active uses above;
- Accommodate a mix of uses that will extend activity throughout the day and into the evening complemented by a range of special events and activities.

## DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The key design principles are:

- A new public square should be created on Singleton Street reinforcing the Grand Theatre's position as a landmark in the area;
- Enhance the frontage of the Grand Theatre to improve the legibility of the entrance and front of house facilities
- Development of the Oxford Street school site should help to improve the area as a gateway to the City Centre from the west. A feature on the north west corner of the site could help to finalise the long view along Oxford Street;
- The scale of any new development in this area should be at least three storeys;
- Work with the existing business owners to redefine and refurbish the Shoppers Walk and Picton Arcades, in order to improve the link between The Kingsway and the Grand Theatre, and the Bus Station;
- Encourage investment in buildings to improve existing facades through incentives (grants/loans) where available;
- Ensure that active ground floors are maintained and upperfloors are brought into use for complementary uses such as city living.

## ACCESSIBILITY AND MOVEMENT PRINCIPLES

The key access and movement principles are:

- An attractive, permeable pedestrian environment with easier crossing facilities on Westway for integration of adjacent areas;
- The parking currently accommodated on the former Oxford Street school site is an important facility for the area as it generates footfall and allows people to stop off in the area and use local shops. Parking provision will remain important in this part of Oxford Street and some element of parking may need to be incorporated in the scheme;
- Parking provision for the Grand Theatre remains important, and car parks should be identified in other parts of the City Centre, improving pedestrian links, lighting and safety;
- Improved highway access arrangements off Westway/Dillwyn Street need to be considered as part of a wider review of highway network arrangements in the The Kingsway area.

## LOWER OXFORD STREET

### Key messages from the Baseline Review

- Lower Oxford Street is an area populated with smaller shops typically for independent retailers and therefore plays an important role in providing a diverse retail offer in Swansea;
- Independent retail is an important element of a city's retail offer and should be encouraged and supported, particularly as the experience and offer is different to that available online or at out of town retail park locations;
- Much of the area is distinctive in its character but building quality is frequently poor and investment in building fabric is needed for the area to fulfil its potential and attract new occupiers;
- The Oxford Street School site identified in the Strategic Framework remains a key development site within the area.

### Key Actions

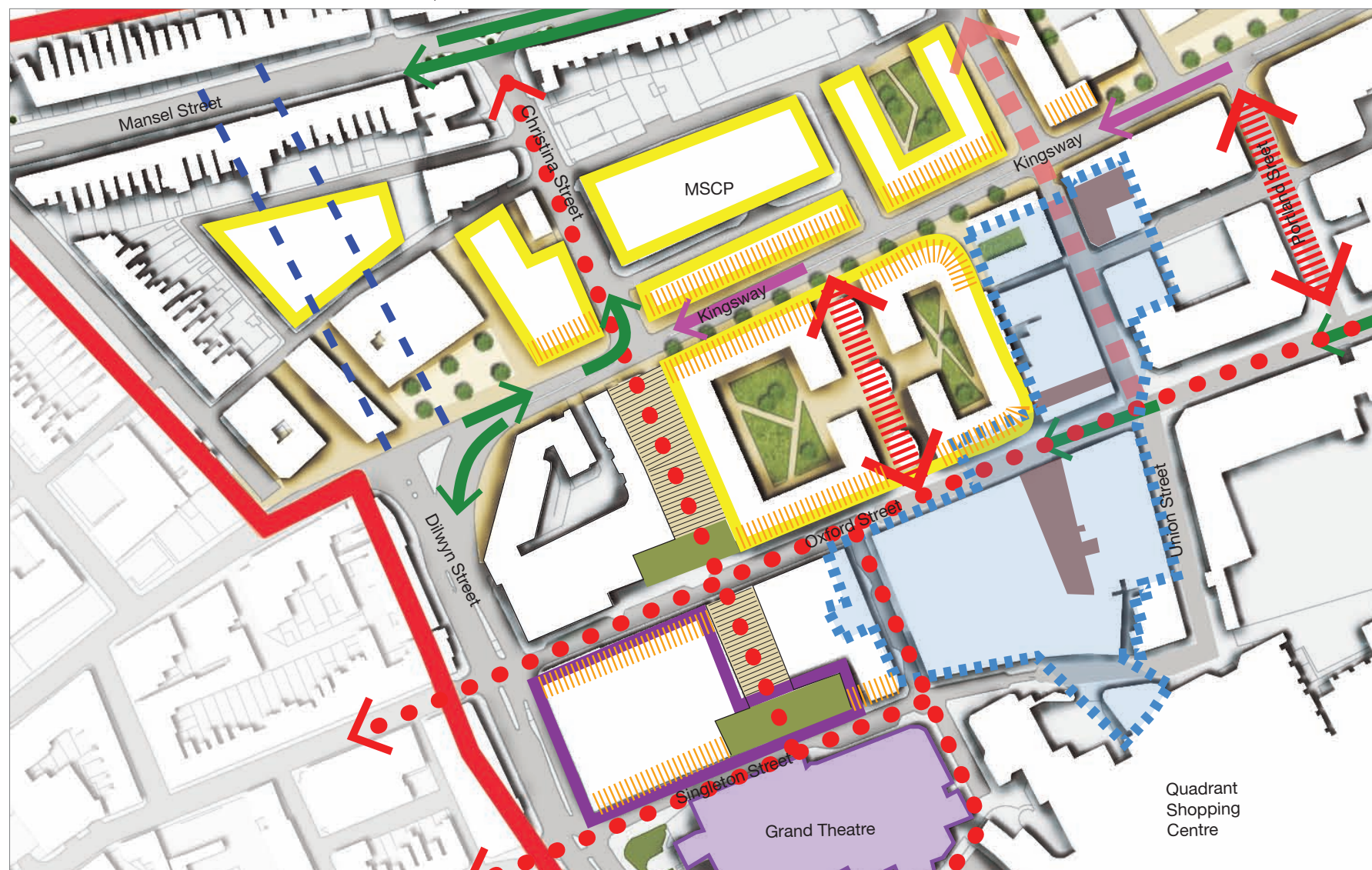
- Update and adopt current draft site specific development and design guidance for the Oxford Street School site (Picton Lanes Initiative)
- Prepare a Design Brief and Action Plan for refurbishment of the Arcades



The Grand Theatre



## Lower Oxford Street Indicative Concept Plan



- |                              |                     |   |   |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---|---|
| Existing pedestrian linkages | Refurbished Arcades | Strengthened linkage possible & possible shared surface roads | Oxford street school site               |
| Potential redevelopment      | Listed buildings    | New two-way traffic flow                                      | Potential future strategic highway link |
| One way cars and buses       | Conservation area   | New development block with active frontage                    | public space                            |

## Wind Street - Complementary Area

### THE AREA

Wind Street is the best preserved historic street in the City Centre, and lies within a Conservation Area with the vast majority of the buildings dating from pre-1900. Traditionally, the street was largely occupied by offices and banks, but in the late 1990's the area was redefined to become a new leisure quarter.

The street forms a gentle curve with High Street on the eastern side of the City Centre. Castle Square lies to the north of Wind Street and this public space is a key nodal point in the City which accommodates seating, interpretation, a water feature, a large tv screen and is a focus for events. Swansea Castle is a key feature overlooking this space and the area immediately around it has recently benefitted from new soft landscaping, interpretation and lighting. However, Castle Square is poorly related to the surrounding streets, it remains dominated by hard surfaces, and has become tired and dated in its appearance.

A new residential development adjacent to the Castle will further enclose and define the Castle grounds. At the south end of the Wind Street, 'Salubrious Place' which includes a Vue Cinema, a Premier Inn hotel, parking and additional eating and drinking venues has consolidated the area's reputation as a leisure area and a particular focus for the City's night time entertainment for the younger demographic.

South of Oystermouth Road, opposite Wind Street, within the Maritime Quarter new developments are coming forward around the Prospect Place and Cambrian Place area which are aimed at providing a different but related offer, which is potentially focused on a more mature demographic and family friendly dining and/or bars. This fits with the strong cultural themes emerging in the Maritime Quarter as well as providing a continuation of the vibrancy of Wind Street and a more tangible link between the retail heart of the City and the river frontage. This connectivity has been greatly improved following the Boulevard works to the Oystermouth Road and in particular the pedestrian crossing point which provides a continuous direct route from the Railway Station to the Sailbridge crossing and SA1 beyond.

### VISION THEME FOR THE AREA

**The Key Vision Theme for this Area is Mixed Use Retail Leisure Heart.**

This area should continue to be an attractive mixed use area, but encourage a diversification of its leisure offer. A step change is required to encourage similar but different leisure offers, possibly with more restaurants and cafes; businesses with residential occupation at the upper levels to allow the street to function throughout the day.

Wind Street is a Conservation area and its historic buildings and gently curved street give it a special ambience and character which is unique to the City centre. Improvements to the public realm, possibly with a new shared surface and the introduction of greenspace should enhance its sense of place and vibrancy throughout the day and night and make a more legible connectivity with the Maritime Quarter, Sailbridge, SA1 and Parc Tawe.

### KEY REGENERATION PROPOSALS

- Refreshing the Castle Square public open space, integrating the surrounding streets and spaces with new greenspace and activity.
- Enhancing the public realm of Wind Street and its connections with adjacent areas
- Reinforce and diversify the mixed use, leisure emphasis of the area with new family focused food and beverage offers, whilst promoting improved management.
- Major new development within the Wind Street conservation area is not considered appropriate and would detract from the unique character of the area;
- Maintain and improve the quality of pedestrian routes through the area particularly from the waterfront to the retail core;

- 'Greening of the area by introducing pocket parks soft landscaping and quality materials .
- Consider a range of opportunities for cultural activities and events in Castle Square and for increasing animation, activity, temporary uses and opportunities for play;
- Promote improved management of the Wind Street night time economy, by engaging with partners to implement the Purple Flag initiative.

### DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The key design principles are:

- Consider the potential for enhancing and refreshing Castle Square public space with new landscaping, new public realm and street furniture. Consider reconfiguring this to better integrate adjacent areas such as the space around the Castle and Princess Way. The benefits of re-landscaping Castle Square and an opportunity to fundamentally change the environment from one which is merely functional to one which is useable and responds positively to the setting of the Grade 1 Listed Castle (and Scheduled Ancient Monument) should be explored;

- Given the attractive nature of the Conservation Area and the architectural quality of the buildings in Wind Street, protecting and enhancing the existing buildings, and maintaining good quality public realm should remain the key objective;
- Provide active frontage to any development on Princess Way and design and build positive edges along The Strand frontage and at the rear of Wind Street blocks
- Respect the character and scale of listed buildings;
- Maintain and improve the quality of the public realm along Wind Street and enhance e-w routes into Princess Way and The Strand, and adjacent future development areas like Parc Tawe;
- Encourage the appropriate use of vacant and underused upper floors.

### ACCESSIBILITY AND MOVEMENT PRINCIPLES

The key access and movement objectives are:

- Introduce a shared surface which allows vehicle access along the street in terms of accessibility for all, pick-up and drop-off late at night and activity and deliveries during the day. This would be designed

to flush with the pavement in a material appropriate to the Conservation area setting, and considers future maintenance requirements.

- A shared surface design approach also provides opportunities to introduce additional landscape features, public art, seating and planting together with creative lighting solutions which in the evenings helps create a new ambience – however this needs to consider the principles of Safety by Design with regard public safety;
- Closure of Wind Street for particular events during the day and in the evenings at weekends could add greater diversity of character and custom to the area.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle permeability and facilities throughout the area;
- Improve accessibility into the retail core and to car park sites which serve the retail core;
- Accessibility will be improved though improved signing and way-marking being implemented in accordance with the Council's City Centre Way-Finding Strategy.

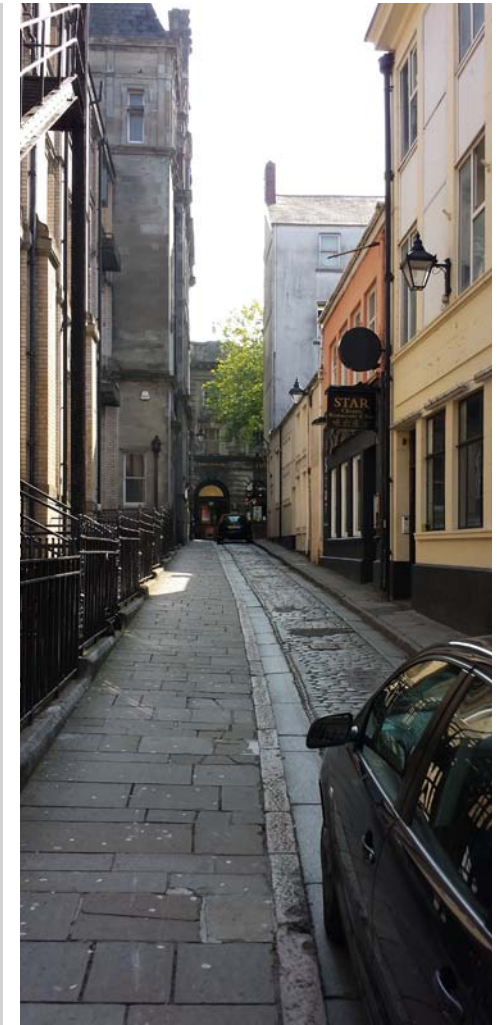
### WIND STREET

#### Key messages from the Baseline Review

- Wind Street is an area populated with bars and nightclubs playing an important role in the night time economy of Swansea.
- Whilst having a strong night time economy occupiers are principally based around drinking and there is therefore a need for an area in the City Centre that provides family based food and beverage and restaurants.
- Wind Street is a Conservation Area containing a range of attractive historic buildings which have been very effectively refurbished and converted to serve modern City Centre uses.
- Significant improvements are taking place at the northern end of Wind Street around Castle Square where development and public realm improvements are enhancing that area.

#### Key Actions

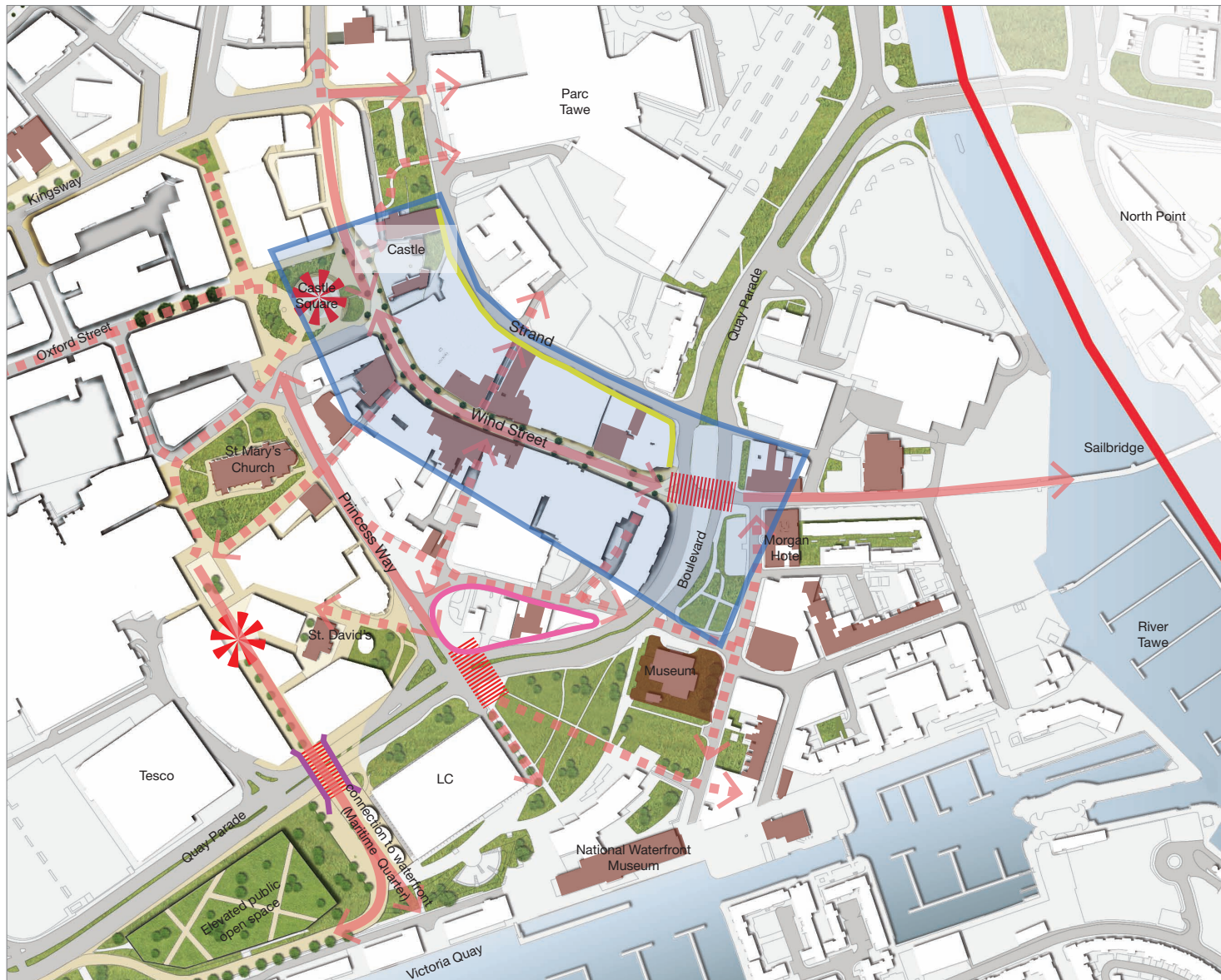
- Prepare a Public Realm enhancement strategy, including proposals for improving Castle Square and explore potential funding mechanisms.



Green Dragon Lane



## Wind Street Indicative Concept Plan



- |   |                  |   |                               |   |                  |   |  |
|---|------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|------------------|---|--|
|  | Nodal points     |  | Primary routes                |  | Listed buildings |  | New Oystermouth road Crossing                                  |
|  | Secondary routes |  | Key frontages for enhancement |  | Public space     |  | Comprehensive enhancement or development with active frontages |
|   |                  |   |                               |   |                  |  | Existing new Boulevard crossing points                         |

### Existing Photos



Wind Street



New Crossing from Wind Street





Oystermouth Road



## Parc Tawe - Complementary Area

### THE AREA

Parc Tawe is a retail park with associated leisure uses located on the eastern side of the central area. It was developed in 2 phases in the late 1980s on brownfield land that was formerly the old docks. Although currently defined in the UDP as being located within the boundary of the 'City Centre Action Area', it lies outside the core retail area and in terms of function, character and layout the retail park would be more commonly found at an out of centre location.

Parc Tawe occupies a prominent location at a gateway to the City from Fabian Way and the M4. A one way gyratory system over the Tawe Bridges was completed in 2013, which has significantly improved traffic flows, junction design and linkage to adjacent roads. Parc Tawe Phase 1 has suffered however from underinvestment and is currently in a poor state of repair, as is some of the surrounding environment. There is little direct linkage to the river available, or intuitive connectivity to the adjacent commercial areas of High Street and Wind Street.

Given its gateway location, the area offers huge potential to transform the first impression of the City and to truly create a sense of arrival to the urban centre of Swansea. The environmental enhancements to Quay Parade arising from the Boulevard works have begun this transformation and has emphasised the need for this uplift in quality frontage development. Redevelopment of the site also presents an opportunity to improve linkages

from the core City Centre to Parc Tawe and the riverside areas beyond.

The current unit operators at Parc Tawe are not broadly 'high street' retailers which, given the current underperformance of Swansea City Centre's retail offer, is fortunate for the future viability of the core retail area and for delivering a suitable redevelopment of the St David's/Quadrant redevelopment area.

To the north east of the area a new community is establishing along the banks of the River Tawe on former industrial land. This comprises houses, apartments and student accommodation. Whilst these new developments benefit from outlook over the River Tawe and a new riverside walkway the linkage to the city centre is very poor and virtually non-existent. Therefore the evolution of the Parc Tawe area offers the opportunity to create new pedestrian and cycle linkages between the Tawe corridor and the High Street. This relationship works both ways and provides the City Centre with a key link to what is in effect a linear park along the Tawe.

### VISION THEME FOR THE AREA

**The Key Vision Themes for this Area are Linking the City to the Waterfront and City Living, Working and Learning.**

The medium to long term aspiration for Parc Tawe is to create a new City Centre residential district, complemented by associated environmental enhancements and

appropriate supporting commercial uses. A re-development of this nature is likely to be phased, focussed initially upon Parc Tawe Phase 1. Indeed Phase 2 could operate as a distinct retail and leisure destination for some time alongside a new residential district at Phase 1.

In the short term/interim period, given the current underperformance of Swansea City Centre's retail offer and the requirement to safeguard the viability of the proposed redevelopment of the core area, it is critical that the character and tenant mix of Parc Tawe (Phases 1 and 2) does not compete with the retail core.

Linkages to the City Centre retail core, the riverfront and the surrounding environment will need to be fundamentally improved if Parc Tawe is to contribute to an improved physical gateway to the City Centre and become a distinctive urban district in its own right.

### KEY REGENERATION PROPOSALS

- Short term – facilitate the modernisation and upgrade of Parc Tawe, particularly Phase 1, whilst ensuring the protection of the Council's City Centre proposals in line with planning policy. It is critical that the Council uses whatever methods it has at its disposal to preclude a move away from large format or 'bulky goods' retailing, and to ensure that the future tenant mix of Parc Tawe does not compete with or dilute the offer within the retail core, and does not compromise

the viability of delivering regeneration at this priority area. The short term aim is to improve the definition of the edges of the Parc Tawe area with further planting or 'gateway' buildings.

- Medium to long term - subject to viability appraisals, produce a Masterplan for a new high quality residential district and gateway improvement on the edge of the City Centre that embraces the development and design principles set out in the Revised Strategic Framework
- The linkages through the Parc Tawe area need to be defined and strengthened to the connect the emerging community along the Tawe River Corridor to the City Centre.

### DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The key design principles are to:

- In the short term and where appropriate, encourage existing occupiers to move to more suitable locations within the City Centre (and ensure that new uses are complementary to it);
- In the short term, encourage new development of urban scale around the perimeter of the Parc Tawe sites to define and activate the street edges. Single storey retail pods and cafes are not considered to be of sufficient scale;



- In the longer term, work up a Masterplan for a new residential district on the edge of the City Centre, with good pedestrian links to the City centre core and the Tawe corridor;
- Develop gateway buildings at the Quay Parade frontage to form part of the wider gateway improvements, of a scale which emphasises a sense of arrival at the entrance to the City Centre and should define positive first impressions of the City;
- Create a sense of place and scale- high standards of architecture and urban design particularly at key locations/gateways;
- Create an attractive high quality development, with active frontages along Quay Parade, Victoria Road, New Cut Road, The Strand and Worcester Place;
- Include references to previous historical site features, such as a curving linear green/blue space within the area to symbolise the lost original route of the River Tawe;
- Exploit the level changes between the site and High Street/Castle Street where possible within future Masterplan proposals to create views from and to the Castle;
- The area is identified in the Tall building zone plan policy\* specifically as a 'Welcome Zone', where well designed tall buildings should be carefully sited to avoid excessive shading of local spaces and visual conflict with the Castle and tower;
- Residential development must be high density (at least 3-4 stories), incorporating

quality public realm and public spaces within the layout of the site;

- Given the views onto and over the site from High Street and the Castle, the roofscape must have variety and be of visual interest;
- Significantly improve links to the City Centre retail core, High Street, Wind Street, The Strand and the river corridor;
- Redevelopment of vacant sites along the west of The Strand, some of which are taking place, should provide edge definition, a mix of uses that provide natural surveillance and points of activity.

## ACCESSIBILITY AND MOVEMENT PRINCIPLES

The key access and movement principles for the area are to:

- Improve the pedestrian linkages to achieve safe attractive and legible routes through to the site to connect with existing communities such as St Thomas, emerging communities such as the Tawe Corridor Area and the river Tawe in general.
- Review and improve the operation and ease of use of Tawe Bridge junctions for pedestrians, cyclist, buses and traffic;
- Investigate the potential to move New Cut Road adjacent to Parc Tawe phase 2 to enlarge parcels of riverside land for a critical mass of development and improve direct linkages;

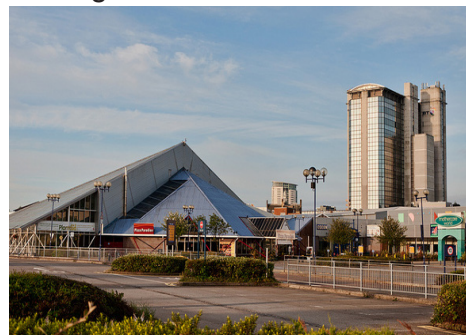
## PARC TAWE

### Key messages from the Baseline Review

- The current development plan designates Parc Tawe as being sited with the City Centre. This is considered erroneous given that, in terms of layout, use and character, it is more appropriately classified as a retail park outside the main city centre retail area is

- The buildings and environment of the park are poor quality
- The key aspirations for the site are to redevelop it in a manner appropriate to its location at a gateway to the City Centre, adjacent to the river, and ensure commercial uses at the site do not compete with the City Centre retail core.

### Existing Photos



Parc Tawe Phase 01



Parc Tawe Phase 02

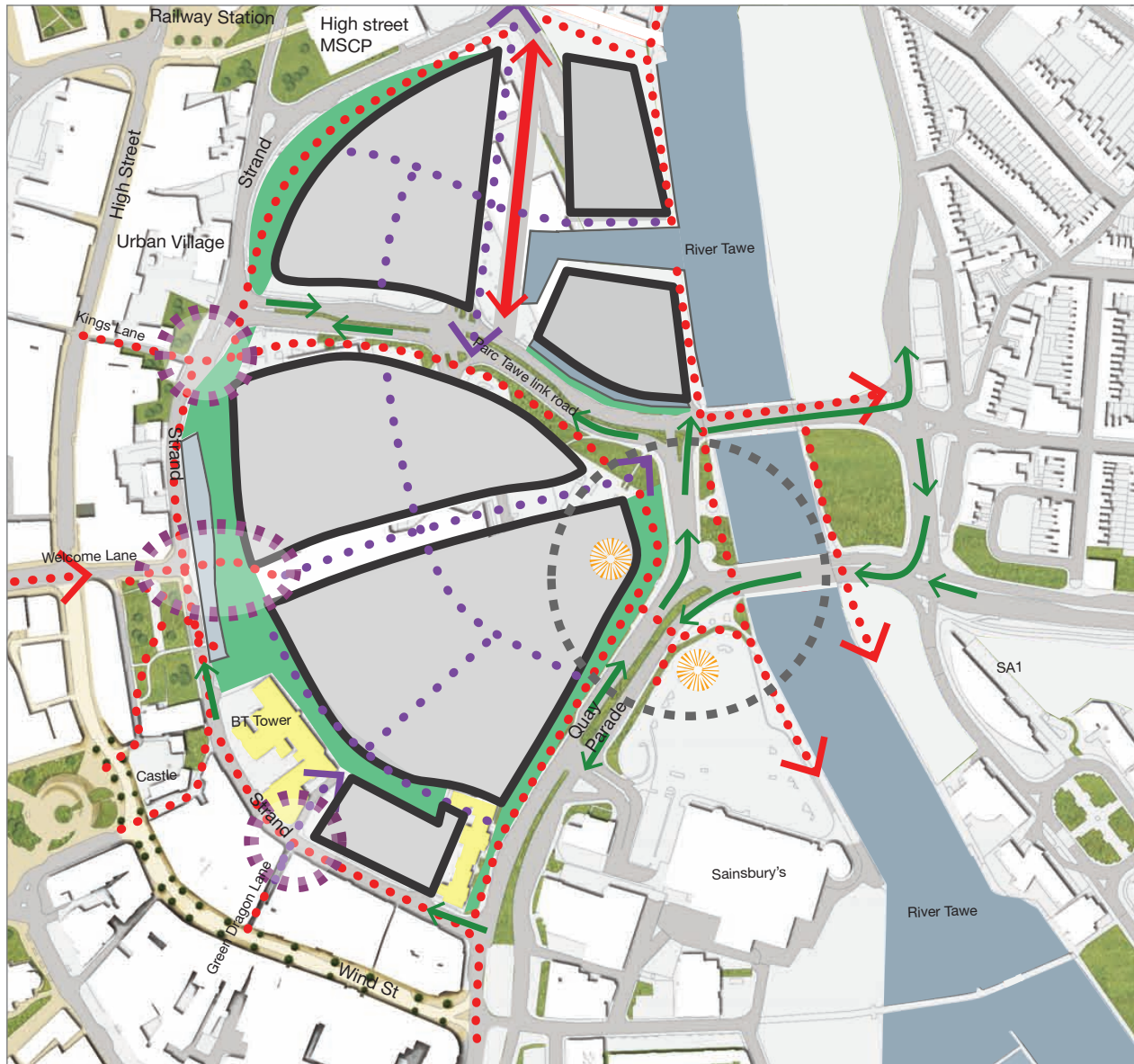


Parc Tawe Phase 01



Strand Street

Parc Tawe Indicative Concept Plan



- |   |   |  |  |   |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing linkage to be enhanced</li> <li>Proposed New/Extended pedestrian linkage</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greenspace</li> <li>Waterspace features</li> <li>Existing building to be retained</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landmark building</li> <li>City Centre gateway</li> <li>Node public open space</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New development blocks with active frontages</li> <li>Re-aligned link road</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing traffic movement</li> </ul> |
|---|---|--|--|---|

Existing Land Use Plan







New Crossing from Wind Street



Sailbridge Crossing to SA1



Sailbridge Development Site



## Maritime Quarter/ Sailbridge - Complementary Area

### THE AREA

The Maritime Quarter is a key element of Swansea's waterfront, and a significant part of its heritage and identity, occupying a prominent location between the St David's Quadrant site the Seafront the River and SA1. The area has a number of listed and historic buildings and their refurbishment and reuse have contributed significantly towards the character and quality of its Conservation Area.

The Maritime Quarter dockland was a particular focus of regeneration activity in the 1980 and 1990's and although the area emerged as a largely high quality residential area, the aim has always been for it to be a mixed use destination which capitalises on its waterfront location. More recent developments at Swansea Point and Meridian Quay have incorporated significant numbers of high quality residential units with opportunities for cafe bar type, complementary retail uses and visitor facilities.

The eastern Maritime Quarter and Sailbridge area now has significant further potential to express Swansea's distinctive character, its links to the sea, its links to its historic, cultural and industrial heritage and form a significant landmark and gateway development with a strategic connection with developments at SA1.

### VISION THEME FOR THE AREA

**The Key Vision Theme for this Area is Linking the City to the Waterfront.**

The emerging Maritime Quarter developments largely sit within the Conservation Area between the river and the City core and are developing a complementary synergy with the Wind Street leisure activities and the cultural elements around Museum Park and stretching down to the Marina.

These developments will continue to reference both the City Centre and the historic waterfront activity. The development site adjacent to Sailbridge is however fundamentally part of the river frontage and is potentially a site which lends itself to a high quality mixed use residential project which could have 270 degree views to water from the river to the north around to the seafront in the west. The site lends itself to marking the west side of the Sailbridge as an entrance to the City from SA1 and to the Maritime Quarter.

### KEY REGENERATION PROPOSALS

Regeneration Proposals

- The Sailbridge site is the key opportunity in this area for a mixed use river front development. Whilst there may be

potential for scale on the waterfront, the development must also respect the adjacent Maritime Quarter Conservation Area.

- The former Pilkington Site is a key gateway site into the City Centre and must be redeveloped in a high quality manner that links in scale with the adjacent Conservation Area.
- There are a number of undeveloped plots within the Swansea Point area such as the site allocated for a Hotel and the vacant land adjacent to the former observatory. These should be developed for appropriate uses that reflect the scale of the area whilst adding vibrancy.

### DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The key design principles are:

- Development of a new high quality place at the Sailbridge site which maximizes the potential of its waterfront location and proximity to attractive buildings and historic areas;
- The river frontage should be maintained as a generous public area, potentially with public art, and with active uses particularly at ground floor, and be designed to facilitate and cycle and pedestrian

movement along the river to connect with the Marina;

- Design of new buildings adjacent to the river should include high quality frontages and respect the scale of the buildings in SA1 as well as the Georgian buildings towards the City Centre;
- Any new development frontages overlooking Victoria Road/ Boulevard and along the key pedestrian corridor to SA1 should be positive, attractive, lively and actively engage with their surroundings;
- The cultural significance of the Dylan Thomas Centre should be used to encourage complementary uses, activities and the design of a performance area as part of the development.
- Encourage a mix of uses in the Maritime Quarter to create a lively destination, including business and leisure, within development wherever possible without compromising the quality of life for the area, in order to add diversity and activity
- Retain and enhance existing commercial mixed use frontages in key public areas on the Maritime Quarter quaysides, promenade and riverside.
- There is potential to enhance Dylan Thomas Square adjacent to the National Waterfront Museum as a more attractive

events space that encourages use throughout the year.

- Encourage the development of facilities or activities along the promenade and river frontage, particularly leisure activities which can add life and create a stronger Waterfront destination for the City Centre;
- Longer term selective redevelopment of existing sites for more appropriate uses should be considered as opportunities arise as part of a deliverable Masterplan. This might include the Sainsbury's site and the gateway to the City from the vehicle bridges;

## ACCESSIBILITY AND MOVEMENT PRINCIPLES

The key access and movement principles are:

- Car parking will need to be incorporated both for residents and visitors;
- The development should through quality of design and the use of high quality materials, enhance the pedestrian corridor from the site to Museum Green and north towards Princess Way or Wind Street to the City Centre;
- To provide quality cycle routes and facilities to complement the NCN which runs through the area should be provided.
- There is potential to introduce a new bridge link from Dylan Thomas Square (adjacent to the National Waterfront Museum) over the channel to the south side of the marina. This could provide a direct and more legible link to the beach through the Swansea Point area.

## MARITIME QUARTER / SAILBRIDGE

### Key messages from the Baseline Review

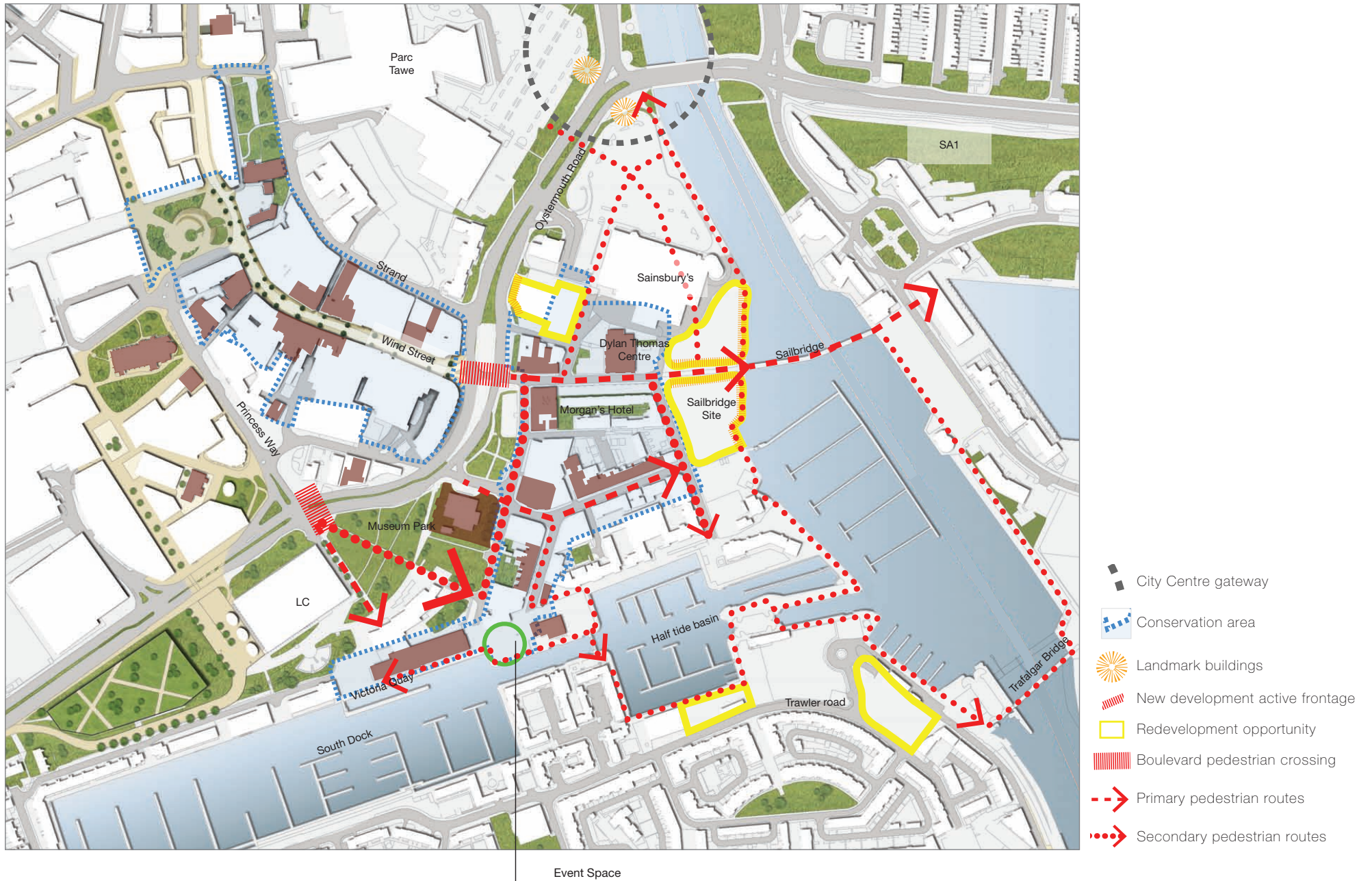
- The Maritime Quarter in its current form is predominantly a residential area with limited variety of life around the waterfront and the dock. This area contains a number of high quality residential developments and must now create a mix of complementary uses.
- Improvements have been made since the Strategic Framework to the Maritime Quarter's role as a link between the City Centre and the waterfront but further improvements to the public realm and the built environment remain to be delivered through implementing the development opportunities.

### Next steps

- To update and adopt detailed site specific development and design guidance for the Sailbridge site.  
CCS to market the site and select a development partner.



Maritime Quarter/Sailbridge Indicative Concept Plan





**Chapman Taylor**