



# Bangor Town Centre Masterplan

July 2011



An Exciting and Dynamic Place Where Waterfront and Town Meet



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These can be downloaded from:

[www.dsdni.gov.uk/rdo-bangor-masterplan.htm](http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/rdo-bangor-masterplan.htm)



Bangor Seafront Marina





# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Bangor Town Centre

Bangor is the largest town within North Down Borough Council and is located on the southern shore of Belfast Lough at the entrance to the Irish Sea. Bangor has a rich maritime and architectural past and has experienced rapid residential growth in recent years due to its close proximity to Belfast City Centre, strong transportation links and attractive built and natural environment. Today, Bangor is defined by its ring road which serves a significant number of residential developments. The rapid growth in residential development has been supported by a range of sporting activities, retail centres and quality educational centres.

Bangor settlement has strong monastic origins and its present form and character reflects its growth as a seaside resort in the late 19th and early 20th Century. Following the arrival of the railway to Belfast in 1865, Bangor Bay developed with a range of holiday accommodation, guest houses and outdoor leisure facilities. Coupled with the development of Bangor seafront, Esplanade, public parks and public services, the growth of Bangor supported the growth of summer visitors and growing population. The arrival of Bangor Marina in the 1980's validated Bangor as the premier marina town in the province.

Due to changes in holiday trade, lack of town centre investment and the growth of residential and retail centres along the Bangor ring road area, holiday trade has significantly declined in the past 30 years. Bangor town has become a dormitory settlement for the Greater

Belfast area due to strong infrastructural links with Belfast City Centre and its attractive coastal position. In addition, the town centre is complimented by a range of retail developments along the edge of the town including Bloomfield Shopping Centre and the recently refurbished Springhill Shopping Centre. However, the heart of Bangor town centre has undergone a transformation with increasing vacancy rates, increasing traffic congestion, a lack of quality retail offer, a lack of a credible evening economy and rapidly declining visitor numbers.

Despite the downward spiral, Bangor town centre still retains a rich architectural inheritance and integrity, range of leisure facilities and a robust residential market. Bangor is still perceived as an attractive place to live and retains its strong seaside character and coastal attractions.

The Regional Development Strategy seeks to consolidate the role of Bangor town centre as an attractive residential location and important retail centre and improve the road and rail links to Belfast and consolidate the town's role as a commuter town with the Belfast Metropolitan Area (BMAP). The Departments Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (dBMAP) identifies the need to enhance the leisure potential of the town as an attractive maritime resort on Belfast Lough and has a strong focus on the retention of the marina, revitalised seafront and town centre shopping.

## 1.2 Background to the Masterplan

As a result of the considerable deterioration of parts of Bangor town



centre, North Down Borough Council have historically considered ways and means of redeveloping Bangor as an attractive place to visit, shop and reside. Whilst the Council had gradually built up a portfolio of key town centre sites within Bangor, re development of these sites has been hampered by an obvious lack of funding. Key town centre sites including the Queen's Parade site were demolished leading to significant deterioration of the urban landscape, blight and urban decay. Against this back drop, the Council supported the designation of Key Development Opportunity Sites within the Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (dBMAP). Following these designations, North Down Borough Council transferred lands at Queen's Parade to private interests for redevelopment potential.

The Department for Social Development (DSD) was established in December 1999 as part of the new Northern Ireland Executive. Amongst other matters, DSD has strategic responsibility for urban regeneration. The Department's policy objective for regeneration is to promote and implement a comprehensive approach to tackling social, economic and physical regeneration and re-addressing disadvantage in urban locations.

### 1.3 The Masterplan

DSD, in conjunction with North Down Borough Council (NDBC) appointed URS Scott Wilson to undertake an extensive and comprehensive Town Centre Masterplan. An Advisory Group including representatives from the Department of the Environment (formally known as 'Planning Service'), Roads Service, elected representatives from North Down Borough Council Town Centre Management and Chamber of Trade, and The Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) was established.

The Bangor Town Centre Masterplan is a non-statutory document, that will help to provide a basis and justification for DSD's and the

new Council's decision making on the promotion, implementation and timing of urban regeneration initiatives in the town centre.



Existing Sculpture at Bangor Seafront



## 2 Background and Context

### 2.1 Methodology

The Bangor Town Centre Masterplan was prepared by a team of specialists led by a Project Manager in URS Scott Wilson. The breakdown of this team is as follows:

Project Manager	URS Scott Wilson Ltd
Master Planner	URS Scott Wilson Ltd
Urban Designer	URS Scott Wilson Ltd
Town Planner	URS Scott Wilson Ltd
Retail/Commercial Leisure	TPA Planning & Economic Consultants
Property Advice	McConnell Martin Property Consultants
Landscape Architecture	URS Scott Wilson Ltd
Public Art	URS Scott Wilson Ltd
Tourism Hospitality	TPA Planning & Economic Consultants
Traffic Parking	URS Scott Wilson Ltd/JNP Consultants
Legal Advice	McGrigor's LLP
Quantity Surveyor	URS Scott Wilson Ltd
Promotional/ Marketing	FRANK
Economic Advice	KPMG
Visualisation	URS Scott Wilson Ltd

The team was commissioned in October 2009 to undertake the project in a structured manner, allowing for all the key stages to be carried out. The structure of the programme was as follows:

Methodology
1. Desktop Research
2. Site Appraisal
3. Community / Stakeholder Engagement
4. Analysis
5. Concept Development
6. Draft Masterplan
7. Public Consultation
8. Review
9. Final Draft
10. Launch of Final Masterplan

#### The Steering Group

A Steering Group was set up by DSD prior to the commencement of the project. The group comprised the following members:

- Representatives from DSD Regional Development Office;
- Representatives from North Down Borough Council;
- Bangor Town Centre Management Consultant;
- Representative from Planning Service;
- Representative from Roads Service;

- Representative from The Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE);
- The Paul Hogarth Company;
- Elected Representatives from North Down Borough Council;
- Retail/Economic Planning Sub Consultant;
- Property Sub Consultants;
- Members from the URS Scott Wilson Project Team.

Consultation with the community and key stakeholders was a major element of this Masterplan. Detailed consultation with individuals and statutory bodies was commenced early on in the Masterplan process. A 'Vision Workshop' was also undertaken, whereby invited individuals were able to express their issues, visions and concerns relating to the town centre.

### Public Consultation

The draft Masterplan proposals were placed on a public exhibition for a 14 week period during November 2010 to January 2011 to allow optimum participation in the process. Regular liaison with appointed DSD officers and other stakeholders was also ensured throughout the process. Questionnaire responses were analysed in detail and the Masterplan concept reviewed.

## 2.2 Location, Geography and History

Bangor is classified by the Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency as a large town with a population of 76'400 persons (2001 Census data). Bangor is the most populous town in Northern Ireland and North Down and the third largest settlement in the province.

Bangor town centre has been a thriving resort and commuter town since the introduction of rail links in the 19th Century.

### History

Bangor and Bangor town centre can trace its roots back to the Bronze Age with early Christian Settlement within Bangor Bay and the Ballyholme Area. Through the Plantation Period of Ulster, Bangor developed due in part to its Cotton Industry, and in later Victorian times, as a holiday resort. Bangor's rich architectural heritage developed, due in part to the erection of a range of prominent and distinctive buildings such as churches, banks and public buildings.

Good accessibility to Belfast promoted by the provision of the County Down railway and main road to Belfast ensured that Bangor thrived as a local tourist destination resort. In addition, distinctive water front development helped 'frame' the Bangor Bay with high quality Victoria development. Bangor sea front and promenade area provided a good range of public accessibility linking walking routes and beaches along Ballyholme and Craigavad to Ballyholme.

Due to changes in travel culture and the affordability of foreign travel, the function of the town as a holiday area was gradually weakened. In the Post War era, Bangor experienced significant residential development along the ring road areas and growth of strong independent retailers within the town centre. However, due to changes in shopping habits and the development of edge of town and out of town shopping centres such as Bloomfield Shopping Centre and Springhill Shopping Centre, the retail emphasis shifted away from Bangor town centre to these alternative locations.

The character of Bangor Bay radically changed following the development of the seafront as a high quality marina area. Whilst controversial at the time, the Marina development helped stimulate Bangor sea front, improve public car parking provision and provide the largest marina development in Ireland.

Due to the lack of inward investment the vitality and quality of Bangor

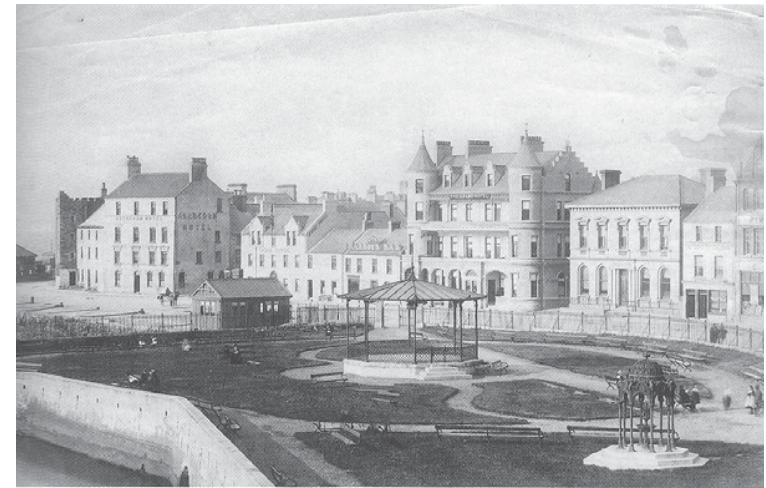


town centre and seafront/promenade has stagnated in recent years. The Queen's Parade area, once a thriving area of tourism and residential accommodation became dilapidated.

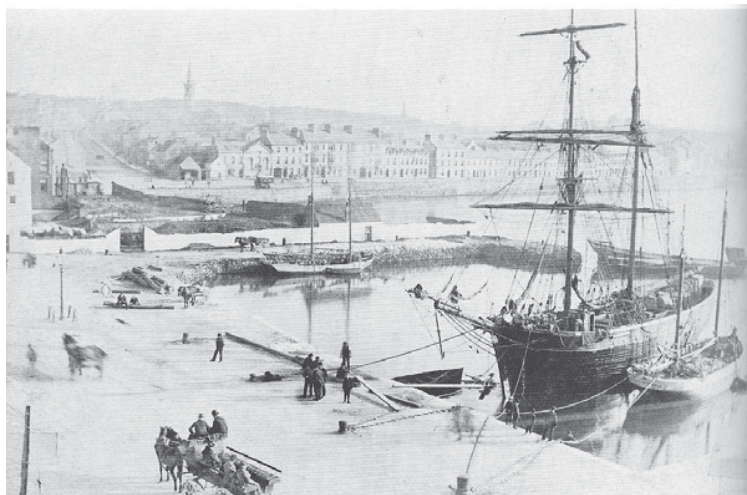
Despite this, Bangor has an active Town Centre Management with a prime aim of retaining and attracting commercial development within the town centre. Today, Bangor town centre functions as a retail centre, area of open space, sport and outdoor recreation with good quality education provision, public buildings and large scale public events.

#### Pictorial Development of Bangor Town Centre

The following images visually define stages of Bangor town centre development from 1880 to present day.



1890



1880



1898



Bangor Town Centre Masterplan



1902



1920



1916



1925





1930



2001



1976



Present Day

The historical progression of Bangor town centre is demonstrated in the following images.



1858



1901



1919



1939

## Demographics

The Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency NI has determined that within Bangor:

- 20.2 per cent of inhabitants were under the age of 20;
- 20.3 per cent of inhabitants were over the age of 60;
- 47.7 per of the population were male;
- 52.3 per cent of the population were female;
- 82.7 per cent of the population were from the Protestant Community; and
- 10.6 per cent of the population were from the Roman Catholic community.

## Economy

Bangor functioned as a seaside town with introduction of the railway links from Belfast in the early 19th Century. The most recent phase of economic development within the town dates back to the 1970's when North Down Borough Council began working with the local Chambers of Commerce and Trade to develop local business. North Down Borough Council was the first in Northern Ireland to establish a Local Trade and Enterprise Centre with the function of promoting new business growth within the town.

### 2.3 Promoting/Marketing of the Town

#### North Down Borough Council

The Council, Bangor and Holywood Town Centre Management have prepared a range of promotional and marketing resources which set out a combined marketing approach for the town centre.

### 2.4 Planning and Economic Policy

A wide range of planning and economic policies were reviewed in order to establish the context of Bangor town centre within a wider

national and regional scale, but also to gain a clear insight into the local policies which impact upon the town.

A comprehensive review of planning policies is included in Appendix 3 of this report.

The Statutory Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) sets out key principles for development as follows:

#### 1. Area of Townscape Character

- Views over the Bay from Main Street and High Street are protected
- The Methodist Church and a number of original three storey Victorian terraces on Queen's Parade are protected as part of the ATC
- Stepped late Victorian terrace dwellings accommodating the acutely sloping topography are protected as part of the ATC

Planning permission will only be granted to a development which protects and enhances the key features of the designation and which meet key design criteria, as follows:

- New or replacement buildings shall replicate existing forms, layout, materials and detailing of the buildings within the area
- New works shall not disrupt the existing silhouette of a roof

#### 2. Policy BR 48 - Urban Design Criteria for Bangor Town Centre:

States that urban design criteria will be applied to all development proposals in Bangor Town Centre, including:

- Development shall respect the established building line
- Building heights shall generally be 3 storeys on principal streets to reinforce scale and character, and between 2 and 3 storeys elsewhere. Taller buildings up to 5 storeys will only be acceptable where it is demonstrated that they act as a landmark building which aid legibility



- Development along Queen's Parade shall be consistent with the height of the existing buildings
- The external façade of the development shall reflect the fine pattern and tradition of the Town Centre

### 3. Local Landscape Policy Area

LLPA designations (BR31 Wilsons Point) are considered to be of greatest amenity value, landscape quality and local significance and therefore protected from damaging development. Planning permission will not be granted for proposals which may detrimentally affect the setting of the LLPA. Where proposals within and/or adjoining an LLPA, a landscape buffer may be required to protect the environmental quality of the LLPA.

### 4. Tourism

In relation to the Seafront, the Draft Plan states that *"The Plan will facilitate appropriate development for recreation and tourism in the designated Urban Waterfront at Bangor and continued regeneration of the seafront and in particular leisure, retail and tourism based uses at Queen's parade. This will link the retail centre with the recently re furnished transport hub at Bangor Train Station"*.

## 2.5 Economic & Regeneration Policies

### North Down Borough Council Corporate Plan 2008 – 2012

North Down Borough Councils Corporate Plan makes specific reference to the provision of a Masterplan. Relevant specific issues include:

- to build a new leisure centre and 50m pool within Bangor;
- to deliver a 'performance venue' along Bangor seafront
- to increase public participation.

Issues identified as 'priorities' include:

- To enhance security within Bangor town centre and sea front area;

- To implement further development of Bangor's seafront including further development of Pickie Family Fun Park;
- More effective support for local business growth to increase tourism revenue and visitor numbers;
- To implement the North Down Tourism Strategy.

### A Local Economic Development Strategy for North Down – North Down Borough Council

This document has been prepared by North Down Borough Council with the aim of working with North Down Development Organisations, North Down and Ards Institute, Invest NI and other government organisations to make business growth an integral part of the mainstream approach to development.

This document identifies the dynamics of the Borough in terms of businesses, skills, education, land and property.

Economic strengths include:

- recognised excellence in the local primary, secondary and tertiary education sectors;
- Safety based on the strength of the residential property market;
- A service sector based economy with strong levels of enterprise start ups;
- Proximity to Belfast, quality life and highly trained population.
- An existing tourism economy and destination resort concept.

### The Tourism Strategy

The Town Strategy states that tourism will be at the heart of economic growth and regeneration in North Down and be recognised as a major sustainable economic activity for the Borough. Tourism in North Down with Bangor, its hinterland and coastal villages, quality visitor attractions and special events, will be integrated and competitive, offering the visitor a high quality, unrivalled holiday or day trip experience.

The following areas and attractions are noted:

- a. Tower House – the former Custom House built in 1637
- b. Harbour Masters Office – Current use as a lifeboat station and restaurant
- c. Eisenhower Pier/RNLI Lifeboat Station and Long Hole – Formerly known as the North Pier and renamed in 2005. Bangor Penguins - These annually nest in the North Pier area. Bangor Lifeboat Station (opened in 2002). The area known as Long Hole was formerly used as a boat harbour area built in 1815.
- d. McKee Clock, Gardens and Bregenz House – The sea fronts oldest landmarks. 'Bregenz House' is home to Bangor Coastguard;
- e. Promenade and Bangor Marina;
- f. Pickie Fun Park/Playground;
- g. Coastal Path;
- h. First Bangor Presbyterian Church;
- i. The Northern Bank Building
- j. Bangor Abbey
- k. Bangor Museum

### **North Down Borough Council (NDBC) Arts Strategy**

This document advises that North Down Borough Council wish to support Arts in general and arts providers.

The Council states that, “Bangor has been fortunate in diversifying its local economy in recent years, North Down is a successful tourist resort and is acknowledged as one of the most tranquil and stable areas in NI”.

The Council's vision is to promote and celebrate culture and creativity as well as contribute to the positive image of North Down as a premier maritime destination as “a great place to live, work and visit”.

#### **Actions**

- To create a Public Art Strategy for North Down;

- To research the potential for a purpose built Arts Centre in North Down;
- To have a significant input in respect to the Queen's Parade development;
- To research the development of a Cultural Quarter In North Down
- To continue to develop both new and existing partnerships with statutory/private organisations.

**Access** - The strategy aims to develop an arts events programme and to create an audience development plan.

**Community Participation** - The Council's aim is to encourage local community participation in public arts programmes as well as **Economic and Cultural Regeneration** - The Council's objective is to add value to economic development and cultural tourism with the Borough.

In order to achieve this, the Council aim to maximise the publicity and marketing of arts events and activity as well as encourage arts festival development and activity.

### **Initiatives and Objectives in relation to Land and Property**

Action Areas include:

- There is a need for strong and viable town centres. The targets set through new investment and development include 2 % pa growth in the total Commercial Net Annual Value of Bangor Harbour;
- Strong potential for retail leakage to neighbouring areas – to promote the development of a year round retail destination image. The Council's targets include to identify and create a suitable vehicle for the independent promotion of Bangor town centre;
- Bangor town centre is under pressure for residential development land – The Council recognise the need to provide quality and affordable housing;
- The need to tackle social exclusion and deprivation within Bangor town centre.

### 3 Initial Consultation

#### 3.1 Introduction

An extensive process of information gathering and analysis was undertaken for the purposes of this Masterplan, via desktop research, site appraisal and stakeholder consultation. The information gathered was very wide ranging and helped in establishing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This is crucial to establish the context in which the Masterplan will be set and strive to address the issues, whilst building upon the strengths of the town centre.

At the outset of the Masterplan preparation, URS Scott Wilson undertook a series of formal consultation with a range of stakeholders present within the town centre.

The list of consultations included:

North Down Borough Council
DRD Roads Service NI
DRD Roads NI
Northern Ireland Housing Executive
The Northern Ireland Housing Executive
TCM for Bangor and Holywood North Down Borough Council
Police Service for Northern Ireland
The Royal Hotel
The Marine Court Hotel
Bangor Marina
Translink
YMCA
For a Better Bangor (FABB)
Bangor West Conservation Group
Karl Greenfarm Properties Ltd – Developers for Marine Gardens
Bangor Harbour Ward Residents Association
Bangor Town Centre Management Group
Planning Service DoE NI Strategic Projects Unit.

Feedback from these consultations identified the following initial issues.

### Retail

- Bangor Town Centre faces increased competition from Edge-of
- Town shopping centres i.e. Bloomfield Shopping Centre and Springhill Shopping Centre
- The Flag Ship Centre – Perceived low quality shopping outlets, vehicular access issues and low foot fall
- High levels of vacancy within High Street and Main Street
- High quality specialist shops are located on High Street & Upper Main Street – Potential for future growth
- The continual approval of retail uses along the ring road - there is a need for stronger planning control and a need to ensure the primacy of PPS5 is restored
- Potential for growth markets i.e. specialist food or clothing shops
- There is need for a co-ordinated strategy
- There is need for multi nationals to locate within the town centre.

### Office and Business

- Bangor Town Centre has low office rents
- Competition from sites within Bangor ring road area (improved access/location)
- A significant number of businesses have left Bangor Town Centre

### Residential

- High quality housing should be preserved and protected from inappropriate development
- Amenity of town centre residents should be protected
- Dufferin Avenue – Transient population and need for the control of property sub division

- Demand for housing within the town centre has remained consistently high
- Need for residents to reconnect with the town centre
- Potential for LOTS - similar to Lisburn or Belfast
- The need to engage communities and residents within the consultation/Masterplan process
- To improve the level of open space within town centre

### Evening Economy, Hospitality and Commercial Leisure

- There is a need to promote an evening economy or coffee culture
- Existing hotels operating below capacity
- Bangor has a good quality leisure facilities within the town centre and along the edge of the town centre
- There is a need to promote tourist assets within Bangor Town Centre
- Need to 'open up' the Marina to the public – it is currently perceived as 'elitist'

### Traffic and Car Parking

- Business users perceive the one way system as crippling the town centre
- Need for increased pedestrian priority
- Need for a taxi rank parking and dedicated coach parking
- The need for dedicated coach parking
- Service vehicles using the town centre can result in significant delays and traffic flows issues

### Visioning and Design

- Perceived low quality of public realm along the promenade
- The need for a co-ordinated strategy to market Bangor to tourists
- The need to improve the perception of Bangor along the arterial routes
- The need to protect some of Bangor's rich architectural heritage
- The need to recapture Bangor's Maritime role and function.

### 3.2 Consultation with the Department, Planning NI

As part of our consultation process, we met with the Department, Planning NI to discuss the Marine Gardens Multi Use Development Proposals at Queen's Parade. Items covered in our discussion included:

#### Transport / Traffic Circulation and Parking

- Parking and transportation needs to be addressed to integrate with the old historic road network;
- Potential problem with service vehicles;
- Major development will increase pressure on street parking;
- One way circulation along Queen's Parade would not be acceptable

#### Design / Heritage Issue

- Refer to Statutory Plan – ATC's / urban design criteria for Bangor;
- Significant concerns over the design of the proposal, and its impact on the heritage of the town centre.

Note: Images on the following page demonstrate quality of the public realm and existing building facades / architectural detailing.

#### Natural Heritage / Environment Issues

- Potential impact on marine life within the harbour;
- Potentially hazardous contaminated fill (dredged from harbour)

below car park.

#### Other Issues Discussed

- Planning application for hotel – further information on parking required.
- Private housing / public access conflicts.
- Impact on deprived housing area adjacent to site
- The need to regenerate the seafront /Bangor as a seaside town.





Existing Building Terrace along Queen's Parade



Existing Public Realm - Variation in Street Pavements / Footpaths



Existing Poor Quality of Main Street



Architectural Detailing Queen's Parade

## 4 Assessments

### 4.1 Introduction

An extensive process of information gathering and analysis was undertaken for the purposes of this Masterplan via desktop research, site appraisal and stakeholder consultation. The information gathered was very wide ranging and helped in establishing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and treats. This is crucial to establish the context in which the Masterplan will be set and strive to address the issues whilst building upon the strengths of the town centre.

As part of the information gathering process, we undertook a series of technical assessments which helped shape the final Masterplan process.

- Town Centre Health Check : An assessment of the vitality and viability of Bangor Town Centre consistent with the methodology recommended by Draft Planning Policy Statement 5 (Draft PPS 5);
- Retail Capacity Assessment: Assesses the potential capacity for new retail floor space in Bangor Town Centre up to 2018;
- Commercial Leisure Assessment : Addresses the future potential for commercial leisure development in Bangor Town Centre; and
- Hotel Assessment: Assesses the potential for future hotel developments in Bangor Town Centre.
- Office and Business Services Assessment;
- Residential Survey;
- Consideration of Townscape / Public Realm;
- Traffic, Car Parking and Pedestrians;

In addition to the above, the following assessments were also undertaken:

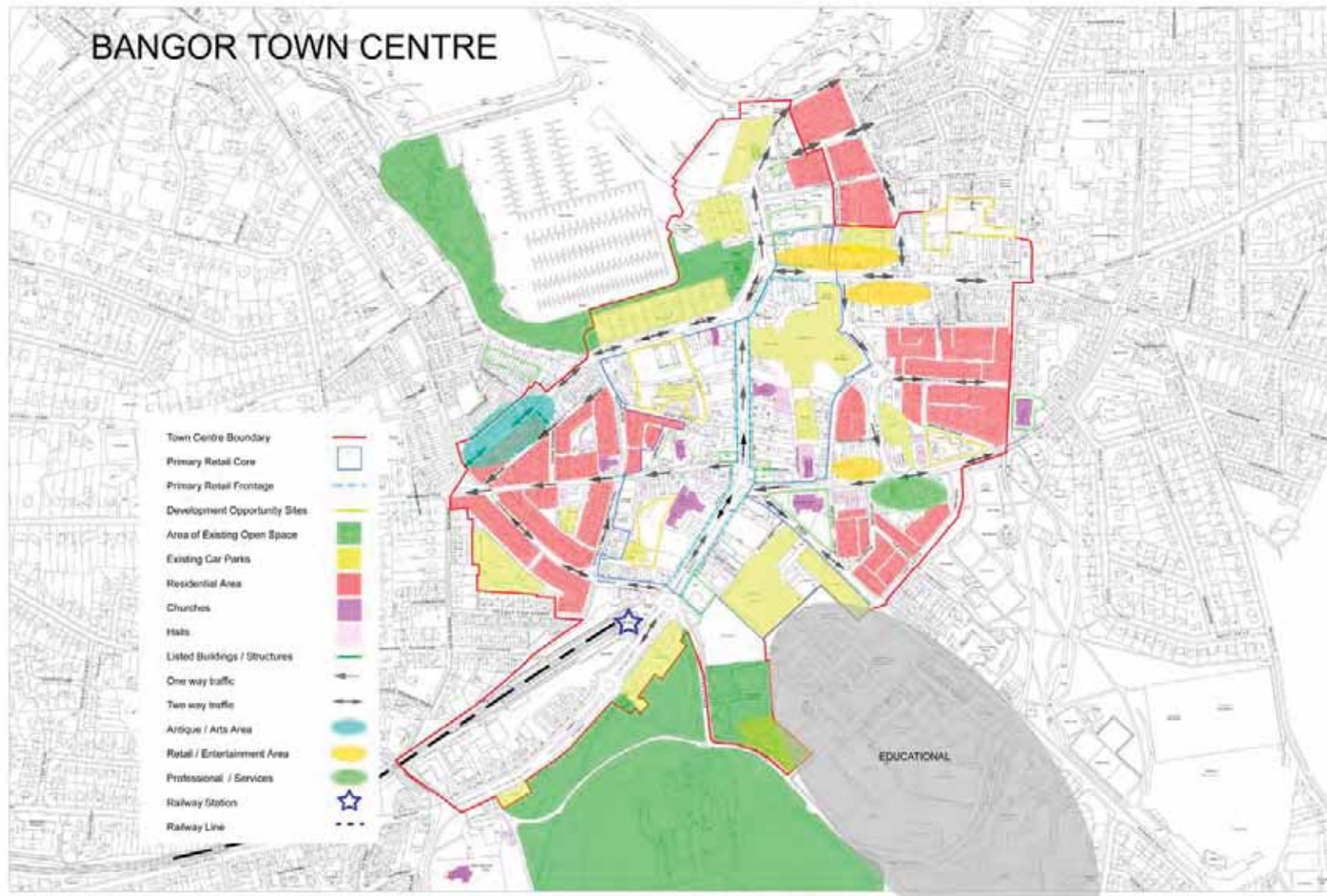
- Townscape Analysis of the Bangor Bay area
- Review of Tourism Capacity within Bangor Town Centre.
- Review of experience of similar maritime town centres

Full copies of these individual assessments have been provided as separate documents.

A separate Traffic Model / Traffic Assessment was prepared by JMP Consultants Ltd. The traffic model and final assessment was considered and options for revised traffic movements tested by URS Scott Wilson as part of the final Masterplan process.

Consideration was also given to Built Form, Views and Landmarks, Open Space and Environmental Quality, Land Use and Potential Development / Redevelopment Sites.

Each component of the technical assessments undertaken has been reviewed and a summary of each assessment is made.





## 4.2 Town Centre Health Check

The health check assessment of Bangor Town Centre highlights a number of key factors which continue to detract from the vitality and viability of the town centre area. These are:

- Bangor town centre is not fulfilling its retail role as a town centre.
- The under representation of 'High Street' type retailers, particularly fashion multiples;
- The inability of the existing retail offer to attract the required footfall to consolidate the overall attraction of the town centre area;
- Respondents to the retail survey view the retail environment as lacking in depth and quality of retail offer normally associated with a town of Bangor's size and importance;
- There is a growing coffee culture within Bangor town centre;
- Bloomfield Shopping Centre and Springhill Shopping Centre are the key competitors to Bangor Town Centre;
- Developments along the ring road are 'sucking' the capacity out of the town centre;
- Should nothing happen within the town centre over the next 10 years, there will be no capacity left within the town;
- "Do Nothing is not an Option" but the 'Asda' effect shows that Bangor Town Centre can attract shoppers if the right types/quality of shops are provided. The development of the town centre Asda store with accessible parking underpinned a 13.5% increase in the convenience market share of Bangor Town Centre in the period 2003-2009.
- If the opportunity for regeneration is leveraged correctly, sufficient capacity is available;
- Further retail developments will hinge on car parking availability and accessibility issues being resolved.



High Street currently with retail voids

### Key Recommendation

If Bangor Town Centre does not pro-actively seek to significantly increase its comparison retail offer, future available capacity will continue to migrate to out of town locations resulting in further "under trading" in the centre.

### 4.3 Retail Capacity

The estimated retail floor space need in Bangor Town Centre in 2018 ranges from 13,161 sq m net (baseline scenario) to 16,261 sq m net (aspirational scenario). It should be noted that these figures relate to net retail floor space only. In order to attain gross retail floor areas it is necessary to account for storage areas, staff areas and ancillary non retail space. Standard retail conventions generally state that net retail floor space account for 70% (convenience) and 80% (comparison) of gross retail floor space.

Estimated Retail Floor Space Need in Bangor Town Centre in the Forecast Year (2018) (Sq m net)			
	Convenience	Comparison	TOTAL
Baseline Scenario:			
Estimated Retail Floor Space Need	2,006 sq m net	11,155 sq m net	13,161 sq m net
Aspirational Scenario:			
Estimated Retail Floor Space Need	2,006 sq m net	14,255 sq m net	16,261 sq m net

#### Key Recommendation

Our overall findings highlight the requirement for Bangor Town Centre to grow its retail sector substantially in order to make the town centre area a more attractive and competitive commercial location.

### 4.4 Evening Economy / Hospitality and Commercial Leisure Assessment

The key findings of our commercial leisure assessment are:

- The per head leisure goods expenditure in the Bangor catchment area is approximately 8.1 % higher than the UK average in 2009;
- Bangor Town Centre is underprovided for in the areas of cafes, restaurants, wine bars and non-amusement arcade family entertainment facilities (e.g. ten pin bowling and covered 'Roll and Bowl' facilities);
- Bangor Town Centre is characterised by only 39% of the average UK bar / wine bar town centre floor space provision and only 53% of the average UK restaurant / floor space total;
- There is very little linkage to any shopping trips, particularly food shopping, with associated visits to commercial leisure facilities;
- The on-street shopper survey highlights that Bangor Town Centre is currently failing to attract the vast majority of family groupings for key retail and commercial leisure activities;
- The usage of key commercial leisure facilities in Bangor Town Centre during the evening is weak;
- Commercial leisure provision, particularly restaurant and take away provision, is predominantly centred along High Street;
- Poor linkages exist between the number of quality commercial leisure outlets located on Seacliff Road / Quay Street and Main Street;
- Potential to expand the 'coffee culture';
- The need for all range / types of restaurant outlets.

#### Key Recommendations

- Bangor Town Centre should be promoted as the focus for further commercial leisure development;
- New development on specific sites should not be considered in isolation from the rest of the town centre area. Providing quality linkages are key to integrating further commercial leisure activities



- in the town centre area; and
- The viability of a leisure quarter or precinct incorporating cafes, restaurants, bars/wine bars and wider leisure uses should be considered on the High Street / Queen’s Parade axis consistent with the provisions of Draft BMAP. This would complement the attractive waterside location, support existing uses on High Street, promote commercial leisure users and open this area up to greater pedestrian permeability;
- To build upon the provision of hotel accommodation within the town centre. To provide 4 Star Business Hotels with Conference Facilities, particularly along the Waterfront area.
- To provide Boutique Style Hotels – These hotels can be integrated with adjoining retail/residential developments in a town centre waterside location.
- To provide new theatre / suitable accommodation for the arts.

Estimated Commercial Leisure need in Bangor Town Centre 2018 (Sq m Net)	
Type of Development	2018
Commercial Leisure (15% - 25% of Identified Comparison Need).	1,789 – 3,563 sq. m
<b>With a focus on:</b> Restaurants Wine Bars / Bars Cafes Indoor Non – Amusement Type Family Entertainment Facilities (ten pin bowling, indoor children’s play zones)	
Further Potential Exists For Performing Arts / Exhibition Space	Not quantified

#### 4.5 Offices and Business Services Assessment

McConnell Chartered Surveyors and Property Consultants were commissioned to examine the Office and Business sectors within Bangor Town Centre as part of the Masterplan process.

The rating data provided by Land and Property Services has identified approximately 260 no. individual non-retail business premises within the Town Centre.

Over 1000 m sq.	1 units	1109m sq.
500 – 1000 m sq.	5 units	3258m. sq.
250 – 500 m sq.	18 units	5870m sq.
100 - 250 m sq.	63 units	9597m. sq.
50 – 100 m sq.	73 units	5267m sq.
Under 50 m sq.	103 units	3040m sq.

There appears to be a very small number of large office premises, and a very high propensity of small or very small units.

- For the commercial stock we have analysed the data by floor area and have estimated that some 68% of the total number of units are less than 100 m<sup>2</sup> (1,076 sq ft), 88% are less than 200 m<sup>2</sup> (2,150 sq ft) and the vast majority (96 %) are under 300 m<sup>2</sup> (3,230 sq ft).
- Of the remaining 4%, only 4 individual properties are over 500 m<sup>2</sup> (5,380 sq ft) – two banks on Main Street, Offices on Central Avenue and the Crown Building on Hamilton Road.
- The highest concentration of office properties is found on High Street, followed by Main Street and Hamilton Road.
- A conclusion which can be drawn from the floor area analysis is that, whilst there appears to be a healthy number of small

businesses operating within the town centre, there is a surprisingly low number of larger buildings, which would suggest an under representation of larger employers.

- As with the residential market, the demand for offices is currently very low across Northern Ireland. Provincial towns in particular are suffering from lack of demand with what little there is being focussed on Belfast.
- If more businesses are to be attracted to locate within Bangor Town Centre, there will be a requirement for the development of more modern office accommodation.

#### Key Recommendations

- The need for large, flexible office space within the town centre;
- To sustain the healthy number of small businesses operating within the town centre



Small properties have limited floor space for modern office and commercial needs

#### 4.6 Residential Analysis

McConnell Chartered Surveyors and Property Consultants were commissioned to examine the residential sectors within Bangor Town Centre as part of the Masterplan process. Using rating valuation provided by Land and Property Services, a total of 980 no. residential properties have been identified within the Town Centre Boundary

Over £250,000	23 properties
£150,000 - £250,000	80 properties
£100,000 - £150,000	270 properties
Under £100,000	644 properties

- A large proportion of the existing town centre residential stock is made up to small units comprising apartments and flats often created by the conversion of older building stock at the lower end of the residential value spectrum. Approximately 30 per cent of the stock having capital values, for rating purposes, of under £70,000 and 65 per cent less than £100,000.
- Approximately 70 no. houses within the study area (7% of the total stock) have rateable capital values over £150,000. These higher value properties are generally found towards the eastern edge of the town centre including Springfield Avenue, Park Avenue and Park Drive.
- The highest proportion of low value, and consequently smaller, properties are concentrated on Dufferin Avenue and Southwell Road where large terrace houses have often been converted into small flats and houses in multiple occupation.
- Looking at the condition of the residential stock, it is apparent that a number of locations in particular are suffering from decay, due to a combination of factors including age and neglect. In particular,

the triangle formed by Southwell Road, Dufferin Avenue and Grays Hill, and to a lesser extent the area centred on Beatrice Avenue has been identified as areas which could benefit from regeneration initiatives.

- Recent new residential development has been largely restricted to out of town centre locations with only a small number of new properties of recent construction within the study area.
- Demand for residential property is currently low throughout Northern Ireland and Bangor is no exception. However, the town would benefit from resurgence in development to provide a modern, sustainable housing stock.
- Consideration should be given to the impact of retail developments on the amenity of town centre residents i.e. noise / increase in traffic / increased demand for on-street car parking spaces.

### Key Recommendations

- To retain the historic residential built frontage within the 'Bangor Bay' ;
- To control the unauthorised sub division of larger residential properties within the town centre;
- To address signs of residential decay within certain residential areas;
- To stimulate the growth of new residential development within the town centre.
- Ensure that any new residential development respect the character and setting of the existing town centre;
- To encourage new high quality residential development.

### 4.7 Consideration of Townscape / Public Realm

#### Strong Townscape Features

The features that provide Bangor Bay with its character are outlined below:

- Frontage – the continuous frontage and the tightly knit pattern of buildings;
- Building line: the consistency in alignment of facades placed hard on the pavement;
- Enclosure – blocks and buildings creating an enclosure around the bay and the marina;
- Focal Points – the spaces and landmarks defined by the views as well as the shape of enclosure of the bay; namely, the space along Queen's Parade, Esplanade Gardens and the McKee Clock;
- Architectural rhythm – buildings with a consistent roof line and heights. A recurring vertical proportion on building. A general predominance of solid walls against fenestration. A cohesive pattern and alignment of windows. An active ground floor that contributes to the life in the street.

### Weak Areas

Similarly the study has identified the weak areas. These include:

- The car parking area along Queen's Parade; although a focal point, its current use creates a bleak and uninteresting environment;
- The Boat Yard area – this area has a poor visual appearance and detracts from the general townscape quality of the bay area;
- Esplanade Gardens – this area is little used and its configuration does not encourage activity. The main drawback is that it is surrounded by car parking areas and thus there is little activity being fed to the square;
- The links between East and West – at present the two ends of the bay are dislocated by two car parking areas and the poor promenade along Queen's Parade.

### Design Guidance

- The protection of the frontage and building line of the Bangor Bay 'enclosure' is critical;
- Only in exceptional circumstance should the building line of the

Bay be broken – In such instances any buildings should be iconic ‘destination’ buildings which are tourism generators i.e. theatre / Tourist Information Centre / Restaurant;

- Focal points (views / spaces / landmarks) must be retained;
- New development along the original building line must have consistent architectural rhythm in terms of height and fenestration;
- Car parking and the enclosure must be carefully designed within a multi functional civic space context;
- Linkages both visual and physical between the town and Bay must be protected and enhanced;
- Accessibility to the water edge is fundamental;
- A high quality environment must be developed;
- Open space provision must provide interest as a destination, and space for events and activities of local and national importance must be incorporated.

#### Key Recommendations

- To retain the historic ‘Bangor Bay’ concept;
- To retain the strong focal points i.e. spaces and landmarks;
- To implement new public realm initiatives;
- To promote high quality public realm improvements;
- To provide a link between the East and West of Bangor Bay.

#### 4.8 Traffic, Car Parking and Pedestrians

A Traffic Model was prepared by JMP Consultants for testing traffic flow options (see section 6.5). A Car Parking review (in association with Roads Service NI) has been undertaken along with visual observations of pedestrian movements through the town centre.

Key issues arising are as follows:

- Not enough car parking spaces at Abbey Street / Upper Main Street;
- Retention of surface car parking at the Sea Front is essential;

- Multi Storey / underground car parks appear not to work in Provincial towns i.e. Flagship Centre and do not reflect a traditional town centre;
- Parking charges;
- On street parking causes traffic to stop as cars manoeuvre into and out of spaces
- One way traffic system – exacerbates severance of town centre roads;
- One way traffic system – makes routes difficult / causes congestion
- Bangor has very complicated / complex junctions;
- Private parking areas are frequently underutilised;
- Major issue with service vehicles accessing premises, particularly at peak times- delivery lorries double park for convenience;
- Conflicts with pedestrians at complex junctions;
- Pedestrians should be given priority in the town centre – public realm space should be increased / ease of access around the town;
- Public transport – bus / train – how can public transport be improved to re connect with the town.

#### Key Recommendations

- The town centre should become more pedestrian friendly.
- A revised traffic flow should be considered to reduce the impact of the existing one way system.
- Access to the shops should be enhanced with more controlled loading arrangements.
- Increased capacity of car parking at the southern part of the town would help access.

#### 4.9 Tourism Capacity

A general overview of the existing tourism offer was carried out

- Bangor town centre has the potential of being an important tourism destination on the North Down coast.



Quay Street with on-street parking for local businesses



Existing Bus Lane and On-street Car Parking along High Street

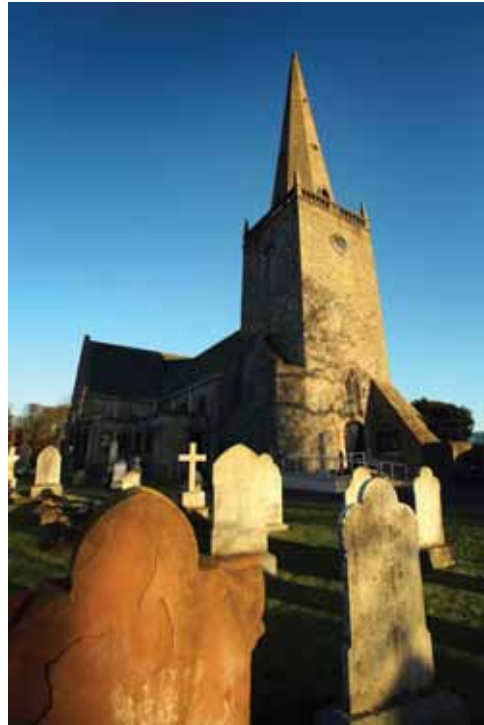
- There is enough space within its principal assets that would allow the town to present a quality and suitably varied offer for day visitors, coach parking and those on short breaks. Moreover, they have the potential to be less seasonally orientated.
- The waterfront should be utilised to establish a mix of commercial ventures that would each resonate with the visitors. The principal component of the development should be a hotel that should be of high quality, potentially a boutique-style. Coupled with suitably positioned retail and catering establishments and access to water sports via the marina and old harbour, the development would present a hub of activity that would help to reposition the tourism offer of town.
- The heritage associated with Bangor Abbey has a very defined niche, but one which could ultimately generate overseas visitors wanting to trace the origins of their church back to St Columbanus' original spiritual home in Bangor.
- The heritage trail could also be developed to represent the anchor for Saint Patricks Trail.
- Pickie Fun Park – Its redevelopment should be designed to retain its sense of importance and encourage family groups to enjoy quality time, but through the inclusion of amenities and attractions that have a greater connection with children nowadays.
- To ensure the completion of Pickie Fun Park by March 2012 and ensure that opportunities exist for further development of amenities as funds / opportunities arise.
- Greater connectivity between Pickie Fun Park and Ballyholme Bay Beach should be encouraged and likewise between the marina waterfront development and Pickie.
- Ensure that new developments complement rather than compete with existing attractions and assets.
- The retention of the North Down Coastal Route is crucial.

#### Key Recommendations

The tourism potential of the town is substantial as it has a unique



setting and existing range of tourist related facilities which can be enhanced to broaden appeal. Quality of offer is all important to the future of the town as a destination. Focus should be on a lively events programme to get repeat visits.



Ecclesiastical History of the Town



Marina as main focal point of Bangor Bay



Swans at Pickie Fun Park

## 5 The Vision

It is important that the Masterplan has a clear and simple purpose and can be easily communicated. There needs to be a strong point of reference that those responsible for delivering the regeneration of Bangor Town Centre.

The Vision for Bangor Town Centre sets out the basic objectives of the Masterplan. It is the measure by which its future success will be assessed.

As part of the consultation process, the vision was widely discussed and represents the aspirations held within the advisory group.

The aim of the consultation process was to gain feedback as to what are considered the relative strengths and weaknesses of the Town Centre. The discussion then sought to identify the threats to the future success of the centre and the opportunities available for the strategy to build upon.

Through the advisory group, it was possible to develop a 'Vision Statement' for Bangor Town Centre, supported by a series of Regeneration Themes that will work to deliver this vision.

It is important to consider the list of 'priorities' identified in the Council's Corporate Plan. These include:

- to enhance security within Bangor town centre and seafront area
- to implement further development of Bangor's seafront including further development of Pickie Family Fun Park;
- More effective support for local business growth to increase

tourism revenue and visitor numbers

### 5.1 A Vision for Bangor Town Centre

#### **The Strategic Vision**

*"Bangor Town Centre will be re-established as a high quality, vibrant competitive town with a distinctive and historic maritime character. This will be achieved through effective and strategic regeneration of its key maritime asset. The town will be renowned as a welcoming place geared to families, youth and the elderly. The town centre will be a location where people want to visit, live and work in and where businesses are attracted to locate in and grow".*

Bangor Town Centre has a strong base from which to begin its rejuvenation. Despite a number of weaknesses, there are several opportunities available to build upon this base and enable the Town Centre to respond to the external threats, most noticeably the current economic recession and growing out-of-centre competition.

Whilst the town centre has experienced some retail decline, there are a good range of quality independent retailers and signs that individual stores are flourishing despite current economic uncertainties. Its people are a major asset with friendly, well-trained staff and a strong community spirit and sense of civic pride.

The retail core is compact and easily defined and has a number of distinctive and significant architectural features. It is clear that the removal of blight and simple improvements to the public realm will

greatly increase the attractiveness of the centre.

Despite issues relating to 'one way' traffic and circulation, Bangor is highly accessible from Belfast and the Ards Peninsula and is in a prime location to capitalise on the growing tourism economy in Northern Ireland. Bangor's marina and Christian Heritage is a significant asset to the town and offers a strong leisure function to the town centre. Coupled with the significant growth in a 'café culture' across the province means that Bangor Town Centre could sustain a vibrant evening economy.

Alongside this, the culture and leisure scene could also be expanded further. The major new leisure development in Castle Park comprising an Olympic size pool will create a world class sporting and swimming facility when completed in 2012. Building upon the key assets of the promenade, North Down Coastal Walkway, Marina and 'Pickie Park' area and historic environment, additional arts and craft facilities and services could be provided to capitalise on the vibrant art community living in the North Down Borough Council area.

### Achieving the Vision

In order to achieve this strategic vision, we have identified a number of regeneration themes. In practise, these themes form a series of objectives that will work together to ensure that the vision outlined above will be achieved. All of the Masterplan proposals considered for the regeneration of Bangor Town Centre were assessed in terms of their ability to contribute to one or more of these objectives:

- To create a diverse town centre with a rich mix of uses and a

balanced provision of activities and opportunities;

- To produce a thriving tourist economy - making Bangor a destination in its own right, from which the attractions of the wider Borough, and beyond, can be explored;
- Expand the evening economy sensitively – to encourage vitality throughout the day and into the night;
- To improve the 'Quality of Place' by making the most of Bangor's built heritage and high townscape quality;
- To maintain and improve accessibility through Bangor Town Centre. To make Bangor Town Centre both pedestrian and cycle friendly, reduce congestion with good public transport links and adequate, accessible parking provision;
- Positivity – To present a friendly face with strong community spirit that is welcoming to visitors;
- Over arching Branding and Promotions – to provide Bangor Town Centre with effective promotion and marketing and an exciting programme of events throughout the year, managed in a partnership approach.

### The Masterplan

The three main aims of the Masterplan have been generated from a synthesis of all vision statements. The 3 main aims of the Bangor Town Centre Masterplan:

#### **Aim 1 – To Make Bangor Town Centre a Premier, High Quality Destination in Northern Ireland**

- By realising its tourist potential
- By developing the town centre retailing product;
- Developing a vibrant evening economy;
- Ensuring accessibility for all

#### **Aim 2 – Bangor Town Centre should reconnect with its Waterfront**

- To strengthen and retain the architectural integrity of the bay;
- Maximise the recreation and civic function of the area between water and frontage of the bay;
- Develop vibrancy of the water front on a 24 hour basis.

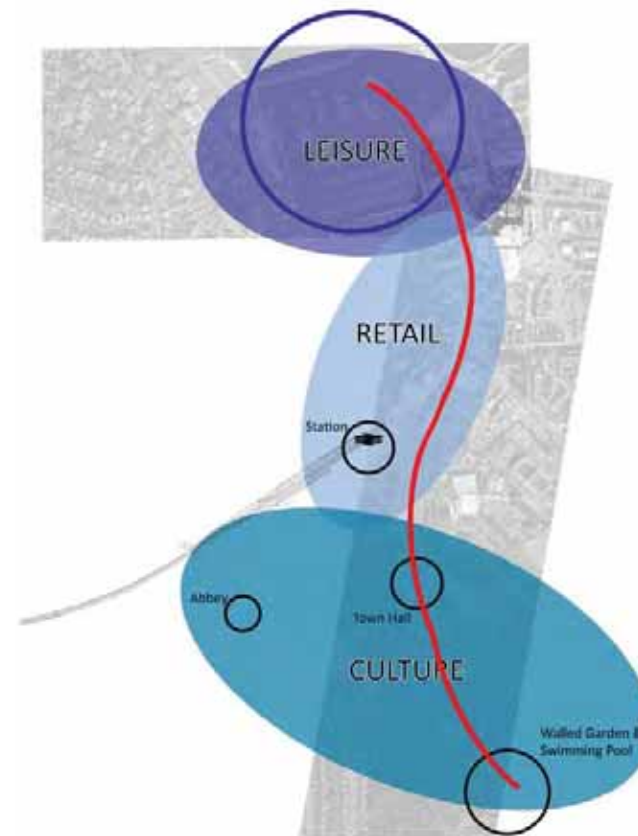
#### **Aim 3 – Bangor Town Centre should have a Strong Unique Identity**

- To build on the towns 'Maritime History' and 'Christian Heritage';
- To build on the existing retail function and develop a unique / 'niche' retail product
- Create a contemporary townscape, linking the promenade to the Main Street;
- Priority given to the positive, sustainable re use of vacant and utilised sites.

The result of the above aims will be a regenerated, vibrant town which is an exciting and dynamic place to be with a fascinating blend of contemporary and historic elements.

The Masterplan concept is reinforcing character areas of the town,

the primary cultural / history area centred to the south focusing on the Abbey, Town Hall and Castle gardens, the retail heart spanning between the cultural area and the leisure area to the north, encompassing the Marina, Marine Gardens and Bangor Bay. Connecting these distinct areas is the quality streetscape, redefining the traffic and pedestrian arteries as attractive places to be and encourage flows between all areas.







## 6 The Masterplan

### 6.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 sets out the Masterplan proposals for Bangor Town Centre. These have been established through extensive desk top reviews, townscape analysis and consultation with relevant stakeholders and the public.

The study area for the Masterplan has been determined by the Town Centre Boundary as designated by the Departments Draft BMAP and includes Bangor Bay.

The Masterplan focuses on achieving the vision and projects through the development of existing and proposed opportunity sites. The development proposals have been simplified into separate manageable components with each one contributing to the overall regeneration of the Town Centre.

The result is the formation of three distinctive 'areas, which will accommodate significant levels of new development. The Masterplan places significant emphasis on Queen's Parade / Marine Gardens and the Seafront area which holds several development opportunities. The regeneration of this area would link directly with opportunities in High Street / Main Street and Hamilton Road areas.

Abbey Street / Main Street have a distinctive character and have the potential to develop as both a 'Cultural Quarter' and 'Retail Quarter'. High Street and Hamilton Road also have the potential to develop as a 'Retail Quarter' and 'Specialist Retail' area i.e. speciality shops /

niche retailing as well as establishing a café culture.

The 'Waterfront Development' has the potential to develop as an area of activity providing protection of the Marina as well as the promotion of open space, recreation and outdoor activities. This area also includes the historic 'Bangor Bay' and should therefore be promoted as rich in architectural and townscape features and a draw for visitors/ destination for visitors.

As well as these site specific opportunities, the Masterplan also considers overall proposals which aim to enhance the visual quality of the town centre.

#### [Presentation of the Masterplan](#)

The individual components of the Masterplan describe each of the core areas in greater detail.



# BANGOR TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

AN EXCITING AND DYNAMIC PLACE WHERE WATERFRONT AND TOWN MEET

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

AIM : To make Bangor Town Centre a premier, high quality destination in Northern Ireland

- By realising its tourist potential
- By developing the town centre retailing product
- Developing a vibrant evening economy
- Ensuring accessibility for all
- A modern, vibrant and exciting place to live

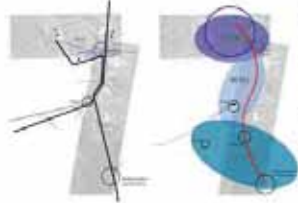
AIM : BANGOR TOWN CENTRE SHOULD RECONNECT WITH ITS WATERFRONT

- Strengthen and retain the architectural integrity of the bay
- Maximise recreation and civic function of area between water and built frontage of bay
- Develop vibrancy of waterfront area on 24hr basis

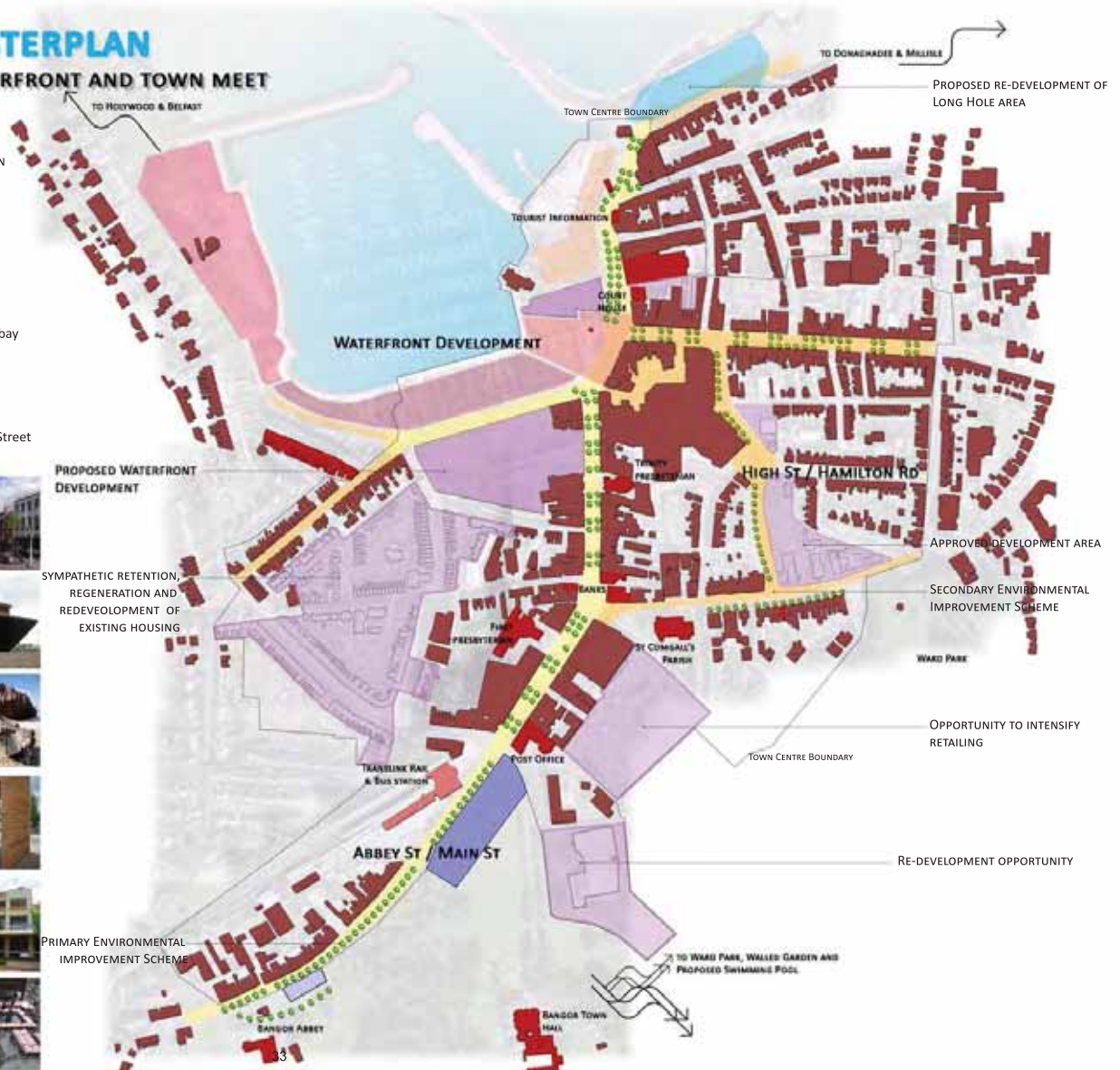
AIM : BANGOR TOWN CENTRE SHOULD HAVE A STRONG, UNIQUE IDENTITY

- Build on the towns maritime history and Christian heritage
- Build on its existing retail function and develop a unique / niche retail product
- Create a contemporary townscape, linking the promenade to High Street and Main Street
- Priority given to the positive, sustainable re-use of vacant and under-utilised sites.

## CONCEPT LINKAGES



## CONCEPT BOARD FEB 2010

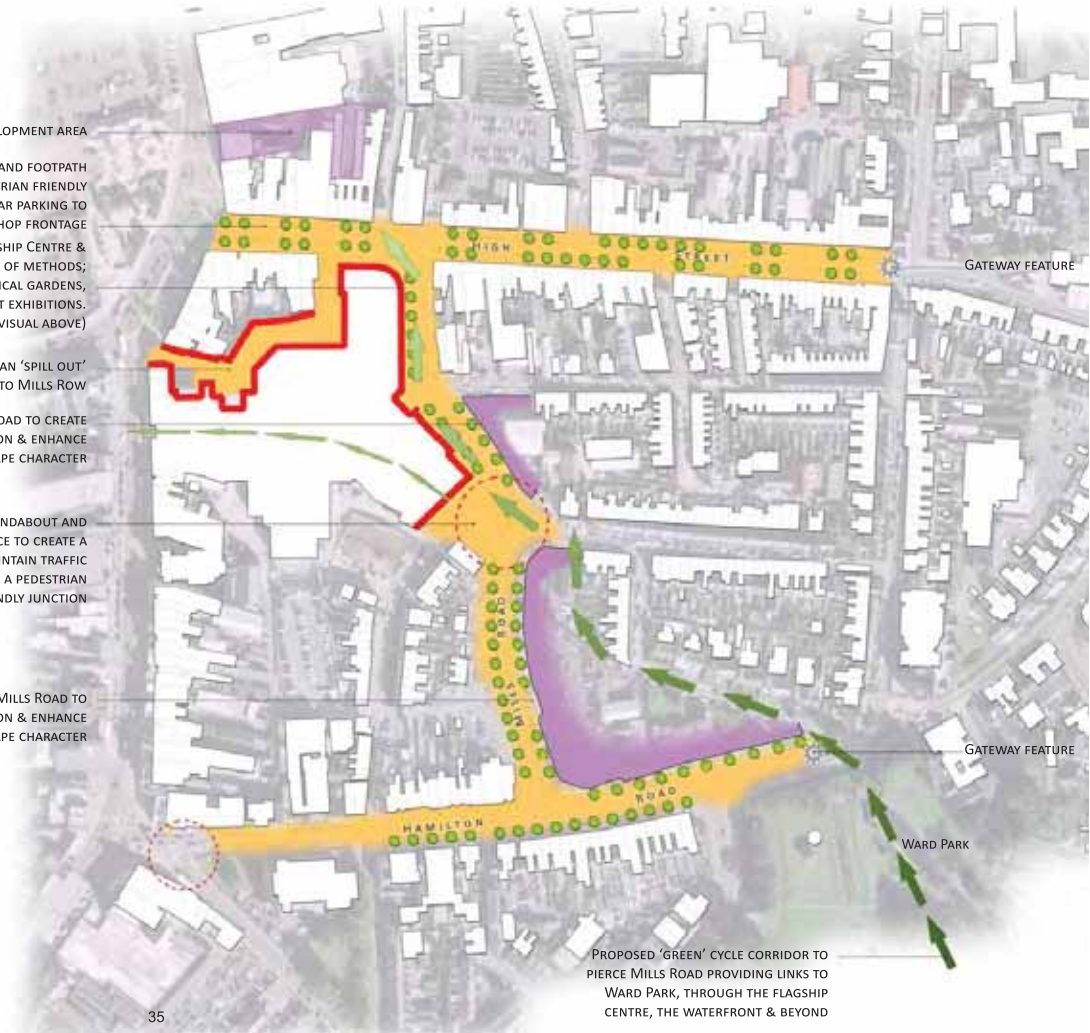


# BANGOR TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

## HIGH STREET / HAMILTON ROAD




- POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AREA
- RATIONALISE CARRIAGEWAY AND FOOTPATH LAYOUT TO CREATE PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY AREAS. MAINTAIN ON-STREET CAR PARKING TO SHOP FRONTAGE
- ENHANCE FACADE OF FLAGSHIP CENTRE & MILLS ROW THROUGH A SERIES OF METHODS; ART INSTALLATIONS, VERTICAL GARDENS, TEMPORARY / PERMANENT EXHIBITIONS. (REFER TO SECTION & VISUAL ABOVE)
- POTENTIAL PEDESTRIAN 'SPILL OUT' DEVELOPMENT TO MILLS ROW
- FRONTAGE TO MILLS ROAD TO CREATE ATTRACTIVE ELEVATION & ENHANCE STREETScape CHARACTER
- RATIONALISE ROUNDABOUT AND SURROUNDING SPACE TO CREATE A WELCOMING NODE. MAINTAIN TRAFFIC PRIORITY WHILST PROVIDING A PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY JUNCTION
- PROPOSED FRONTAGE TO MILLS ROAD TO CREATE ATTRACTIVE ELEVATION & ENHANCE STREETScape CHARACTER



PROPOSED 'GREEN' CYCLE CORRIDOR TO PIERCE MILLS ROAD PROVIDING LINKS TO WARD PARK, THROUGH THE FLAGSHIP CENTRE, THE WATERFRONT & BEYOND





## 6.2 Area 1 – High Street / Hamilton Road

### Role

Retail / Business and Commercial / Residential / Community and Open Space.

### Key Principles

- to retain and build upon the retail vibrancy / offer along High Street;
- to encourage a niche retail product;
- to improve the quality of the public realm;
- to soften the visual impact of the Flagship Shopping Centre;
- improve traffic flows and circulation;
- to implement Development Opportunity Sites.

### Key Improvements

- New environmental improvement scheme along the length of High Street / Main Street;
- Junction improvements to Main Street / Hamilton Road;
- Lighting and street trees along with a suite of street furniture all of a very robust, high quality will revitalise the shopper experience;
- Active frontages must be encouraged along the length of the trees and should be integral to any new development;
- Frontage improvements to the Flagship Shopping Centre and environs;
- Create a new frontage onto Mills Road through new development and creating a pleasant green corridor feel;
- Provision of a cycle link through Ward Park down to the waterfront;
- Upgrade boundaries to Hamilton Road;
- Provision of a 2 new gateways to the town on High Street and Hamilton Road.

### Development Opportunities

The following development opportunities are considered:

Opportunity	Code
Mills Road / Hamilton Road Development Opportunity Site	D1
40 Mill Street	D2
'Bank Lane' off Albert Street	D3
High Street Environmental Improvement Scheme	PR1
Mills Road Environmental Improvement Scheme	PR2
Hamilton Road Environmental Improvement Scheme	PR3
Mills Row Lane Environmental Improvement	PR4
Frontage of The Flagship Centre 'Façade Frontage Enhancement	PR5
Gateway Features High Street / Hamilton Road	PR6
'Green Corridor' Hamilton Road to Seafront	PR7

#### D1 – Mills Road/ Hamilton Road Development Opportunity Site

This site comprises North Down Borough Council premises and British Legion Premises. The site lies within Bangor Central Area of Townscape Character (ATC). Zoned as BR45 in the Draft BMAP the site is overlooked by a number of residential properties along Springfield Avenue and is inter visible with Hamilton Road Presbyterian Church.

#### D2 – 40 Mill Street

This White Land site is currently operational as car sales commercial / work shop area. There is a current planning approval for apartment development on this site. The principle for alternative residential / commercial activity would be acceptable to the Department.

**D3 – ‘Bank Lane’ off Albert Street**

Located within the ‘Existing Retail Core’ of Bangor town centre as identified in the Draft BMAP Plan, the current commercial units could be retained and expanded to provide for ‘niche’ retailing opportunities i.e. speciality foods et al.

**PR1 – High Street Environmental Improvement Scheme**

New decorative lighting, high quality paving, street trees and appropriate street furniture would uplift the image of the street and make it more appealing day and night. White light will be important to give an added feeling of security at night when the street is busy.

**PR2 – Mills Road Environmental Improvement Scheme**

With the proposed revision to traffic flows and the future development of a built frontage along the road, there is an opportunity to bring back a feeling of cohesion and unity. Where building frontage is missing cohesion can be introduced by using trees to give an avenue feel.

**PR3 – Hamilton Road Environmental Improvement Scheme**

With the introduction of the two way traffic, this road will become more prominent. The junction will have to be modified with Main Street and this offers the chance to make it more pedestrian friendly. New paving and lighting would enhance the road.

**PR4 – Mills Row Lane Environmental Improvement Scheme**

As an important pedestrian link from Main Street to High Street this road could have a shared surface treatment which would make it more pedestrian friendly. New lighting and façade treatment to the Flagship Centre with the possibility of a new entrance onto the lane would add to the permeability and use of the area.

**PR5 – Frontage of the Flagship Centre ‘Façade Frontage Enhancement’**

The Masterplan recognises that the rear façade of the Flagship Shopping Centre and Multi Storey Car Park presents an unattractive view to Mill Street. There is a need to introduce an active streetscape with a more attractive streetscape elevation and fenestration.

A simple frontage enhancement scheme would improve the visual quality, scale, massing and appearance of these buildings. The Masterplan proposals will ‘soften’ the visual impact of this frontage and provide a more robust and attractive townscape character in this area.

**PR6 – Gateway Features High Street / Hamilton Road**

The provision of these features provides strong definition and identification of entrance and exit of the town centre boundary.

**PR7 – ‘Green Corridor’ Hamilton Road to Seafront**

The provision of this Green Corridor will provide a convenient, safe and secure means of access from Ward Park and Hamilton Road through Mills Road to the Seafront.

Provision of taxi ranks at Mills Row will provide a satisfactory / designated taxi rank for the Seafront and High Street areas renowned for their entertainment / evening economy potential;

Provision of dedicated Coach Parking at Bridge Street and Quay Street will assist in the formal parking of coaches and buses (subject to a satisfactory Parking Management scheme);

Existing niche Retailing and Specialist Shopping along High Street should be expanded upon.



Bridge Street junction will be redesigned to create pedestrian permeability between High Street and the Waterfront



Flagship Centre façade requiring improvement



# BANGOR TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

## ABBAY STREET / MAIN STREET





### 6.3 Area 2 – Abbey Street / Main Street

#### Role

Abbey Street and Main Street constitute the main arterial route into Bangor from Belfast and Newtownards. These streets perform a strong retail role but also include key community / ecclesiastical buildings, churches et al.

#### Key Principles

- to improve the quality of existing public realm;
- to improve the quality of shop frontages
- to respect the setting and character of protected buildings / structures
- to ensure the primacy of the centre for any new retail development.

#### Key Improvements

The main route into the town is divided into 2 character areas:

1. **Single frontage with parkland opposite.**
  - a gateway entrance at the road junction and increase visibility of the abbey wall through the car park;
  - the roundabouts would also act as artwork features;
  - the central tree avenue would be reinforced and a new unique lighting scheme would signal a bright and vibrant character;
  - the significant development in this section is an extended decked car park opposite the station with tunnel under the road for direct access;
  - Close up existing entrance onto Castle Park Avenue will improve traffic / pedestrian interface.
2. **Primary retail core of the town with double frontage, higher buildings.**
  - A major environmental improvement scheme along the length of High Street / Main Street;

- Improvements should be made to the junction of Hamilton Road and Main Street;
- Lighting and street trees along with a suite of street furniture, all of a very robust, high quality will revitalise the shopper experience;
- Active frontages must be encouraged along the length of the street and should be integral to any new development.

#### Development Opportunities

The following development opportunities are considered.

Opportunity	Code
Queen’s Parade ‘Development Opportunity Site’	D4
Lands to the rear of Asda - Car Park Area	D5
Existing North Down Borough Council Leisure Centre	D6
Shop Frontage Enhancement Scheme	D7
Main Street & Abbey Street Environmental Improvement Scheme	PR8
Road and Traffic Proposals at Main Street/Hamilton Road	PR9
Abbey Street ‘Decked Car Park’	PR10
Abbey Street Public Realm Improvements	PR11
Abbey Street Gateway Feature	PR12

**D4 – Queen’s Parade Development Opportunity Site**

This site is currently within the ownership of Karl Greenfarm Properties Ltd and the Department for Social Development (DSD).

The Masterplan recognises that DSD is currently considering a multi use redevelopment scheme on this site which was published at public consultation. A number of outline planning approvals have been granted on this site. The current use of the site is as surface car parking and large art panels / hoarding have been erected along Queen’s Parade to soften the visual impact of this large gap site.

**D5 – Lands to the Rear of Asda – Car Park Area**

This development opportunity site comprises surface level car parking to the rear of Main Street and a range of commercial and retail premises. Whilst principally used as surface level car parking in connection with Asda, consideration could be given to redevelopment potential of these lands and provision of a multi storey / level public car park with increased retail floor space. This would increase the retail potential to the south of the Main Street to reinforce the existing retail in this area.

This site is zoned within the Primary Retail Core of Bangor town centre.

Lands to the rear of the car park are defined by a significant wall which provides enclosure to the site.

**D6 – Existing North Down Borough Council Leisure Centre**

This development opportunity site constitutes the existing North Down Borough Council Leisure Centre which straddles Castle Park Avenue and Castle Park Road.

Although due for replacement with the Olympic sized Swimming Pool at Castle Gardens, the current facility still functions as a



D4 Queen’s Parade Development Opportunity Site



D5 Lands to the Rear of Asda - Car Park Area



D6 Existing North Down Borough Council Leisure Centre



PR10 Abbey Street Decked Car Park

Leisure Centre. Planning approval has been secured on the site for residential development. The site is zoned as Open Space and a Historic Garden and Demesne in the Draft BMAP North Down Area Plan proposals.

At the time of writing, North Down Borough Council are disposing of this site on the open market.

#### D7 – Shop Frontage Enhancement Scheme

A robust and imaginative shop frontage scheme would effectively improve existing shop frontages along Abbey Street and Main Street. Existing frontages, particularly Abbey Street lack any design co ordination or consistency. Improvements to shop frontages, signage, canopies, windows and fenestration treatment will upgrade and improve the townscape character of this area.

#### PR 8 - Main Street & Abbey Street Environmental Improvement Scheme

A major environmental improvement scheme is proposed for this arterial route into the heart of the town (See section 7 for details).

**PR9 - Road and Traffic Proposals at Main Street / Hamilton Road**  
Change to traffic flow at this junction underpins the reduction in traffic to the lower end of Main Street and will enhance the pedestrian quality of the town centre. (See details in Section 8)

#### PR10 – Abbey Street Decked Car Park

PR10 development opportunity site is presently defined by an existing surface level car park at Abbey Street. This area is divided into two areas; one area is operated by North Down Borough Council and the other, Translink Bangor. Due to the success of the combined Road / Rail facility, this car park is currently operating above its capacity. Consideration could therefore be given to the intensification of this car park with a sensitively designed car park ensuring



that views to / from the listed Castle were retained as part of the development proposal.

There should be a level of under build so as to protect the integrity and setting of Bangor Castle and the historic Gardens area. A roof top grass garden should be provided on top of the car park in the interests of screening and integration.

#### **PR11 - Abbey Street Public Realm Improvements**

As the main entrance into the town from Belfast, this street sets the quality for the new town centre. New signature lighting and paving will create a strong character and sense of arrival. The central reservation will be upgraded and new street trees planted to harmonise with adjoining the Castle Park. (See section 7 for details).

#### **PR12 – Abbey Street Gateway Feature**

Marking the start of the town centre there is the opportunity to mark the point with a significant piece of sculpture which relates to the Abbey itself. (See Section 7.3 Public Art Strategy for details)



Abbey Street in need of Public Realm Improvements



Existing Car Park which will become two storey with one below ground





## 6.4 Area 3 – Waterfront Development

### Role

Open Space / Outdoor Recreation, Public Space, Business and Commercial Leisure and Retail.

### Key Principles

- to retain the ‘Bangor Bay’ concept;
- to promote public access to the Waterfront area;
- to link the eastern and western ends of Bangor Bay,
- improve the quality of built form, open space and public realm.

### Key Improvements

- Connect key focal areas of the town;
- Develop a ‘necklace of activities’ around the promenade;
- Reinforce the traditional built form of the town encircling the bay and marina;
- Provide the infrastructure which supports the vision of Bangor as the ‘Kinsale of the north’
- Provide exciting recreational activities set within contemporary gardens;
- Provide cutting edge architectural design of pavilions set within the landscape to enhance the cafe culture and restaurant potential ;
- Consider a landmark tower lookout at the end of the pier;
- A new site for hotel / theatre with parking underneath;
- Major new plaza for major events and markets which can be partially used for parking when no events are planned;
- Boundary improvements to the boatyard;
- New pedestrian boulevard to the long hole;
- Promenade extension and circular walk around the long hole;
- Development of a sailing school by building an impounding wall.

The Waterfront / Queen’s Parade Area represents the most significant opportunity within Bangor Town Centre to address the

findings from the Health Check and Retail Capacity Study. The redevelopment of the Queen’s Parade site for high quality retail and mixed use will create the catalyst for regeneration throughout Bangor Town Centre. Without this anchor project capacity will continue to migrate out of town and so it is seen as the most fundamental “must have” in the Masterplan. This development will also provide increased car parking, a select range of new retail outlets. The product must be hugely desirable as a shopping destination to draw shoppers back from neighbouring towns. Queen’s Parade can provide the footprint for larger outlets as there is the space on the current site. This major development links retail, restaurants, housing and office space together in the heart of the town. It offers potential for medium to large office units of which there is a current deficit.

The Queen’s Parade development potential is of sufficient magnitude to substantially increase footfall and visitor numbers to the waterfront. This will be hugely beneficial to commercial / hotel / theatre viability in the Bay. Together these projects will raise the whole profile of the town as a destination by day and boost the evening economy significantly.

### Development Opportunities

The following development opportunities are considered:

Opportunity	Code
Theatre Development/ Hotel Development - Commercial Leisure	D10
The Long Hole Sailing Centre	D11
Waterfront Promenade Redevelopment	PR13
Waterfront Boat Yard Boundary	PR14
Gateway Features	PR15
Focal Points for the Pier and Long Hole	PR16
Queen's Parade /Bridge Street Environmental Improvement Scheme (in conjunction with D4 and D5)	PR17
Refurbishment of Pickie Fun Park	PR18
Marine Gardens	PR19
Civic Plaza	PR20
Jetty and public access to the waterfront	PR21

### D10 Theatre Development / Hotel Development – Commercial Leisure

The Commercial Leisure Capacity study undertaken as part of this Masterplan identifies the need for new theatre development / arts along the Seafront area. Indeed, North Down Borough Council has an active Arts / Tourism Campaign for this area. Whilst the site is zoned as an 'area of existing open space' in the Draft BMAP, the area is under utilised and in need of regeneration. Consideration would therefore be given to the Departments PPS8 policy i.e. the loss of existing open space and the setting of the listed McKee Clock Tower.

### D11 The Long Hole Sailing Centre

The Long Hole area is located on Seacliff Road and is within a tidal area, which is occasionally used for sporting and recreation purposes. Whilst this area is located outside the development limits of the town as defined in the Draft BMAP Plan, it is an integral part of the Seafront area.

Redevelopment options could include a new impounding wall, new walkway or public right of way and the potential for a slip way access from the Long Hole area to Bangor Bay.

Outdoor sports and recreation could be promoted within this area. Development criteria for the Long Hole would include:

- Impound the water with an attractive wall incorporating a walkway over, decorative railings and connection to the public footpath
- Extend promenade materials and themes to a new lookout point with art piece
- Integrate a new slip way into the promenade for use by sailing school
- Provide seating along walkway to view seascape as well as water based activities in the basin
- Establish a state of the art training facility for sailing which would include a new small sailing centre building.







Aspirational Images

### PR13 Waterfront Promenade Redevelopment

The existing promenade is dated and requires to be upgraded to integrate with the Marine Gardens and the wider Bangor Bay. It needs to link from Pickie round the entire bay through the civic plaza and continue around to the Long hole to fully exploit the facilities and be the cohesive link between them. It will be the thread holding the necklace of activities together. It should adopt the following development criteria:

- Resurface with high quality finish
- 'State of the art' lighting scheme with interactive feature elements
- High quality sea edge railings to RoSPA standards
- High quality seating along the route
- Integrated public art
- Design brand Bangor Bay as a destination with a maritime theme

The promenade extension along the eastern side of the bay could include pavilion type buildings of small scale within or beside the pedestrian routeway. Here there is scope to introduce tree planting to create a strong boulevard feel where the path is remote from the water's edge.



Aspirational Images









Aspirational Images



#### PR14 Waterfront Boat Yard Boundary

Whilst the provision of a boat yard is necessary as part of an operational marina, the current wire fencing presents an unattractive vista to the public car park and Quay Street area. The boundary should be enhanced in keeping with the promenade style theme.

#### PR15 Gateway Features

Strong, robust and clearly identified gateway features provide strong definition on exit and arrival of the existing town centre boundary. This will mark the arrival in Bangor from the coastal path.

#### PR16 Focal Points for the Pier and Long Hole.

The provision of focal points for the Pier and Long Hole ensure the preservation of attractive views of Bangor Marina and Bay.

#### PR17 Queen's Parade / Bridge Street Environmental Improvement Scheme \*in conjunction with D4 and D5\*

Environmental improvements are described in section 7.



### PR18 Refurbishment of Pickie Fun Park

North Down Borough Council has commissioned Consultants to upgrade the facilities for the fun park including a splash pad, Pirates 18 hole mini golf facility and improved café/toilets. The Park will reopen in March 2012. This is a very exciting rejuvenation of a much loved and visited facility from within the Borough and beyond. It will act as a real catalyst to the implementation of the Masterplan and give focus to the regeneration around the marina as a whole.



### PR19 Marine Gardens

The Gardens area offers significant recreation potential which can be intensified from its current park character. New facilities could be sensitively incorporated within the zone between the Queen's Parade and the Promenade as long as the open, pedestrian only aspect is retained. Development must be of the highest quality and the resulting space a delight to be in by day and by night when the lighting of the bay comes into its own. New feature lighting should create a real ambience for the promenader. If these goals are achieved the area will receive significant increase in footfall and generate spend in cafes, bars, restaurants and shops in the area. Development potential is illustrated on the accompanying mood boards. The rejuvenation of Marine Gardens is probably the most significant project within the Masterplan after the Queen's Parade development as it links Pickie Fun Park, the promenade walking route, the new civic square and the development site together to form a cohesive design. There is opportunity to make a real design statement here in place of the existing car park.

Contemporary garden spaces with vibrant planting, imaginative use of levels and provision of sitting areas will be a tranquil counterpoint to the range of potential new activities which can be introduced within the space. Incidental play activities, such as slides, skating, electric karts could be introduced in an imaginative manner. These activities would be complementary to Pickie Fun Park whilst extending the necklace effect around the waterfront. They may be temporary or permanent features. Diversity and change is important within this zone as people enjoy the walk through the area on broad walkways with open views to the marina and across the gardens. The pedestrian movements should be very permeable so that built form does not dominate but rather enhance the visitor experience.

The area is sufficiently large to be able to accommodate new pavilion style buildings within a landscape setting. These would act as

sculptural elements within a natural setting. The pavilions could be used as café/restaurants, leisure activities, arts spaces and niche retailing and would maximise the use of the area by day and evening as a destination. They would meet the architectural focus of seafront regeneration in the town. The pavilions would act as node points or focal points and be arranged to act as a foil against the strong historic street frontage encircling the bay and including Queen's Parade which will be the dominant new frontage.

The Marine Gardens should be developed to the highest standard of design using robust, sustainable materials and capable of withstanding very high usage. The materials should be complementary to the new streetscape but have a certain unique character that links the civic plaza and wider promenade together.

Imaginative decorative lighting can be used to good effect around the bay and within the gardens to create a lively atmosphere and bring colour into the night environment. The use of coloured lighting and sound has been successfully adopted in Gerland Park in Lyon which is now a renowned destination for the Lyonnais at night. The area has the advantage of being in a u-shaped curve and so the effect of lighting is accentuated as you walk along.

Public art should be a key feature of the gardens area as it will embellish its setting and provide an opportunity to link the ecclesiastical /historical aspects of the area within a modern interpretation.

The Waterfront / Queen's Parade Area represents the most significant opportunity within Bangor Town Centre to address the findings from the Health Check and Retail Capacity Study. The redevelopment of the Queen's Parade site for high quality retail and mixed use will create the catalyst for regeneration throughout Bangor Town Centre. Without this anchor project capacity will continue

to migrate out of town and so it is seen as the most fundamental “must have” in the Masterplan. This development will also provide increased car parking, a select range of new retail outlets. The product must be hugely desirable as a shopping destination to draw shoppers back from neighbouring towns. Queen’s Parade can provide the footprint for larger outlets as there is the space on the current site. This major development links retail, restaurants, housing and office space together in the heart of the town. It offers potential for medium to large office units of which there is a current deficit.

The Queen’s Parade development potential is of sufficient magnitude to substantially increase footfall and visitor numbers to the waterfront. This will be hugely beneficial to commercial / hotel / theatre viability in the Bay. Together these projects will raise the whole profile of the town as a destination by day and boost the evening economy significantly.



Aspirational Images



Aspirational Images







### PR20 Civic Park

Development of a major events space for the town flanked by the new theatre/hotel will provide a venue for a regular civic events programme.

The area will have the McKee clock as a focal point within it. Attractive seating, lighting, planting and flexible use paving will make it a pleasant space to be in even if events are not taking place. Markets and a degree of car parking can also be accommodated. The design should consider the following development criteria:

- Act as 'town square' and major events space for Bangor and District
- Be bounded on the north side by arts building / theatre / hotel
- Provide setting for McKee clock
- Integration of covered section for use by local market/events which would be under lit at night
- High quality paving capable of heavy loading to facilitate events and parking
- Space partially used for car parking which is easily regulated if the space is being used for events
- Plaza visually linked with building frontage on Bridge Street with traffic calming to allow pedestrian movement across the road
- New significant water feature element within the plaza which would create a dynamic attraction and enliven the space.
- Active frontage between the new arts building and plaza to promote visitor dwell time in the space and interaction between the inside and outside of the building.

The civic space should be integrated within the design for the Marine Gardens so that the boundary between the two areas is not evident and one flows naturally into the other.



Aspirational Images





#### PR21 Jetty and public access to the waterfront

Better access to the town from the water, via the civic plaza, can be created by providing a new, attractive jetty. This will be of particular use when cruise ships come to town. Once the vision for the Town is complete, visitors from the ships will be able to access a vibrant new town centre, niche shopping at Queen's Parade, waterside cafes and an attractive route to the historical parts of the town.

#### Additional Considerations

Consideration within the Masterplan could be given to:

- a. Grays Hill / Queen's Parade West / Princetown Road – Designation of a Conservation Area. Design Guidance could be produced for the preservation and enhancement of key buildings and spaces within this area;
- b. Grays Hill – Provision of Niche marketing i.e. Antiques Quarter. We recognise that previous studies have been undertaken in this area;
- c. Sensitive redevelopment of existing housing within Southwell Road / Dufferin Avenue and Primrose Street. This triangle of housing is zoned as a 'Protected Town Centre Housing Area'.

Redevelopment proposals could include:

- A Strategy to deal with the sub division of property / residential units and;
- 'LOTS' (Living above Shop Units).

## 6.5 Traffic and Parking

### Proposed Traffic, Roads and Car Parking Improvements

The following section sets out the proposed traffic, roads and car parking improvements proposed within the overall Masterplan process.

These improvements have been made following rigorous testing using the base traffic model prepared by JMP Consultants. Their model, with the agreement of DSD, accounted for future developments by using NRTF growth, as there was no committed development or infrastructure schemes that would impact on traffic flows.

#### Traffic Model Testing:

Two primary development scenarios were tested against the Masterplan and a range of highway schemes considered on both development scenarios.

- a) Masterplan scenarios prepared by URS Scott Wilson – 500 No. car parking spaces at Marine Gardens, one car park access off King Street, no car park off Bridge Street and doubling the size of Abbey Street car park.
- b) Private Developers Scenario (prepared by HR Architects) for Queen's Parade Development – 1000 no. car parking spaces, 250 no. spaces with access off Bridge Street, 750 no. spaces with access off King Street.

Particular attention was paid to Scenario (b) on the basis that if the schemes work for that scenario then they will work for the URS Scott Wilson option. The following changes were modelled:

- To allow right turns from Main Street to Hamilton Road and make Hamilton Road Two Way –installation of a right turn movement from Main Street to Hamilton Road at the Main street / Hamilton



road junction to allow eastbound traffic to route via Hamilton road instead of Main Street - Bridge Street - High Street. Through the modelling exercise, a potential signalised junction was devised which catered for two way movements on Hamilton Road which operated well in traffic terms and catered for pedestrians. The Castle Street / Hamilton Road junction was considered and right turns into and out of Castle Street would be banned. Right turn movements from Castle Street could be accommodated at streets to the east, and right turns to Castle Street could be accommodated via the Park Drive junction. It is proposed to ban right turns into side streets along Hamilton Road between Main Street and Mills Road. These streets will be accessed via alternative routes.

- Making Main Street more pedestrian friendly -Main Street will be enhanced and become a 'pedestrian friendly street' with widening of footways and catering for the needs of cyclists. Traffic flows would be reduced, in particular through traffic movements, thereby enabling potential enhancements to Main Street for pedestrians and cyclists
- Making Bridge Street One Way – To do so, has a 'knock on' effect of sending some traffic that would otherwise route from Quay Street to Queen's Parade down Mills Road. Two way traffic can be achieved by a single carriageway link from Quay Street to Main Street / Queen's Parade instead of the current elongated gyratory which has two lanes towards Quay Street and one lane towards Main Street. This gives scope for urban realm improvements / increased disabled parking bays etc on Main Street.
- Changes to Mill Road/Street – Mill Street is retained as a two way link south of Bingham Street. The section from Bingham Street to the car park can be made two way to facilitate access to the car park from Hamilton Road.
- Queen's Parade / Bridge Street / Shared Surface / 20mph zone-A key objective of the masterplan was to remove conflict between road users and pedestrians at Bridge Street and make

Queen's Parade, which fronts the marina, a better environment for pedestrians. Making Queen's Parade a safer and more pleasant environment will encourage people to work rest and play in this area and thus make the site more marketable.

### **Park and Ride Scheme**

Following detailed consideration, a park and ride system for Bangor Town Centre was not included as part of our Masterplan concept for the following reasons:

- The scheme will increase congestion in the local area particularly around Abbey Street. The main benefit of a park and ride scheme will be on the wider regional network i.e. the A2, not the local network.
- The traffic model is a local highway model and is not an appropriate tool for assessment of a multi-model regional scheme.
- We have no data or information on which to make a judgement of the impact of the park and ride. This leaves our assessment open to challenge.

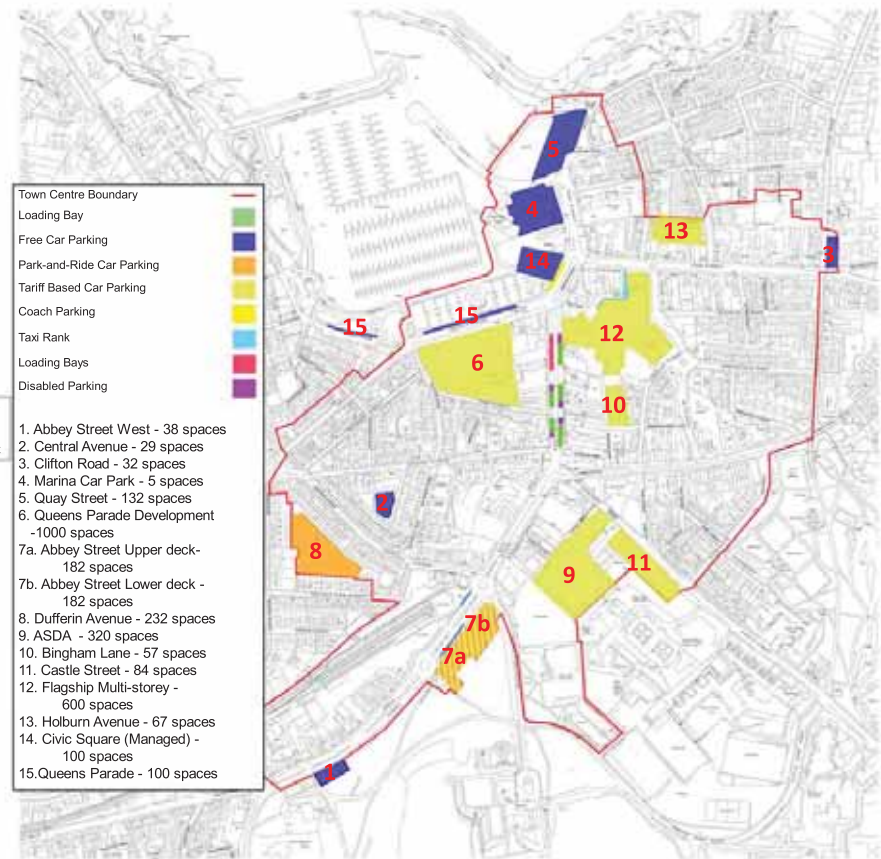
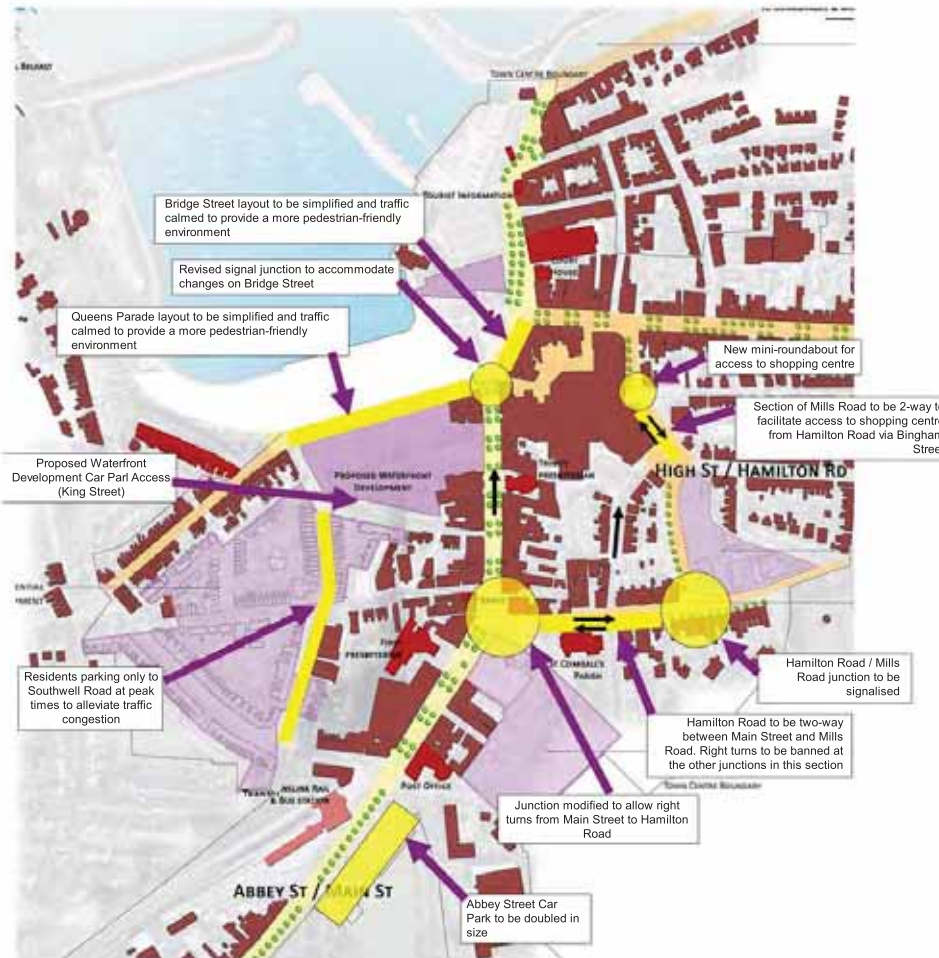
### **Changes to the Town Centre Road Network**

The following changes are proposed to the town centre road network in order to ensure the full delivery and implementation of the Masterplan:

- Hamilton Road / Main Street junction to be reconfigured to allow right turns from Main Street to Hamilton Road;
- Hamilton Road to be made a two way road between Main Street and Mills Road;
- Increased car parking capacity at Abbey Street car park in addition to re organised car parks associated with the marina development;
- Improvements to the pedestrian environment on Queen's Parade / Bridge Street;

# BANGOR TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

## TRAFFIC



The key positive impacts of the proposed Masterplan will include:

- A reduction in traffic flows on Main Street and Bridge Street as a result of allowing right hand turns to Hamilton Road at the Main Street / Hamilton Road junction
- Improved connectivity in the town centre , resulting in reduced journey times and distances across the town whilst reducing traffic volume from the retail core;
- Traffic calmed on Queen’s Parade and Main Street;
- Improved pedestrian environment and improved access between the retail core and the marina development.

#### Other Impacts

As a result of these proposals, the following may occur:

- Some roads will have an increase in traffic flow due to re-routing of traffic i.e. Hamilton Road. However, there is sufficient reserve capacity along this route to accommodate the increased flows;
- Overall the capacity to the road network is not predicted to be significantly affected by the Masterplan scheme;

#### Proposals Considered and Rejected

- The provision of two-way traffic from Hamilton Road to Bridge Street;
- Bridge Street one-way from main Street to High Street
- Mills Road two way from Hamilton Road to the Flagship Shopping Centre
- Southwell Road two way

In our opinion, all of the above options would compromise the overall performance of the roads network.

#### Car Parking Proposals

We recognise existing car parking provision within Bangor town centre. These include:

Car Park	Number of Spaces
Abbey Street West	38 no. spaces
Central Avenue	29 no. spaces
Clifton Road	32 no. spaces
The Marina Car Park	52 no. spaces
Quay Street	132 no. spaces
Queen’s Parade Redevelopment Scheme	1000 no. spaces
Abbey Street Car Park (Upper Deck)	182 no. spaces
Abbey Street Car Park (Lower Deck)	182 no. spaces
Dufferin Avenue	232 no. spaces
ASDA Car Park	320 no. spaces
Bingham Lane	57 no. spaces
Flagship Multi Storey Car Park	500 no. spaces
Holborn Avenue	67 no. spaces
Civic Square (Managed)	100 no. spaces
Queen’s Parade Car Park	100 no. spaces

#### Total Available Car Parking Available

Based on the above figures, 3023 no. car parking spaces have been provided for within the Masterplan.

#### Proposed Car Park Charging

Consideration of car parking proposals within Bangor town centre should be set against the back drop of the Department for Regional Developments proposal to introduce car parking charges for all major towns across the province including Bangor town centre.

DRD Roads Service hopes to raise £37.5m over the next four years

from extra car parking spaces. Extra parking costs are proposed coupled with a greater minimum charge.

Final Masterplan proposals should therefore give cognizance to these proposals which are due to be implemented next year.

### A Car Parking Strategy for Bangor Town Centre

#### Background

The Car Parking Strategy sets out a practical parking strategy which should inform and guide the future provision of car parking within the town centre. As an integral part of the transport system, parking is closely linked with the economy and, as a major use of land; it has significant influence on the design, density and quality of the urban environment.

This parking policy reflects regional and local planning policy which aims to moderate car travel and create more environmentally sustainable forms of urban development. Parking will continue to grow in importance as an area of public policy and professional practise because of the continuing trend to higher vehicle ownership.

Whilst Bangor town centre is serviced by a good range of public transport provision and functions as a traffic hub with the combined rail and bus centre, there is still a high dependency on the private car within the town centre. Whilst our Masterplan aims to focus on improving the quality and experience of public transport within the town centre, this Car Parking Strategy has been prepared in the belief that environmental, economic and social considerations need not be mutually exclusive.

#### Current Position

There are two types of parking within Bangor town centre, 'On Street' and 'Off Street' parking.

DRD Roads Service dictates that there are currently 731 no. individual car parking spaces within Bangor town centre. This strategy covers many types of parking and includes parking of cars, HGV's, motor homes, motor cycles, bicycles, coaches and buses.

The purpose of this strategy is to identify current car parking provision within Bangor town centre and develop both a medium and long term approach to the overall car parking strategy.

Proposed Measures include:

- Specialised Parking Zones
- 'Residents Only' Car Parking areas
- Dedicated 'disabled parking'
- Parking Control on Arterial Routes
- Deliveries, Lorry and Motor Home Parking
- Coach and Tourist Bus Parking
- Development Control for Parking Arrangements
- Enforcement and Decriminalisation

#### The Car Parking Strategy

To ensure that this Parking Strategy meets the aims of current regional and local planning policy, the over arching approach to transportation must be integrated with the following key documents and legislation:

- Current Government Policy;
- Current Transport Plans for North Down and Bangor Town Centre;
- Current Planning Policy and Guidelines;
- The Queen's Parade Re Development Proposal;
- Town centre, Retail and Residential schemes;
- The Disabled Discrimination Act (DDA).

Compliance with the above, regulated parking provision driven by a cohesive Strategy will ensure that demand for road space will be controlled and the number of cars which enter an urban area will be



controlled.

To do this requires skill, as there must be a satisfactory balance between the need for parking of residents, business uses and visitors alike.

The following key elements have been incorporated:

### 1. Parking Control on Arterial Routes

Arterial Routes into Bangor town centre radiate from the Bangor ring road. These include:

- the Groomsport Road;
- the Gransha/Donagahdee Road;
- Abbey Street/Belfast Road;
- Bryansburn/Crawfordsburn Road.

An essential component of congestion management is the control of street parking. A significant deal of congestion on strategic routes into and out of towns is caused by interruptions to traffic flows from vehicles moving into and out of on street parking spaces. In addition, the impact of right turning movements along these routes often reduces the flow of traffic. Consideration should therefore be given to urban clearways along these routes to facilitate the effective movement of traffic.

### 2. Harmonisation of Car Parking Charges

There is a need to ensure harmonization between parking charges for dedicated on street and off street car parking. It is natural for motorists to choose between accessibility of car parking, the cost of car parking or both. The trend of 'hunting' for on street car parking rather than use a dedicated off street car park contributes to unnecessary congestion in Bangor town centre and results in pollution and delays for service vehicles.



### 3. The Creation of Zoned Car Parking

A Zoned Car Parking Strategy is based on the creation of a central parking zone being for short stay on and off street parking for shoppers and visitors, an intermediate parking zone to include short stay parking and long stay parking for commuters; and an outer zone to include for commuters, long stay commuters and Park and Ride facilities (where appropriate).

The creation of Parking Zones ensures better and more efficient use of existing parking stock for the benefit of residents, users and the local economy.

The following measures could be adopted in respect of the zoned approach:

#### 1. On Street

- The Town Centre Zone will contain short stay spaces for parking up to 2 hours in close proximity to the town centre and to provide facilities for the less able. However, certain controls will be required within existing residential areas within the central Bangor area;
- The Intermediate Zone will contain medium parking spaces up to 4 hours;
- The Outer Zone will contain long stay parking stock primarily for commuter long stay parking. A satisfactory balance will be required between existing residents and commuter car parking;
- Income from pay and displays can be used to employ additional wardens.

#### 2. Off Street

- Car Parks can be designated as Long, Medium or Short Stay periods;
- High Street, Main Street and the Promenade to provide short term parking i.e. 30 minutes to 2 hours maximum stay);

- Fees for off street parking to be less than on street car parking to promote greater use of off street car parking;
- Outer Zone areas shall provide areas for long stay off street car parking (close to strategic routes or contiguous to the integrated bus/rail station at High Street.
- Provision shall be made for Coach Parking within the outer area of the town centre namely at the new leisure centre.

### 3. Charging Rates for Car Parking (both On Street and Off Street)

All current car parking charges for both on street and off street parking within Bangor town centre should be reviewed as a matter of urgency. Standardisation and harmonisation of all parking charges shall be introduced on the grounds of equity and fairness.

In order to meet required budget levels, any increases should be agreed as part of the overall budget process.

#### Aims and Objectives of the Car Parking Strategy

- To retain lowest short stay tariff is possible, ideally set slightly below that of on street charges as soon as possible;
- Apply the zoned approach by increasing long stay tariff in town centres sites to encourage use of out of town sites, and this set lower rates on sites out of town. In each case the balance must be applied to endeavour to achieve a 85 per cent occupancy rate at peak times in each type of designated car park thereby achieving high utilisation and a reasonable level of availability;
- Restrict stay time allowed as part of the zoned approach, to allow for the introduction of designated car parks;
- Have a uniform overall charging time throughout the area. This can include Sundays, Bank Holidays and may be variable depending on local requirements;
- Where feasible, introduce discounted rates and incentive schemes with local traders and hoteliers. This may include discount cards;
- Structure charges that may encourage users to visit car parks

- when they are least busy;
- Charge all users in fee paying car parks including disabled badge holders;
- Apply 24 hour charging for all long stay sites;
- Where there are car parks associated with privately owned new developments

### **Residents Only Car Parking**

Many motorists assume they will be able to park their vehicles within a reasonable distance of their home or their destination. Finding a space in areas of high demand such as town centres and primary shopping area is becoming increasingly difficult as car ownership continues to grow. Even in residential neighbourhoods, the demand for parking spaces often exceeds the amount of space available.

The primary function of the highway is for the movement of traffic. There is not a right to park on the highway or to use a particular parking space on a section of the highway where parking is permitted. However, parking is allowed where this does not impinge on the movement of traffic or where it does not create safety hazards or obstruct access to property or for emergency vehicles or cause damage to the fabric of the highway.

To this end, the Masterplan proposes the Southwell Road/Dufferin Avenue area as a residents only parking zone.

### **Dedicated 'Disabled Parking'**

Adequate car parking provision should be made for dedicated disabled persons in the town centre.

Disabled car parking should be provided for along High Street, Abbey Street, Main Street and Queen's Parade. Adequate disabled car parking shall be also provided for at public buildings i.e. the combined rail/bus station, main churches, shopping centres and

community centres et al.

### **Commercial Deliveries / Lorry / HGV Parking**

To ensure the minimal disruption of HGV loading / unloading and delivery of commercial vehicles, dedicated parking bays have been provided for in the Masterplan.

Time restrictions shall be imposed on these bays to ensure that parking is not restricted for other users in the evenings or at the weekends.

Such restrictions shall be imposed on Queen's Parade, High Street, Main Street, Abbey Street and King Street.

### **Coach and Tourist Bus Parking**

Bangor town centre attracts a significant number of coach and tourist bus parking due to the numerous public recreation attractions.

The town is presently devoid of dedicated coach parking. This presents issues in relation to off loading / on loading coaches particularly in the summer months.

Dedicated coach drop off/ pick up points has been identified along Quay Street and Bridge Street.

Dedicated out of town bus parking sites should be provided for due to the lack of suitable venues within the town centre boundary.

### **Taxi Ranks**

Dedicated taxi ranks shall be provided at dedicated areas within the town centre. These have been clearly annotated on the Masterplan concepts.

### **Improved Information for Customers**

Proposed activities planned:

- to update and modernise the provision of car park signage;
- to make available comprehensive and up to date IT information on the car park service through the Councils web site;
- to review direction signage for off-street car park;
- Explore provision of visitor information at key car parks.

### **Enforcement and Decriminalisation**

The Masterplan must participate in the decriminalisation of 'on street' parking enforcement regulations and implement a coordinated enforcement service for both 'on street' and 'off street' situations.

The Council should consider adopting powers to undertake decriminalised parking enforcement.

A review of fines should be undertaken to ensure consistency with other towns in the province.

### **Development Control for Parking Arrangements**

Existing and proposed car parking must comply with the Departments design guidance and current car parking standards. These include:

- Planning Policy Statement 3 'Access, Movement and Parking'
- 'Parking Standards' (PPS3 Addendum).
- Development Control Advice Note 10 'Access for People with Disabilities'

### **Additional Comments**

A Park and Ride facility was considered from Bangor Town Centre Seafront to North Down Borough Councils new Leisure Centre facility. However, this option was rejected on the basis of access and ability of shuttle buses to get to and from it in a circular route.



## 7 Town Centre Environmental Improvements

### 7.1 Regeneration Objectives

These include:

- to enhance the quality of life for Bangor's residents;
- to maintain and enhance Bangor's historic character and identity;
- develop a sustainable economy based on existing strengths;
- develop Bangor as a leading tourism destination
- develop a sustainable transportation network.

### 7.2 Townscape

A detailed townscape analysis was undertaken as part of this Masterplan process. The townscape features identified in this report (included in the appendix of this report) should form part of any consideration for future interventions or initiatives in the Bangor Bay area. This will avoid further deterioration whilst also maximising the positive potential for the benefit of the area

#### Public Realm Improvements

The public realm and built environment of any town sets the initial perception of a place for visitors to an area. The architectural integrity of the street facades and how well kept the buildings are provide the visual framework of the streetscape as a space and reference its inherent quality. The streetscape finishes also need to be of high quality and well maintained to unify the whole. Both buildings and street environment together generate a sense of place and create the character of the town centre.

In order to achieve the aims of the Masterplan, extensive public realm improvements are proposed as the town centre lacks visual cohesion, a quality image and does not portray a town which has moved forward to offer what it takes to be a major economic destination. The proposed improvements cover the following streets:

- Abbey Street
- Main Street
- High Street
- Queen's Parade / Bridge Street
- Mills Road
- Hamilton Road) Secondary level scheme
- Grays Hill

#### Design Quality Indicators

As evidenced from similar town centres which have undergone environmental improvements, it is vitally important to ensure that the components of the street environment can be measured against the following criteria:

- Complement the inherent character of the town, its principal buildings and / or the environment in which it is situated including its heritage.
- their long term sustainability
- be distinctive from other schemes
- have design elegance so that over time the scheme does not become dated
- meet the requirements of DDA and Statutory Authorities

As with any good design it is the simplicity of a scheme without being

bland which will be key to its success.

The town centre does not have heritage style indicators remaining from which to draw upon. Old photographs of the town show standard width kerbs with some evidence of setts at entries. As none of these features remain in any quantity there is justification for a new design palette to be introduced.

The key components of the streetscape scheme will include the following elements

#### 1. Paving and kerbs

The paving choice needs to consider the colour of local building stone, how it reflects the light both wet and dry, the size of the paving units in scale with the width of streets and pavements. The kerb is often seen as a functional item rather than a feature. It however can instil an air of grandeur if wide and chunky and more modest if narrower.

#### 2. Street Lighting

As a very visual item both by day and night the style of the lighting can create a dramatic impression. The light levels for the centre of the town are set by DRD Roads Service and will be category CE1 with 40% uniformity. Due to the differing scales of streets a lighting style will have to be adaptable to a range of mounting heights in each location.

#### 3. Street Furniture

Seats, bins, signage, bollards and cycle racks are the normal components of an EI scheme. The number of items required needs to match the volume of use and scale of the space. Seats provide welcome opportunity to rest for older citizens as well as the less mobile whilst also affording the chance to linger and act as a meeting place. A suite of furniture needs to reflect the new character of the

space and be robust to withstand abuse.

#### 4. Planting

- Trees – street trees can provide a unifying feature along a street and help create a strong identity to the space. Their integration requires co-ordination with underground services, street lights and CCTV cameras. Arguments against trees commonly cite leaf drop as a negative but they add significantly to the biodiversity and greening of town centres, filter particulates and improve air quality. The Castle Demesne with its mature trees bounds Abbey Street and creates a real sense of place. This can be extended into the town to complement its setting and heritage.
- Ornamental displays / hanging baskets – seasonal colour can add dramatically to the appeal of a town. As a regular competitor in a “Town in Bloom” the new design of the streetscape should give due recognition to meeting the objectives of this scheme.
- Vertical Gardens – the recognised proponent of vertical gardens is Patrick Blanc with many European examples of his work featured regularly in prestigious schemes. This is a unique “plant / art” form and is especially useful where space is limited or building facades are bland or ugly. There is scope to introduce this as a feature in the existing fabric of the town and also in new buildings such as in arts centre / theatre or hotel or within the Queen’s Parade Development.

The priority areas are:

1. Main Street – junction with Hamilton Road subject to DRD Roads Service implementation of traffic proposals.
2. Abbey Street
3. High Street

with Queen's Parade, Hamilton Road and Mills Road being determined by the new development programme and DRD Roads Service implementation of new traffic proposals respectively. Resurfacing footpaths on Grays Hill will be low cost and could be undertaken through a minor works programme.

There is advantage in co-ordinating the palette of materials, paving sizes and specification across the whole scheme so that economics of scale in purchasing materials and long term maintenance is maximised. The same applies to the street lighting design across the town centre.

#### Recommendations:

- Early dialogue with DRD Roads Service to take forward feasibility of traffic proposals to outline design and statutory consultation process.
- Consultant team is appointed to provide a detailed design for Main Street and Abbey Street and approve the palette of materials.
- Apply for Planning Permission for the above scheme so that it is ready for implementation.

### 7.3 Public Art Strategy

#### Public Art Strategy for Bangor

Public art is recognised as providing interest, relevance and embellishment to a place. It provides local context and can become part of the formal or informal way finding of an area. There are a number of different types of public art:

1. Set piece art- this is the most common form where a object is prominently displayed such as a statue or centrepiece
2. Infrastructure art- where common objects such as seats, bollards and fencing become art works in their own right through embellishment or unique design.

3. Temporary art- pieces which are only relevant to the place in which they are displayed for a short period of time, such as during construction, on hoardings or as transient pieces which move on to different locations or break down over time.

All of these are relevant to a town and help to create its sense of place. The role of an arts strategy in raising the quality of a place should not be underestimated. It is a vital component to the regeneration strategy for the town and needs to be reviewed regularly to ensure that opportunities are not missed for commissioning new works.

The main opportunities for art features within the town centre are:

- Gateway features in combination with light and paving to mark the entrances to the town centre. These are located at the main road or path junctions which identify the limits of the town centre Masterplan. These may be realised in a number of different ways but should be of sufficient scale to be easily identifiable from the surrounding urban context. The features should interpret their surroundings and/or have the Christian heritage and maritime themes as their inspiration.
- Traffic junctions/roundabouts are highly visible and punctuate the Main Street. Currently dramatic floral displays mark these points. The season colour is a welcome addition to the street. New artworks could be commissioned to form the centrepieces to the roundabouts with associated plantings to set them off as part of an integrated design.
- McKee Clock located at the bottom of Main Street is a focal point and important part of Bangor's history. In its current setting it becomes rather lost in among the tree planting and paving. The new civic plaza needs to be designed with its location at the forefront so that it is given due prominence within the new place and that it can be seen as an object in space. The paving design may reflect its position or be embellished around the base area to

mark its significance.

- The new streetscape improvements offer significant opportunity to provide infrastructure art as part of the new design. New seats, bollards and lighting as well as tree surrounds, decorative railings and paving can be part of an arts trail and be commissioned as a unique part of the new layer of the Town's fabric.
- Lighting effects such as projection techniques, use of colour, carpets of light in paving, lasers and feature lighting on buildings are a further layer of the art strategy which adds a further dimension to the town at night and where developed strongly can be a real reason to visit the town centre in the evening.
- The Marine Gardens area including the waterfront and piers should have public art woven into the fabric of the new design and provide a number of features along the length of the promenade both large and small which encourage exploration, interpretation and fun for those enjoying the walk.
- Unobtrusive building facades can be treated in a sculptural manner using the horticultural artist, Patrick Blanc's marvellous vertical carpets of plants.

Development of the public arts strategy should reflect all strands of the Town's Tourism strategy by linking areas together, reinforcing themes and marking places within the town. The Walled Garden has two recently commissioned artworks which enriches the quality and experience of the garden.

Over time, a new arts trail can be developed, which can be used as an introduction to many facets of the town's history, development and renewal. Art helps to generate a sense of civic pride of place. There are many opportunities to include the public in some of the projects. Competitions in schools are a good method to gain ownership in a project as many can be involved at a range of level.

#### Recommendation

- A public arts coordinator is appointed to bring forward a detailed Public Arts Strategy for the town and overview the implementation of artwork as part of capital projects.

The following matrix identifies the areas to be covered by public realm improvements and outlines a concept for the nature of work to be undertaken in these areas:



Project Location	Paving / Kerbs	Lighting	Street Furniture	Planting
Abbey Street	Broad stone kerbs. Extra size kerbs to central reservation. Mix of small and large element stone paving.	10-12m contemporary columns in centre of road with twin headed lamps. Banner and basket brackets.	Occasional use of furniture suite, concentrated at car-park and Abbey.	Large street trees along central reservation. Hanging baskets. Displays in roundabouts.
Main Street	Broad stone kerbs. Large element stone paving.	10-12m contemporary columns at kerb-line with road and pedestrian lamps. Banner and basket brackets.	Volume to reflect usage – furniture suite along length of street.	Large street trees in pavements close to road edge. Hanging baskets. Vertical wall planting.
High Street	Standard kerbs width stone. Mix of small and large element stone paving.	6-8m contemporary columns at kerb-line. Banner and basket brackets.	Occasional use of furniture suite.	Small Street trees in pavements close to road edge. Hanging baskets.
Queen's Parade / Bridge Street	Broad stone kerbs. Large element stone paving.	10-12m contemporary columns at kerb-line with road and pedestrian lamps. Banner and basket brackets.	Volume to reflect design of new development and complement Marine Gardens.	Large street trees / vertical wall planting. Hanging baskets.
Mills Road	Standard width stone kerbs. Small element stone trim with resin bonded gravel. Colour to match or contrast stone.	8-10m contemporary columns at kerb-line.	Bollards / cycle racks may be required.	Small street trees. Vertical wall planting at Flagship Centre.
Hamilton Road	Standard width stone kerbs. Small element stone trim with resin bonded gravel. Colour to match or contrast stone.	6-8m contemporary columns at kerb-line.	Bollards / cycle racks may be required.	Small street trees.
Grays Hill	Standard width stone kerbs. Small element stone paving.	6-8m columns or wall mounted lamps.	None	Hanging baskets.

## 8 Promotional/ Marketing Strategy

### 8.1 Principles for Promotion of the Town Centre

Delivery of the Masterplan will reposition Bangor as an attractive, distinctive and focused town centre. However, the town's ability to attract investment and visitors and to capture additional expenditure is dependant on the delivery of the Masterplan and how it communicates the changes which are occurring. Developing and promoting a brand for the town is key to this:

#### Successful Approaches

Other town centres in the UK have developed integrated regeneration and 'place marketing' strategies which have enabled new place 'brands' to be created as strategic projects are delivered.

#### Lessons Learned

- Successful town centres have invested time and research to establish a clear brand identity;
- Brand identities need to be grounded in reality – the experience of a town centre needs to match the brand and any promotional activity, including private sector representatives;
- Successful town centres have established dedicated budgets for marketing and promotional activities;
- An events programme, tailored to the brand identity has often been implemented.

#### Implications for Bangor

We would advise that Bangor should not look to simply replicate the approach taken by other towns, but rather to develop a brand

identity and marketing strategy which responds directly to its own unique selling points. In the context of the Masterplan, these have been assessed as:

- the history of the town and its heritage;
- The Marina, Promenade, Bangor Bay and Waterfront area;
- Monastic origins / Christian Heritage and St. Patrick's Trail;
- Tourism offer and attractions;
- Open Space / sport and recreation;
- Niche shops and sub – regional shopping offer;
- The provision of high quality residential development;
- Its credentials as an alternative business location to Belfast which is highly accessible and has a high quality environment for business.

Bangor town centre has already established brand identity as 'Lets Go' which reflects its reputation for open space, sport and recreational facilities. This brand does fit with the vision for the Town Centre Masterplan as a multi functional place where people can live, work, and shop and enjoy leisure time.

The challenge in terms of promoting the Masterplan is therefore not developing a separate brand identity rather promoting opportunities for development and investment within the context of this established brand.

A secondary challenge is ensuring that people are continually updated on the key projects and improvements for the Town Centre's offer. On the basis that the 'Lets Go' marketing will progressively

promote opportunities for shopping, leisure, recreation and culture in the town, the focus of any additional promotional activity should be targeted at:

- Investors;
- Developers;
- Businesses that might potentially relocate in the Town Centre.

#### Marketing the Masterplan

Opportunities to market the Masterplan strategic projects are identified below:

#### **The Marina / Marina**

As the centrepiece of the Masterplan, it is recommended that the improvements to the Marina, seafront and promenade are actively promoted through the local and regional media. There is an opportunity to create an event space around McKee's Clock Tower which could host events such as markets selling speciality goods (such as gourmet food / farmers market or arts / crafts / antiques etc). Any such activity should also include Upper and Lower Main Street as well as High Street in order to maximise the impact on Bangor's principal shopping streets.

Bangor Marina is one of Ireland's largest and holds the prestigious Five Anchors and Blue Flag awards; is situated in the centre of the town and boasts over 500 berths. Running along side the marina is the promenade with beautiful views and Pickie Family Fun Park. This area is the site of the big summer fun fair. The regeneration

of Bangor seafront to include a Winter Garden area will effectively consolidate the promenade and Marina as an area of public recreation. A regenerated Marina, Promenade and Winter Garden will provide a firm basis for holding regatta, sailing series and championship events throughout the season.

#### **Main Street / High Street – Centre of Retail Excellence**

Main Street and High Street are the two main principal shopping streets within Bangor town centre. In the medium term, the development of Main Street and the proposed Queen's Parade Retail development offer a unique opportunity to change shopper's perceptions of the town centre and its retail offer. The vibrancy of Upper Main Street should be consolidated and extended to Lower Main Street. High Street is home to a range of specialist / niche shops. These should be consolidated and expanded upon as part of the regeneration process.

To complement any retail operator promotional activity, it is recommended that marketing is undertaken in local and regional media to publicise the changing nature of shopping in Bangor Town Centre

#### **Christian Heritage**

Bangor town centre has been at the centre of Ireland's Christian Heritage trail. Following the foundation of Bangor Abbey in 558AD by St Comgall, Bangor grew to become one of the most important seats of learning in Ireland. St Comgall's disciple, St Columbanus along with 12 companions set out for the continent where they

founded monasteries at Anagray, Luxeuil and Fontaines. Since that time, Bangor has been attacked by Vikings, settled by Scottish Planters and developed as a seaside town. Bangor town centre also has links with St. Patrick and the St. Patrick's trail including Bangor, Downpatrick and Armagh City. Significant architectural buildings such as Bangor Abbey and First Bangor Presbyterian should be promoted as an integral part the Masterplan. It is recommended that North Down Borough Council co-ordinate a targeted campaign and provide an effective marketing campaign.

### **Tourism**

Restoring Bangor town centre as a destination of tourism excellence is a long term objective of the Masterplan. However, in the short term, it will be necessary to raise commercial awareness of the tourism prospects for this area and to test appetite for delivery. In the short term, this can be achieved through the Masterplan 'launch' but it is also recommended that a focus group of developers is consulted in the short to medium term.

### **Residential**

Bangor town centre is historically renowned as an attractive place to live, work and enjoy. Bangor's distinctive 'Bangor Bay' provides rich diversity of late Victorian residential properties that make a strong contribution to the character and townscape quality of the town.

A number of listed terraces are located along Clifton Road and Holborn Avenue and a number of Protected Housing Areas are located within the town centre.

The Masterplan should aim to consolidate these housing areas and aim to stimulate and enrich the residential building stock. Design guidance shall be provided for key residential opportunity / redevelopment sites to ensure that new residential development respects the continuous and 'tightly built' frontage of the bay, strong

vertical proportions of the town and consistent building lines.

This will ensure that new residential development contributes to the quality of the urban environment. Consideration will also be given to 'LOTS' (Living above Shop Units) and the control of the sub division of residential properties into flats and apartments. Guidance similar to that published by the Department for South Belfast Holylands could be provided to ensure that residential areas do not lose their intrinsic character. Working closely with estate agents / surveyors / housing agents and statutory agencies such as Planning Service DoE and The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) the aim of the Masterplan will be to restore the primacy of Bangor town centre as an attractive, distinctive and inspirational place to live.

### **General Marketing Recommendations**

In order to prosper, Bangor needs to become a high quality town by the sea as opposed to a seaside resort. The town should stop considering itself as a resort as it implies focus on a type of activity and a quality of activity that is no longer in tune with what people want. An events programme should be used to attract visitors, change the town's image and stimulate business clusters.

In order to achieve this, we would envisage:

- the establishment of a Masterplan working group, which could include major developers and retail operators and cultural industries representatives. The remit of this group will be to strategically plan and implement marketing activity in support of the Masterplan. This group will also manage a dedicated budget for marketing and promotion.
- The current NDBC resource should be expanded to ensure that all developments, events and attractions are appropriately marketed.

This would include the establishment of:

- A dedicated budget for regional, UK and international marketing.



This budget may combine funding contributions from private sector partners in the town centre as well as the Council;

- Consideration of forms of subvention funding in order to attract new events to the town centre.



Easter Parade



Sea Bangor Festival



Snow Patrol Concert



Tall Ships

## 9 Delivery and Implementation

### 9.1 Implementation / Benefits / Realisation Plan

The Masterplan sets out a comprehensive programme of proposals and improvements that will transform the prospects for Bangor Town Centre over the next fifteen years. Current evidence shows that there is some private sector interest in the development of the town. That interest has to be nurtured and encouraged, but it is essential that DRD, DOE, DSD and the Council play their part by seeking the right mix of development and by securing the high quality development expected by the Masterplan.

Bangor Town Centre has entered into a period in its development where opportunities for change and regeneration can be realised. These are outlined in the Masterplan and accompanying Action Plan. Together, they have the potential to increase the attractiveness of the Town Centre, provide additional retail and residential development, and improve key public spaces and deliver new cultural and leisure facilities.

#### Introduction

The Action Plan identifies specific organisations that will have a role to play in the delivery of specific projects. However, it will be important to set in place the over arching structure and organisation(s) who can take responsibility for driving forward and co-ordinating delivery of the Masterplan, tracking its progress and where necessary, updating (finding alternative priorities or delivery means where the originally envisaged approach may change).

There are a number of organisations playing an important role in Bangor Town Centre, including:

- North Down Borough Council;
- Bangor Town Centre Chamber of Trade;
- Bangor and Holywood Town Centre Management; and
- The Department for Social Development (DSD).

There are also a range of others involved, including private businesses, landowners and public agencies, such as Libraries NI and the Department for Regional Development.

These individual groups will be consumed into an overall over arching new 'Town Partnership' with the main task of implementing the plan.

#### The Review of Public Administration

In looking at structures to take forward the Masterplan, it will be important to consider the changing political context. As a result of the Review of Public Administration (RPA) a range of functions are likely to transfer to local government. These will include:

- Development Management and Development Plan;
- Preparation of Regional Area Plans;
- Rural development;
- The public realm aspects of local road functions;
- Urban regeneration and community development;
- A range of housing related functions;
- Local economic development, and
- Tourism.

North Down Borough Council will have a leading role to play in taking forward and delivering the Bangor Town Centre Masterplan irrespective of the full implementation of RPA.

### A Challenging Economic Climate

In considering the implementation of the Masterplan, consideration should also be given to the current economic climate. The world wide recession triggered in 2007, has brought an end to the lengthy period of property investment that has helped to regenerate many town centres across Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK over the last decade. Regeneration and property investment is likely to very different going forward, and local councils will need to step up to their role and play a stronger and more direct role in urban regeneration.

In conjunction to this, public spending is likely to experience downward pressure in forthcoming years. Central Governments Spending Review which was announced in October 2010 is an attempt to reduce debt over the long term period. Therefore, as well as the additional powers and resources that RPA will bring, existing Councils will have to consider additional financial tools, revenue raising options and delivery mechanisms to help them fulfil their bigger regeneration role.

Across the United Kingdom, a range of innovative delivery approaches and financial mechanisms have been considered and developed in recent years (e.g. Urban Regeneration Companies, Business Improvement Districts, Local Asset Backed Vehicles), and

new ones continue to emerge to respond to changing circumstances.

A number of delivery options exist and include:

- Mainstream Council delivery;
- Informal partnerships;
- Contractual partnerships; and
- Corporate partnerships (including Special Purpose Vehicles).

### Delivery Mechanisms

Creating viable mechanisms for the delivery of proposals will be fundamental to accomplishing the Vision set out within this Masterplan. Proposals have been made throughout Bangor Town Centre including land in private and public ownership.

### Privately Owned Land

The process will take place through negotiation or the disposal of interests via the open market. More complex projects involving multiple private ownerships must establish a co-ordinated approach to realise regenerative and commercial benefits. Site specific plans are to be encouraged, taking the principles outlined within this Masterplan to a further level of detail. Consultation with key public sector agencies from the outset will be an important element of this process.

### Publicly Owned Land

Publicly owned land may be the key to unlocking the regeneration potential in Bangor Town Centre. In such circumstances, the disposal of sites must be carefully considered so that the regenerative return

is fully maximised. An effective means is through the production of Development Briefs. Based on the principles of this Masterplan, they enable sites to be realised on the market on a competitive basis but with clear conditions based on type and style of development to be taken forward. Undertaken correctly, this gives a degree of control over the project with regards to maximising its regenerative impact, without stifling commercial viability of the project.

### Estimated Time Frames

The overall timescale to develop the town centre 'vision' encapsulated within the Masterplan will extend over a number of years. Some elements of the Plan will be more suited to meet short and medium term goals, while other areas may be more appropriate for development in the longer term. Indeed, the addition to the specific proposals contained within the Masterplan, a number of areas are identified as having longer term development potential.

The detailed phasing of the development proposals needs to be examined further as there will, for example, be issues relating to disturbance of existing occupiers, temporary arrangements during the construction phase, access to existing properties, parking provision, traffic flows etc as well as provision of construction compounds.

### Development Principles

Whilst the most appropriate means of delivering regeneration services goes beyond the scope of this study, certain principles should apply when overseeing the delivery of the Masterplan and the regeneration of Bangor Town Centre. The delivery structure that is chosen should be the one that best meets the following principles:

#### Build Upon Existing Partnerships and Successes

North Down Borough Council is charged with Town Centre Development and will be responsible for the delivery and implementation of new Town Partnerships and Masterplan. The

Council will be involved in every step of the Masterplan process.

The Policy Unit within the Councils Development Department is charged with Town Centre Development and will be charged with the delivery and implementation of the Masterplan. The Council will be involved in every step of the Masterplan process.

The Council will be charged with determining a new 'Town Partnership' approach which will ensure maximum stakeholder buy in and engagement into the delivery process. Good work in recent years has ensured strong relationships with the Chamber of Trade, and the Private and Public sector stakeholders. This provides a platform for a Future Town Centre Partnership. Council will establish an implementation team comprising representatives from North Down Borough Council, Department of Social Development, Town Centre Partnership, DRD Roads Service, DOE Planning Service, and Strategic Investment Board and take forward the implementation Action Plan.

#### Access to the Required Resources

In a context of limited public and private funding and investment, the structure should look to maximise the level of funding that it can attract. The ability to access and hold funding can influence the choice of delivery structure. Independent bodies can sometimes access funding that Councils cannot. Corporate entities can hold assets, capture value and potentially access third party funding and borrowing. The potential and required sources of funding to deliver the Masterplan should help to determine that structure. In order to ensure that the staff and resources are available when required, the structure should have effective management and monitoring processes and systems in place



## Inclusion

Key stakeholders the Partnership should look to engage include:

- The Private Sector – Most of the Masterplan will need to be delivered by the private sector, and most of the organisations within the town centre are private businesses. It is therefore essential that the private sector have a central and influential role to play in any delivery structures or organisations. Private sector representation within specific delivery organisations can be a powerful tool. Specifically, it can act at times as a counter balance to the political pressures that such organisations can – and often do – face. Depending on the strength and quality of the individuals concerned, the private sector can be particularly helpful in keeping such organisations focused on tasks and outcomes, bringing together skills and expertise from business or other backgrounds.
- A Range of Different Public Sector Bodies - Even with additional functions being transferred to the Council under RPA, there will be many public services and functions that will remain with public bodies outside the Council. Many of these bodies will have a role to play in the regeneration of the town centre and should therefore be engaged in the delivery structures. As well as engaging these bodies in the structures, the Council and other public bodies should also seek to align their mainstream service delivery and policies with the objectives of the Masterplans; and
- The Community – Whilst Community involvement is a recent phenomenon, involvement has emerged as a key requirement of success in regeneration delivery structures. This extends beyond just consultation and focuses on organisational commitment to working with local people and businesses. In relation to Bangor town centre, it is important not only to engage the community within the town, but also those in its wider hinterland. It will be important that those within the wider surrounding area feel an ‘ownership’ of the town centre.
- Sustainable Approach – The funding and resources required to support delivery may come from within mainstream services and

budgets. Funding should ideally be secured (and ear marked specifically for implementing the Masterplan) for as many of the initial years as possible. This will help to generate sufficient momentum to deliver the plan.

The delivery structure should be developed and enabled to generate and capture funding and value as part of the process of delivering the Masterplan. Not only will this help to sustain the structure, but it can also act as an incentive to deliver. In setting out a Masterplan for Bangor Town Centre, the DSD, Council and many additional stakeholders recognise the importance of realistic targets, a strategic and sustainable plan for Bangor and delivering tangible changes regularly over period of time which future proofs Bangor town centre. The most appropriate structure for overseeing delivery of the Masterplan will need to be determined by the Council and their partners depending upon what approach best can meet the principles outlined above

The choice includes:

- Can the Masterplan be delivered by the existing Council?
- Delivery through a new ‘Town Partnership’ – The Council can determine an appropriate structure to deliver the Masterplan proposals.

## Public Sector Interventions

It is vital, going forward, that North Down Borough Council and the DSD make the case for public sector interventions including:

- Public realm and infrastructure improvements;
- Planning control and design guidance
- Town Centre Management
- Direct business support e.g. shop front improvements / grants / LOTS (Living above Town Shops), Heritage Lottery Funding and land transactions – land sale, acquisition and assembly; and
- Delivery of Events and Festivals.

### Public Realm and Infrastructure Improvements

It is widely known that towns compete for residents, businesses and visitors based on the quality of life they can offer. A key determinant of this quality of life is the quality of the place and the public realm within it. The condition and appearance of some of the public spaces within Bangor town centre is in significant need of improvement.

URS Scott Wilson has undertaken a series of environmental schemes across the province, most recently in Newcastle, County Down and Armagh City, County Armagh. Successful regeneration projects are often those that make the greatest use of the streetscape and existing buildings and introduce complementary new development to fill the gap sites. If the scheme is delivered to a high enough standard, the benefits may be felt by the town as a whole, not just a street or square.

A distinctive development of public realm or iconic artwork/image can become synonymous with a town and impact positively on its capacity as a shopping, business, tourism and recreational location. The Councils existing Public Art Strategy will progress this further.

### Planning Management and Specific Design Guidance

An Urban Design Guide for Bangor town centre would assist in the introduction of a more coordinated approach to town centre, streetscape and shop frontage design. A dedicated design guide should be developed and agreed before design options for targeted public realm upgrades are developed. Typically, the design guide should:

- Set out the style for forthcoming public realm upgrades and ensure there is consistency between these and subsequent upgrades elsewhere in the town centre;
- Allow for a certain degree of design 'flexibility' within each distinct area of Bangor town centre i.e. High Street, Main Street, Hamilton Road and Queen's Parade;

- Identify simple but robust materials which are cheap to maintain and are easily available;
- Identify designs that reflect and enhance the local character of Bangor town centre, strongly influenced by its heritage, hinterland townscape quality.
- We anticipate that the Design Guidance should be progressive, forward looking and contemporary rather than pastiche.

### New Town Partnership

The Masterplan must recognise work which has been done to strengthen relationships between Bangor Town Centre Chamber of Trade, PSNI and other statutory bodies.

A Town Centre Partnership in Bangor led by the Council Implementation Group could potentially lead to greater private sector leadership and investment over time in the management and promotion of the town centre. The benefits of a town centre partnership or forum are that it would bring together local businesses / the local authority / PSNI and other interested parties to create a fully functional town centre.

Developing terms of reference for the Partnership would give it a clear remit in the longer term beyond being a consultative body, and would help to lay the foundation for productive work between the different partners.

The Objectives of the New Town Partnership could be as follows:

- To promote the interests of businesses and other stake holders;
- Identify and attempt to address issues of concern for businesses and other stakeholders;
- Support the continuous improvement of the quality and management of town centre facilities and services;
- Liaise with other relevant agencies that may have influence upon relevant issues;

- Provide a focus and contact point for agencies engaged in town centre relate activities; and
- Support the promotion and marketing of Bangor town centre as a great place to live, work and visit.
- To assist Council to implement the Bangor Town Centre Masterplan.

Successful implementation of the plan relies on stakeholder 'buy in' and engagement.

Bangor Town Centre can build on its strengths as a pleasant and welcoming place to spend time with quality independent retailing. There could be a focus on improving the general appearance of the town, adding colour and visual excitement through re planting, public art and adding to festive facilities and events.

#### Direct Business Support

Direct business support can be provided through a number of different funding streams which can be delivered through both the public and private sector or partnership between both. In the interest of clarity, some of the funding streams are set out below:

- DSD Public Realm Scheme - Projects under the Public Realm Scheme are generally used to improve the appearance of towns and regenerate areas by restoring confidence and attracting new investment. They are mainly used to improve the appearance of public open spaces in towns;
- NIHE Town Centre Living Initiative (TCLI) - This aims to promote private rented sector residential accommodation in town and city centres as an 'added value' contribution to town centre regeneration. It is targeted at the commercial core of a number of designated towns and villages in Northern Ireland and seeks to provide housing in vacant or under used upper floors above shops and other commercial properties;
- Northern Ireland Department of the Environment – the

Environment & Heritage Service (EHS) Historic Building Grant. The Historic Building Grant is one of the grants available for the repair and restoration of listed historic buildings – both secular and ecclesiastical. The Historic Buildings Grant Scheme is currently under review, and final details might change;

- Heritage Lottery Funding –The Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) supports strategic action to address problems of disrepair, erosion of quality and under used buildings in historic areas. Single organisations, such as local authorities, partnerships and less formally structured consortia are eligible. Grants are available for major projects only. Proposed schemes should be large enough to have an impact on the historic area as a whole and may include:
  - The repair of the structure and external envelope of historic buildings and structures;
  - Bringing vacant floor space in historic buildings back into use; or
  - Authentic reinstatement of historic surfaces and other 'public realm' townscape features.

THI does not apply to single buildings or groups of buildings in single ownership. Grants are available to cover approximately 20 % to 50 % if costs – and in exceptional cases 75%.

- Land Transactions – Public Sector / Private Sector Development Agreements, following the sale of a public sector land holding. An agreement can be put in place whereby the developer must make a contribution to the benefit of the town, such as for public realm improvements. The development may also be bound by design guidance or a development brief put in place prior to the sale of the land.
- Business Grants - In particular:
  - Invest NI – Innovation Project Grants;
  - DEL – Currently offers a number of programmes to advise businesses on management to advise businesses on management and business analysis etc;

- HALO – A Business Angels Network, which can provide access to equity;-
- Carbon Trust – Will prepare a report on business energy use and can provide grant funding up to £250,000 to convert to renewable energy.
- Provision of Electric Cars within Town Centres – Various agencies exists to promote the use of electric cars / power terminal points in towns and cities across the UK.

## 9.2 Resourcing / Funding

The following tables sets out components of the proposed Masterplan, resourcing available and potential sources for funding.

### Key Stakeholders and Partners:

The range of stakeholders includes

Agent	Public / Private
The Department for Social Development (DSD)	Public – DSD is currently the key Government Department in the preparation and delivery of this Masterplan. DSD will use the Masterplan to inform decisions o urban regeneration initiatives within the town centre. Continued leadership of this Masterplan will be provided by DSD as per its statutory responsibility.
North Down Borough Council (NDBC)	Public – North Down Borough Council and its successors will play a key role in the delivery of the Masterplan, particularly after the RPA. The Council is a major provider of Town Centre services, such as cleaning, car parking services and public toilets; it manages the Leisure Centre and the Waterfront area.

Bangor Town Centre Management (BTCM)	Public / Private – Partially funded by North Down Borough Council. The primary aim of Town Centre Management is to create active partnerships and broad networks to develop healthy and sustainable town centre environments that involve the benefits all its stakeholders. This includes the public, private and voluntary sectors as well as rate payers and visitors who use the town centre. It works to create an environment where social inclusion is the norm.
Department of the Environment – Planning Service (PS)	Public – Planning Service is the Statutory Planning Authority. Although the Masterplan is non-statutory, it will be material consideration during the decision making process.
Department of Regional Development – Roads Service (RS)	Public – Roads Service is the sole roads authority in Northern Ireland. A function of Roads Service is to ensure that the public road network is managed, maintained and developed. There are significant enhancements to the public road network and within this Masterplan. DRD Roads Service must be supportive of this Masterplan and help with its implementation.
Private Developers Landowners and Companies	Private – These individuals will be the key partners in the delivery of many of the proposals of the Masterplan. DSD, the Council and all Government Bodies will continue to work closely with private developers to ensure the implementation of the Masterplan.
The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)	Public – NIEA Historic Buildings Branch provide funding for improvements to listed buildings and buildings within Townscape Heritage Areas as well as providing information on Buildings at Risk.
The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB)	Public – NITB relates to the promotion of key tourist assets within North Down and Bangor Town Centre



Northern Ireland Arts Council (NIAC)	Public - The Arts Council is the lead development agency for the arts in Northern Ireland. We are the main support for artists and arts organizations, offering a broad range of funding opportunities through our Exchequer and National Lottery funds
SUSTRANS	Private – A charitable organisation dedicated to the promotion of Sustainable Transport Means and Cycling within Town Centres
Invest NI	Public -
Northern Ireland Sports Council	Public -
Northern Ireland Coast Guard	Public -
NI Crown Estates Management	Public -

### 9.3 Use of the Masterplan

This Masterplan is non statutory and will provide the basis and justification for DSD's and the future Councils decision making on the promotion, implementation and timing of urban regeneration initiatives in the town centre for the next 15 years. The Masterplan will also be used as a mechanism to inform developers prior to making a planning application. The Masterplan is designed to encourage development. Developers are encouraged to discuss planning applications with DOE Planning Service prior to making an application.

### 9.4 Estimated Timeframe

The overall timescale to develop the town centre 'vision', encapsulated within the Masterplan, will extend over a number of years. Some elements of the Plan will be more suited to meet short and medium terms goals, while other areas may be more appropriate for development in the longer term. Indeed, in addition to the specific proposals contained within the Masterplan, a number of areas are identified as having longer term development potential.

The detailed phasing of the development proposals needs to be examined further as there will, for example, be issues relating to disturbance of existing occupiers, parking provision, traffic flow etc, as well as provision of construction compounds.

## 9.5 Action Plan for Delivery

### High Street / Hamilton Road

Site	Code	Delivery Agent	Additional Stake Holder	Actions Required	Cost
Mills Road / Hamilton Road Development Opportunity Site	D1 (pg37)	Private	RS/PS	Determine owners intentions Awaiting Planning Service determination	
40 Mill Street	D2 (pg37)	Private	RS / PS	Awaiting determination from Planning Service	
'Bank Lane' off Albert Street	D3 (pg38)	Private	RS / PS	Initiate forum to start development process Initiate Development Brief Identify Land Ownership	
High Street – Environmental Improvement Scheme	PR1 (pg38)	DSD / NDBC / DRD	Statutory Authorities	Prepare Design Brief Appoint consultants to deliver streetscape Secure funding Design and implementation	£1.4m
Mills Road – Environmental Improvement Scheme	PR2 (pg38)	DRD / DSD	Owners of D1 & D2 Development Opportunity Site.	Implement Road and Traffic Proposal in Hamilton Road Realign Access to The Flagship Centre Design and Implementation	£700k
Hamilton Road – Environmental Improvement Scheme	PR3 (pg38)	DRD/DSD	Owners of D1 Development Opportunity Site	Implement Road and Traffic Proposals on Hamilton Road Realign access to The Flagship Centre Design and Implementation Implement PR7 'Green Corridor for Hamilton Road to Bridge Street'.	£550k
Mills Row Lane – Environmental Improvement	PR4 (pg38)	DSD / Private Land Owners i.e. The Flagship Centre	PS / RS	Initiate a forum to agree development Secure funding Design and implementation	£300k
Frontage of The Flagship Centre 'Façade Frontage Enhancement'	PR5 (pg38)	The Flagship Centre	DSD 'Shop Frontage Scheme'	Secure funding Design and implementation	£400k
Gateway Features – High Street / Hamilton Road	PR6 (pg38)	NI Arts Council / NDBC / DSD	RS / PS / ND	Prepare Gateway Strategy Secure funding Design and Implementation	£100k
'Green Corridor' Hamilton Road -	PR7 (pg38)	NDBC / Sustrans	Private Developers of D1	Design in conjunction with PR2 Mills Road EI Scheme Secure Funding Land Ownership Feasibility Study to deliver project.	£175k

## Abbey Street/Main Street

Site	Code	Delivery Agent	Additional Stake Holder	Actions Required	Cost
Queen's Parade Development Opportunity Site	D4 (pg42)	Private	PS / RS / NDBC TCM Statutory Authorities	Determine owners intentions DSD to liaise with developers	
Lands to the Rear of ASDA Car Park area	D5 (pg42)	Private	PS / RS	Determine owners intentions Prepare feasibility / study plan	
Existing NDBC Leisure Centre	D6 (pg42)	Private	PS / RS	Determine owners intentions Prepare Feasibility Study / Plan	
Shop Frontage Enhancement Scheme	D7 (pg43)	DSD / NDBC	PS / NIEA	Secure funding Liaise with shop owners Prepare design guide	
Main Street & Abbey Street Environmental Improvement Scheme	PR8 (pg43)	DSD / DRD	Statutory Authorities / NDBC	Implementation of roads and traffic proposals Prepare design brief Appoint consultants to deliver streetscape scheme Secure funding Design and implementation	Main Street - £2.5m Abbey Street - £2.3m
Road and Traffic Proposals at Main Street / Hamilton Road	PR9 (pg43)	DRD	PS / NIEA / NDBC / Residents / Retailers	Detailed feasibility study	£300k
Abbey Street 'Decked Car Park'	PR10 (pg43)	RS / Translink	NIEA / NDBC / PS	Initiate Development Brief Secure funding	£6m
Public Realm Improvements Abbey Street	PR11 (pg44)	NDBC	NIEA / PS / RS / NITB	Comprehensive design of Car Park / Abbey Street and Gateway Area	£300k
Abbey Street – Gateway Feature	PR12 (pg44)	Arts Council / NITB / NDBC	RS / PS	Undertaken in conjunction with PR11	

## Waterfront Development

Site	Code	Delivery Agent	Additional Stake Holder	Actions Required	Cost
Theatre Development / Hotel Development – Commercial Leisure	D10 (pg47)	NDBC / Private Developers	NI Arts Council / PS / RS / NIEA	Development Brief Secure funding	
The Long Hole – Sailing Centre	D11 (pg48)	Private Ballyholme Sailing and Yacht Club	Invest NI / NI Sports Council Health and Crown Estates / PS / NDBC / Residents	Prepare design brief Secure funding Grant funding assistance	£700k
Waterfront Promenade Redevelopment	PR13 (pg50)	NDBC / Private / DSD / NI Coast Guard	PS/ RS	Design brief for the promenade / Civic Plaza	£3m+
Waterfront Boat Yard Boundary	PR14 (pg52)	Boat yard	PS / NDBC	Development design and implementation	£25k
Gateway Features	PR15 (pg52)	NDBC / NI Arts Council / NITB	PS / Residents	Design and implementation	£50k
Focal Points for the Pier and Long Hole	PR16 (pg52)	NDBC / NI Arts Council / NITB	PS / Residents	Design and implementation	£250k
Queen's Parade / Bridge Street = Environmental Improvement Scheme (in conjunction with D4 & D5)	PR17 (pg52)	Private RS / DSD	NIEA / PS / Residents	Detailed traffic proposals Secure funding Implementation	Pier £300k Promenade £2m
Refurbishment of Pickie Fun Park	PR18 (pg53)	NDBC	Residents	Currently under construction	£1.9M
Marine Gardens Area	PR19 (pg54)	NDBC / DSD	Queen's Parade Developer	Detailed design for leisure use Establish framework for future development	£3-4m
Civic Plaza	PR20 (pg58)	NDBC / DSD	PS/ RS	Design in conjunction with D10, PR13 and PR19	£2m
Jetty and public access to the waterfront	PR21 (pg60)	NDBC / DSD	Marina / Coastguard	Prepare design brief Secure funding	£500k

Indicative costing for the individual components of the Masterplan are set out at 2011 prices



## 10 Conclusion

### 10.1 Summary

It is important to consider the strengths of Bangor as a town centre. As the largest town within North Down Borough Council, Bangor has a rich maritime, monastic and architectural past. Its growth as a town is due to its close proximity to Belfast City Centre, its attractive built and natural environment and range of sporting activities. Bangor performs a strong tourism function and the presence of the Marina and Seafront validate Bangor as a premier marina town in the province. Whilst the town centre has experienced recent decline, it has the potential to reinvigorate itself and this Masterplan document will assist in the delivery and implementation of this objective.

Through the extensive analysis and consultation undertaken during the preparation of this Masterplan, it has become clear that Bangor Town Centre has great potential to grow and develop over the next 15 years. The people of Bangor have taken 'ownership' of this Masterplan and have identified a broad range of issues which need to be addressed. We have carefully considered these and incorporated them as proposals / actions to be implemented.

With major opportunities as set out in this document, achieving the vision that Bangor Town Centre 'will become a premier, high quality destination in Northern Ireland, a town that will reconnect with the Town Centre and a town which has a strong, unique identity' seems tangibly realistic. Obviously, today's economic climate and RPA may pose some obstacles to growth in the short to medium term, however with careful planning and close liaison between key stakeholders

many of the proposals can be successfully achieved.

Many of the specific proposals within the Masterplan relate to the redevelopment of privately owned sites. The key to achieving these proposals will be a close working partnership between the key public bodies and the private sector in order to overcome the barriers to development. Main Street and High Street proposals focus on rebuilding the area as a retail core, while other sites such as Mill Street and Hamilton Road focus on the regeneration of vacant sites which will improve the overall quality of the town centre. Proposals along the Seafront will reassert the importance of open space and public recreation and build upon the existing commercial and retail offer. The Queen's Parade development provides a significant and strategic opportunity for development. The onus now lies with DSD and the future Council, in conjunction with its partners and the private sector to initiate the development of this site.

The Masterplan also proposes many smaller, readily achievable projects such as the Design Guide, Shop Front Improvement Scheme and Promotion / Marketing Strategy which can be realised in the short term, whilst providing significant benefit to the Town Centre.

The Masterplan identifies a wide range of opportunities for the town centre which will help achieve the overall vision for the Town. It is definitely achievable with dedicated effort from all the stakeholders involved. The Bangor town centre new 'Town Partnership' will be crucial to retaining focus on the vision set out in the Masterplan and holding the regeneration of Bangor Town Centre as the key priority.



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