

REGENERATION PLAN FOR HOYLAK AND WEST KIRBY

Strategic Options Report

Metropolitan Borough of Wirral

April 2004

Prepared by

Building Design Partnership

With

Jones LangLaSalle

Locum Destination Consultation

Boreham Consulting Engineers

CONTENTS

1. Introduction	1
2. Key drivers	3
3. Key opportunities	4
4. Strategic Options	16
5. A Vision for Hoylake and West Kirby	19
6. Preferred option	24

Section 1: Introduction

Objectives of the Regeneration Plan

- 1.1 BDP, Jones Lang LaSalle, Locum Destination Consulting and Boreham Consulting Engineers have produced this report as part of the Regeneration Plan for Hoylake and West Kirby. This piece of work is being undertaken on behalf of Metropolitan Borough of Wirral.
- 1.2 The overriding purpose of the Regeneration Plan is to:
 - a. Reflect and expand upon the objectives of the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral's 8-Point Plan for the regeneration of Hoylake and West Kirby.
 - b. Maximise the 2006 Open Championship opportunity.
 - c. Provide a robust regeneration vision for Hoylake for the next 10 years.
 - d. Set a development framework within which investment can be planned and guided in a coherent and advantageous way.
- 1.3 The Regeneration Plan should furthermore build on natural assets, benefit residents, businesses and visitors alike, increase physical linkages and improve access and movement, as well as applying best practice urban design principles.

Purpose of the Strategic Options Report

- 1.4 The Strategic Options Report is the second stage of the Regeneration Plan for Hoylake and West Kirby, taking the key findings from the Baseline Report and using these as the basis for the identification of an overriding vision, a series of options for the Regeneration Plan and then an evaluation in order to arrive at a preferred option, which will form the basis of the Draft Regeneration Masterplan.
- 1.5 The Draft Masterplan will in turn be the subject of wider public consultation.
- 1.6 The structure for the Strategic Options Report is therefore as follows:
 - a. Introduction
 - b. Key drivers

- c. Key opportunities
- d. Vision for Hoylake and West Kirby
- e. Strategic options
- f. Preferred option

Section 2: Key Drivers for a Vision for Hoylake and West Kirby

Introduction

- 2.1 In this section of the Strategic options report, we set out five key drivers for the Regeneration Masterplan. These have been informed by the work carried out for the Baseline Report produced and presented to Metropolitan Borough of Wirral on March 4th 2004.

Five Key Drivers

- 2.2 **Capitalising on the 2006 Open Championship to make Hoylake and West Kirby a key investment, tourism and coastal activity destination** → Provide early win projects that are able to be delivered prior to the 2006 Open Championship that will promote Hoylake and West Kirby as destinations of interest and quality.
- 2.3 **Utilising Hoylake and West Kirby's natural assets to make it a more attractive place to live, work and play** → drawing up plans for the physical fabric that enhance and showcase the coastal and countryside assets that surround West Kirby and Hoylake – the Dee Estuary, the Merseyside Green Belt and the attractive and well used Parks and Gardens.
- 2.4 **Improving accessibility for Hoylake and West Kirby residents and visitors into, out of, and around the area** → developing an integrated transport strategy to improve access to both town centres, whilst strengthening cycling and pedestrian links to the coastal and countryside resources within West Wirral and the wider Borough environment.
- 2.5 **Improving the retail environment and facilities for Hoylake and West Kirby residents and visitors alike, and to ensure that expenditure is captured locally** → deliver town centre improvements, improve accessibility to all retail areas within the two towns and focus on more efficient and effective access and innovative car parking solutions.
- 2.6 **Create an image and identity for Hoylake and West Kirby that promotes the two towns as 'classic resorts' and instils a sense of pride and ownership to residents old and new** → ensure effective consultation of the masterplan to ensure the vision and development framework is owned by all stakeholders, fostering a new sense of identity for each town focusing on the distinctive features and assets.

Section 3: Key Opportunities

Introduction

- 3.1 This section of the report highlights a number of key opportunities which we believe will underpin the Regeneration Plan for Hoylake and West Kirby, by virtue of their overriding importance for the locality and/or the sub region.

West Kirby Site Development Opportunities

The Concourse

- 3.2 The Concourse is a central focus within West Kirby located adjacent to a series of other town centre facilities that when considered together represent a major development opportunity. The different elements of the Concourse and the adjacent facilities that make up this wider development opportunity are:
- a. Leisure Centre and Library
 - (i) The investment made into the leisure centre over recent years is significant and is a key factor in options for redevelopment.
 - (ii) Any future investment is likely to be targeted at remodelling the existing operation and cosmetic upgrades.
 - b. PCT / Doctors Surgery
 - (i) The doctor's surgery is no longer fit for purpose in the view of the PCT.
 - (ii) There is a nearby doctor's surgery that the PCT would like to merge with this operation on a new site.
 - (iii) The PCT has considered redeveloping the existing site but complexities of ownership with the Council made this unviable for the developer. The developer is still keen to get involved. Redevelopment would be financed through a PPP/PFI type arrangement.
 - (iv) There is therefore potential of redeveloping the footplate taken up by the existing doctor's surgery.

- c. Council Pay and Display Car Park
 - (i) This has strong redevelopment potential although some consideration as to re-provision of car parking elsewhere in the town needs to be made.
- d. Merseyside Fire Service Station
 - (i) The Fire Service is keen to finance a new building that is better fit for modern purpose than their current building. They want relocation at zero cost to themselves. The location needs to be close to West Kirby town centre but not necessarily on The Concourse. Access direct onto the A540 would be advantageous.
- e. Bridge Court and adjacent BT site
 - (i) The Council housing stock is the subject of a tenant ballot regarding the transfer to a newly formed Housing Association. There is a possibility that if this transfer occurs, redevelopment of Bridge Court in the long term could occur and thus provide a larger development opportunity around the Concourse.
 - (ii) The adjacent BT site is currently in use but does not appear to be being fully utilised. This site also has the potential to be incorporated into a wider development opportunity around the Concourse.
- f. Bridge Walks (ex-Cinema building)
 - (i) This site is currently the subject of a pre-sale contact between the Council and a developer for redevelopment for mixed-use subject to planning.
 - (ii) There is limited potential for this site to assist with road realignment away from the town centre but this appears to have been ruled out as Merseytravel are unwilling to move their Station at West Kirby or allow access over the end of the track.
- g. West Kirby Train Station
 - (i) Merseytravel has allocated £250,000 for upgrading the Station. At present it appears the potential to seriously alter the orientation of the Station appears slight due to Merseytravel's response to change.

- 3.3 It is clearly evident that there is potential to put together a relatively significant development opportunity at the Concourse. The options currently under consideration are:
- a. PCT and Fire Service relocated either on or off the Concourse site. If off the Concourse the new site needs to have strong road links and be close to the town centre. Together, uses could be complementary to that of Leisure Centre.
 - b. Consider changing layout and external appearance of the remaining Concourse as a Gateway to town, i.e. public realm improvements and creation of piazza.
 - c. Include Bridge Court, possibly BT site and municipal car park into the new Concourse development.
 - d. West Kirby Train Station upgrade.
 - e. Bridge Walks Cinema development.
- 3.4 The fact that the majority of these sites are in public ownership make the deliverability of this option far more viable than if in private ownership.
- 3.5 At this stage it is difficult to predict best uses on site but for the purposes of this document it is worth raising some possibilities:
- a. Extension of retail may lead to improvements in the town centre but may also threaten existing provision. Any new development therefore needs to be at the correct scale and sensitive and well integrated to the existing offer, especially along Banks Road.
 - b. Increased community use – PCT, Fire Service building and Ambulance Rapid Response bay – that will lead to increased footfall.
 - c. Hotel development – low-grade option but unlikely to be viable in this position until hotel and conference market is established for the area.
 - d. Mixed-use development – Any increase in evening uses from bar/restaurant provision would help in diversifying the use times of the town centre. Residential values from a new build residential element would drive development possibilities forward strongly but may conflict with RPG13 policy restrictions.
 - e. Public realm – would deliver short term early win for 2006 and enhance the image of the area. Any such upgrade should be related to an upgrade of the station and its immediate environment.
 - f. Housing – Affordable and social housing requirement needs consideration, especially in the context of potential redevelopment of

Bridge Court as part of a wider Concourse redevelopment scenario. Affordable/social housing will not conflict with the provisions of RPG13.

- g. Office development is unlikely but would lead to increased viability of town centre.

Town Centre Retail

- 3.6 Safeway has clearly had a marked impact in the provision elsewhere in the town centre and needs to be counteracted in some way. Remodelling of the Concourse to provide an additional anchor within the core of the town centre is a viable option potentially linked to the creation of a gastronomic quarter and remodelled station.
- 3.7 Existing retail provision elsewhere in the town is reasonable for a town of this size but not the depth of quality offer than is aspired to. The offer along Banks Road and the Crescent needs to be examined carefully in the context of its current and potential offer to the vitality and viability of the town centre and potential links into a remodelled Concourse development.

Coronation Gardens and Cafe

- 3.8 This site is viewed as an important community resource; it could, however, also offer development potential. Initial ideas for this site identify the potential to achieve development on part of the site, utilising its prominent and excellent location overlooking the Dee Estuary, whilst dramatically enhancing and improving the gardens as a community and recreational resource.

West Kirby Waterfront

- 3.9 The West Kirby Marine Lake offers an excellent draw for visitors and residents alike and contributes to the viability of development at South Parade. Marketing of this important resource needs to be improved.
- 3.10 Development of points of interest along the South Parade need to be considered, including public realm / public art opportunities at the waterfront that could assist in image enhancement of the area. Coronation Gardens will be central to this approach.

- 3.11 The West Kirby Sailing Club is an anchor at the end of South Parade and must be linked into the points of interest to encourage movement along the parade.

Sailing School and Council Car Park

- 3.12 The Council owned pay and display car park offers the potential to link up the waterfront Sailing School site and the town centre. In order for this to be viable a critical mass of development is needed at the waterfront to draw visitors/residents past Safeway and away from the retail provision in the town centre.
- 3.13 An iconic new building to include the provision of changing and associated facilities that befits the importance of the Marine Lake and an exciting restaurant opportunity are options that have clear potential.

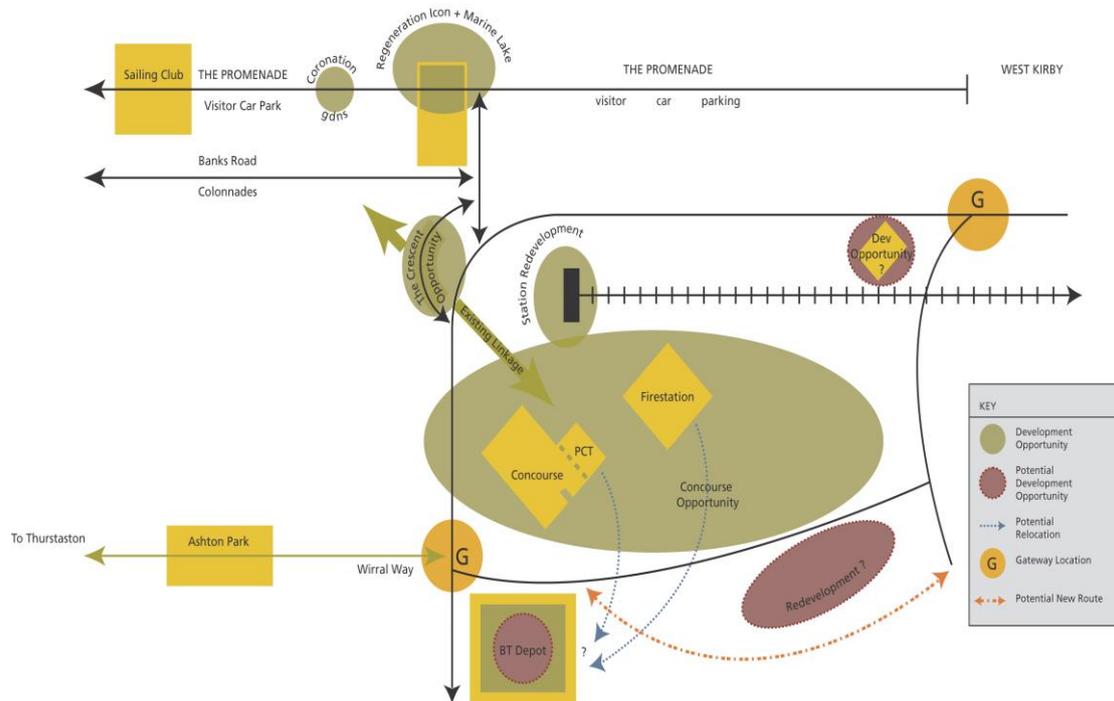
Sailing Club

- 3.14 Linkages to the private Sailing Club at the southern end of South Parade could assist in developing this waterfront's potential as a destination and draw. However, the distance between the development sites and the sailing club may hinder development as none are in close proximity.
- 3.15 The treatment of the south parade is therefore paramount to making these connections, identifying nodes of activity that will draw visitors and residents between the Sailing School and Sailing Club.

West Kirby Development Options: An Illustration

- 3.16 Figure 1 provides a conceptual illustration of the initial development opportunities within West Kirby town centre.

Figure 1: West Kirby Development Options



Hoylake Site Development Opportunities

Municipal Golf Club

- 3.17 The Municipal Golf Course is currently undergoing improvements ahead of the 2006 Open Championship. This involves 2 holes, the fourteenth and fifteenth, being upgraded as practice holes for the Open Championship. This means that the full 18 holes at the present time and during the 2006 Open will not be available for public use.
- 3.18 New Hall Farm sits adjacent to the Golf Course directly behind the Club House. As part of a wider development opportunity there is some potential to relocate New Hall Farm and use the land as part of the golf course expansion. The farm buildings would be part of the golf course and / or hotel development. The farm land under lease would predominantly be used for the expansion of the golf course.
- 3.19 There is therefore clear potential as part of the 2006 Open Championship to significantly improve the course as part of a wider golf, leisure and tourism offer.
- 3.20 Development options should include:

- a. There is clearly a requirement to improve the golf course facility and as a minimum it has been suggested that the 18 hole municipal is significantly upgraded ahead of the 2006 Open Championship, with the prospect of being able to provide a second and third municipal 18 hole course based on the success of the Open Championship and the regeneration of Hoylake as a whole.
- b. The Clubhouse is in need of some improvement in order to establish this golf course as an attraction in its own right, subject to the golf course being upgraded. The Clubhouse is in fact an obvious choice for locating a hotel if the visual impact of Carr Lane can be mitigated.
- c. Leases from the Council to New Hall Farm will need to be terminated in order for development to be brought forward. Additionally, the farmland is subject to drainage problems, which will need to be addressed.
- d. Although in the greenbelt the farmland is clearly the best location for a quality hotel and golf course and the planning options for this type of development need to be considered fully.
- e. In order to drive values and potentially facilitate the viability of development, options and feasibility for golf course side residential development need to be explored.
- f. More extensive development of a golfing resort would include the establishment of ancillary leisure development and possibly conference facilities. The potential for establishing such uses are greatly restricted by available land and planning restrictions. There may be some developable land at the Carr Lane side of the Golf Course. However, for significant development to be exploited encroachment into the Greenbelt may well be necessary.
- g. The development of a leisure and hotel based resort in this location may not be restricted to simply a golfing offer. Responding to Locum's previous work on the tourism market in the North West and West Wirral and their concept of a classic resort, a Spa based resort or hotel development is an option that will be considered further.

Carr Lane Industrial Estate

- 3.21 Carr Lane Industrial Estate is clearly important to the local economy and employment, and its role in the economy should not be underestimated.
- 3.22 It has clear issues in terms of its physical environment, proximity to the Municipal Golf Course and access issues across the railway line. These will all need to be considered as part of the development options appraisal. Initial options include:

- a. Although Carr Lane Industrial Estate is a thriving business area the external environment of some of these buildings, especially at the entrance to the estate and on the approach to Hoylake Station, detract from what is an important entrance into the town and to the golf offer.
- b. An option therefore that must be considered relates to the relocation of some of the less visually attractive buildings and uses to other areas of the estate. Consultation with local owners will therefore be required.
- c. An alternative option would be to consider an internal reordering of uses on the Estate without encroaching onto new land, but this needs closer examination of uses by plot.
- d. The viability of re-establishing Carr Lane as a new Industrial Estate on Council owned Greenfield land is also a key consideration, especially in the context of pursuing a long term goal of achieving a golf complex focused on the upgraded Municipal Course. Such a development could help overcome the transport access problems for goods and services to Carr Lane.

Hoylake Train Station Opportunity

- 3.23 Hoylake Train Station needs upgrading due to its strategically important location between the proposed improvements to the golf course and town centre.
- 3.24 The rail lines create a transport problem for goods and services into Carr Lane. Consideration is required into how the station could be improved without alternative access points.
- 3.25 Hoylake Station car park, Royal Mail building and its external environment create a wider development opportunity.
- 3.26 This development opportunity incorporates the listed Train Station and its external environment, level crossing and access to and from the town centre, Carr Lane Industrial Estate and the Municipal Golf Course and the Royal Mail Building. The Royal Mail Building opposite the station car park is an attractive building in a strong location. The development potential of this site needs further investigation but initially there appears to be some merits in a mixed-use redevelopment.
- 3.27 The reconfiguration of the train stations external environment could provide the opportunity for an attractive public open space or town square as part of a station upgrade, linking into the gateway to the town centre at the Meols

Drive/Kings Gap/Market Street/Station Road junction. This could provide an important link between the town centre and station, acting as a catalyst to draw visitors arriving by train into the town centre and along Market Street, especially at the time of the 2006 Open Championship.

Market Street

- 3.28 The town centre at Hoylake is of lower quality than at West Kirby and is in need of improvement, especially in the context of the visitor experience related to the 2006 Golf Open Championship. Central to this objective is Market Street.
- 3.29 In order to maximise the chances of town centre renaissance as a result of the catalyst of the 2006 Open Championship, the external environment and retail offer of Market Street needs to dramatically improved and enhanced.
- 3.30 At this early stage it is thought that this can be achieved through selectively focused public realm improvements, framed by two anchor developments on Market Street. This may mean shortening the main retail area along Market Street, providing a critical mass close to the station and Kings Gap that provides a key link through to the promenade.
- 3.31 Detailed design work for the public realm improvements has recently been commissioned as part of a schedule of works that will deliver the enhanced Market Street environment ahead of the 2006 Open Championship.
- 3.32 The sites of Melrose Hall, Co-op, a Car Mechanics and Tennis Club may create a plot sizeable enough for redevelopment for establishing an anchor development within the town centre.
- 3.33 This would focus town centre activity to a core area close to an improved Hoylake Station and environs and allow public realm improvements of a very high quality to be delivered ahead of the 2006 Open Championship.
- 3.34 As part of the upgrade of the Station and its environs, provision of an area that could be utilised for a weekly or monthly market is being considered. This would provide extra vitality to this focal point of the town and a beneficial extra offer for Market Street.

Bathing Pool Opportunity

- 3.35 Planning permission has been granted for the relocation of the Lifeboat Station to the old bathing pool site adjacent to Meols Parade Gardens. This will release the site of the current Life Boat Station as a redevelopment

- opportunity. A local group is planning to turn the existing station into a Maritime / Life Boat Museum.
- 3.36 The opportunity of the new Lifeboat Station should be considered as a possible early win project if the funding opportunity provided by the RNLI can be procured as it is likely that it will bring with it the opportunity for match funding through the Objective 1 project. This funding could provide associated ancillary uses such as café / restaurant facilities on the site and adjacent site, as well as possibly providing funds for the Lifeboat Museum.
- 3.37 Alternative uses on this site need to be considered if this opportunity is not able to be delivered in the short to medium term. The waterfront at Hoylake is in need of upgrade and this site offers good redevelopment potential. Alternative options should not compromise the delivery of the new Lifeboat Station.
- 3.38 As identified, local interests have earmarked the vacated site for a Lifeboat Museum that will build upon the importance of the Hoylake Lifeboat Station as one of the world's oldest stations and the annual Hoylake Lifeboat Day that attracts around 30000 visitors annually. This site is visually linked with the centre of Market Street and an iconic building, such as the proposed RNLI museum in Cromer, Norfolk would provide a strong visual link between the town centre and the waterfront. With the possibility of match funding, the proposed museum could also provide an opportunity to celebrate Hoylake and Meols history.

North Parade and Meols Parade - The Promenade

- 3.39 The combined length of North Parade and Meols Parade is an important resource to Hoylake in terms of its recreational potential, the views it affords as well as a role as a platform for watching coastal activities, such as sand yachting as well as bird watching.
- 3.40 The whole of the promenade, including Meols Parade, needs investment in its public realm, infrastructure and overall environment. Specific points of activity along the parade have been identified as key to attracting new investment; however, this will not finance the investment required along its full length.
- 3.41 An element of the masterplan must therefore consider this issue. Early analysis indicates that the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park is a potential source of funding that could be utilised to begin to lift the overall quality of the North Parade and Meols Parade.
- 3.42 For this approach to be successful, Wirral Borough Council must commit to a long term improvement framework that outlines a phased enhancement

programme but also retains the flexibility to be able to 'tap into' external funding mechanisms, such as the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park, as opportunities to do so arise.

- 3.43 This framework should not only identify essential infrastructure improvements but also focus on the activities that rely on the Parade, such as bird watching, wildlife and historical interpretation, dog walking and sand yachting, ensuring that there are facilities and focal points that deliver activity along the length of the parade.

Conservative Club

- 3.44 This is close to the Royal Liverpool Golf Club and has views overlooking it. Further investigation is required into the feasibility of this site as a location for a hotel but this is unlikely due to the available plot size.
- 3.45 Further investigation is also required on another site currently being considered for development by a local developer a few hundred yards from the Conservative Club. Again the size of the plot may not be big enough for a hotel development.

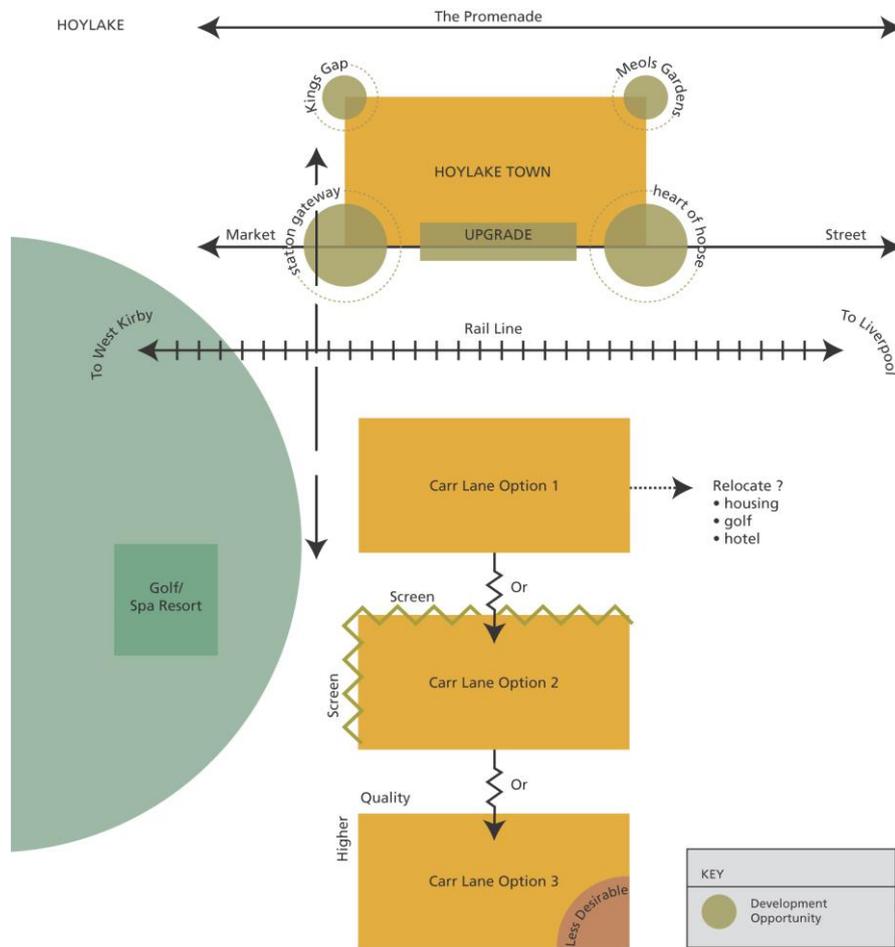
Hoylake Development Options: An Illustration

- 3.46 Figure 2 provides a conceptual illustration of the initial potential development opportunities within Hoylake town centre.

Conclusion

- 3.47 The above factors are key to the opportunity for change in Hoylake and West Kirby. They are not necessarily an exclusive list and they may not all have equal weight. Nevertheless these facets of Hoylake and West Kirby life identified above reflect not just the multifaceted nature of the opportunity but also the challenges faced by the community and the scope of the Regeneration Plan that will guide transformation over the next 10 years.

Figure 2: Hoylake Development Options



Section 4: Strategic Options

Introduction

- 4.1 In this section of the report, we set out the alternative strategic options for the future development of Hoylake and West Kirby. These are set out as a series of concept diagrams that follow the summary text that explains each option.
- 4.2 The strategic options are not intended to be literal masterplans but to reflect alternative strategic approaches to regeneration.

Strategic options

- 4.3 The strategic options considered by the study team are:
- a. Discrete Identity
 - b. Theming
 - c. Golf Resort
 - d. West Wirral Activity Zone
 - e. Coastal Resort Towns
- 4.4 These options are illustrated in summary diagrams and have been explained and discussed at Steering Group meetings. A synopsis of the options is included below for ease of reference.
- a. **Discrete Identity**
 - (i) This first option identifies Hoylake, West Kirby and the Royal Liverpool and Municipal golf courses as separate entities, each with their own offer and identity.
 - (ii) West Kirby's presents an offer that is akin to the traditional seaside resort, with remnants of shopping arcades, well defined coastal activity and classic Victorian parks and gardens.
 - (iii) Hoylake's town centre offer is more divorced from its coastal environment than West Kirby and thus, as part of

this option, Hoylake's offer is split between the traditional and aptly named Market Street, and the open promenade and sandy beach environment.

- (iv) This option sees the Royal Liverpool Golf Club and Municipal Golf course as totally separate to the offers of the two towns, with the principal focus being on upgrades ahead of the 2006 Open Championship and the ultimate goal of retaining these facilities and its place on the Open roster.

b. Theming

- (i) The second option seeks to build upon the first option, by identifying a specific theme for each of the two towns and as a result linking the golf offer to Hoylake.
- (ii) As part of the baseline analysis, the consultants have been advised by their golf specialist that the 2006 Open Championship is more likely to be marketed as 2006 Open Championship Hoylake as opposed to the 2006 Open Championship Royal Liverpool. In this context, the close proximity of Hoylake town centre and its railway station to both the Royal Liverpool and Municipal Golf courses provides the scenario whereby Hoylake can be themed as the 'Gateway to Golf' and linked strongly to the NWDA led 'Golf Coast' concept.
- (iii) The theme for West Kirby would major upon its strength as a seaside resort, reinstating shopping arcades, developing and enhancing coastal and sporting activity specifically around the Marine Lake and the town's classic Victorian parks and gardens.

c. Golf Resort

- (i) The key regeneration focus for this option lies in the integration of the Royal Liverpool Golf Club offer and Municipal Course offer as part of a comprehensive golf village.
- (ii) The village complex would be centred on a four or five star hotel with ancillary restaurant, retail, leisure and conference facilities. The most likely location for the hotel would be as part of a major redevelopment of the Municipal Course that would aim to deliver Hoylake's third and fourth

courses (in addition to the Royal Liverpool and existing Municipal) on council owned farmland to the west.

- (iii) The complex would provide the main regeneration focus for both town centres as they would diversify to support the golfing economy.

d. **West Wirral Activity Zone**

- (i) This option is a far more balanced option that recognises that both towns have a coastal offer, whether this is tourist led or sporting event led, as well as a golf offer, and an offer that is related to access to an attractive countryside environment, expanding upon the success of the Wirral Country Park at Thurstaston to the south.
- (ii) The ability to link these three offers together will be a key driver for this option, maximising the activities that visitors and residents alike can participate in and gain easy access to. Walking and cycling are key elements to this option.

e. **Coastal Resort Towns**

- (i) This option is similar in its concept to the West Wirral Activity Zone; however, it does not include the country park element, focusing totally on the combined coastal and resort offer that Hoylake and West Kirby can provide.

Conclusions

4.5 The above options have been articulated and discussed in a number of forums and perhaps inevitably, each has been found to have both strengths and weaknesses. However, whilst a hybrid option was perhaps always the right outcome for Hoylake and West Kirby, we feel that certain concepts have particular value.

- a. Theming – golf, gastronomy and reinventing the English seaside attractions
- b. Integrated and enhanced Coastal and Countryside activity
- c. The “Classic” Resort

4.6 Accordingly, the Preferred Option for Hoylake and West Kirby builds in these three key concepts.

Section 5: A Vision for Hoylake and West Kirby

Introduction

- 5.1 This section of the report puts forward a vision for Hoylake and West Kirby, based on the key findings of the Baseline Report, previous work carried out by Locum and the analysis of the key drivers and key opportunities analysis contained in the preceding chapters.

A Classic Resort

- 5.2 Encapsulating the vision for any place is a difficult task though once achieved, such vision statements are a powerful tool in conveying the image and aspirations for an area.
- 5.3 The phrase “Classic Resort”, defined in the New Visions for NW Coastal Resorts report¹ encapsulates the vision of what Hoylake and West Kirby will aspire to be. They will aim to be elegant, charming communities by the sea with nice places to eat, drink and shop and a pristine built and natural environment.
- 5.4 Hoylake-West Kirby will be positioned in the market as an integrated resort offering a variety of high quality recreational activities, including:
- Sailing
 - Windsurfing
 - Swimming
 - Paragliding
 - Sand yachting
 - Skateboarding
 - Golf
 - Beach Volleyball
 - Basketball
 - Bowls
 - Tennis
 - The best cycling network and facilities in the country
 - Bird watching

¹ NWDA 2002

- 5.5 This will be complimented by a varied and interesting shopping, food and beverage offer.
- 5.6 Hoylake-West Kirby will provide outstanding facilities in a beautiful environment to the benefit of residents and visitors alike.

Vision : Overarching Strategies

- 5.7 As part of this vision, there are several overarching strategies that apply to the vision of an integrated 'classic' resort. They will serve to provide the strategic framework and setting for the individual development opportunities identified within section 3.
- 5.8 Wirral Waterside Way
- a. Wirral Waterside Way is the primary Signature Project within the Wirral Tourism Strategy and Action Plan produced by Locum in 2003, building upon the objectives of the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park.
 - b. The Wirral Waterside Way builds upon the peninsula's prime asset – its splendid waterfront. This waterfront offers exceptional views along its length, with variety and opportunities for access that clearly makes it special. Its goal is to make this stretch of coast one of the best, well known and visited recreational facilities within the region.
 - c. The Waterside Way will provide outstanding infrastructure for off-road walking, cycling and riding that will connect a series of high quality activity hubs, such as historic interpretation, bird watching locations, toilet and café facilities etc.
 - d. The route will be clearly marked and off road all the way, with as much of it as possible being focused on the waterfront.
 - e. West Kirby-Hoylake will be major destination hubs for the Waterside Way, providing cycle hire facilities at West Kirby and Hoylake Stations with one way drop offs. As major hub points on the Wirral Waterside Way, they will allow high quality off road cycling and walking from Birkenhead to the new Dee Estuary wildlife park (currently the Wirral Country Park) at Thurstaston.
 - f. Hoylake-West Kirby will also feature as a "book end" attraction for the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park. The proposed iconic

building at West Kirby Marine Lake will include a visitor centre for the Park.

5.9 The Hoylake-West Kirby Trail

- a. The Hoylake-West Kirby Trail is a concept that will support the Wirral Waterside Way at a local level, providing a circular off road cycling route that connects West Kirby and Hoylake Stations, along seaside and inland routes.
- b. As part of this route and key hubs of the Wirral Waterside Way and Mersey Waterfront Regional Park, Hoylake and West Kirby will offer some of the best facilities in the country for cycling and walking.
- c. The “Trail” will link the main Anchor Attractions within Hoylake and West Kirby that are explored in section 3. The main hub points will be the two railway stations, the proposed iconic sailing school and Meols Gardens beach area. These will allow people to hire a cycle and drop it at any of the other hub points.
- d. The highlight of the “Trail” will be the seafront/bird watching boardwalk between West Kirby and Hoylake, around Red Rocks, with panels interpreting the wildlife and habitats that exist.
- e. Bicycle racks will be provided at regular intervals around the Circle Line.

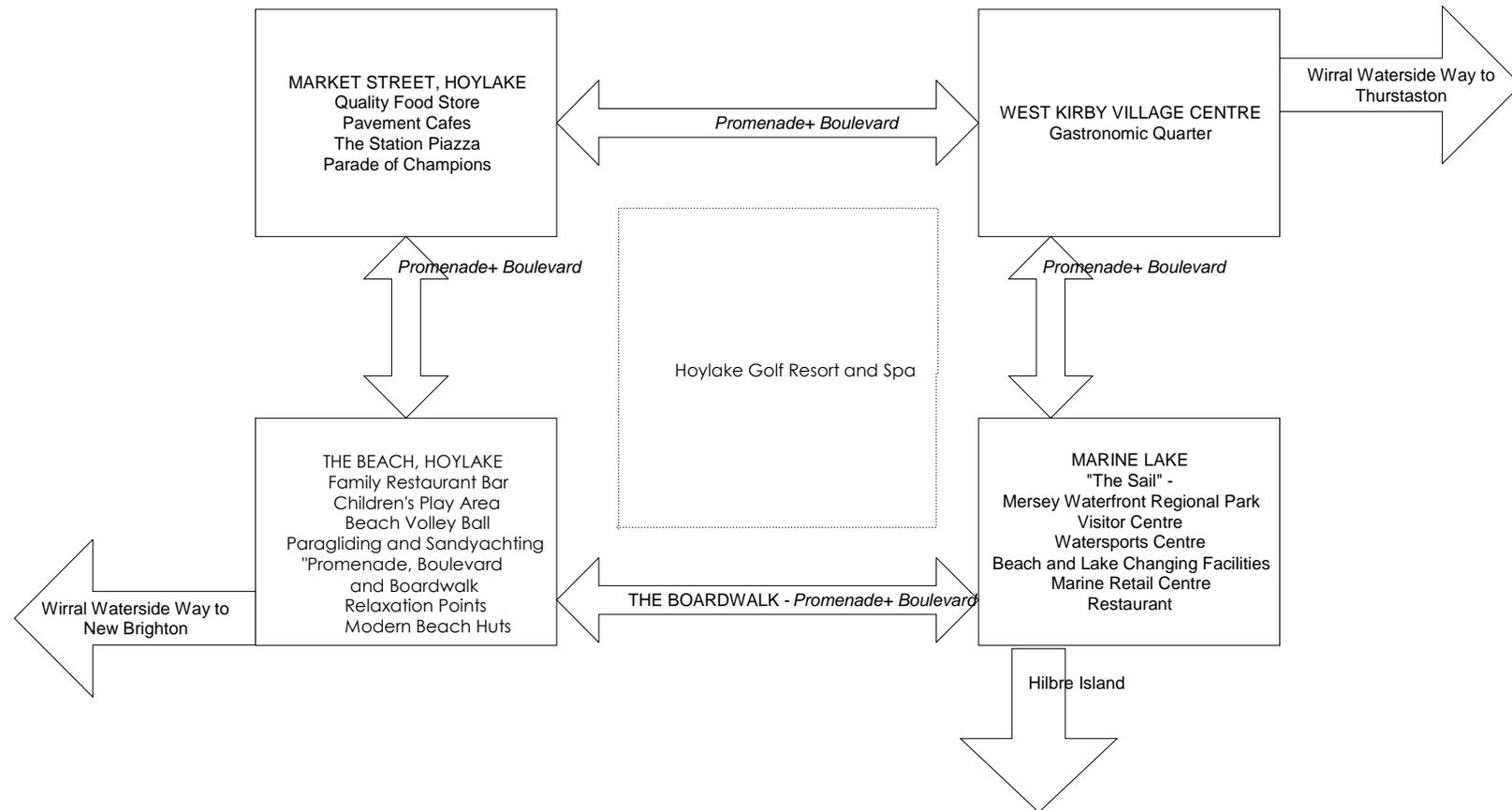
5.10 “Promenade, Boulevard and Boardwalk”

- a. A feature of the Hoylake-West Kirby stretch of the Wirral Waterside Way and the Hoylake-West Kirby Trail will be a series of promenades and boulevards utilising existing and proposed local footpaths and cycle paths that will showcase the natural, physical and historical assets of Hoylake and West Kirby.
- b. This will include wildlife and historic interpretation routes, sculpture trails relating to the natural and physical assets of the two towns and the wider West Wirral environment; examples would include the indigenous bird life and the historic Roman settlements.
- c. The centre piece of this strategy is a proposed boardwalk that will link the two towns via the coast line. This concept would run around Red Rocks and initial ideas identify that it should have an environmental focus, maybe being made from recycled material from local industries, similar to the boardwalk around Old Faithful in Yellowstone Park.

- d. The “Promenade, Boulevard and Boardwalk” concept will add a complimentary yet unique identity/theme for the Hoylake-West Kirby classic resort as well as contributing to the wider leisure, recreational and tourism offer of the borough and Merseyside.

5.11 Figure 3 diagrammatic representation of the Hoylake-West Kirby Vision is provided overleaf to strengthen its message.

Figure 3: Hoylake-West Kirby Vision



Section 6: Preferred Option

Introduction

- 6.1 In this section of the report, we have started to develop the preferred option in order to further explain and test the key principles.
- 6.2 In order to begin the process of developing the preferred option, the consultant team have debated the positive and negative aspects of the five strategic options and taken into account the concerns and aspirations of the Steering Group and key agencies.
- 6.3 This process is best summarised in a SWOT analysis table, which identifies the positive elements from each option that together form a robust, yet exciting, preferred option.

Strategic Option	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Contribution to Preferred Option
1. Discrete Identity	Identity and offers are unique yet complementary.	Lacks the critical mass to deliver comprehensive and long term regeneration.	Unique and distinct identities provide a good opportunity to market and promote a particular offer.	Without significant investment all three locations will not be able to sustain growth or the status-quo and thus their offer will decline.	Complementary yet unique offers with excellent marketing potential.
2. Theming	Utilise the 2006 Open Championship opportunity to drive regeneration based upon coastal and sporting assets.	Possibility that long term regeneration post 2006 will not be sustained.	Market Hoylake as the 'Gateway to Golf' and West Kirby as a truly 'Classic Resort'.	Diversity inherent in both towns will be lost.	'Gateway to Golf' and 'Classic Resort' badges.
3. Golf Resort	Maximise the 2006 Open Championship opportunity.	Emphasis on one particular market.	Opportunity to create a major resort and	Loss of identity and diversity within both towns.	National and international leisure, recreation and

			competition location alongside an international identity.		sporting investment.
4. West Wirral Activity Zone	Balanced regeneration approach that recognises and builds upon the excellent coastal, countryside and sporting resources that currently exist.	Relies upon the ability to integrate the three core offers in a complementary manner.	Ability to deliver integrated economic, environmental and social regeneration.	Innovation and objective visioning may be overlooked.	Integrated regeneration approach utilising existing resources.
5. Coastal Resort Town	Regeneration approach that focuses upon the success of West Kirby and Hoylake's coastal activities and resources.	Main regeneration benefits will be seasonal and event focused.	Tailor-made to take advantage of regional and sub-regional coastal based regeneration initiatives.	Coastal offer unable to sustain the comprehensive regeneration of both towns.	Regional and sub-regional coastal based regeneration initiatives.

The Preferred Option: An Integrated Resort Offer

- 6.4 The strategic concept diagram overleaf identifies the preferred hybrid option, which integrates the three key concepts identified in the conclusion of section 4 and the positive elements that the consultant team have identified from each of the five strategic options.
- 6.5 The preferred hybrid option recognises that Hoylake and West Kirby both have strong coastal offers as well as strong links to excellent countryside resources. Through certain key strategies and projects these shared offers will ensure that Hoylake-West Kirby can be positioned as an integrated resort.
- 6.6 The preferred hybrid option also recognises that within this integrated resort concept, there are offers that are specific to each town.
- a. Hoylake – the 2006 Open Championship opportunity with wider potential to develop into a Gateway to Golf.

- b. West Kirby – the more traditional resort town with wider potential to maximise the Marine Lake offer regionally and nationally as well as to nurture speciality offers that are essential to successful resort activity, for example building on its restaurant base to become a gastronomy centre for West Wirral.
- 6.7 The following text provides further explanation of the key elements of the preferred hybrid option that will be developed into the Regeneration Plan for Hoylake and West Kirby.

A physical framework as a core delivery tool

- 6.8 The key drivers need to be realised through the development of a physical framework allied to programmes of physical and economic investment. Notwithstanding the importance of the economic drivers and projects, the physical framework can act as a key delivery tool across all themes, by providing a focus for service delivery as well as new development.

Capitalising on the 2006 Open Championship

- 6.9 The ability to be able to deliver significant physical and environmental improvements to the street scene and public realm of both Hoylake and West Kirby will enhance the image and perception of the two towns when worldwide coverage of the Open Championship focuses upon the settlements in 2006.
- 6.10 The physical masterplan will have to tailor its framework to achieving this goal, specifically along Market Street, Hoylake and around the main transport interchange of Hoylake Station. Specific detailed work is being prepared for Market Street, Hoylake and the masterplan must dovetail with this design work.
- 6.11 It is not just physical changes that will capitalise upon the opportunity that the 2006 Open Championship brings. Marketing and promotion of the many exciting and important coastal sports championships and facilities will serve to increase the interest in the two towns beyond that of just the golf. Indeed, marketing the 2006 Open Championship as 'Hoylake' the 2006 Open Championship definitely strikes a chord with this approach.
- 6.12 Being able to deliver these projects ahead of June 2006 is also critical and the masterplan delivery strategy must focus upon this objective,

engaging with local businesses and investors to ensure the benefit of shared by all.

Key Development Projects

- 6.13 The key opportunities outlined within section 3 should all be considered further in terms of their viability and role as part of the regeneration strategy for Hoylake and West Kirby.
- 6.14 However, the three overarching strategies that are outlined within section 5 provide a framework that generates the opportunity to identify certain key development projects that provide the catalyst for long term regeneration in Hoylake and West Kirby.
- 6.15 The framework that these three overarching strategies provide is hierarchical and is explained below.
- a. The **Wirral Waterside Way** covers the whole of the Wirral Coastline and provides a sub-regional context for key development opportunities within Hoylake and West Kirby.
 - b. The **Hoylake-West Kirby Trail** provides a circular link between the two towns, integrating the coastal, countryside and sporting offer that the combined towns provide. This strategy delivers a resort level context for key development opportunities.
 - c. The **“Promenade, Boulevard and Boardwalk”** concept provides a localised and specific context for individual and themed development opportunities, picking up on local identities.
- 6.16 Set within this framework the key development projects become strategically important to the comprehensive and long term regeneration of Hoylake and West Kirby. This is clearly communicated by figure 3.
- 6.17 Each key development project is explained in the text below:
- a. **Market Street, Hoylake** – specific focus, prior to 2006, on the stretch of Market Street running between Hoylake Station up to ‘Heart of Hoose’ addressing detailed public realm improvements to include;
 - (i) the ‘Parade of Champions’ (a permanent parade of banners detailing each Open Champion the parade could also be utilised for promotion of other key events);

- (ii) reconfiguration of the carriageway to allow active use of the pavement environment along with introduction of colonnades;
 - (iii) creation of new retail anchor at 'heart of hoose';
 - (iv) reconfiguration and enhancement of Hoylake Station to create 'The Station Piazza' and/or 'Market Place' that can be linked into an expanded and improved golf offer at the Municipal Golf Course and rationalisation/screening and improvements to Carr Lane Industrial Estate.
- b. **'The Beach', Hoylake** – expansion and significant environmental improvements to Meols Parade Gardens, incorporating the new Lifeboat Station and Hoyle Road Community Centre to create a beach based activity area. It is recognised that the whole of the North Parade needs investment in its public realm, infrastructure and overall environment, however, specific points of activity along the parade such as 'The Beach' are key projects to attracting new investment that will 'kick start' the wider improvements needed along North Parade. 'The Beach' would include;
- (i) traditional garden area, focusing on the aspirations of The Friends of Hoylake and Meols Gardens and Open Spaces
 - (ii) a family restaurant / bar;
 - (iii) children's play area;
 - (iv) beach volley ball/football/tennis;
 - (v) paragliding and sand yachting centre;
 - (vi) skateboard park
 - (vii) a celebration and interpretation of the coast, countryside and local history alongside relaxation points as part of the Wirral Waterside Way, Hoylake-West Kirby Trail and "Promenade, Boulevard and Boardwalk" concept;
 - (viii) 21st Century beach huts.
- c. **West Kirby Village Centre** – creation of new development opportunities surrounding the rationalisation of the Concourse and redevelopment of West Kirby Station frontage to create a gastronomic quarter, focusing on a quality and varied restaurant offer in addition to specialist food retail outlets. This development

opportunity must be strongly linked to the improvement of the existing retail and A3 offer of West Kirby Village focused on the Crescent and along Banks Road.

- d. **The Marine Lake, West Kirby** – redevelopment of West Kirby Sailing School as an iconic facility in terms of offer and architecture to include;
- (i) West Wirral Coast and Countryside Interpretation Centre, specifically focusing on the offer of Hilbre Island and making wider connections to the Mersey Waterfront Regional Park and Wirral Waterside Way;
 - (ii) watersports centre to include all existing facilities, especially toilet provision;
 - (iii) beach and Marine Lake changing facilities;
 - (iv) marine retail centre;
 - (v) restaurant;
 - (vi) hotel.

Accessibility and Linkages

- 6.18 A further element of the emerging vision is the delivery of a robust and integrated Transport Strategy to support the future development of both townships and to support the regeneration and possible diversification of the Carr Lane Industrial Estate as this is seen as a significant economic driver in the area.
- 6.19 More specifically, the strategy will need to work at both a strategic and local level and recognise the broad strategy for the economic and environmental regeneration of the area as set out in the emerging masterplan and the implications of the key development opportunities.
- 6.20 It will therefore be important to develop a Strategy which recognises the phased approach to regeneration projects of this nature, whilst at the same time reflecting local, regional and national policies and objectives.
- 6.21 Certain key access and movement strategies have begun to be developed that respond to the development opportunities and overarching strategies that the preferred option has begun to generate.

6.22 Hoylake Strategies:

- a. **Market Street:**
 - (i) Market Street will incorporate a 20mph zone between the 'Heart of Hoose' and Station Gateway. This will be achieved through traffic calming/pedestrian crossings, road re-alignment and increased on street parking.
 - (ii) The road realignment and on street parking also serves to focus more activity along the core retail frontages, enhancing the vitality and viability of Market Street as well as providing dedicated service bays and better public transport access points.
- b. **Station Gateway:**
 - (i) A one-way route is being examined directing buses from Market Street down Albert Road onto Station Road as part of an improved bus/rail interchange. Certain short stay parking will be retained in this area and the potential for the long stay parking to be re-located to the park and ride site are being considered.
- c. **Promenade:**
 - (i) A parking strategy is being considered along the promenade with the goal of increasing activity along the North Parade.
 - (ii) North Parade will also incorporate dedicated pedestrian/cycle route and facilities, as part of a 'Safe Cycle Routes strategy.
- d. **Carr Lane:**
 - (i) Options that seek to reduce the bottle neck created by the rail crossing at Hoylake Station are being considered.
 - (ii) An alternative access into Hoylake and Carr Lane Estate from Saughall Massie Road appears to be a viable and a pragmatic approach to dealing with the anticipated increase in visitors to the Hoylake-West Kirby resort.

- e. Heart of Hoose:
 - (i) It is recognised that car parking is a major issue along Market Street and with the potential to create a comprehensive development site at the 'Heart of Hoose', a car parking strategy that would likely incorporate a new car park is being considered.
 - (ii) As part of this an off street car parking capacity assessment is being undertaken.

6.23 West Kirby Strategies:

- a. Station Concourse:
 - (i) Two highway options that aid the redevelopment of the Concourse and link it effectively to the Crescent and Banks Road are being examined:
 - (1) pedestrianisation scheme for the section of Grange Road from the junction of Dee Lane to the junction of Orrysdale Road
 - (2) One way scheme diverting traffic from Meols Drive along Bridge Road and onto Orrysdale Road. Grange Road would become one way in this option for traffic travelling from the opposite direction
 - (ii) A traffic calming strategy for the rest of the town is being examined alongside improved public transport provision.
- b. Promenade:
 - (i) A parking strategy is being considered along the promenade with the goal of increasing activity along the South Parade.
 - (ii) South Parade will also incorporate dedicated pedestrian/cycle route and facilities, as part of a 'Safe Cycle Routes' strategy.
- c. Sailing School:
 - (i) Redevelopment options for the Sailing School may result in the loss of car parking, therefore a car parking strategy specifically related to this facility is being progressed.

Image and Identity

- 6.24 The full potential of Hoylake-West Kirby is untapped. Its history, major coastal sporting events and facilities, natural coastal and countryside environments and ability of its retail offer to attract the affluence of the adjacent areas are all undersold and have the potential, when treated as a comprehensive package, to transform Hoylake-West Kirby into a 'classic resort'.
- 6.25 The masterplan will knit together the existing offer with the new opportunities to create this 'comprehensive package' and then identify mechanisms for the Hoylake-West Kirby package to be promoted and marketed to external markets and audiences, sub-regionally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Existing concepts and initial ideas include;
- a. The 'Classic Resort'
 - b. Hoylake(-West Kirby): The Golf Resort
 - c. Hoylake-West Kirby: The Coastal Sport Resort
 - d. Hoylake-West Kirby – The Recreational Resort
 - e. Gastronomy
 - f. Local history

Conclusion

- 6.26 Our emerging view is that the combination of the five key drivers and the physical development framework outlined above provide the basis for the successful delivery of the Regeneration Plan for Hoylake and West Kirby.
- 6.27 The successful delivery of the Regeneration Plan will be based on the production of a delivery and implementation plan. It will identify key funding agencies, partners and priority programmes that will ensure the implementation of the development proposals that the masterplan identifies. An integral element of this plan will be recognise that the ability to maintain the quality of the new Hoylake-West Kirby resort is essential to the long term regeneration and success of the two towns. Further consideration of this important aspect will be progressed as the masterplan evolves.