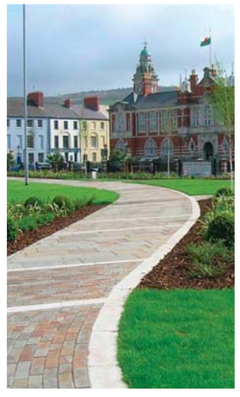
Swansea
city centre

Strategic Framework







A report produced by:

ROGER TYM & PARTNERS Planners and Development Economists with:: ARUP BDP Donaldsons Locumconsulting creating successful destinations

A report produced for:

Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Assembly Government

Partneriaeth Canol Dinas Abertawe Swansea City Centre Partnership

Swansea city centre

Strategic

	Page number
Introduction	
Introduction	3
Study Brief	3
Study Area	4
City Centre Partnership	5
The Strategic Framework	5
Organisation of the Strategic Framework	5
Context	
The City and County of Swansea	7
Policy Context	8
Analysis	
Introduction to the Analysis Section	15
The City Centre Economy	15
Physical and Urban Design Analysis	22
Accessibility Analysis	30
Vision	
Aspirations	37
Core Cities	38
Priorities for Developing a Successful European Waterfront City	39
Summary of Priorities for the Strategic Framework	39
The Vision for Swansea	40
Strategic Objectives	40
Regeneration Framework	
Developing the Vision: Priority Themes and Priority Areas	43
Sustainability Strategy	44
Design Framework	46
Accessibility Strategy	50
Development Strategy	53
Priority Areas	58
1. A Vibrant Mixed Use Heart to the City Centre	59
2. A High Quality European “Boulevard”	72
3. Connecting the City to the Waterfront	76
4. Complementary Districts	85
Framework Review	
Delivery	97
The Future for Swansea City Centre	100

Introduction

Context

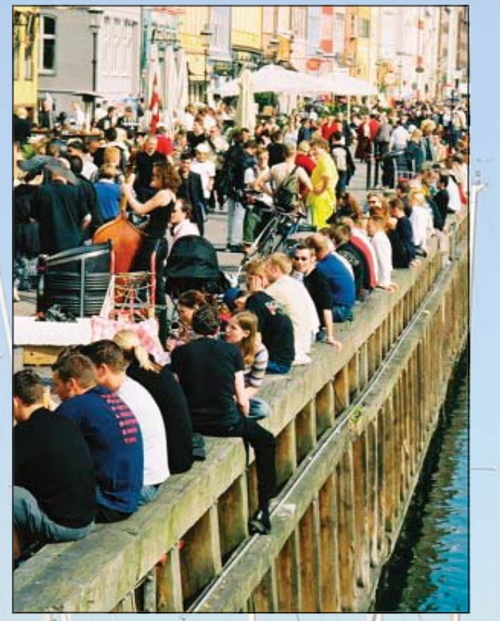
Analysis

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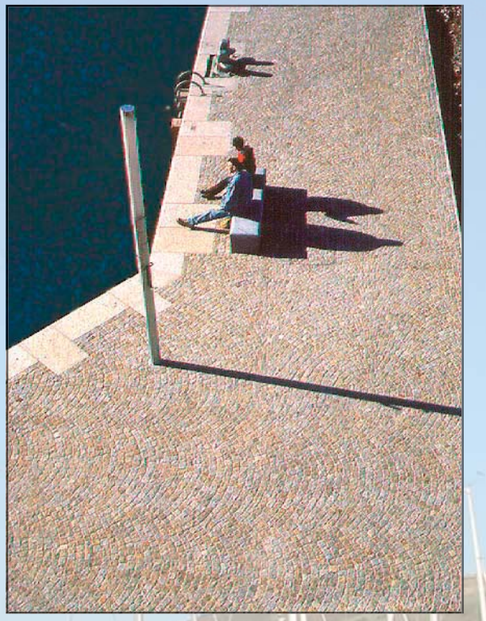
Regeneration Framework

Framework Review

Framework



Copenhagen waterfront



Belfast waterfront



Barcelona waterfront

Introduction

Introduction

Swansea is a thriving urban area with a waterfront setting and an extensive rural hinterland. It has a strong, proud identity and sits as the regional capital of South West Wales. Its City Centre is a focus of community, business, civic and cultural life and a major driver of the local economy. The City Centre is the public face of Swansea, and its character, profile and performance are important to the future of the area. It has reached a critical point in its development, and important choices must be made.

Swansea is on the threshold of a new phase of economic growth, particularly in the “knowledge economy” as endorsed by the Wales Spatial Plan and the City’s own Economic Regeneration Strategy. Significant changes will be driven by the City and County of Swansea Council, the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), and a wide range of public and private sector partners. Change will impact well beyond the City itself, but the City Centre has a key role in making it happen. It is important that developments in the City Centre are shaped to achieve the maximum benefits for residents, visitors and for the local economy.

To assist in this process, the City Centre Strategic Framework was commissioned by the City and County of Swansea (CCS) and the former Welsh Development Agency (now WAG) on behalf of the Swansea City Centre Partnership (SCCP). The Framework provides a carefully researched evidence base and analysis of the City Centre and its potential. Robust research into economic prospects, retail capacity and other issues have informed proposals which are ambitious but realistic and deliverable. There is a strong emphasis on making things happen, and the Strategic Framework is complemented by recommendations about delivery structures and mechanisms.

Study Brief

The Brief for this study is to prepare a Strategic Framework that will :

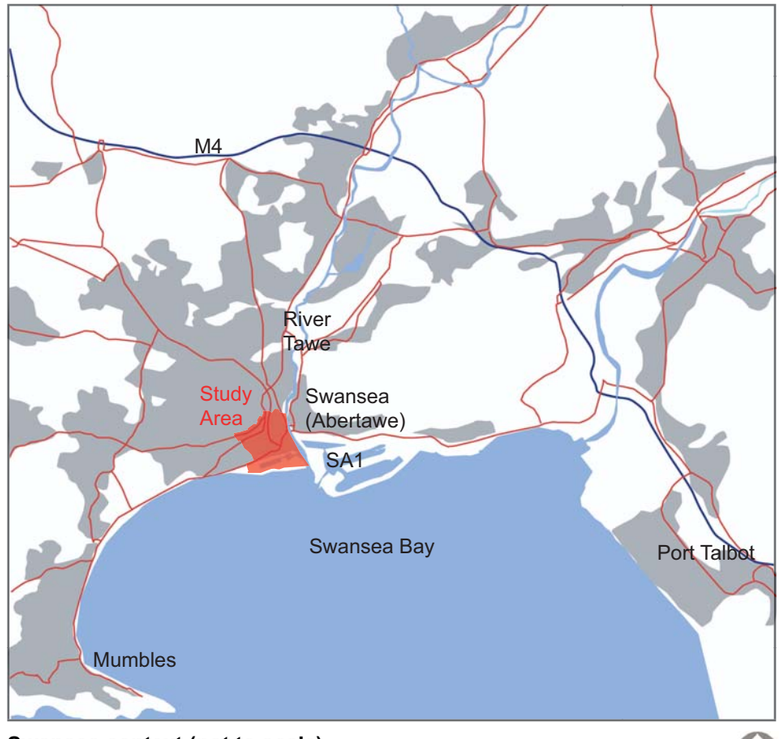
- Identify a role for Swansea City Centre and express this through regeneration proposals
- Evaluate development economics as they affect Swansea City Centre
- Prepare a City Centre accessibility strategy to support development
- Provide a design framework for the City Centre
- Produce a comprehensive, integrated, deliverable regeneration strategy and action plan for Swansea City Centre.

A number of key principles are highlighted in the Brief as important, in that the Strategic Framework needs to be:

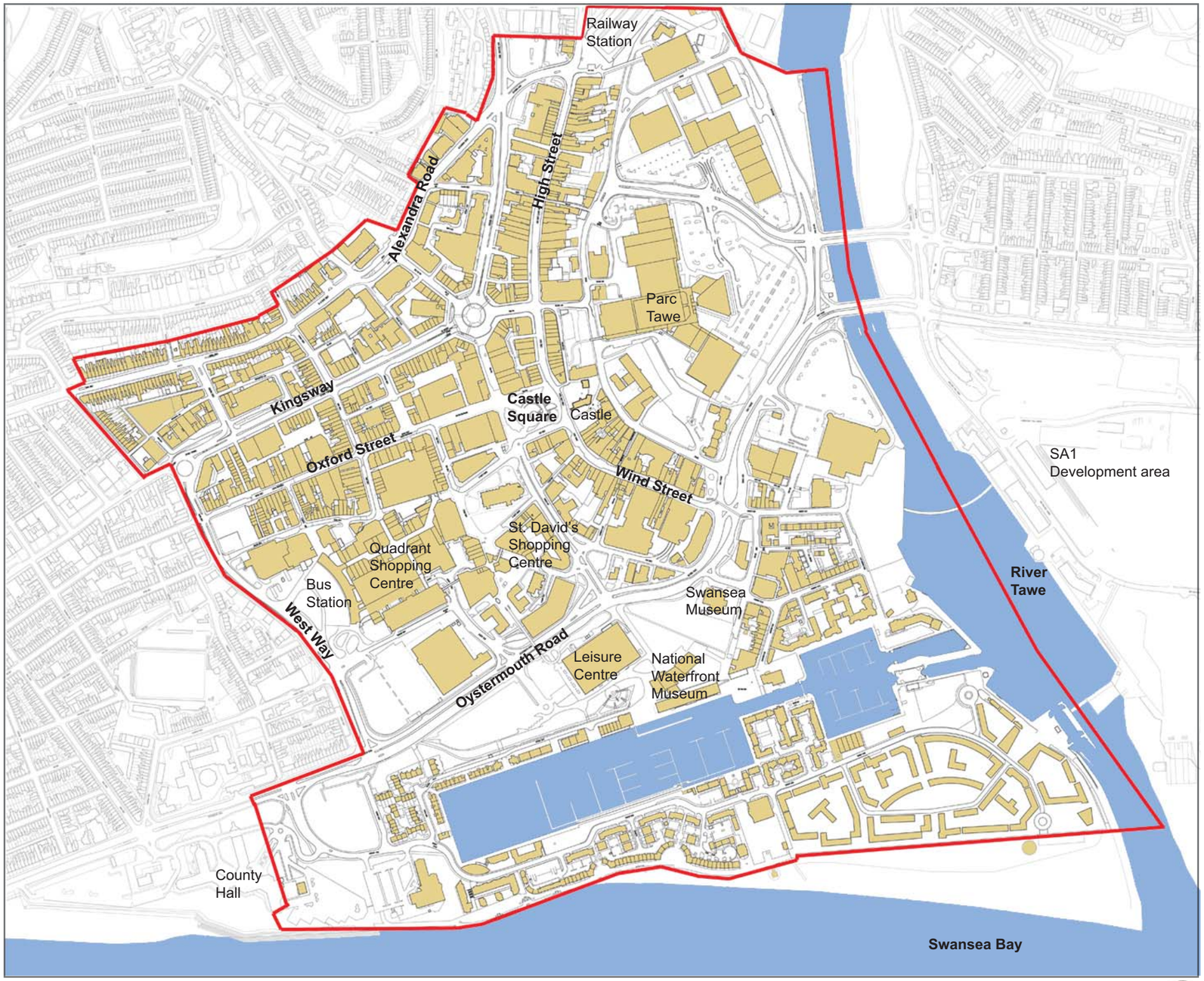
- Flexible but sound
- Integrated and holistic
- Formulated through Partnership working
- Sustainable
- Aware of management and maintenance issues
- Deliverable
- An example of best practice and innovation.



Regional location (not to scale)



Swansea context (not to scale)



Study Area (1:7500)

Study Area

The Study Area was defined to encompass all of the main retail and commercial areas of the City Centre.

The main focus of the City Centre is the area around Oxford Street, Castle Square, and the Quadrant Shopping Centre. It is constrained by key transport corridors at Kingsway, West Way, Oystermouth Road/Victoria Road and Wind Street. It also includes more established areas around Alexandra Road, High Street, Wind Street and the Castle. A more recently developed bulky goods retail and leisure area is situated to the east at Parc Tawe.

The City Centre includes the "Maritime Quarter" extending down to the seafront, developed around the old South Dock. Predominantly a residential area, it includes some important heritage buildings and structures and is also an important leisure and cultural part of the City Centre, linking to the beach and promenade. Swansea Museum, the Leisure Centre (which is currently being refurbished) and the new National Waterfront Museum Swansea now comprise an important group of facilities which serve the City and surrounding areas.

County Hall is situated south-west of the City Centre and on the seafront, whilst SA1 Swansea Waterfront is located to the east across the River Tawe. Both are outside but adjacent to the Study Area, and the Strategic Framework clearly acknowledges their importance, and the need to improve connections between them and the City Centre.

Proposals in the Strategic Framework are intended to secure the future of each of the component parts of the City Centre, to enhance the synergy between them, and to integrate them into a vibrant, successful City Centre.

City Centre Partnership

The Swansea City Centre Partnership (SCCP) was formed almost six years ago and has been actively involved in the preparation of the Strategic Framework. Initiated by the City and County of Swansea (CCS) and the West Wales Chamber of Commerce, it was established as a partnership involving the public and private sectors. Its aim is to facilitate a co-ordinated and consistent approach to the future development, management and marketing of the City Centre.

The City Centre Partnership has been responsible for guiding improvements to the City Centre, by working with businesses, property owners and key stakeholders, including the City and County of Swansea and the Welsh Development Agency. It has prepared a rolling Annual Action Plan, which sets out a comprehensive set of proposals, and has been responsible for promoting and coordinating the establishment of a Business Improvement District (BID) for the City Centre.

The 2005 - 2006 Action Plan sets out the SCCP Vision for the City Centre:

"To develop Swansea City Centre as a premier destination and a vibrant and dynamic place to shop, live, work and visit."

The Strategic Framework

The purpose of this Strategic Framework is to set out proposals that will guide new investment in the City Centre over the next 15 – 20 years. The proposals are strategic, ambitious and realistic, and will create the conditions for sustainable urban change that will transform the City Centre. The Framework will establish development priorities, design principles and an accessibility strategy in response to a number of strategic objectives.

The Strategic Framework is particularly intended to demonstrate Swansea's ability to take responsibility for its destiny and to transform itself for the twenty-first century, as a distinctive, high quality European city. In this respect, it provides a vehicle for engagement on the future of the City Centre, between organisations, residents and other local interests, and identifies ways in which they can work together.

It provides a clear vision and a context within which private sector interests can make their choices about investing in the City Centre, providing the certainty and confidence which they need to invest in the City. The study partners are keen to work with the private sector, and this Strategic Framework provides the basis for detailed discussions and negotiations.

In due course the CCS intends to adopt the Swansea City Centre Strategic Framework (SCCSF) as Council corporate policy. In addition, it intends to adopt elements of the Framework as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), in support of the Unitary Development Plan once it is adopted. It is also intended to prepare area or site-specific planning and development briefs where necessary, to provide more detailed development, planning and urban design guidance, on the way in which development plan policies should be applied.

The Strategic Framework will be used by CCS and Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) to jointly consider the interventions and investments that they should make in the City Centre, in order to facilitate key proposals. It will clarify the inputs of the City Centre Partnership as well, sitting in tandem with the aspirations arising from the BID process, confirming the activities which the Partnership will contribute.

Organisation of the Strategic Framework

There are four constituent documents that comprise the Strategic Framework for the City Centre and which together will be used to support the regeneration of the City Centre.

This document is the main Strategic Framework itself, and is structured as follows :

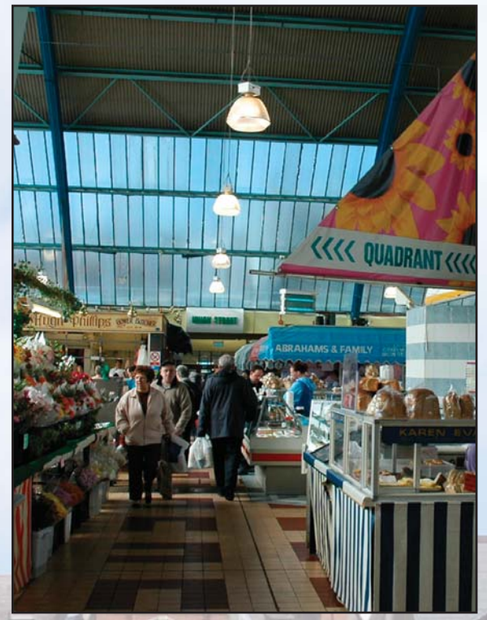
- Introduction
- Context – providing historical and policy context for analysis of Swansea City Centre
- Analysis – setting out the "evidence-base" from research on the economy, urban structure, physical form, development, and accessibility
- Vision – describing the aspirations and Strategic Objectives for the City Centre, and setting out the Vision Statement
- Regeneration Framework – an overview of the Framework's rationale, followed by design and accessibility principles and culminating in a development strategy for the City Centre
- Framework Review – reviewing the proposals of the Strategic Framework and summarising how it can deliver development to meet the ambitions for the City Centre.

In addition to this document, there is:

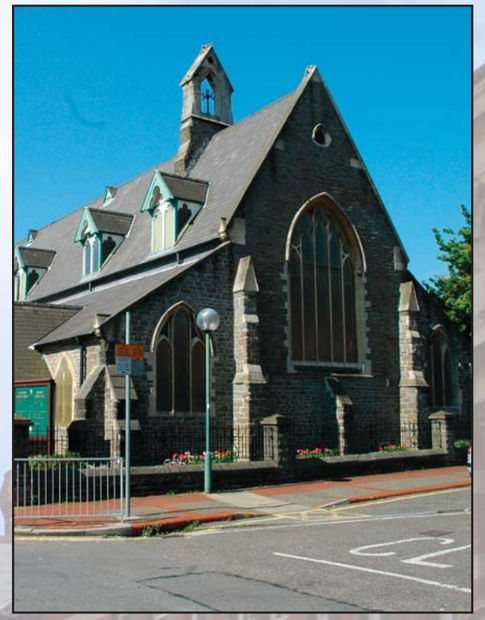
- An Executive Summary - a short synopsis of the Framework's key issues and proposals
- A Delivery Strategy and Action Plan - to identify implementation structures and mechanisms that will coordinate delivery of the proposals, including an Action Plan which can be used to guide initiatives, programmes and investment, and manage the process on an annual basis
- A number of Technical Appendices – specialist studies and



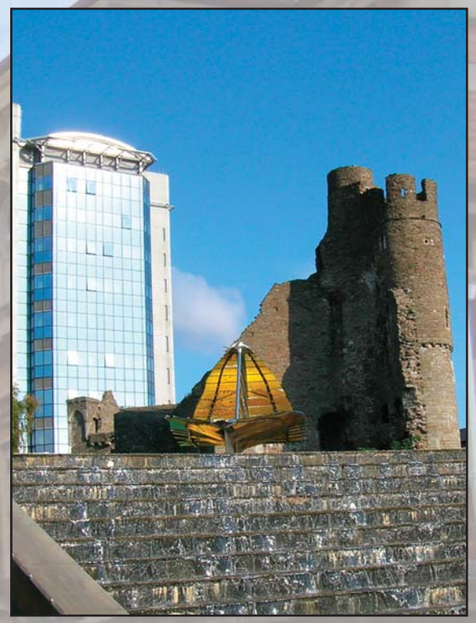
Photograph of Castle Square representing the relationship between water and history in the City Centre



Swansea Market



St David's Church



Swansea Castle & BT building from Castle Square

Context

The City & County of Swansea

The City and County of Swansea is home to 224,600 people (2003), with a substantial rural hinterland, and a City Centre situated at the mouth of the River Tawe, overlooking Swansea Bay. It is the second largest city in Wales, and the regional centre for South West Wales.

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

Location

Swansea is situated towards the western end of the M4 motorway, which connects it to Cardiff, Bristol, the Thames Valley and London (some 188 miles distant). Swansea is also connected along this corridor by mainline rail services. Cardiff International Airport is 44 miles eastwards.

The Urban Economy

There were 101,700 employees in employment in Swansea in 2003 and 75.4% of the working age population were economically active (above the Welsh average but below the Great Britain average). There was a net inflow of 6,600 people commuting into the City and County daily in 2003 – but by comparison, Cardiff had a net inflow of 46,800.

Swansea is a service sector dominated economy, with 86% of employment in the service sector in 2003. The largest sectors of employment in Swansea are public services (37% of the total in 2003), "distribution, hotels and catering" (which includes retail) (25% in 2003), and manufacturing - now just less than 10% of the economy. Swansea has experienced strong employment growth since 1999 (14% increase 1999 - 2003) - above the levels of growth of GB, Wales or South West Wales.

The Swansea economy has seen particularly high levels of growth in banking, finance and insurance, and public sector employment between 1999 and 2003. Over this period manufacturing employment in Swansea has declined only marginally (0.7%), unlike Wales and Great Britain where employment levels continued to fall. The economy is rather vulnerable being concentrated in a narrow range of sectors. Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita (representing output per head) is higher in Swansea (£12,610 in 2002) than the Welsh average (£11,971), but is only 83% of the UK average (£15,614).

Swansea suffers from negative business perceptions and is not rated highly for business location decisions because of perceptions related to workforce size and skills, lack of suitable premises and poor transport links. These perceptions relate to problems identified through research and market information – particularly the poor quality of much of the built environment of the City Centre, a lack of modern, good quality premises in the City Centre, and a very limited range of attractions and facilities to support leisure, tourism and business tourism.

However, Swansea has a number of key assets - most notably the unique quality of its setting on Swansea Bay and its surrounding landscape. A legacy of industrial pollution and contamination has substantially been dealt with. Redevelopment projects around the City Centre, at SA1 and at Swansea Waterfront, are changing the urban environment and perceptions of the City. In a modern economy, this quality of environment has a high potential value. Key economic assets for the City include its role as a regional centre for shopping, leisure, commerce, sport, culture and education; its thriving evening economy; the research strengths and international reputation of the University and the Institute; the cultural and artistic heritage of the City; and the strong sense of the Swansea community identity and local pride.

Historical Context

Swansea's City Centre has grown and changed over centuries, and continues to evolve today in response to changing economic and social circumstances.

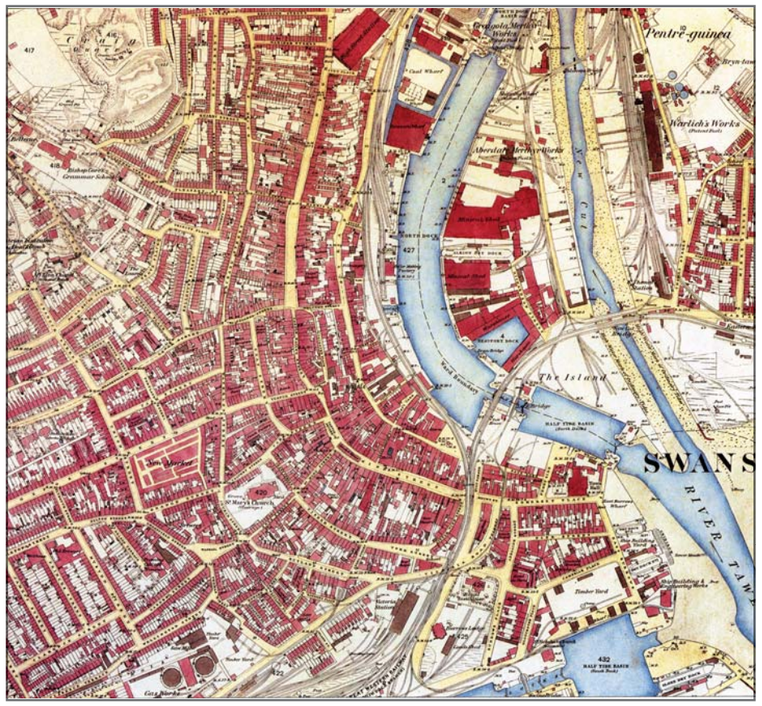
The shape and character of the City Centre was substantially determined by industrial development of South Wales from the mid-eighteenth century. The growth of mining and metal industries stimulated major investment in new docks and railways and led to high levels of industrial employment and new urban growth. The population of Swansea (now over 220,000) grew to 10,000 in the early 1800s; to around 20,000 in mid-1800s; and to nearly 100,000 by 1900.

The early urban growth of Swansea is still evident in the smaller area of Georgian streets and buildings near the Old Town Hall (now the Dylan Thomas Centre), and the civic pride of later phases is evident in some surviving public buildings such as the former Head Post Office, Wind Street (now a café bar/restaurant, offices and housing by Swansea Housing Association), the Swansea Harbour Trust Office (now Morgan's Hotel), and the Carlton Cinema in Oxford Street (now Waterstone's bookshop). Bombing in the early 1940s flattened much of the established retail and commercial areas of the City Centre, and resulted in the loss of many attractive streets and buildings. The new City Centre, planned on a grid-pattern of roads including the main thoroughfares of Kingsway, Princess Way, West Way and Oystermouth Road, created an urban structure which is still a major influence on the functions, environment and perceptions of the City Centre. Other areas such as the River Tawe riverfront and the South Dock (now the "Maritime Quarter") were still very much port and industrial areas, separated from the City Centre by railway viaducts and roads.

Redevelopment continued in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, including the construction of the Quadrant Centre, St David's Centre, County Hall, Parc Tawe and the demolition of railway viaducts at Victoria Road. These developments reinforced the structure of the City Centre as a largely retail centre (with only limited office accommodation and housing) based on the post-war road grid. Recent developments have begun to re-establish some diversity and distinctiveness in the City Centre. Rejuvenation of Wind Street and Princess Way, including Salubrious Place, has made a major difference, with links across Oystermouth Road to the Maritime Quarter. The National Waterfront Museum, more housing in the Maritime Quarter, and the planned refurbishment of the Leisure Centre will draw more people and bring more life

to this part of the City Centre. Development is also progressing across the river in SA1, with substantial development of new office buildings, housing, cafés/restaurants/bars, and other facilities all contributing to a new focus of city life.

The economic context and competition for the City Centre have changed and hardened dramatically in recent years. Cardiff has become established as the much larger city of South Wales, with a stronger city centre and the structure of a modern urban economy. Global change has restructured the national and regional economy, creating different demands on the City Centre. Swansea's economic role has changed dramatically in the past 20 years. The City Centre needs to respond to that change, and lead the City and County, and the wider sub-region in the twenty-first century.



Historical map of Swansea dated 1878 (not to scale)

Policy Context

A number of important recent policies set the context for the Strategic Framework.

Wales Spatial Plan

The Wales Spatial Plan - People, Places, Futures – (WSP) published in November 2004 is the first spatial plan for Wales. It reflects the Welsh Assembly Government's desire to prepare for the future based on the key principles of social justice, equality and sustainability.

The Plan has a vision based on building sustainable communities, promoting a sustainable economy, valuing the environment, achieving sustainable accessibility and respecting distinctiveness. It recognises the need for each area of Wales to have its own distinctive response to delivering the national vision.

The vision for Swansea Bay – Waterfront & Western Valleys in the Wales Spatial Plan is for:

"An area of planned sustainable growth and environmental improvement, realising its potential, supported by integrated transport within the area and externally, and spreading prosperity to support the revitalisation of West Wales."

The WSP notes that there are many signs that Swansea is on the cusp of substantial and sustained improvement although at present the area as a whole is not benefiting from its potential. The main elements of the strategy for the area are:

- Development of a modern, attractive and vibrant waterfront urban area
- Revitalisation of Swansea as Wales' second national city
- Enhanced transport links between inland communities and the coast.

The Spatial Plan wants the role of Swansea to be strengthened as a driver for growth within the area and a catalyst for development further west. This is particularly being promoted through the "key settlements" and "waterfront" themes of the Plan. Appropriate cultural, leisure, and social infrastructure and regional capital functions, including retailing should be encouraged to provide an attractive place to live, work and visit. This will help to retain young people and attract well-qualified people from outside the area, providing a stimulus for improved economic performance.

The Plan recognises that the natural assets of Swansea will need to be capitalised upon, including improvement to linkages between the City Centre and seafront area, building upon SA1 Swansea Waterfront and Swansea Marina developments.

The WSP links to the other strategic agendas and priorities of the WAG, published in recent years. Most notably:

- Wales: A Better Country - the Strategic Agenda of the Welsh Assembly Government was published in September 2003. A revitalised and regenerated Swansea City Centre will have a part to play in overcoming each of the challenges identified - helping more people into work; creating better jobs and skills; improving health; and building strong and safer communities
- Wales: A Vibrant Economy (WAVE) - the Welsh Assembly Government's Economic Development Strategy for Wales, was published in November 2005. The vision is for a vibrant Welsh economy delivering strong and sustainable economic growth by providing opportunities for all. The priorities are to further increase employment and at the same time raise the quality of jobs available in Wales so that average earnings increase and close the gap with the UK average. WAVE highlights the importance of urban agglomeration, and the greater Swansea Bay region is cited as an area that has potential to extract greater benefits from urban agglomeration. The revitalisation of Swansea City Centre will be an important contributor to this, and can act as a driver for growth in the region
- Creative Future - the Culture Strategy for Wales is a ten-year plan launched in January 2002 through which the Welsh Assembly Government wishes to enrich and release the energies, talents and creative potential of individuals. Swansea City Centre could play an essential role as the centre of culture for South West Wales

- Creative Future highlights areas of deficiency – where Swansea may have an essential role to play - these range from providing modern venues appropriate to local needs and national ambitions, to investing in festivals and attracting sporting events, conferences and exhibitions.

Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statement 02/2005 – Planning for Retailing and Town Centres

The Assembly Government's objectives for retailing and town centres are to:

- Secure accessible, efficient, competitive and innovative retail provision for all the communities of Wales, in both urban and rural areas
- Promote established town, district, local and village centres as the most appropriate locations for retailing, leisure and for other functions complementary to it
- Enhance the vitality, attractiveness and viability of town, district, local and village centre
- Promote access to these centres by public transport, walking and cycling.

Local planning authorities should develop through their Community Strategies and development plans a clear strategy and policies for retail development. They should identify changing pressures and opportunities and devise appropriate responses to them. Development plans may distinguish between primary and secondary frontages in town centres and consider their relative importance to the character of the centre.

In deciding whether to identify sites for retail and leisure developments, LPA's should in the first instance consider whether there is a need for additional provision. Local planning authorities should adopt a sequential approach to selecting sites where a need is identified for such new development. Adopting a sequential approach means the first preference should be for town centre locations, where appropriate sites or buildings suitable for conversion are available.

Welsh Assembly Government Technical Advice Note 15: Development and Flood Risk

Flood risk is potentially a serious development issue within important parts of the City Centre. The plan extract from TAN15 printed below indicates that a section of the study area is designated as Zone C1 (protected by flood defences) and a section as Zone C2 (unprotected). Both areas are considered to be at risk by the Environment Agency.

Hyder Consulting (UK) has, however, been commissioned by the City and County of Swansea to carry out a Flood Consequences Assessment in respect of key City Centre locations. The 1 in 200 and 1 in 1,000 tidal flood levels have been determined and agreed with the Environment Agency Wales as 6.55m and 6.85m above ordnance datum (AOD) respectively (with allowance made for global warming).



Zone A: Little or no risk

Zone B: Areas known to have previously flooded

Zone C1: Served by significant flood infrastructure

Zone C2: Without significant flood infrastructure

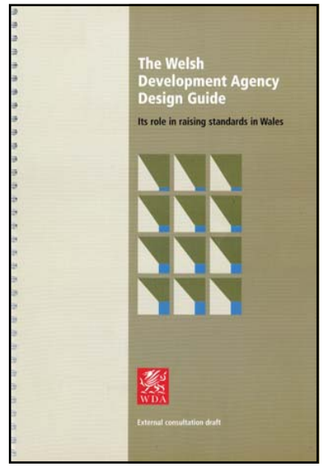
Extract from TAN 15 (not to scale)

The results of the assessment show that at the extreme event, flooding would be localised around the bank of the River Tawe. It follows, therefore, that the flood zone classification as defined in TAN15 is considered to be incorrect and that consequently, allowing for the one exception referred to above, the study area is not at risk.

Welsh Assembly Government Technical Advice Note 12: Design

In the late 1990s a growing awareness of the importance of achieving a high standard of design in our towns and cities culminated in the publication of 'Towards an Urban Renaissance' (Urban Task Force led by Lord Rogers, 1999). In Wales, this was followed by 'Technical Advice Note 12: Design' (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002) and 'Creating Sustainable Places' (Welsh Development Agency, 2005). Both of these documents establish easily understood principles and objectives of good design in relation to the buildings, streets and spaces that comprise the public realm.





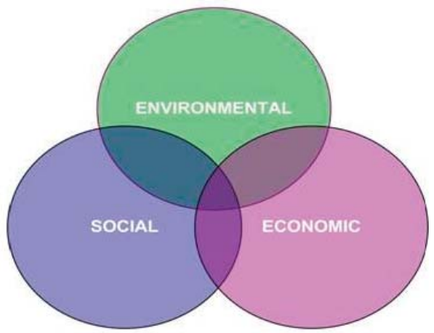
The objectives of good design as indicated in TAN12 are clear and concise, and particularly relevant to the City Centre. They are reinforced by principles included in the Welsh Development Agency Design Guide. The key objectives involve:

- Achieving sustainable design solutions
- Sustaining or enhancing character
- Promoting innovative design
- Promoting a successful relationship between public and private space
- Promoting high quality public realm
- Ensuring ease of access for all
- Promoting legible development
- Designing for change
- Promoting quality, choice and variety.

Creating Sustainable Places: Welsh Development Agency

The former Welsh Development Agency identified specific principles which aid sustainable development in support of the relevant design guidance. The key principles which build on those referred to above include:

- A vision which defines the sort of place a design is intended to create
- The need to promote economic viability
- Consultation and engagement as part of the design process
- Recognising environmental capital and the benefits of positively managing conservation and biodiversity
- Seeking to reduce resource use and promote recycling.



Sustainable development - the triple bottom line

Property Strategy for Employment in Wales

The Property Strategy for Employment in Wales is the Welsh Assembly Government's strategy for employment sites and buildings in Wales. It covers existing sites and buildings in public and private sector ownership, and potential sites for the future. It highlights opportunities to create quality office space in city and town centres, and clear links with wider regeneration, identifying Swansea City Centre as one of the areas for early consideration.

South West Wales Regional Economic Framework

A Regional Economic Framework was launched in autumn 2005 by the South West Wales Economic Forum, following a commission supported by the Welsh Assembly Government. It notes that South West Wales accounts for more than a quarter of the total output of Wales, and while output per capita is low for the region as a whole, Swansea's output per capita is actually above the Welsh average.

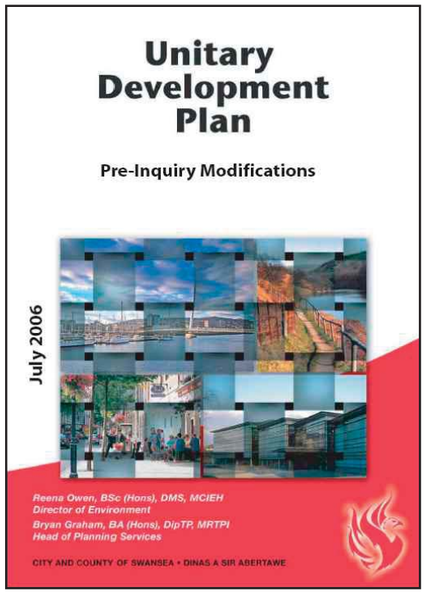
The Framework notes that the region has a strong base of knowledge-based activities, containing leading Further and Higher Education Institutions, is the home of the Technium concept and the location of a number of important firms in the creative and high-technology industries. The Framework emphasises the need to diversify the economy and focus on the knowledge-based economy, stating that "through the development of higher value activities and increasing use of ICT, the problems of peripherality can be reduced, and indeed may be seen as a virtue as quality of life becomes an increasingly important factor in locational decision-making".

The focus of the Framework is on stimulating the development of the region through the concept of the "Creative Region", based on innovation and knowledge-driven activities. While the Framework does not make specific geographic comment or prescriptions, this focus clearly has significant implications for the only City Centre in the region, and Swansea attracts particular comment in the context of its strategic role within Wales as a whole.

The Pre-Inquiry Modifications Unitary Development Plan (July 2006)

The Pre-Inquiry Modifications UDP for the City and County of Swansea will provide the statutory planning policies for the CCS area, and includes a chapter on the City Centre Action Area, which is discussed in more detail below.

It is envisaged that elements of the Framework will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) in due course to support the policies in the UDP. It is also intended to prepare area or site-specific planning and development briefs, where necessary, to provide more detailed development, planning and urban design guidance, on the way in which development plan policies should be applied.



The Pre-Inquiry Modifications UDP sets out as a City Centre objective "to reinforce and improve the City Centre as a vibrant regional focus for business and administration, shopping, culture and leisure." A number of sub-objectives for the City Centre are stated:

"i. To improve the image of the City Centre and its contribution to making Swansea a vibrant and distinctive waterfront city
ii. To strengthen the attractions of the City Centre by promoting a diversity of uses and developments that will sustain its economic vitality
iii. To reverse the declining market share of the City Centre for expenditure within its catchment area
iv. To establish a high quality City Centre environment closely integrated with the Seafront and River Tawe creating a unique waterfront city
v. To deliver major enhancements to the public realm leading to the creation of a network of attractive streets, gateways and corridors
vi. To improve accessibility to and within the City by reducing congestion, delivering a fast and efficient public transport network with improved facilities and enhancing pedestrian linkages both internally and to the waterfront."

Policies within the City Centre chapter of the Pre-Inquiry Modifications UDP reflect these objectives.

Policy CC1 sets out a mixed use approach to development within the City Centre including encouragement of the re-use of historic buildings and the redevelopment/enhancement of post-war buildings. The Policy explains that the SCCSF will set out specific proposals for a number of key sites and development areas across the City Centre.

Policy CC2 aims to encourage new retail development that "maintains and enhances the vitality, attractiveness and viability of the City Centre as a regional shopping destination…" "Highest priority is placed on enhancing shopping facilities by means of refurbishment and redevelopment of the City Centre retail core. Retail development proposals that would be detrimental to objectives for the enhancement of the retail core will not be permitted."

In the amplification of Policy CC2 it states that the term 'vibrant mixed use heart', to cover the retail core, is applied in the SCCSF. The retail core in the Framework is subdivided as follows :

- St David's/Quadrant
- Oxford Street/Castle Square
- Oxford Street/West Way
- Wind Street/Princess Way.

St David's/Quadrant is defined as "the highest priority for redevelopment" and it states that a "…regeneration scheme at this location must be delivered in the short to medium term, in order to generate the impact necessary to activate the essential aim of retail-led regeneration". The amplification continues by stating that " ….the potential for bringing forward such a scheme must not be compromised. Any other retail-based development, either within or outside the City Centre must be evaluated against this aim."

Policy EC4 outlines that "the acceptability of all retail development proposals will be assessed against:

i. The need for the development and provided the need can be justified
ii. A sequential assessment of the suitability of the site;
iii. Impact on vitality and viability of the City Centre and other established shopping centres
iv. Compatibility with the function, scale and character of the centre within or adjacent to which the site is located
v. Accessibility by foot, bicycle, public transport and car;, and
vi. Design, environmental and highways considerations."

The Pre-Inquiry Modifications UDP aims to secure accessibility for all through a set of complementary policies relating to public transport, walking, cycling, and improvements to infrastructure, traffic management and parking. These improvements will be achieved by:

- Completing the strategic road network around the City Centre
- Introducing further park and ride facilities on strategic approaches to the City Centre
- Improving public transport, including rail and bus interchange facilities, and facilities for taxis
- Comprehensive redevelopment of the Quadrant Bus Station, introducing further bus priority measures and a City Centre circular bus route
- Broadly maintaining the existing level of car parking to serve the City Centre, whilst promoting better management of both on-street and off-street parking
- Extending an improving the quality of pedestrian routes through the City Centre and its connections with the Waterfront
- Providing facilities to encourage cycling
- Encouraging development that facilitates sustainable travel choices and complies with accessibility for all principles.



A consultation event involving the community in the design process

Swansea's Economic Regeneration Strategy

In summer 2005, the Swansea Economic Regeneration Partnership (SERP) commissioned a new strategy to support economic regeneration in the City and County of Swansea, and deliver the prosperity theme of the Swansea Community Plan. The Strategy – called "Swansea 2020" – was published in the summer of 2006.

Swansea 2020 sets out a Vision, Strategic Aims, Cross-Cutting Themes and Action Plan to support the economic regeneration of Swansea over the next 15 years. The Vision for Swansea is that :

"By 2020, we want Swansea to be:

- an internationally competitive economy
- Wales' leading centre for the knowledge economy
- Operating with an economically active population equal in size to the Great Britain average, known for high skills and providing critical labour mass in priority Focus Clusters
- A proud, vibrant and ambitious City."



The Strategy focuses on six Strategic Aims:

- Increased Productivity
- Knowledge Economy
- Economic Equity
- Entrepreneurship
- Focus Clusters
- Children and Young People.

A specific recommendation in 'Focus Clusters' is that the resources for development of the Professional Business Services cluster should link with the plans to regenerate the City Centre. The Strategic Aims are supported by four cross-cutting themes of: foresight; sense of purpose & image; competitive places; excellence in delivery & sustainability.

The Strategy notes that city centres are increasingly recognised as drivers of wider economic development. The Competitive Places theme is about making Swansea a place where people want to live, work and visit and revitalisation of the City Centre will be an important component of this.

Swansea Tourism Strategy

A new Tourism Strategy is currently being prepared that will lead tourism development in Swansea for the next ten years. Tourism has particular strategic value for Swansea, with its natural and cultural resources, strategic location and accessibility giving it scope to drive the region's tourism economy.

At present, Swansea's urban tourism offer is limited but the regeneration of the City Centre has the potential to significantly enhance the City's ability to attract business and leisure tourists. The Tourism Strategy suggests that there should be major investments in key transformational schemes such as a purpose-built conference centre and further hotel development, along with creating new public spaces and physically linking the City Centre to the sea.

Swansea City Centre Transport and Development Study

This study was undertaken in 2002 for the City and County of Swansea and the former Welsh Development Agency. The primary objective of the work was to determine ways in which the key developments and the desire for integration could be achieved at the same time as meeting both national and local transport aspirations and air quality objectives. A travel choice model was developed to forecast future conditions for the year 2017 and various possible measures were tested.

The study conclusions included the following:

- The city would experience increased traffic congestion unless interventions in the transport systems are made
- Park & Ride and improved bus services, if supported by bus priority measures and complementary car park pricing policy can be effective in reducing congestion in the City Centre
- The potential transfer from car to bus would be greater if "modern user-friendly vehicles, bus priority measures, good waiting facilities, and good passenger information" were in place
- The main sources of congestion on approach roads were the Tawe Bridges, Oystermouth Road west of the City Centre, and Pentrechwyth Road / Neath Road to the north.

The Study recommended that investments be made in transport infrastructure to address the above issues. In addition, it recommended better pedestrian crossing facilities on Oystermouth Road, and consideration of differential parking charges to reduce long-stay parking in the central area, as a contribution to reducing traffic flows. The Study concluded that balanced investment across all transport modes would be fundamental to the future prosperity of the City.

The City Centre Transport and Development Study has been reviewed as part of the work undertaken to establish the accessibility strategy for the City Centre Strategic Framework.

Swansea Retail Capacity and Planning Policy Study

This study was completed for the Council by Roger Tym & Partners in August 2005. Its purpose was to identify the capacity for further retail development within Swansea City Centre and the wider County area, and help inform preparation of the City Centre Strategic Framework and other related planning policy documents.

The study is based upon empirically gathered information on local shopping patterns, existing and proposed retail floorspace and turnover levels, catchment area analysis and projected population and expenditure changes up to 2016. It reviews current levels of retail floorspace provision and trading in all main centres across the County, and concludes on the potential capacity for the development of additional convenience (food and groceries) and comparison goods floorspace up to 2016. In terms of convenience, goods the Study concludes that there is little quantitative need for the provision of any additional floorspace within the County as a whole up to 2016. However, it acknowledges that in qualitative terms there may be scope for the provision of additional floorspace within existing town and district centres, where - in line with national guidance - it would improve the centre's vitality, attractiveness and viability and/or address gaps in local provision.

In respect of comparison goods, the study acknowledges that Swansea City Centre's regional shopping role has been declining and it now only accounts for 38% of comparison goods expenditure within its catchment area. This decline is directly attributed to increasing competition from the recent growth in out-of-town retailing. In response, the Study puts forward for consideration two possible scenarios:

1) Maintenance of the City Centre's current market share at 38% - on this basis it is estimated that there would be capacity to support an additional 11,200 sq.m. net of additional comparison goods floorspace within the City Centre by 2011 and 22,100 sq.m. net by 2016
2) Reversal of decline in the City Centre's market share – if its market share were to rise to 40% by 2011 and to 42% by 2016 (as a result of qualitative improvements in the City Centre and imposition of a restrictive policy on out-of-centre retailing), it is estimated that there would be capacity to support an additional 16,350 sq.m. net of comparison goods floorspace in 2011 and 35,550 sq.m. net in 2016. The latter net figure equates to a gross area of 50,787 sq.m. which if to be provided in a new development (and allowing an additional 10% for the provision of complementary service uses such as banks, financial services, restaurants and the like) points to the need for consideration of development in the order of 55,800 sq.m.

For the latter scenario to be achieved the Study highlights the need for a comprehensive package of measures to be put in place to regenerate the City Centre and strengthen its regional role. It also stresses the need for complementary policy measures to be introduced to strictly control further out-of-centre retail development. The aim : to create an environment that is conducive to attracting investment in a major retail development, which "will require a change in market perceptions of Swansea".

The Study also puts forward for consideration a series of recommended initiatives and policies to:

- Promote active City Centre management
- Improve the shopping environment of the City Centre for example by improving the public realm and enabling shopkeepers to improve their shopfronts.

These recommendations are considered in the later parts of the Strategic Framework.

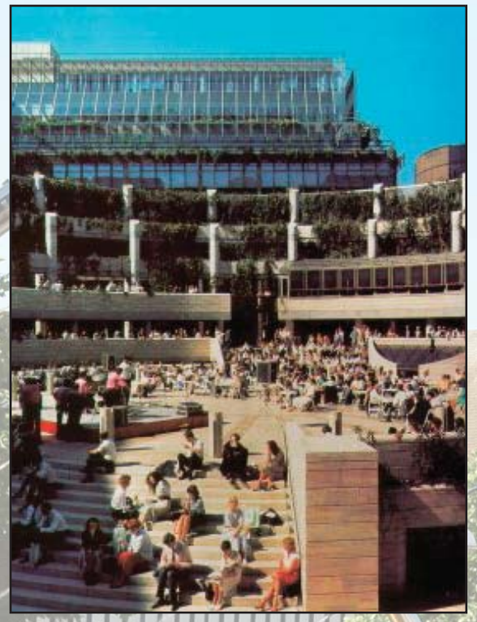
"Swansea Futures"

If Swansea is to become a distinctive European City by 2020 and one that sits at the heart of South West Wales, then it is essential that a strategic and co-ordinated approach is adopted for the promotion and marketing of the area. Swansea Futures Ltd has been set up as a public/private sector partnership with this aim in mind, with support from many of the key employers in the area.

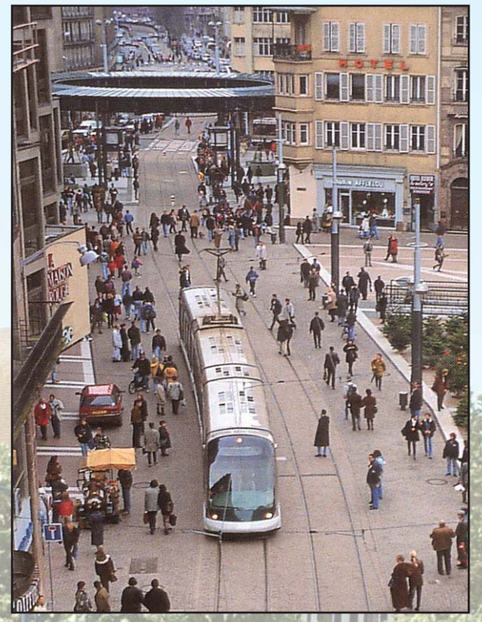
The company manages the new Swansea brand which provides a focus for co-ordinated promotion and sets out what makes Swansea and the region stand out from other areas. By highlighting its assets, perceptions of Swansea will be challenged, and new markets can be targeted. This will go some way in assisting to define the role of the City, and in helping to regenerate the City Centre.

Further details of the company, its approach, the Swansea brand and how it could help Swansea City Centre can be found on www.swanseafutures.co.uk

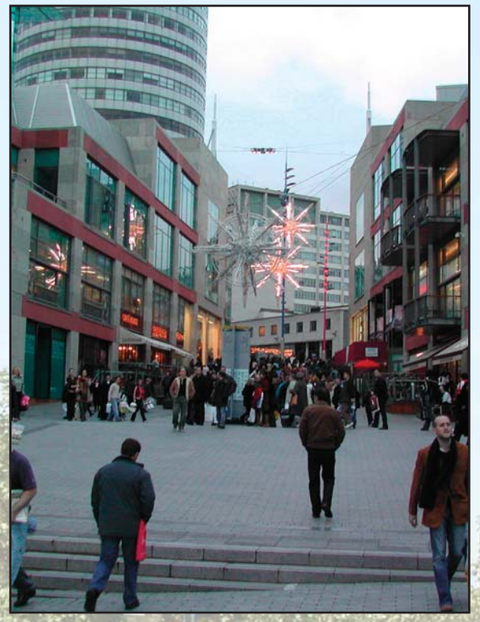
Swansea
it's a bay of life



Broadgate, London



Rue de la Haute Montee, Strasbourg



Bullring, Birmingham

Analysis

Introduction to the Analysis Section

This Section summarises the work undertaken to analyse the City Centre in terms of:

- Economy
- Urban Design and Physical Form
- Accessibility

It is supported by a number of technical appendices in a complementary document.



The former Police Station, a unique gateway building in Swansea

The City Centre Economy

City Centre Employment

The economy of the City Centre provides employment for over 24,000 people[1]. Two facts are notable about this total of employment – firstly, it is a relatively low proportion of Swansea's overall total number of jobs; and secondly, it is substantially made up of jobs in retail and other service sectors, which are often lower skilled and lower paid on average.

In comparison with a range of benchmark UK cities, Swansea has 18% of the urban area's[2] employment in the City Centre, and only Sheffield has a lower figure (14%). Other cities with higher proportions include Cardiff (23%), Hull (27%), whilst Southampton (35%) and Derby (39%) have over one-third of their employment in the city centre. If Swansea had the same proportion as the average of the benchmark cities, a further 9,000 jobs would be found in the City Centre today.

Retail employs 5,900 employees in the City Centre, with a third of all retail jobs in the urban area based in the City Centre. Just under a quarter (24%) of City Centre employment is in retail. This appears healthy in comparison to other similar cities, but it actually results from the fact that there are comparatively fewer retail jobs in the City Centre, and fewer jobs in "traditional" city centre sectors like financial and business services in Swansea. Employment in hotels and restaurants is well represented in Swansea City Centre, with about 2,500 jobs (34% of all hotel and restaurant jobs in the urban area). This compares favourably with some comparator cities like Leicester (36%), Cardiff (33%) and Hull (30%), but there is potential for further improvement compared with others.

The Financial and Business Services sector is another large employment sector in the City Centre, with just over 5,000 jobs at present, and is important for future growth. However, this represents a relatively low proportion of Swansea's total employment in this sector – currently 27% of the urban area's total. This compares adversely with cities such as Hull, Leicester, Plymouth and Southampton, whose city centres have over 50% of this sector, representing as many as 20,000 jobs. However, in recent years, growth has been relatively strong in Swansea City Centre in this sector, and without this growth, the situation would be worse.

[1] Annual Business Inquiry data, 2003, used throughout for employment statistics unless otherwise noted

[2] "urban area" and "city centre" in these comparisons refer to areas defined by wards and the ONS/ODPM definitions respectively– see "Benchmarking Cities" annex

Swansea City Centre has a much lower proportion of the urban area's employment in Public Administration, Education and Health sectors than benchmark cities – 15%, representing less than 7,000 jobs, compared to figures as high as 35% (Derby). This sector is important as a major employer in the City Centre, and in providing important local and regional services to residents and businesses. Public administration alone accounts for 2,000 jobs in or adjacent to the City Centre, including the Civic Centre at County Hall.

Jobs which are generated by the "knowledge economy" - industries such as publishing, architecture, advertising, media, financial intermediation, specialist manufacturing, research and development – are fewer in number in Swansea City Centre than in comparator cities. These are jobs which achieve significant levels of added value and drive the modern economy, and yet there are less than 5,000 jobs in the City Centre. The rate of growth is good, however, and the City Centre can look to play an even more significant part, as the knowledge economy is highlighted for growth in the Economic Regeneration Strategy.

This overview of employment in the City Centre reflects a consistent pattern. Whilst Swansea City Centre has a strong concentration of retail jobs, much of the private and public sector employment that would normally be located in a city centre has instead been located in outer areas. The development of out-of-town business parks, retail parks and mixed use areas provides substantial concentrations of office and retail-based employment. This undermines the vitality and viability of the City Centre, and needs to be addressed in future, with the support of the Strategic Framework.

City Centre Economic Activities

Retailing

As set out in the Pre-Inquiry Modifications UDP, the City Centre currently supports 89,650 sq.m. of comparison goods floorspace (56.6% of overall floorspace) (clothing, furniture, electrical goods and so on), 22,950 sq.m. of convenience goods floorspace (14.8% of the overall figure) (food, groceries, etc.), and 23,900 sq.m. of Service Sector uses, which include banks, building societies, travel agents, cafés, bars and restaurants.

Retail premises are thus by far the most significant land-use in the City Centre and have a major impact on its appearance and the way that it functions. There are a number of distinct areas within the centre:

- The Quadrant Centre, which includes Debenhams, Boots and WH Smith in approximately 41,000 sq.m. (440,000 sq.ft.) of gross retail space in a covered centre, and links through to the Bus Station
- Oxford Street (east), where the pedestrianised area forms the prime retail "pitch" in the City Centre, includes Marks & Spencer, and links through to Swansea Market
- Oxford Street (west), where the non-pedestrianised area is dominated by mass-market/down-market multiple stores and then links to two arcades of very small independent retailers
- St David's Centre, approximately 11,500 sq.m. (124,000 sq.ft.) in a smaller, open shopping development
- Parc Tawe, located to the east of the City Centre retail core, approximately 24,000 sq.m. (255,000 sq.ft.) built in two phases, and accommodating large format units which include Homebase, JD Sports, Staples and ToysRUs

	Town Centre Floorspace (000 sq ft)	Rank		Catchment Population		Competitive-ness Aggregate Score	Competitive-ness Aggregate Rank
Birmingham	3,238	1	Glasgow	1	Glasgow	547	1
Glasgow	2,763	2	Leeds	2	Birmingham	441	2
Nottingham	2,736	3	Birmingham	3	Manchester	383	3
Manchester	2,473	4	Manchester	4	Edinburgh	380	4
Newcastle	2,242	5	Cardiff	5	Nottingham	372	5
Norwich	2,223	6	Newcastle	6	Leeds	350	6
Southampton	2,177	7	Nottingham	7	Norwich	325	7
Leeds	2,171	8	Liverpool	8	Brighton	321	8
Leicester	2,107	9	Edinburgh	9	Southampton	310	9
Croydon	2,101	10	Bristol	10	Oxford St	304	10
Reading	1,834	14	Reading	16	Reading	276	13
Cardiff	1,752	16	Southampton	17	Cardiff	260	18
Swansea	1,652	18	Plymouth	23	Bluewater	256	19
Gloucester	1,330	41	Swansea	29	Bristol	254	20
Bristol	1,319	43	Exeter	30	Cheltenham	248	21
Cheltenham	1,303	44	Swindon	46	Bath	240	27
Exeter	1,245	51	Cheltenham	48	Exeter	212	34
Plymouth	1,233	55	Taunton	64	Plymouth	209	36
Taunton	1,138	65	Gloucester	66	Swindon	190	55
Swindon	1,101	71	Newport	84	Swansea	177	69
Wrexham	1,045	83	Wrexham	113	Portsmouth	171	76
Newport	975	97	Weston-Super-Mare	136	Taunton	164	83
Llandudno	902	115	Llandudno	140	Bournemouth	164	83
Bridgend	621	179	Bridgend	157	Gloucester	157	95
Llanelli	570	186	Llanelli	188	Newport	126	144
Sources :	CB Ellis		CB Ellis		VenueScore		

Comparisons through the PROMIS Database[3], establish Swansea as the eighteenth largest retail centre in the UK, which is relatively large for its population.

However, as the table above shows, the overall quality, range and size of shops is poor, and when these factors are added into an overall score of attractiveness and competitiveness of centres, Swansea is ranked outside the top 50 centres in the UK on various industry standard rankings.

In summary, comparative data confirms Swansea City Centre's poor retail performance, and shows that Swansea has:

- Low requirements from retailers for existing premises in the City Centre, compared to other cities
- Low prime City Centre rents compared to cities such as Cardiff, Bristol and Reading, but higher than Newport City Centre
- A substantially higher rate of vacancies in the City Centre than is usual for city centres
- A higher than average primary catchment population, notably higher than Swindon and Newport, but almost half the primary catchment population that exists for Cardiff City Centre, but spend from this catchment is not necessarily retained within Swansea City Centre

Analysis of the economic performance and property market indicators shows that the reasons for this poor comparative retail performance are as follows:

- Retail Demand: While the City Centre ranks strongly on the total amount of available retail floorspace, there is an indication from property market sources that the level of demand for retail premises from retailers is below average. The lack of a new substantive retail development in recent years has restricted growth in demand, preventing occupier interest from being stimulated and satisfied
- Quality of Retail Offer: The City Centre retail core has a lack of quality modern retail space and a lack of department and variety stores, with many of the multiple shops (such as fashion) being aimed at the mass market. Redevelopment of the former House of Fraser store site will help to address the negative perception regarding retail offer and rental growth for Swansea in the future, and other opportunities exist to improve the offer
- Type of Retail Unit: Existing retail units in the core retail area and the covered shopping centres, albeit predominantly occupied, do not meet modern standards in terms of size and configuration. This problem precludes higher levels of demand for retail space, and few quality retail outlets seek space in the City Centre. Specifically, there is a lack of modern retail units, specifically in the 10,000 sq.ft plus range, 5,000 sq.ft plus and 1,000 sq.ft plus. There is a need for new development to meet this floorspace need, to ensure a high level of demand
- Competition from Other Centres: This is particularly strong from Swansea's out-of-town centres (Fforestfach and Morfa) which include traditional high street names normally found in city/town centres, and from other centres and new developments in Bristol (Cribbs Causeway), Cardiff, Bridgend (M4), Newport and Carmarthen
- Extent of the Retail Area in the City Centre: At present, the City Centre's retail area is extensive and as a consequence footfall is dispersed and not concentrated in one particular area or around one main retail circuit – there is no strong "retail circuit" attracting shoppers around the City Centre. There is insufficient prime retail frontage in the City Centre retail core area and a large proportion of secondary and tertiary shopping, and this contributes to the dispersal effect. Parc Tawe to the east of the City Centre is separated from the City Centre retail core by level changes which make pedestrian movement difficult, and includes larger format retail and leisure units which are substantially car dependent
- Retail Expansion Potential: The retail capacity study undertaken by Roger Tym and Partners (October 2005) has demonstrated that there is significant scope for retail expansion. If the City Centre can make a step change in its quality to attract a higher proportion of spend from its catchment area, there is potentially a capacity for 16,350 sq.m. (176,000 sq.ft.) of net additional retail floorspace for comparison goods by 2011 and 35,550 sq.m. (382,700 sq.ft.) by 2016[4] . This potential is reinforced by the fact that there has been no substantive high street/town centre style retail scheme in Swansea since the Quadrant in 1979, providing a real opportunity for new investment

[3] PROMIS is a reference database providing independent comparative property market information, prepared by Property Market Analysis LLP

[4] The detailed meaning and interpretation of these figures is found in the "Retail Capacity and Planning Advisory Study" (2005), Roger Tym & Partners

- Positive Factors: There are three positive factors which could be built upon to contribute to an enhanced retail offer. Firstly, there is clear potential to claw back leakage in terms of spend from other competing centres. Secondly, Swansea Market is an important attraction within the City Centre retail core area, and is situated at an important location between Oxford Street and the Quadrant Centre. Thirdly, a range of small, independent shops is well established, and despite being of variable quality, are an important part of the character and attractiveness of the City Centre.

Offices in the City Centre

Swansea City Centre is not a major office location. There are only 890 office jobs in the retail core area – and a total of 4,510 office jobs in the wider City Centre. By comparison Cardiff City Centre, which is larger than Swansea, has 13,910 office jobs[5]. The lack of office employees in the City Centre reduces the potential spend which contributes to the City Centre economy, and results in a limited critical mass of professional offices.

ODPM statistics show a total of 147,960 sq.m. (1,592,600 sq.ft.) office floorspace in the City Centre, with only 30,360 sq.m. (326,800 sq.ft.) in the retail core area. The only larger office premises in the City Centre are at BT Tower, Oldway House/Alexandra House in High Street/Alexandra Road, and the DHSS/Job Center Plus offices near the St David's Shopping Centre.

There has been no significant provision of new premises of any scale in recent years, there is a limited quantity of new space in the City Centre, and availability of this space is concentrated in traditional premises. It is important that quality office spaces are not lost through redevelopment or change of use. However, since 2001, the Swansea office market has seen a general increase in the take-up of space. Over the past four years, take-up has averaged at approximately 10,000 sq.m. (107,800 sq.ft.) with a high in 2003 of 12,700 sq.m. (137,200 sq.ft.).

The office market in Swansea has historically been centred on traditional space within the City Centre, and has been significantly influenced in recent years by the development of the Enterprise Park and its financial incentives. City Centre office space generally commands rents in the region of £6.00 to £8.00 per sq.ft. (£65 to £86 per sq.m.). The weakness of Swansea City Centre as an office location is indicated by the fact that Cardiff office rents have levelled off recently at around £18.50 per sq.ft. (£200 per sq.m.). These figures indicate the poor development economics of the office market in Swansea City Centre, which deter investor interest.
Recent developments which have provided modern office premises, such as those in SA1 Swansea Waterfront, are understood to have obtained rents in the region of £12.00 to £13.00 per sq.ft. (£130 to £140 per sq.m.). It is reasonable to assume that higher levels are possible in the short term, once a greater quantum of office development becomes available. This demonstrates that a supply of good quality accommodation with good access can begin to "build" an office market in Swansea which is commercially viable, and could begin to support office development in the City Centre.

The SA1 Swansea Waterfront masterplan includes proposals for a total of 65,000 sq.m. of new office-type premises, which – if built out - is likely to accommodate at least 3,000 employees. It is important not to compete with these proposals. Early phases have been very effective in creating a new profile for Swansea and in demonstrating the potential of new good, quality offices in a fairly central location. It will be important to balance any aspirations to build new offices in the City Centre with the supply which is planned for SA1 Swansea Waterfront. This may require active discussions with the Welsh Assembly Government regarding phasing at that location, and in relation to public sector funding to support City Centre office developments.



Technium 1 in SA1 Swansea Waterfront

Public services

There is a wide range of public services and associated facilities currently provided in the City Centre, including for example, education at Swansea Institute, health services in Orchard Street, and an Area Police Headquarters in a new police station at Grove Place. A key issue within this overall provision is the restructuring of local authority services and the reconfiguring of County Hall and specifically library services. A scheme now being implemented will result in a significant change in the way local authority services are delivered and how County Hall operates.

A new "one-stop" shop approach through a contact centre and call centre, along with relocation of the Central Library into County Hall from its current premises on Alexandra Road, is being planned, and is expected to generate 1,500 - 2,000 personal visits to the site every day. As a result, some CCS functions will move out from County Hall, but it is understood that the overall number will be similar to that which presently exists. Retaining displaced staff within the City Centre would be of clear benefit.

These plans confirm a continuing place for County Hall as a major centre of service delivery, civic activity and employment, on the edge of the City Centre, for the foreseeable future. This is particularly important as the number of staff involved is significant, and they contribute to the vitality of the City Centre.

Education

Swansea has the benefit of two major higher education institutions - Swansea University and Swansea Institute - the latter occupying the Mount Pleasant campus on the northern fringe of the City Centre, with some departments occupying premises in the City Centre. There are around 400 people employed in education in the City Centre - primarily in Swansea Institute.

Higher education universities and institutes are particularly important in supporting growth in the modern economy through development of skills and knowledge, links between academic activity and industry, commercial R&D, and an involvement in a range of business sectors and public services.

[5] ODPM "Town Centres Statistics", 2002

Swansea University is highly active and effective in very important and commercially successful initiatives, and has been instrumental in establishing the "Technium" concept of incubator development in key economic activities. There are currently two buildings in SA1 Swansea Waterfront, a Digital Technium on the University campus, and a number of other Techniums across South West Wales. The University has over 11,000 students, most of whom are full-time students, adding significantly to the resident population of the City. It is understood that the University sees its geographical focus remaining within its campus, whilst continuing to support initiatives such as Technium at various locations.

Swansea Institute is a higher education institution with important specialisms in applied design, engineering, art, design and humanities. The Institute is actively seeking opportunities to engage with the City Centre, particularly through innovative projects for buildings adjacent to its Mount Pleasant site. It has recently developed the Dynevor Centre in De-La-Beche Street as a new building for the Faculty of Art and Design and the Centre for Innovation in Photography and Video. There is also an aspiration to convert and re-use historic buildings in Alexandra Road - the Central Library, former Police Station and adjacent buildings. These projects provide an opportunity to renovate an important part of the City Centre, to enhance educational activity, and to support vital links between the Institute and the City Centre economy.

Providing housing and leisure facilities for students in the City Centre will help to attract them to the City, and will maximise their spending power for the benefit of City Centre businesses. Support for all the activities of higher education institutions within the City Centre is, therefore, important, and should be encouraged.

Health

The Health sector is an important service to support a City's population, and as one of the fastest growing sectors of a modern economy is also potentially an important driver of local employment, GDP and competitiveness. Employment forecasts for this study suggest that growth in the sector city-wide could be as high as 11,400 jobs to 2026, or 77% growth above existing levels. The challenge is to secure some of this growth within the City Centre.

In Swansea, the Local Health Board are considering the concept of Primary Care Resource Centres which will provide better access to a range of primary care services for patients, including GPs. Some activity might move from acute hospitals to the community to prevent unnecessary journeys, and the Centres would accommodate new multi-agency teams of doctors, practice and community nurses, therapists, optometrists, pharmacists, dentists, social workers and others. They would work to promote health in local communities, and would provide space for other services to local communities.

There appears to be an opportunity to discuss the potential for a Primary Care Resource Centre in conjunction with redevelopment of the Swansea (Central) Clinic site in Orchard Street. This would provide a new focus for health administration and primary care in the City Centre, and serve communities to the north of the City Centre. Though at an early stage of discussion, the concept is now included in the draft Strategy for the LHB and should be pursued through the Strategic Framework.

Cultural Life, Leisure and Tourism

Swansea has a strong cultural history and a diverse provision for culture and leisure, including theatres, music, cinemas, cafes, restaurants and bars. As a cultural centre, it has some real strengths in the City Centre, notably the new National Waterfront Museum Swansea, Swansea Museum, the Grand Theatre, the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery and the Dylan Thomas Centre. There are other important facilities nearby, including the Brangwyn Hall at the Guildhall. A number of these facilities contribute to a sense of local identity and cultural history.

In a slightly different way, Swansea Market is an important asset for the City Centre. It appeals to local residents and visitors, and contributes distinctive character to the City Centre. Food and local produce is increasingly highlighted as a growing sector and source of identity, and work by the former Welsh Development Agency with "Taste of Wales" shows the potential. Other cities have benefited from the contribution which local markets can make in regeneration. Swansea should be no different - a scheme is being prepared for refurbishment of the Market building, and it may be appropriate to consider a greater scale of investment to maximise its potential.

Over 300 people are employed in hotels and guest houses in the City Centre. There are probably more than 2,500 people employed in restaurants, bars, arts, culture and entertainment activities. This represents a higher proportion of employment in this sector than in some other city centres.

However, there are weaknesses which reduce the quality and attractiveness of the City Centre as a centre for culture, leisure and tourism. Work for this study has indicated a critical need for Swansea to improve its "offer" as a place to live, for business and to visit. There is room for improvement and the City Centre could perform better if the overall offer was upgraded.

The National Waterfront Museum and the refurbishment of Swansea Leisure Centre will help. Recent investment in hotel accommodation within the City Centre – Dragon, Grand, Morgans, Premier Inn – also helps to improve the quality of facilities and indicates that there is investor interest in the City Centre. However, if Swansea is to become an internationally competitive destination, it needs to improve its facilities, services and infrastructure, as well as branding and management. There needs to be a stronger focus of tourist provision, including possibly a hotel "circuit" providing a range of accommodation in close proximity. In particular, the City Centre needs to raise its offer in terms of City Breaks and Business Tourism, where there are substantial opportunities for growth, based on Swansea's particular assets.



The National Waterfront Museum : a cultural, leisure and tourist location in the City Centre

Housing

The core of the City Centre study area north of Oystermouth Road has very few dwelling units - estimated at fewer than 400, with a residential population possibly less than 500. However, there is a significant quantity of housing, mostly relatively new, in the Maritime Quarter, between Oystermouth Road and the sea. In total there are approximately 5,000 people within the City Centre study area.

House prices have grown strongly in Swansea since the late 1990s in line with national trends, but have recently shown continued signs of growth due to a lower base than the England and Wales average. Analysis of information from the Land Registry demonstrates that average house prices in Swansea have risen from £41,000 in 1995 to £139,153 by the first quarter of 2006.

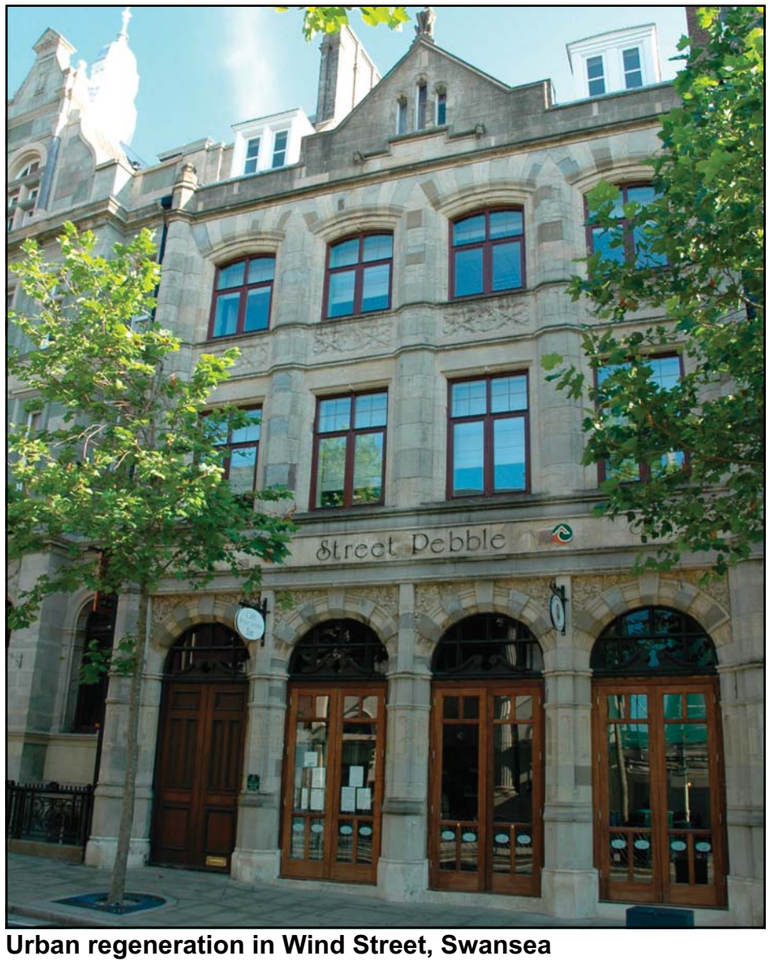
The general market perception is that there is currently a shortage of available residential property in the City Centre, with demand outstripping supply. In particular, there is a lack of one-bedroom apartments with competitive bidding on most units that come to market. The available housing is largely in older developments, and there is a very limited supply of new premises expected to be available in the immediate future.

Review of the housing development pipeline shows that the Maritime Quarter will see development of around 925 dwellings in a mix of types over the next 5 - 8 years or so, A further 362 are planned in the rest of the City Centre – of which 170 will form an “urban village” in the High Street. There are also plans to provide approximately 1,500 dwelling units in SA1 Swansea Waterfront.

In the core City Centre, Swansea Housing Association’s inclusion of housing in redeveloping the former Post Office in Wind Street and their urban village proposals, demonstrate the potential to regenerate areas with new housing and the scope to deliver affordable housing and mixed-use within the City Centre. Conversion of the upper floors of Castle Buildings and development of 70 units at Princess Way for apartments will provide a new form of housing in the City Centre, and show that the private sector is also willing to play its part.



Marina development, a significant proportion of housing in Swansea City Centre over the last few decades



Urban regeneration in Wind Street, Swansea

Economic prospects

Economic forecasts prepared for this study by Business Strategies Ltd. show that employment in Swansea as a whole may grow by approximately 18,000 jobs (or 16% above existing) by 2026. Significant growth is likely to occur in Financial and Business Services, Hotels and Catering and in Retail, all of which could have an impact on the City Centre.

By comparing the current representation of sectors in Swansea with the national average (the “location quotient”) we can see which sectors are currently strongest or weakest in the City; and then we can compare this current situation with what the forecasts indicate will happen in the future. The chart overleaf shows how existing stronger sectors such as retail and health may continue to grow in future. A “health warning” on these forecasts is that public sector forecasts for health, education, public administration are more susceptible to error as local circumstances and national spending policy can have a major impact on the actual levels of growth which occur.

The forecasts show that 7,800 new jobs could be created in Financial and Business services between 2003 and 2026, with scope for some of these jobs, which are primarily office-based, to be accommodated in the City Centre. This would add to the number of employees in the City Centre – attracting investment in new premises, adding the daytime spend of employees to City Centre shops, cafés, etc., and adding more life on the streets. It also helps to create a more sustainable pattern of travel to work.

Employment forecasts suggest that jobs in the Hotels and Catering sector across Swansea could grow by 2,100 in the period up to 2026. If the proportion of Hotel and Catering employment in the City Centre remained the same as the current level, this could mean an extra 800 Hotel and Catering jobs in the City Centre by 2026.

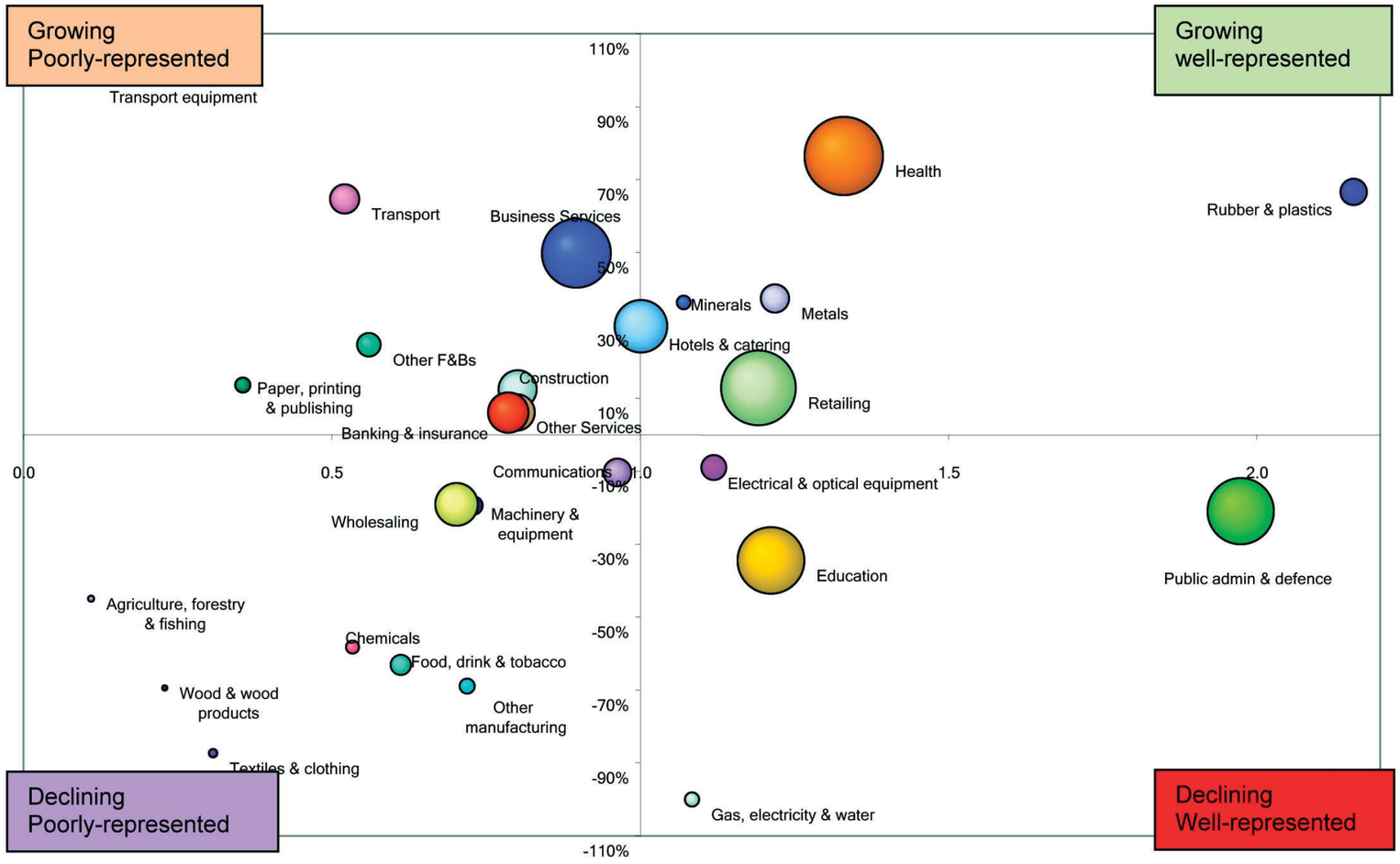


Chart showing economic prospects in Swansea City Centre

Public administration

Forecasts suggest that employment in the public administration and defence sector in Swansea, which currently employs approximately 10,000 people could decline significantly, by 21% to 2026. However, this forecast should, as noted earlier, be treated cautiously. In relation to the City Centre, much of any decline which does occur is likely to arise in other areas of the City where public sector employment is currently concentrated, and in response there could be a strategic policy to locate newer forms of public service administration and delivery in the City Centre.

Retail jobs

The forecasts indicate that there could be significant growth in the number of jobs in retailing in Swansea, rising by 1,800 jobs from a current total of 14,400 – with most of the rise occurring by 2016. If this rate of increase occurred in the City Centre, over 700 additional jobs would be created in the City Centre. This figure is broadly consistent with the figures for additional floorspace which arise from the retail capacity forecasts.





The Guildhall and County Hall, the administrative centres of Swansea

Economic Analysis Conclusions

Strengths

The key economic strengths which Swansea City Centre demonstrates are, in summary:

- A large retail area, with a range of shops and facilities
- Some areas of character, improvement and regeneration, which contribute to the diversity of the City Centre and add vitality to it
- A range of existing facilities, including Swansea Market and the Quadrant Bus Station, which draw people from a wide surrounding area
- New and improving facilities at Salubrious Place, the National Waterfront Museum, the Leisure Centre, Police Headquarters, Dynevor Centre which add to the attractiveness and diversity of the City Centre
- Capacity for development of quality new retail facilities in and adjacent to the City Centre retail core, sufficient to draw a higher proportion of spend from its catchment population
- The presence of two higher education institutions, one within the City Centre and actively seeking to contribute to it
- Growth of the knowledge economy will provide more opportunities for types of businesses and employment which may locate in the City Centre
- The environmental setting provides the opportunity to create a City Centre of distinctive quality which could rival other European regional centres
- Significant development in SA1 Swansea Waterfront is helping to change the commercial profile of Swansea and building a modern office market, and through physical links such as the Sailbridge, integrating with the City Centre
- Investment in new facilities and infrastructure, particularly environment and transport improvements in the City Centre, through European funding and Welsh Assembly Government/ CCS initiatives

Weaknesses

The City Centre demonstrates a number of important gaps and deficiencies which weaken its economic performance and competitiveness:

- The City Centre contains a low proportion of the City's jobs and population, which undermines its dynamism and market potential
- The retail offer is generally poor and increasingly uncompetitive, and is not helped by the lack of a substantial recent high street/town centre style retail development
- The quality of the environment in the City Centre is generally poor, and many buildings are of poor quality and becoming obsolescent
- There is a lack of vitality in the City Centre, particularly because of a lack of offices and office-based employment, and a lack of housing
- There is a limited range of facilities for culture and leisure enjoyment, and the City Centre is a poor "destination"
- Swansea University has a minimal presence and few links to the City Centre
- Because of investments elsewhere, there are issues regarding development of office and residential schemes in the heart of the City Centre, and a lack of grant support mechanisms to assist
- The Maritime Quarter and the waterfront areas are separated from the City Centre, which fails to take advantage of the potentially attractive waterfront setting
- The Civic Centre, based at County Hall, is close to the City Centre, but outside the main retail and commercial areas, and poorly linked to them

Priorities

This analysis indicates that there are a number of important economic priorities if Swansea City Centre is to become successful, distinctive and attractive, and act effectively as an economic driver for a competitive regional city:

1. The City Centre must be developed as an attractive, distinctive, mixed-use, higher density urban core
2. There is a need for a "step change" in the retail offer of the City Centre. This should result in a range of good quality premises, of the right size and type to meet modern needs, adding "critical mass" to the shopping centre, as part of a mixed-use scheme. There need to be strong constraints on any retail development outside the City Centre, or on any other development that would compromise delivery of a new retail scheme in the St David's/Quadrant area
3. Office development and other commercial premises must be concentrated in the City Centre, along with developments in SA1 Swansea Waterfront. They should support the knowledge economy, offering modern employment and competitive advantage to Swansea businesses, in an attractive, competitive City Centre environment
4. Residential development should be included in development throughout the City Centre, to add vitality to the Centre and house key workers, students and professionals/executives working in the City Centre
5. The environment of the City Centre must be improved through construction of new high quality buildings and programmes of improvement to streets, places and spaces
6. Public transport, streets and car parking provision should be enhanced to achieve a City Centre which is easy and enjoyable to access and move around
7. The waterfront location on Swansea Bay and the River Tawe must be effectively linked to the City Centre to create a stylish, attractive and distinctive quality, which helps to maximise its economic potential
8. Cultural, leisure and tourist facilities must be improved in the City Centre to create a City Centre "destination" serving visitors, residents and businesses, contributing to economic prosperity
9. Grant support mechanisms need to be considered to assist in delivery of key regeneration priorities

Physical and Urban Design Analysis

Conservation Areas and listed buildings

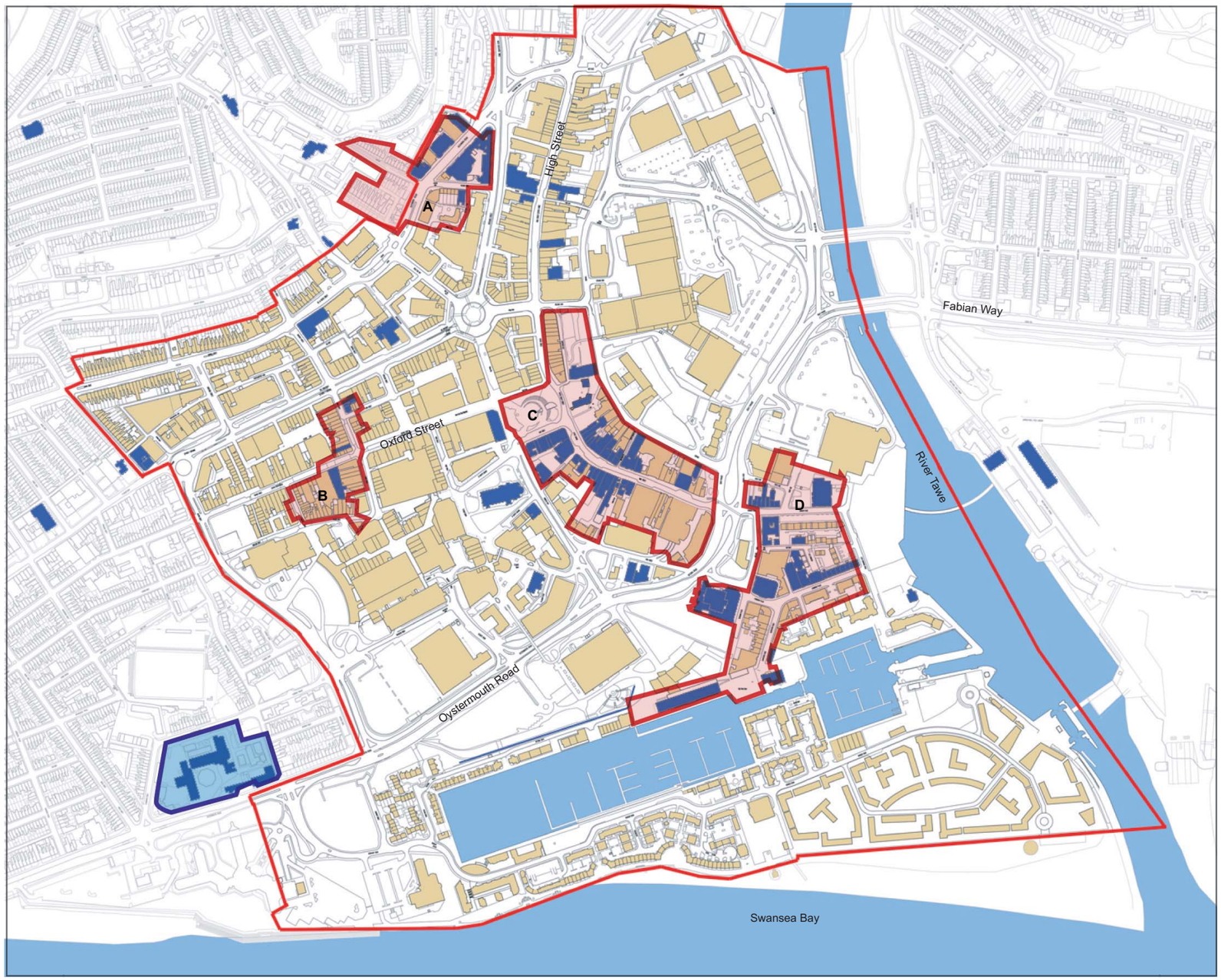
As a city with a rich history dating back to medieval times, Swansea has a range of significant historical buildings that have survived. This is despite the heavy bombing it suffered in the Second World War, and the extensive post-war programme of highway infrastructure works, which gave rise to the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

Swansea has four Conservation Areas within its City Centre boundary. These are Alexandra Road, Oxford Street/Nelson Street, Wind Street and the Maritime Quarter. In addition, the City Centre has one Grade 1 listed building: the medieval Swansea Castle. The Castle ruin is both Grade 1 listed and a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It is well sited on the edge of the eastern escarpment that once looked directly over the River Tawe before land was reclaimed. It is, however, overshadowed by the greatly larger landmark of the BT building, the tallest in the City. It lies next to a derelict site and blank facades. This compromises the setting of the Castle in this location.

Most of Swansea's better historic buildings - there are over 70 Grade 2 listed buildings in the City Centre - date from its historic industrial past and are good quality examples of the sort of civic, residential and commercial buildings developed at the time. They are also, therefore, very varied in style as the older medieval character was not retained and new building materials and styles allowed greater variety.

The Alexandra Road Conservation Area covers 2.4 hectares of land on the northern edge of the City Centre. The Conservation Area respects the cluster of distinguished, mostly Victorian and Edwardian, buildings in rich classical and baroque styles, largely built in brick and Portland stone. They originally lined the Alexandra Road 'Grand Boulevard'.

The Oxford Street/Nelson Street Conservation Area covers 1.3 hectares of land in the centre of the City and incorporates part of what is the primary retail street. This Conservation Area respects the individual properties of historic and architectural merit rather than a specific defining character, largely as this was one of the areas worst hit by the bombings.



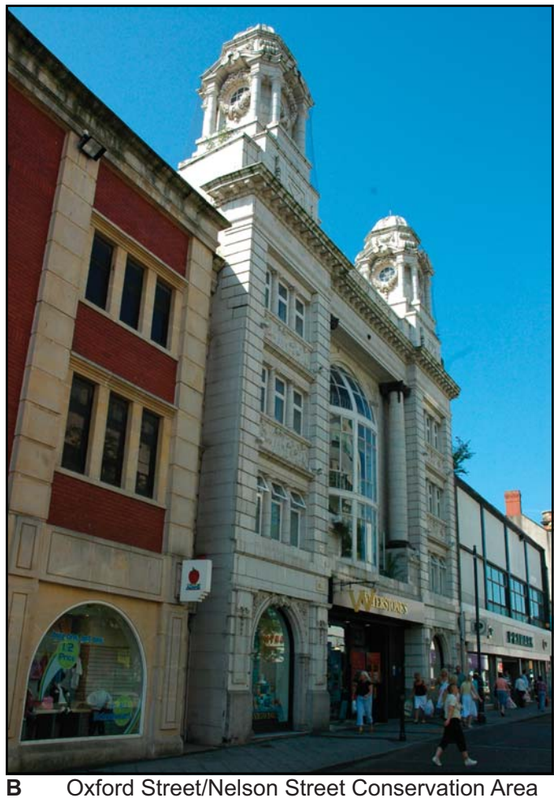
Conservation Plan (1:7500)

Conservation Area
Listed Building
Listed wall

A Alexandra Road Conservation Area
B Oxford Street/Nelson Street Conservation Area
C Wind Street Conservation Area
D Maritime Quarter Conservation Area



A Alexandra Road Conservation Area



B Oxford Street/Nelson Street Conservation Area





C Wind Street Conservation Area



D Maritime Quarter Conservation Area

The Wind Street Conservation Area covers 5.4 hectares of land and is located in that part of the City Centre leading down to the Maritime Quarter. The Conservation Area contains a group of high quality, stone and terracotta-built historic buildings. These have now mainly been converted into eating and drinking establishments, but the visual character as a distinctive area of a prosperous Victorian and Edwardian city where banks and commercial establishments were situated, has been maintained. The new Salubrious Place development at the bottom of Wind Street echoes this rich, diverse character.

The Maritime Quarter Conservation Area covers 5.1 hectares to the southern edge of the City Centre and lies strategically between the main retail heart of the City and the waterfront to both Swansea Bay and the River Tawe. The area was known as 'The Burrows'. It is dominated by late Victorian and Edwardian office buildings generally constructed of brick and stone. The Maritime Quarter contains several Georgian terraces from early nineteenth Century Swansea, in addition to the former industrial buildings now converted into the Pump House pub/restaurant and the National Waterfront Museum Swansea.

Overall, the City Centre is well stocked with listed buildings, such as the variety of Gothic and classical-styled churches. However, with the exclusion of Wind Street and the historic maritime areas, the listed buildings are dispersed and do not form a cohesive historic centre. This is not to say that key buildings may not in the future set the tone for an area being redeveloped.



St Mary's Church, a major historic building outside a conservation area

Districts and land use

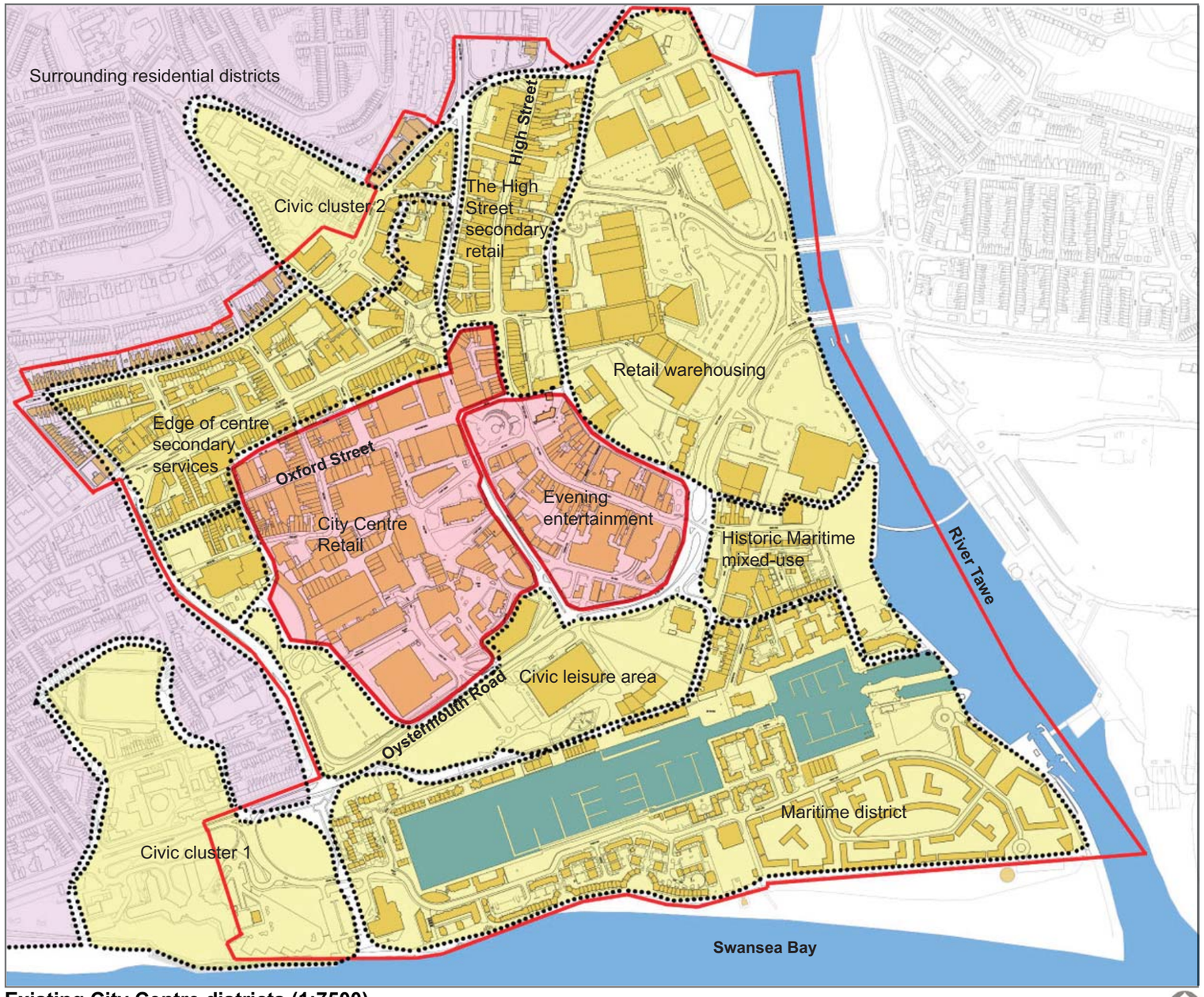
The City Centre area has a number of distinctive districts largely based on different land uses. At the heart of the City is the retail core. This area contains a lot of post-Second World War 2-3-storey retail development. The edges of the retail core, particularly to the north and west are of low quality, built stock with secondary retail at best.

Parc Tawe is situated immediately east of the City Centre on flat lower lying land separated by topography from the City Centre retail core. It is composed of leisure and retail warehousing format buildings and functions as a bulky goods retail area. Whilst performing an important large format retail and leisure role for the City Centre, Parc Tawe does not, in design terms, present the best image at this prime gateway location to the City Centre, and has no relationship with the river.

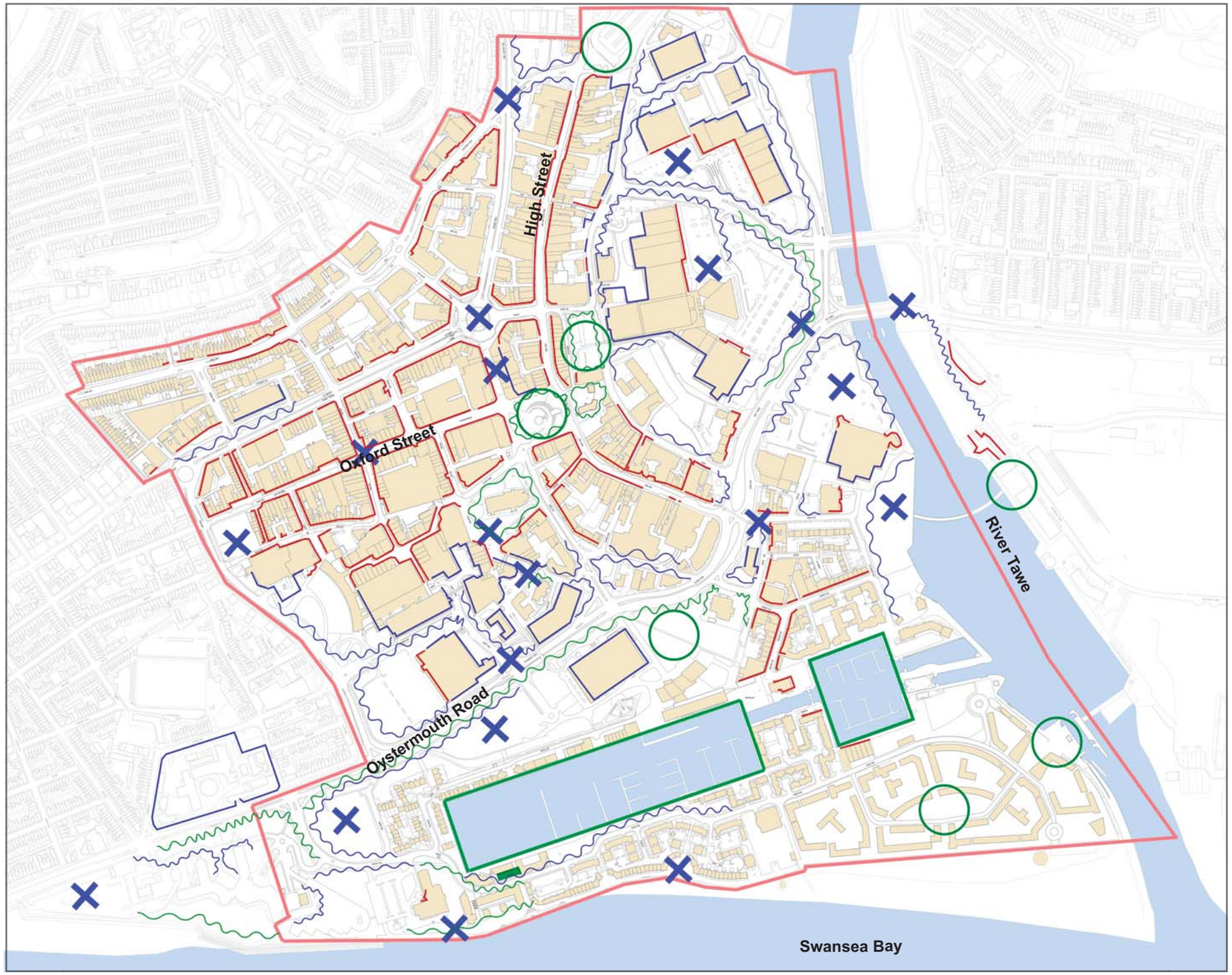
The Maritime Quarter incorporates a variety of uses with new residential developments around the marina areas and civic, office and residential uses in the historic area. The Quarter, as a district, functions against a waterside backdrop and incorporates all the particular maritime characteristics of restored docks, moored boats and good open views.

A distinctive evening entertainment district has grown up along Wind Street, one of the most homogeneous and high quality Victorian Streets left in the City. The former banks and other commercial buildings have been sensitively converted to eating and drinking establishments which do well to retain the character of the street. The other evening entertainment district is centred around the Kingsway, which is a wide “boulevard” street, laid out in the post-war period, now home to a number of nightclubs and similar venues. The street has some poor quality buildings and surfaces.

The High Street area is a secondary retail district with a generally good level of built stock and forms the main route from the railway station to the City Centre. Even so, some buildings are poorly maintained plus a few poor quality buildings along the street bring down its environmental attractiveness as a whole.
There are two civic clusters in the City itself which are big enough to form districts. To the north, the Swansea Institute, Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, police station, magistrates’ court, and central library offices make up one area around Alexandra Road. Several grand buildings are situated here, some of which have immediate requirements in terms of maintaining their condition. To the west, the Civic Centre at County Hall, prison, theatre, around West Way and Oystermouth Road make up the other. The latter district has a lack of cohesiveness and a very disjointed character as a result of its dispersed facilities.



Existing City Centre districts (1:7500)



Spaces and edges (1:7500)

- Negative spatial edges
- Active/positive edges
- Negative built edges
- Green/positive spatial edges
- Negative spaces
- Positive spaces

Quality of edges and spaces

The low quality environment along Oystermouth Road, the Parc Tawe development, and most of the Kingsway, caused by the dominance of wide roads, large areas of car parking, and poor quality architecture dilutes the perception of Swansea as a City with any urban quality in the eyes of visitors.

Generally, within the City Centre retail core, the edges are active and built to pavement lines. Of particular quality is Wind Street which retains its medieval urban grain. The primary retail streets such as Oxford Street and Nelson Street have active edges too, however the general quality of buildings lets down the overall perception of what is a vibrant and well used space. Oxford Street proportionally works well with generous spatial widths to accommodate large numbers of pedestrians, although there is too much street clutter and the hard landscaping is tired. Other streets around this area such as Kingsway and Princess Way north are significantly wider than Oxford Street yet do not encourage the same amount of footfall. Therefore, they appear spatially open and awkward in scale. The High Street is another well proportioned street, but the quality of the buildings here brings down its visual appearance, despite some notable attempts at improvement in individual cases.

The St David's Shopping Centre is poorly conceived in retail and in urban design terms. The development is too far from the retail circuit and therefore suffers from low footfall. It only attracts lower quality retail units and has a significant vacancy rate, and in turn this has resulted in the poor environmental quality of the spaces. Oystermouth Road and West Way are negative environments. They are composed predominantly of car parks building rears, footbridges, underused open spaces, and large monolithic buildings that fail to provide active frontages. As a result, they present ineffective and inconsistent edges and spaces. These encourage faster driving and are reminiscent of the Fabian Way bypass, not a city centre street. Several large spaces have been created along Oystermouth Road where the roadside has been treated with landscape.

Once into the maritime areas, the environmental quality improves considerably with the historic built area to the east and positive edges to buildings around the marinas and seafront.



Museum Green, a high quality public space outside the new National Waterfront Museum

Quality of physical realm

As suggested in the 2004 Swansea Healthcheck, the quality of the public realm plays a vital role in influencing impressions of the City Centre. The public realm is defined by buildings and uses, but can be broken down into the following elements, each of which are discussed below: street furniture, lighting, surface materials, landscape, signage and public art.

Street furniture influences the users of public space and is the most interactive feature in the street. Swansea has clearly invested considerably in its furniture over a period of time. There is a sense of continuity in the colours and forms of furniture in the environs of Oxford Street, however this is of a somewhat standard format and usually not specific to the nature or location of Swansea. Generally, the furniture is kept to the centre of the streets so as not to interfere with the shopping experience, but can still prevent the free flow of pedestrians. The furniture in the northern section of Princess Way is very low quality, unused and an eyesore in a street whose proportion is already too open. The most disappointing areas in Swansea are situated along lengths of the seafront and riverside. There has been no attempt for the furniture to interact with the use, nature and image of the sea. This is one of the reasons the seafront is not working. There are occasions throughout the City Centre, where highway signage style conflicts with furniture, and the preponderance of guard rail does have a negative effect.

Lighting in the City Centre is generally of a good quality. The lamp posts have been removed in Oxford Street in favour of building mounted lights. This frees space at ground level and reduces clutter. Elsewhere, the street lights are of standard format. Again, there is no lighting along the seafront promenade to encourage evening use. Some attempt at a seafront theme has been made adjacent to the marina, yet along Kingsway even this has dated. The Conservation Areas of Wind Street and the Historic Maritime have appropriate low level lantern type light fittings which sit well against the quality building backdrop. The feature lighting is also well handled, specifically at the Castle, Morgan's Hotel and the River Tawe footbridge. If there was a fault here, it would be that not enough feature lighting has been used.

Whilst buildings form a backdrop for the public realm, surface materials are a significant contributor to its quality. The City Centre seems to be suffering from an uncoordinated approach to materials that has created a patchwork quilt effect. There are some areas, recently refurbished with good quality stone, connecting with other materials of different shade, colour, texture, size and shape. A good example is the station plaza. It has had a recent makeover which makes the space a pleasant and interesting one when exiting from the station. This connects to the road hierarchy where standard highway materials have been used (i.e. tarmacadam etc) and the quality stops abruptly. The Oxford Street area has another mismatch of materials creating a confusing public realm. The connecting Castle Square is a high quality space with an interesting connection to the Castle itself.

As would be expected, the materials used in the Conservation Area of Wind Street are high quality, however, at the historic Maritime Quarter area they are generally of a standard or even lower quality. The area around southern Princess Way seems to have been treated to a good quality range of materials, yet it is questioned where else these materials are used and if they will help to define a character area, or are simply another small area in the patchwork quilt of the City Centre material range.

Planted and green space areas in the City Centre are sparse, with landscaping otherwise limited to car parks and embankments. There are, however, a few notable exceptions in terms of public spaces :

- Castle Square is the City's most central and prominent space. It steps down from Castle Street and the Castle into the major retail centre of Oxford Street. There are four plant beds raised above the ground with integral seating. These raised beds do not interfere with the pedestrian desire lines, nor do they detract from legible movement through the space. As a result, the space generally functions well. Central to it is a feature waterfall. This unfortunately reduces the quality of the space as the structure is not well maintained, and it could, therefore, simply be seen as a vandalised barrier. Also, the planting along the north side of the space is another barrier to movement and detaches the building on this side of the square from the space.
- The entrance to the National Waterfront Museum is of high quality. This entrance has recently been planted but is a well considered space providing areas for lounging and relaxing in front of the museum. However, it is located between the Leisure Centre and Swansea Museum, both of which back on to it, and it is essentially a "walk-through" as opposed to "walk to" space. Now that the museum has opened, and once the Leisure Centre is refurbished, this will be a well used space despite the inactive edges, and future improvements should seek to encourage more activity.
- The marinas have a certain quality due to the focus provided by the historic docks around which they are built. Generally hard landscaped to reflect the nature of the space and their historic use, the marinas are a fantastic amenity which could become a hub of activity through proper use.
- Museum Green is a recently landscaped public space critical to the movement of pedestrians from the core area to the historic Maritime area and riverfront. It is seen as one of the most important spaces in Swansea.

The statutory requirements for highway signage means that there is a multitude of highway signs littering the streetscape. These can be consolidated with careful thought. Ironically, on the High Street, there are banners to introduce visitors to the fact that Swansea is a seaside resort but there are no vistas to the waterfront.

Public Art is often seen as an add-on to a development or public enhancement, but can make a significant statement regarding a city centre. Swansea has a tradition of public art and has a few interesting pieces which genuinely contribute to the image of the City. One of these is the Police sign on Alexandra Road. Another is the glass shard topping the fountain in Castle Square. It encourages thought into the use of glass and how it is connected to the history of Swansea.

The plan on the previous page indicating positive and negative public spaces demonstrates that there are only a handful of areas with satisfactory large scale public space in the City. This implies that the rest of the City requires a completely fresh approach and substantial investment in the public realm. It also indicates that in areas where redevelopment can take place there is the opportunity for new public spaces linking together.



Lack of seafront furniture



Cluttered and conflicting styles of street furniture in core areas

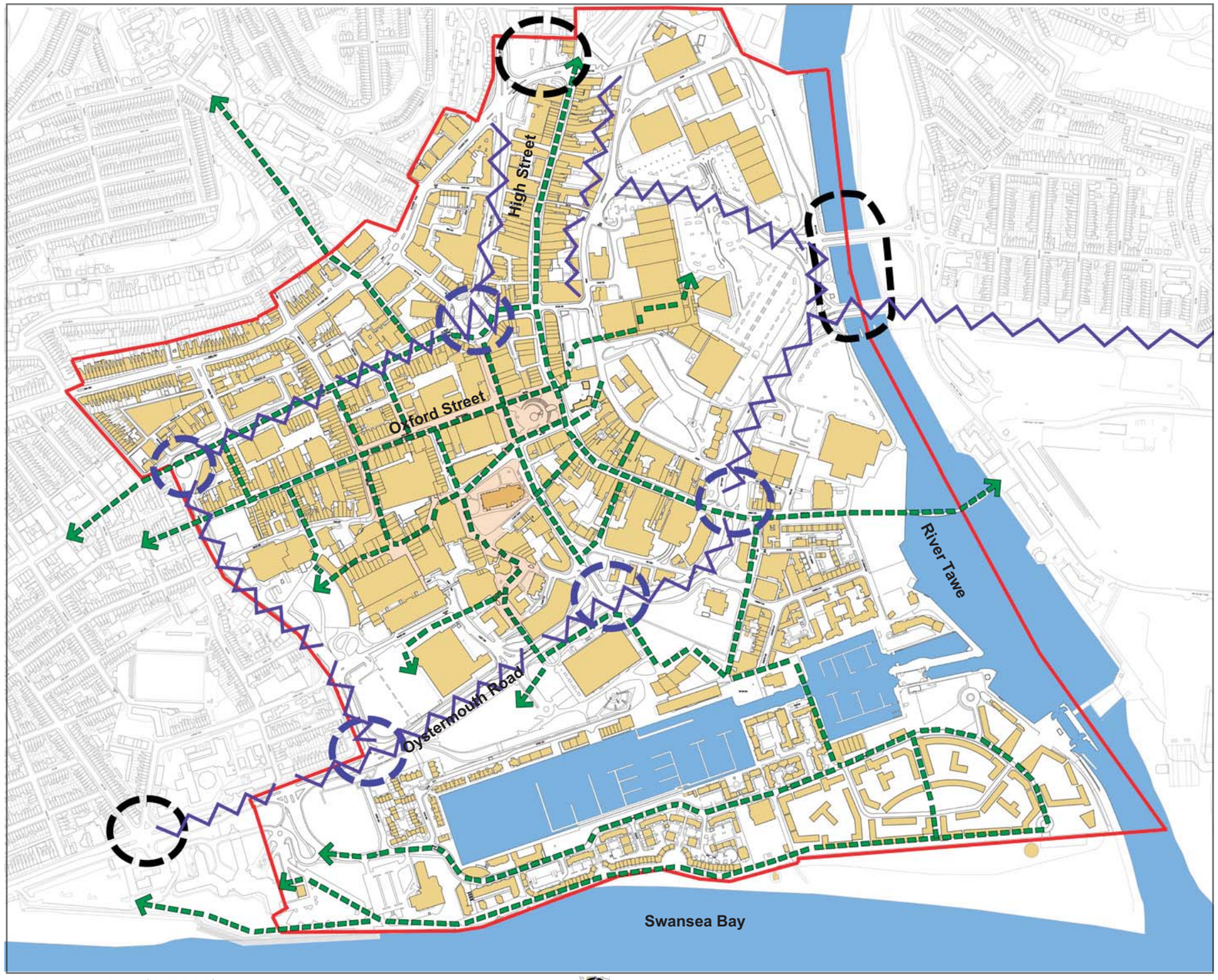
Linkages

The main line railway station sits at the top of the historic embankment at the end of the High Street and overlooking Parc Tawe and the River Tawe to the east. This is now a peripheral location in relation to the retail core, which shifted down to Oxford Street some years ago. The bus station is better located next to the retail core, but its separation from the railway station is such that interchange between transport modes is difficult.

Movement within the City Centre core is generally easy. There is a large area of pedestrianised or shared surface streets from Castle Square along Oxford Street and its neighbouring streets. The Kingsway to the north is a wide street (originally intended as a boulevard) which now presents a barrier to the adjacent residential areas. Traffic engineering at the Kingsway Roundabout has created an environmentally unfriendly underpass system that detracts from what could be a strong and focused space. The West Way presents a similar road barrier on the western edge of the City Centre.

The historic escarpment to the east of the Castle and overlooking Parc Tawe is poorly negotiated by existing pedestrian routes. The main access to Parc Tawe from the Castle dodges around the back of it and then has to pass through the shopping building itself to get down to the lower level.

The most significant barrier to movement between the City Centre retail core and the waterfront is Oystermouth Road. It has been engineered to give priority to vehicular traffic travelling around the Bay, and gives little consideration to the pedestrian, and no views over the Bay. The psychological impact of this barrier is increased by the looseness of the space around it - lack of enclosure, blank facades and car parking dominate perception of this road. Even with a subway, footbridge and various traffic light junctions, pedestrian access across is an unpleasant and uninviting route to the City's key waterfront locations. The treatment and perception of Oystermouth Road as a bypass is a primary reason for the generally held view that Swansea has a lack of quality in terms of its linkages and environmental routes.



Linkages plan (1:7500)

Key:

- Pedestrian/shared surface
- Pedestrian route
- Barrier to pedestrian movement
- Gateways into the City
- Nodes around the city

Urban Design Analysis Conclusions

Strengths

- There are a number of historic and listed buildings that managed to survive the Second World War bombings
- A new café bar entertainment district along Wind Street has emerged only recently, which demonstrates the potential of the City as a whole to develop more character and better defined districts
- There are some areas of historic buildings such as Wind Street and in the Maritime Quarter where active frontages and quality buildings combine to give a good environment. There are a few areas of the City Centre where elements of paving, furniture, public art and lighting work well and give clues as to how the City could be developed
- The core retail area is pedestrianised and creates an easily negotiated heart to the City



Wind Street, a regeneration success in Swansea

Weaknesses

- The historic and listed buildings are scattered around the City and only form cohesive groupings in a few areas such as Wind Street
- There is a variety of architectural styles with no one style dominating, and examples of tired, poor quality architecture and poorly maintained buildings
- The post-war rebuilding has introduced a lot of concrete finishes and details that have not stood the test of time
- Most districts suffer from a lack of cohesion because of the wide variety of quality and maintenance in their buildings and spaces
- There is very little mixed-use in the City Centre as a whole and districts are therefore more defined by use than character
- The whole Oystermouth Road corridor is very weak spatially and in terms of active edges
- St David's shopping centre is poorly conceived spatially and failing as an active area
- Good public spaces are few and far between and the general impression of the City's public realm is of a hotchpotch of tired styles and solutions, and of unsatisfactory places that detract from the image of the City
- There are major road barriers all around the City Centre along the Kingsway, West Way and Oystermouth Road. Oystermouth Road is a particular problem as a barrier between the retail core and the waterfront, exacerbated by its spatial looseness and aggressive environment of car parks and blank facades The escarpment creates a barrier between the retail core and Parc Tawe
- There is a poor relationship between the railway station and the bus station

Priorities

- Promote a public realm which is more pedestrian friendly, whilst recognising the need to service an active and vibrant City Centre economy
- New development in the City Centre should be designed to high architectural standards that balance the desire for innovation with a respect for the scale and character of the better areas of existing townscape
- Isolated historic buildings and settings should be considered by new development and handled sensitively
- Compile a register of buildings which require enhancement or replacement and establish a funded programme to undertake such works
- There is a need to develop a more cohesive district structure that encourages mixed-use development
- Linkages between districts are not as strong as they should be
- Improving the environment of Oystermouth Road, creating a new urban and active character along through development with better pedestrian crossings, developing it as a new place, possibly a "boulevard"
- Rejuvenating the existing retail core and enhancing the quality of shops to create more activity.
- Increasing the level of active frontage generally, particularly through new development
- A cohesive and comprehensive approach to the development of the City's public realm is required that builds on its history, character and best spatial qualities, and should be supported by a rigorous and proactive approach to maintenance based on a protocol for key streets and spaces, supported by a champion
- The framework needs to dictate a vision for the public realm that will take it forward and ensure integration with new development
- The public space network should be addressed and a concept embracing existing spaces and potential development sites should be developed
- A system of pedestrian priority crossings needs to be developed across the major road barriers.
- The relationship between the retail core and Parc Tawe needs to be improved
- Linkage between the bus station and the railway station should be considered

Accessibility Analysis

Maximising accessibility and an efficient integrated transport system is an essential requirement of creating an attractive, successful City Centre for residents, shoppers, visitors and for employment. It is an important factor in sustaining a competitive economy and maintaining an inclusive society. This analysis identifies the strengths, weaknesses and priorities for accessibility in the City Centre today.

The strategic context for accessibility in the City Centre is well defined in Swansea, supported by a number of existing and on-going initiatives, the Local Transport Plan and funding available through the Welsh Assembly Government. Nevertheless, it is relevant to undertake a review of established policy in the context of this study, and consider new areas of intervention where appropriate.

Accessibility by Car

Swansea is well served from the M4 motorway, with junctions 42 to 47 all linking to the City Centre via radial routes, which are generally of a dual carriageway standard, and have adequate capacity to carry high levels of traffic flow without significant congestion. The main routes are:

- Fabian Way (A4067) from the east
- Carmarthen Road (A483) from the north-west
- Ffordd Cwm Tawe (A4067) from the north via Neath Road through the Hafod area or via Pentreguinea Road which joins with Fabian Way
- Oystermouth Road (Mumbles Road) which does not connect with the M4, but provides an important link into the City Centre from the west

Other radial routes have less capacity but are adequate to serve local access needs and are generally also served well by bus transport.

Within the City Centre, the key routes for circulating traffic are as follows:

- Orchard Street
- De La Beche Street / Mansel Street
- Kingsway
- West Way
- Oystermouth Road / Victoria Road

Other significant traffic routes within the City Centre are:

- College Street / Welcome Lane / Strand / Parc Tawe Link Road - this route provides access to and from the Parc Tawe area and beyond, and serves as an alternative route to the east instead of Victoria Road. It has a limited traffic carrying capacity, reducing its role to that of a local distributor
- New Cut Road – as it links with Oystermouth Road, this road offers an alternative route to Orchard Street / Kingsway for traffic from the north travelling west or to the City Centre, and thus plays a role in relieving City Centre congestion

The Council is seeking to improve two further traffic routes within and to the City Centre:

- A new road link at the north-west ‘corner’ of the City Centre “highway box” (West Way / Kingsway / Orchard Street / Dyfatty Street / New Cut Road / Victoria Road / Oystermouth Road) is proposed. This new link road will be routed between the northern end of West Way and Mansel Street, and will effectively replace Christina Street as a north-south connector
- The Tawe Riverside Corridor Study (commissioned in summer 2005) is examining the potential to enhance the distributor role of Morfa Road, approaching the City Centre from the north-east. Consideration is also being given to the way in which this road may be better connected to the existing highway network

The road network system is largely controlled by signals and roundabouts, and elements of this network are subject to congestion at peak times. Traffic congestion occurs on a frequent basis at the following key locations:

- Kingsway / West Way (Dillwyn Street) roundabout: Congestion here is generally due to backing up of queues at the Kingsway / Christina Street signal-controlled junction
- Kingsway / Orchard Street roundabout: Congestion here is often caused primarily by queues forming at the adjacent High Street / College Street signal-controlled junction
- West Way / Oystermouth Road signal-controlled T-junction: The combination of high flows along Oystermouth Road and large numbers of turning traffic (from / to car parks on West Way) can lead to congestion here at peak times
- Junctions along Oystermouth Road / Victoria Road: The combination of high traffic flows and side road traffic wishing to enter the traffic stream leads to intermittent congestion and queuing
- Tawe Bridges (Fabian Way / Victoria Road): The current operation as a series of signal-controlled cross road junctions does not provide the Council with the capability to manage traffic flows efficiently, and limits the scope for increased priority for buses, pedestrians and cyclists. Previous studies have investigated the possibility of introducing a one-way gyratory at this location, but the feasibility of such a system was not fully established

Congestion is often caused by traffic queuing across roundabout junctions, which then limits the ability of other traffic to move clear. The close proximity of junctions together with the mix of roundabouts and traffic signals contributes to traffic inefficiency within the City Centre. This reduces the Council’s ability to provide effective traffic management and pedestrian and cycle crossing opportunities.

The existing road network is due to change significantly during 2006-08 as the Metro (Bus Rapid Transit) scheme is introduced. Its implications for the road network are that the northern portion of the City Centre will operate as a one-way system, with two lanes clockwise along Kingsway, Christina Street, Mansel Street, De la Beche Street, Orchard Place, Pleasant Street, and Orchard Street. These changes will enhance traffic management in the City Centre by introducing more efficient co-ordination of signal-controlled junctions. This will enable improved management of queuing and congestion, as well as achieving significant improvements to public transport, and provision for pedestrians and cyclists. However, it will not seek to increase capacity to carry traffic through the City Centre.

Through traffic is a significant cause of congestion. However, there are few alternative routes for traffic with origins or destinations close to the City Centre. The Oystermouth Road corridor currently provides the main conduit for through traffic. Its dual carriageway layout and direct alignment makes it the most suitable road to act as the principal east-west artery. As a road corridor, it merits specific consideration, as it has a significant effect not only in terms of accessibility by car, but also on pedestrians.

Oystermouth Road - Crossing the Divide: The Tunnel Option

In the late 1990s, investigations were undertaken in respect of lowering the Oystermouth Road / Victoria Road carriageway into a 300 metre long tunnel. This was under consideration to enable a direct pedestrian connection to be made between the City Centre and waterfront, and also to create a new urban environment and potentially valuable development area. Estimates indicated that the cost of the engineering works would exceed £30 million for even a partial tunnel, and a range of other considerations would have to be addressed. Following a review of these previous investigations, it is clear that any benefits are insufficient to justify the expenditure on the tunnel construction and associated works. In addition to this very significant level of cost, a range of other issues are likely to be difficult to resolve. This leads to the conclusion that the tunnel proposal should not be pursued because :

- The programme for construction works would exceed six years
- Traffic diversions would be needed on an already busy route
- Considerable noise and dust would be generated from the construction works
- Temporary and/or permanent support would be needed for adjacent structures
- Significant statutory services and drainage would have to be diverted, abandoned or protected
- An extensive network of at-grade 'slip' roads, access roads and junctions would be needed
- The actual benefit in vehicular terms would be minor, while pedestrians and cyclists would still be exposed to the impact of busy roads at several key locations
- A range of alternative measures to encourage a more sustainable approach to movement in the City could be implemented

Car Parking

There are over 8,000 off-street car park spaces that serve Swansea City Centre in over 25 locations. In addition, there are some 400 on-street spaces, which are generally limited to a maximum waiting time, but free of charge. There is a significant amount of private non-residential (PNR) spaces e.g. employer parking – which is not available to the general public.

Name	Total
Public - Surface	1,768
Public – Multi-storey	2,888
Private - Retail	2,325
Park & Ride	1,100
Total	**8,081**

Summary of Off-Street Parking serving Swansea City Centre

There are over 25 car parks in the City Centre. Many of the surface car parks are small, encouraging high levels of circulatory traffic on City Centre roads as motorists search for a space. Eight of the car parks have fewer than 100 spaces.

The six multi-storey car parks providing 2,888 spaces are located on the northern and southern boundaries of the core area of the City Centre. The multi-storey car parks offer the best level of service to visitors since they are covered, spaces are well marked out, information on space availability is given on VMS (Variable Message Signs) for the three Council car parks, and they are barriered. They are not all open into the late evening, and some could be better located, to prevent traffic penetrating into the City Centre core on extensive journeys around one-way systems, seeking car park spaces.

Access to City Centre car parks can involve delays at congested City Centre roads, although parking is available on most of the radial routes into the City Centre. There is no public car park on the eastern route into the Centre, along Fabian Way, so motorists need to travel into the City Centre itself to park if they do not use the Park & Ride.

Typical charges for car parks are £1.00 to £1.20 per hour for short stay and £5.00 per day. The daily charge is substantially higher than the Park & Ride charge. It can thus be an effective tool in managing parking demand and effectively relocating a proportion of demand to Park & Ride locations.

Car Parking

By comparing with other cities, it is possible to benchmark the current parking supply / demand relationship in Swansea. Comparisons are made with Aberdeen, Exeter and Plymouth – similar sized cities with geographical, population and hinterland characteristics of a relatively similar nature to Swansea.

City	Population	City Centre Car Park Spaces	Park & Ride	Total car park spaces
Aberdeen	212,000	7,500	1,800	9,300
Exeter	111,000	8,800	2,000	10,800
Plymouth	240,000	4,200	1,600	5,800
Swansea	225,000	6,900	1,100	8,000

Comparison Table – City Centre Car park Spaces

Car park charges in Swansea are broadly in line with charges in the above cities, with parking up to 2 hours generally costing around £2, and all-day parking costing between £5 and £9. Park & Ride charges in all the above cities are substantially below the all-day city centre parking charges.

Thus it is concluded that Swansea currently has a sufficient level of parking to adequately cater for general demand, and

the availability of parking is not considered to be a significant factor in visitors' choice of Swansea as a destination. In future, there may be a need to consider the impact of major City Centre developments on the level of provision.

In the meantime, it is important that current parking supply is grouped into larger (and thus fewer) parking facilities. The currently high number of car parks leads to management inefficiency across the City Centre, congestion, and confusion for the customer. Rationalising car parking supply into fewer, larger, car parks is both beneficial to customer understanding, and allows operational aspects to be better focused on issues such as maintenance, enforcement, security and customer service. In addition, circulation of traffic then tends to occur within car parks rather than on the road network. In particular, increasing the efficiency of operation results in improved turnover per parking space. Reallocation of parking supply to larger car parks will thus generally result in an effective increase in parking supply, without the addition of more spaces.

At the same time, the provision of Park & Ride has reduced pressure on City Centre parking, and in particular allows scope for the Council to seek to re-locate long-stay parking activity out of City Centre car parks.

Park and Ride

Swansea has two Park & Ride sites, one to the north-east at Landore and one to the east at Fabian Way, and each of these has 550 parking spaces. Two more Park & Ride sites are planned, to the north-west and to the west. The Park & Ride services operate Monday to Saturday (0645–1930) with bus services every 12 to 15 minutes. The charge is £1.50 to park a car all day and up to 4 people can travel into Swansea and back on the dedicated Park & Ride bus. Usage of the sites is increasing and is currently over 10,000 vehicles per month for the Landore site and 8,000 vehicles per month for the Fabian Way site.

The bus priority lanes now being introduced on the routes to both of the existing sites are critical to the future effectiveness of the Park & Ride operation and will further enhance competitiveness with the private car.

Accessibility by Bus

First Group operates the majority of the bus network in Swansea. Within the City Centre, the main waiting locations are Kingsway and the Quadrant Bus Station, and there are a number of bus routes, predominantly using the more significant traffic routes approaching and around the City Centre core area. There is a high frequency of buses travelling between the railway station and the bus station, and thus demand for bus / rail interchange is relatively well served.

Long distance coaches leave Swansea from the south side of the Quadrant Shopping Centre, near the bus station, and link Swansea into the national coach network, with direct services to London, Birmingham, Heathrow, Gatwick and other parts of the UK. Coaches visiting the City Centre have drop-off and pick-up facilities south of the Quadrant, with parking facilities provided outside the City Centre. Some dedicated coach parking is available for the National Waterfront Museum near the Leisure Centre.

The redevelopment scheme for the 'Quadrant Interchange' bus station is programmed for completion in 2008. There will be substantially improved facilities for bus and coach passengers, provision to accommodate the Metro, and access for buses in and out of the bus station will be via West Way only. The new facilities at the interchange will have a significant impact on the image and role of public transport in the City Centre.

Metro Accessibility improvements

In partnership with First Group, the City and County Council is currently implementing the 'Metro' Bus Rapid Transit system along the Morriston – City Centre – Mumbles corridor. The City Centre part of the scheme will be completed by 2008. The changes to street infrastructure for the Metro scheme will bring about considerable improvements in accessibility for public transport users, and for pedestrians and cyclists.

The 'Metro' bus will significantly improve the public transport accessibility of the City Centre from areas to the north and west of the city, and will further improve the rail / bus interchange. A particular feature of the Metro system is a dedicated two-lane bus route along the Orchard Street – Kingsway corridor. The bus route will be utilised by a new fleet of articulated buses which will operate cross-city between Morriston and Mumbles.

City Centre 'stations' on the Metro route will be provided at the rail station, Kingsway, at the Quadrant Interchange and at the Civic Centre in County Hall.

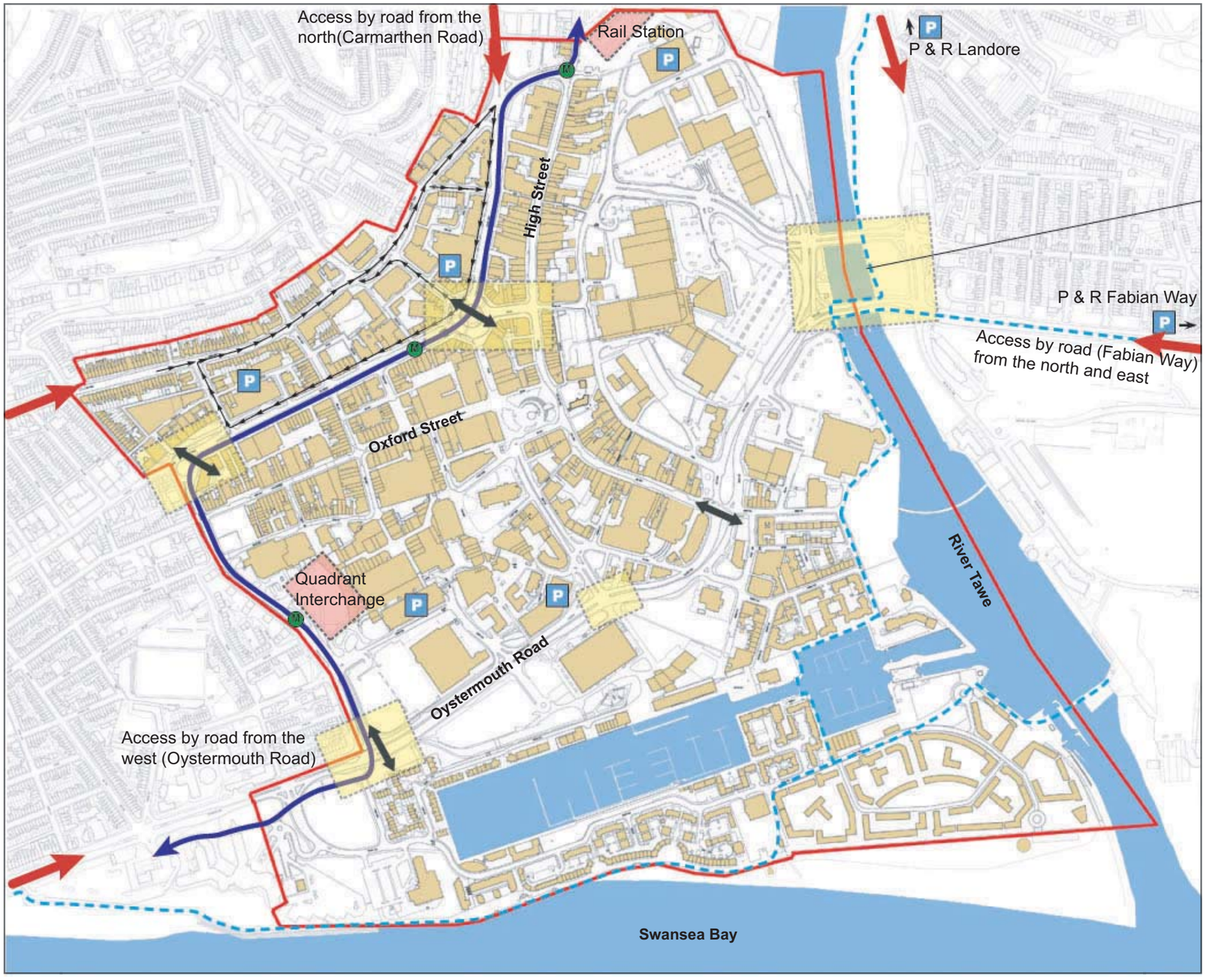
Accessibility by Rail

Swansea Railway Station, located on the northern perimeter of the City Centre on High Street, acts as the focal point for the rail network within South West Wales and offers good links to many major cities including Cardiff, Manchester, Bristol and London. Swansea is served by two train operating companies – First Great Western (with nearly twenty services per weekday from London Paddington) and Arriva Trains Wales (with 14 trains from Cardiff, 19 trains from West Wales and 4 trains from Central Wales per weekday). Local railway stations to the east and west are also served by trains to / from Swansea.

As a public transport interchange, Swansea High Street has improved considerably in recent years following significant investment, linked to Park & Ride and the proposed Metro route, thereby providing better connections to other parts of the City Centre. Whilst the facilities and environment around the station are better, there is a need to work with partners to improve the comparatively poor facilities within the station itself, and to continue upgrading property in the immediate vicinity.

Accessibility by Bicycle

The Celtic Trail (National Cycle Network Route 4) passes through Swansea from east to west. The section of the trail that runs along the seafront promenade is the most heavily used cycle path in Wales. With three cycle crossings of the River Tawe, the provision of routes in the waterfront area is of a high standard. However, the linkages from these routes into the City Centre are



Strategic accessibility issues (1:7500)

Key:

- Congestion 'hotspot'
- Major barriers to pedestrians
- National cycle routes
- Proposed Metro route
- Proposed Metro stop
- Main car parking
- Proposed one-way system (introduced with Metro)
- Main road access

unsatisfactory, with Oystermouth Road / Victoria Road creating a barrier to north-south cycle movement. Cycle routes to the City Centre have been designated, but for much of their length cyclists are required to share road space with other vehicles. Cycle parking is provided at 29 sites spread across the City Centre, currently providing for 236 cycles.

Accessibility by Foot

Pedestrian movement in the City Centre core area is relatively good, with unimpeded access across the largely pedestrianised areas between Kingsway and Oystermouth Road.

However, key locations where pedestrians enter the core area are of poor quality and are environmentally unattractive. Crossings at the edge of the City Centre road system (Oystermouth Road / Victoria Road, Kingsway, West Way) are either via subway or overbridge, or via low capacity, at-grade, signal–controlled, staggered pedestrian crossings. Links into other surrounding areas like Parc Tawe, High Street and adjacent residential areas exhibit similar characteristics. Recent improvements have been made to the pedestrian routes to the Maritime Quarter, in particular along Princess Way, and at the new river crossing to SA1 Swansea Waterfront (the Sail Bridge), but there is scope for more widespread improvement.

The future introduction of the Metro system, on the northern and western side of the City Centre, will provide improved pedestrian facilities. In particular at Kingsway / Orchard Street roundabout, the proposals will result in a less car-dominated environment and removal of unpopular subways in favour of an at-grade junction combined with pedestrian crossings at each approach road. There should also be significant opportunities to improve the public realm along Kingsway.

Accessibility for Disabled People

The Swansea Shopmobility scheme, managed by the City Centre Partnership, opened in December 1997. The service provides scooters and wheelchairs to help people with permanent or temporary mobility difficulties access the City Centre. Since its opening, there has been continuing and significant growth both in

terms of membership and the usage of equipment. The Swansea Shopmobility scheme is now the busiest such scheme in Wales.

Long Distance Accessibility by Ferry and Air

Swansea has a Ferry Port to the east of the City Centre, adjacent to the SA1 Swansea Waterfront development area. There is also an airport situated at Fairwood some 20 minutes outside the City Centre, providing limited facilities and services. Cardiff International Airport is less than an hour away by car.

Future Travel Demand with City Centre Development

The 2002 City Centre Transport and Development Study was commissioned by the City and County of Swansea and the former Welsh Development Agency. It determined that a number of key issues needed to be addressed in order for the City to be in a position to meet potential travel demand associated with future development within the City Centre. It concluded that "the City would experience increased traffic congestion unless interventions in the transport systems are made".

The Council, with support from the Welsh Assembly Government, has responded to the recommendations, and the current situation is summarised below:

Interventions identified	Current progress
Park & Ride, if supported by bus priority measures can be effective in reducing congestion in the City Centre.	High quality and robust bus priority measures are currently either in completed or programmed for construction to serve buses travelling to and from the Fabian Way and Landore Park & Ride sites.
Modal Split: The potential transfer from car to bus would be greater if "modern user-friendly vehicles, bus priority measures, good waiting facilities, and good passenger information" were in place.	Park & Ride and the Metro system will bring a 'step change' in public transport service within the city, and will address all the requirements listed. The Quadrant Interchange development will also significantly improve passenger facilities.
Congestion on approach roads is mainly likely at the Tawe Bridges, Oystermouth Road west of the City Centre, and on Pentrechwyth Road / Neath Road to the north.	Park & Ride and the Metro offer alternatives to car travellers affected by congestion delays on these corridors. Traffic management improvements at Tawe Bridges (through which Pentrechwyth Road traffic is routed) are still being investigated, in conjunction with development potential.
Differential parking charges to encourage reduced use of the private car for journeys to the city centre.	A progressive review of parking charges has been undertaken, and initial changes have been implemented, geared towards providing sufficient differential to make Park & Ride an attractive alternative.

Significant progress has been made in progressing relevant measures and firm proposals. These will improve services and infrastructure, emphasising opportunities to travel by various modes, facilitate future development, and provide effective accessibility to and from the City Centre.

Accessibility Analysis Conclusions

Strengths

Swansea has a balanced provision of transport infrastructure across all modes. The key strengths in terms of accessibility are:

- Bus station: The bus station brings many passengers from a wide area into the heart of the City's retail area. The proposed major upgrade of facilities at the 'Quadrant Interchange' will result in a more attractive passenger environment
- Metro system: The Metro Bus Rapid Transit system will offer fast and reliable state-of-the-art public transport linkage to and through the City Centre for passengers from the north-east and west of the city
- Pedestrian routes: Pedestrian routes within the core of the City Centre are generally direct and there is little conflict with vehicular movement
- Foreshore cycling route: The foreshore cycling route offers a high quality route into the southern edge of the central area
- Parking provision: There is an adequate total number of car parking spaces in the City Centre
- Car park charging policy: The Council's policy of higher daily all-day charges for City Centre parking is an effective tool in encouraging long-stay parkers to use Park & Ride
- Park & Ride: The Park & Ride system offers a modern, efficient and relatively cheap means for people to travel into the City Centre, and importantly this can help to ensure more short-term parking spaces in the City Centre
- Parking Information Variable Message Signs (VMS): The presence of VMS on approaches to the City Centre provides a useful tool to guide drivers to appropriate parking locations where spare capacity exists. This can ease the journey into the City Centre, reduce the circulation of traffic looking for parking space, and hence assist in managing congestion

Weaknesses

- Pedestrian links to the Maritime Quarter, the waterfront and SA1 Swansea Waterfront: Facilities for pedestrian movement on the edge of the Oystermouth Road / Kingsway / West Way 'box' are poor, particularly at road crossings, but with high quality routes thereafter, such as to SA1 Swansea Waterfront and along the foreshore. The Oystermouth Road corridor is traffic dominated, which supports the perception that pedestrians are given very little priority
- Links to Parc Tawe: The historic escarpment to the east of the Castle and overlooking Parc Tawe is negotiated by poor quality existing pedestrian routes involving level changes. The main access from Castle Square to Parc Tawe is deflected around Castle Buildings, across a pedestrian footbridge into the leisure and shopping centre itself, to reach the lower level.
- Cycle links to foreshore route: Cycle access between the City Centre and the foreshore route is poor due to the barrier created by Oystermouth Road
- Pedestrian and cycling environment along Oystermouth Road: The environment for walking or cycling along Oystermouth Road is poor, which further erodes the linkages between the waterfront and the City Centre
- Pedestrian access between the City Centre and areas to the north: Pedestrian access between the core of the City Centre and the area north of Kingsway is poor, with pedestrians either using the underpasses at Kingsway roundabout or the various at-grade staggered crossings on Kingsway
- Bus priority measures: There is little effective bus priority at present in the City Centre, and buses tend to be held up in general traffic congestion. This leads to reduced reliability and increased journey times
- Traffic congestion at peak times: Congestion at peak times can often lead to delays in traffic movement – especially along Oystermouth Road and Kingsway / West Way
- Number of car parks: There are a large number of small surface car parks in the City Centre. This results in the inefficient circulation of traffic, which in turn leads to congestion and can be a source of frustration
- Parking enforcement: On-street parking enforcement is not carried out effectively at present

Priorities

- Pedestrian and cycle links to waterfront: Pedestrian underpass access between the City Centre and the waterfront area should be relocated to ground level, as part of a change to the public realm along Oystermouth Road / Victoria Road. The existing dual carriageway should be re-designed and enhanced to produce wider "crossing islands" where pedestrians can cross in relative comfort
- Pedestrian links to north of the central area: The Metro proposals to remove the underpass arrangement at Kingsway / Orchard Street, along with other street modifications, will significantly improve the experience of pedestrians moving between the City Centre and the area north of Kingsway
- Car Parking: Small surface level car parks should either be removed and developed or allocated to particular specialist uses, e.g. disabled users only. As development occurs, new, large, efficiently managed car parks will provide additional capacity, compensating for the loss of smaller car parks without significantly reducing the availability of parking to the general public
- Parking enforcement: The Council should take over responsibility for on-street enforcement from the Police by applying to decriminalise parking enforcement
- Metro public transport system: The Metro system will provide a step-change in bus priority within the City Centre, with consequent improved bus reliability and reduced journey times. The associated upgraded waiting facilities will also enhance the attractiveness of bus travel to City Centre visitors. The system should be extended with additional routes serving the City Centre, to maximise the use of public transport
- Metro traffic management changes: The one-way traffic management plan which forms part of the Metro system, is an essential element of improving all aspects of traffic management along streets in the northern side of the City Centre. It will provide improved conditions for all modes of travel, i.e. better pedestrian crossings, introduction of cycle lanes and crossings, bus priority lanes, and a more efficient signal control system for general traffic
- Congestion Issues: The Metro proposals will provide traffic management tools to deal with congestion issues on the northern side of the City Centre. On the southern side, further measures need to be considered at the Tawe Bridges and along Oystermouth Road
- Park & Ride: The third Park & Ride site serving the north-west, should be introduced as soon as possible, with further consideration of additional sites as appropriate. This will ensure that all car travellers from outside the city, or from its outer edges, will have an opportunity to use Park & Ride

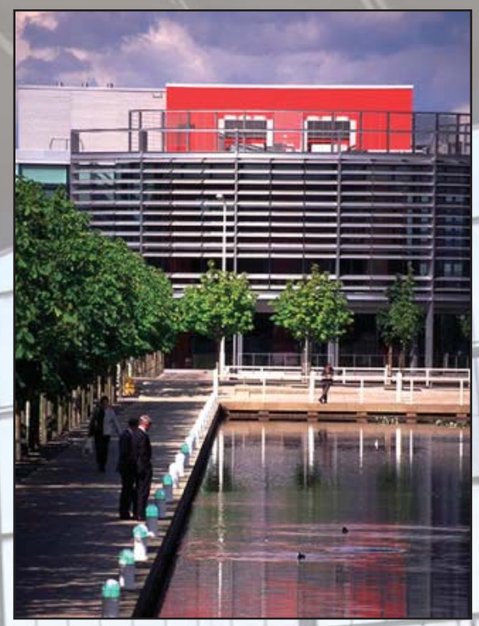
Development and implementation of the above priorities will provide a robust transport network and a sound basis for coping with future travel demand into and through the City Centre. In particular, the progressive improvement of facilities and infrastructure for all modes of travel will provide flexibility and choice for residents, visitors and employees using the City Centre.



Integrated public transport system: Beursplein, Rotterdam



Outdoor life in Stockholm, Sweden



Edinburgh Park



Sydney markets

Vision

Aspirations

It is important to recognise that there are a number of drivers already in place for the creation of a vision for Swansea City Centre. Visions previously drafted for the City and County and for the City Centre emphasise the need to achieve standards which prevail in the best examples of European cities, and also point to the significance of the Swansea waterfront as a distinctive and important asset for the City Centre, the potential of which must be fully exploited and realised. Current policies and Vision statements, therefore, give rise to the concept of a distinctive European Waterfront City.

Everyone concerned with the future of Swansea wants to make it as successful as possible within the context of a developing Europe. The best European cities are economically successful and environmentally attractive, supporting the resident and business population of their "city-region" and their national economy. Their city centres are the focus of their urban economy and the showcase for their quality and identity. They set the benchmark and the competition which Swansea must match if it is to prosper. Waterfronts have proved to be major contributing factors in successful regeneration. A number of existing plans and strategies identify Swansea's potential. By combining a number of aspirations and visions, the concept of Swansea as a European Waterfront City can be developed.

The City Centre Partnership has set its Vision for the City Centre:

"To develop Swansea City Centre as a premier destination and a vibrant and dynamic place to shop, live, work and visit"

and stated that:

"The key element of this Vision is the establishment of a high quality City Centre, closely integrated with the seafront and River Tawe, creating a unique Waterfront City."

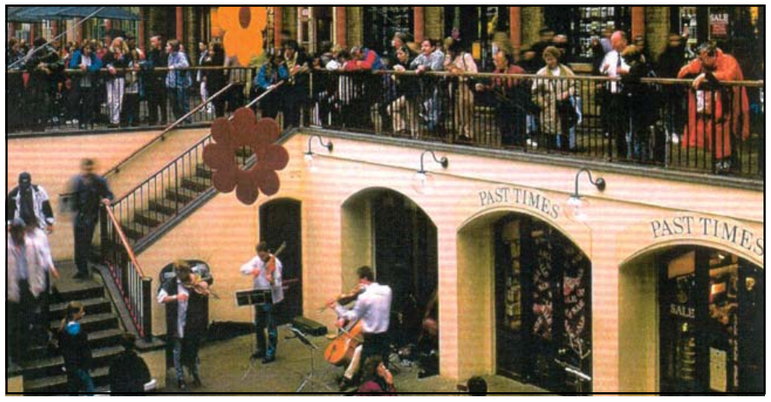
The Better Swansea Partnership's Vision for Swansea, as expressed in the Community Plan is:

"By 2020, Swansea will be a distinctive European City
- *A city that compares with the best*
- *A city that invests in the future*
- *A city where everyone matters*
- *A city that values its culture and heritage."*

The City Centre Partnership, Unitary Development Plan Deposit Draft and the Brief for this Strategic Framework identify four themes to achieve these Visions:

- Reconnecting the City Centre: improving links between the City Centre and surrounding areas, including the seafront, and making movement around the City Centre more effective and comfortable
- Encouraging mixed and sustainable development: strengthening retail, attracting business, delivering new leisure and cultural facilities, providing residential development and improving access
- Developing a high quality and distinctive City Centre based on its location as a Waterfront City: improving the physical environment, cleanliness, buildings and spaces, reducing pollution, encouraging public transport, reducing crime and fear of crime, and active promotion
- Developing partnership working: building on well-established and effective partnerships

To help confirm the priorities for Swansea and identify the objectives for this Strategic Framework it is important to understand what constitutes a successful European Waterfront City, and to examine the concept of a competitive "Core City", demonstrating best practice elsewhere in the UK.







London's Covent Garden is a successful place to live, shop, work and play

Core Cities

In recent years, substantial research has been undertaken to identify the factors which make European regional cities competitive, under the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) "Core Cities" project. This has looked at cities such as Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds and Leicester by comparison with European competitors. A "Core City" is a major regional city which has achieved a distinctive urban renaissance and makes an important contribution to its regional and national economy[1].

The initial Core Cities report laid out research evidence showing the pivotal role of regional urban centres in advanced economies – where the creation and application of unique knowledge is of greater significance than exploitation of natural resources or mass production. The Core Cities Group has identified the following success factors for a competitive "Core City". Such factors will help them to achieve distinctive urban renaissance and compete with leading Continental cities to attract international businesses. These are already present in the framework of policies, strategies and plans within which the future development of Swansea City Centre is evolving:

- **A city of European distinctiveness** (e.g. see the Swansea Community Plan which has a vision of Swansea as a distinctive European City by 2020)
- **Nationally and internationally recognised facilities for events** (e.g. see the role of Swansea as set out in the Wales Spatial Plan)
- **Sophisticated cultural infrastructure and services** (e.g. see the Culture Strategy for Wales which sees Swansea as playing an essential role as the centre of culture for South West Wales)
- **A wide range of high quality residential choices** (e.g. see the Unitary Development Plan which places a priority on the City Centre and Waterfront area for housing)
- **A reputation for environmental excellence and responsibility** (e.g. see the Unitary Development Plan which aims to create a healthy, attractive and ecologically rich society)
- **An inclusive and diverse society** (e.g. see the National Economic Development Strategy which aims to create strong communities, and the Community Plan which has the vision of Swansea as a city 'where everyone matters')

[1] Cities, Regions and Competitiveness – Interim Report – Core Cities Working Group, 2002

More recent research[2] into the roles and characteristics of post-industrial cities provides further evidence of how successful cities can also deliver policy goals on a broader social and environmental scale. There is a potential chain reaction which can follow from a high level commitment to strengthen a city's knowledge base as the launch for stronger economic performance and a distinctive external profile.

The research shows that the City Centre is particularly important because creativity and innovation are strengthened and enriched when key functions are located close together. City Centre development will directly support the growth of knowledge assets and the higher value economic functions that these attract. This in turn produces a stronger property market for renewal and upgrading of the inner urban areas. Prioritising the City Centre as a city's key economic crucible creates a positive climate for the renewal and enrichment of urban communities. This puts a major responsibility on cities to develop innovative approaches to issues such as education, skills and employability, and to the quality and competitiveness of the City Centre, including the design of buildings and the public realm.

European Waterfront City

The "Core Cities" experience highlights the importance of creating distinctiveness and competitiveness in a European context, and there is a strong policy intention, expressed in the Wales Spatial Plan, Swansea Economic Regeneration Strategy, Swansea Unitary Development Plan, Swansea Tourism Strategy and other strategies, to regenerate Swansea and the City Centre as a distinctive "European" waterfront city.

In the UK, a number of cities including Liverpool, Newcastle, Hull, and Bristol are included in the Core Cities group and have particularly benefited from waterfront development projects in regenerating their city centres. In the European mainland, Bilbao and Barcelona are two cities which have re-invented themselves with a particular emphasis on waterfront regeneration, but others including Amsterdam and Venice – and a number of capital cities including London, Paris, Copenhagen, Stockholm – use their waterfronts to create a particularly attractive, successful urban environment.

[2] Cities, Regions and Competitiveness – Second Report from the Working Group of Government Departments, The Core Cities and the Regional Development Agencies, June 2003

What are the characteristics of a successful "European Waterfront City" of a comparable size and role to Swansea?

A number of key factors are evident – strength of the economy, quality of the environment and vitality and diversity of "city life" encompassing residential communities, cultural activities and informal leisure in the City Centre. These factors can combine to support a distinctive and successful city – and of course effective use of the waterfront is a key component.

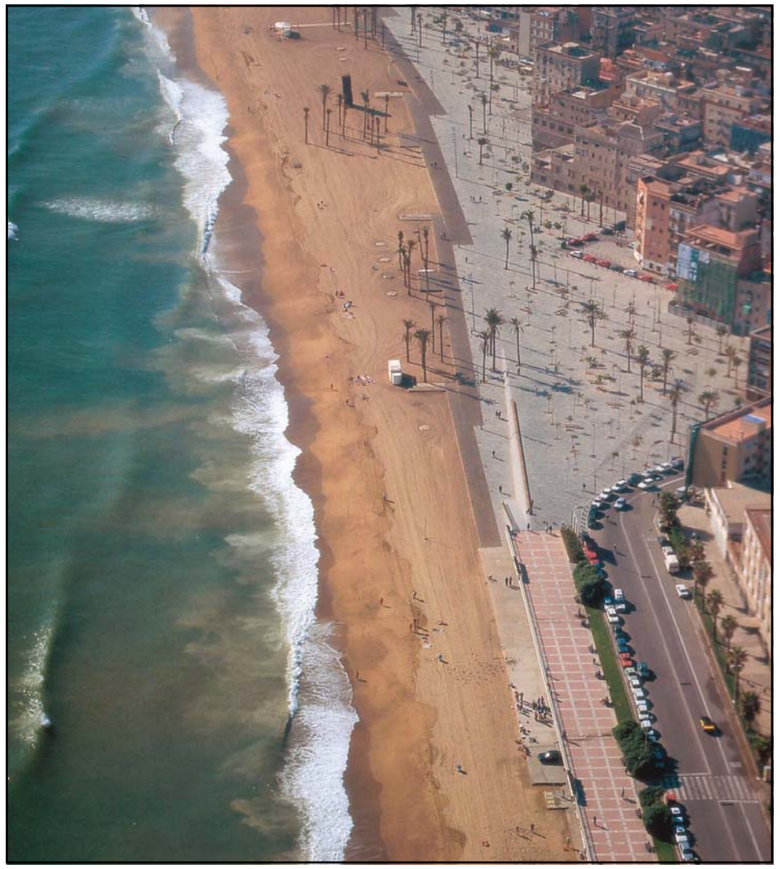
Many of these factors are important in creating a "destination" for residents, visitors and businesses. Locum Consulting completed a Destination Competency Audit of the City Centre, which reviews five elements – "attractors", "services", "infrastructure", "branding" and "destination management". The Audit concluded that Swansea is a weak destination overall, with an average score of 2.0 out of 5.0. Swansea performed best in the attractor element – with a reasonable portfolio of attractors including the waterfront, museums, and Swansea Market, and particular strengths in reflecting local history and culture for instance at the Dylan Thomas Centre and National Waterfront Museum Swansea. However, there is a limited range of hotel accommodation, without a major business class hotel and no leisure resort product. The poor quality of the "infrastructure", especially the environment of the City Centre, is a major issue.

This assessment was extended to provide a subjective illustration of the relative performance of Swansea as a European Waterfront City when compared to a sample of cities of similar size and role across Europe, and concluded that Swansea is poorly placed across a range of criteria.

The table, overleaf, highlights the range of factors which affect the success of waterfront cities, and the need to improve Swansea's performance if it is to achieve the ambition of becoming a distinctive European Waterfront City.

CITY	Swansea	Cork	Ports-mouth	South-ampton	Bilbao	Malmo	Ham-burg	New-castle	Rotter-dam
STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE									
Competitiveness of Economy	*	**	*	**	***	**	***	**	***
Quality of Environment	**	**	*	*	**	**	**	**	**
Vitality of City Centre	*	**	**	**	**	**	**	***	***
Quality and Use of Waterfront	**	**	**	*	**	**	**	**	**
City as a "Destination"	*	**	**	*	***	*	**	**	*
Distinctive Identity	**	**	***	**	***	**	**	***	**
Score (max = 18)	9	12	11	9	15	11	13	14	13
Score as %	50%	67%	61%	50%	83%	61%	72%	77%	72%

Note: Subjective View of Locum Consulting. * = lowest *** = highest



La Barceloneta: Barcelona a successful European waterfront city

Priorities for Developing a Successful European Waterfront City

Bringing together the success factors from these analyses of successful, competitive waterfront cities and the aspirations for Swansea highlights a set of 12 priorities that need to be addressed in the Strategic Framework. Arranging these priorities under key headings they group as follows:

Economy:

- Creating and supporting a strong economy – supporting growth in the knowledge economy, providing good quality employment and attracting business and investment to the City Centre
- Creating a 'destination' for residents, visitors and businesses with nationally and internationally recognised facilities

Environment:

- Creating a city with a distinctive identity
- Creating a high quality environment in terms of public spaces and buildings
- Using the waterfront effectively as an essential component of the City Centre
- Developing a reputation for environmental excellence and responsibility, encouraging mixed-use and sustainable development

Community:

- Creating a vital and diverse city life – including residential communities, sophisticated cultural infrastructure, high quality services and informal leisure in the City Centre
- Ensuring a wide range of high quality residential choices
- Promoting an inclusive and diverse society

Movement:

- Creating a high quality environment and a reputation for environmental responsibility, providing sustainable accessibility by all modes of transport and encouraging pedestrian and cycle movement
- Removing barriers to movement and reconnecting the City Centre

Governance and Leadership:

- Developing partnership working and providing strong, effective leadership

Summary of Priorities for the Strategic Framework

The "Priority Issues" from the Analysis Section of this report highlight fundamental priorities found in current conditions in Swansea City Centre. They relate very strongly to requirements of a successful European Waterfront City – though they also highlight some particular aspects of Swansea which will need special attention – notably, the "mono-culture" of the City Centre; the urgent need to strengthen the retail core; the need for much improved connections to the waterfront; and the impact of roads (especially Oystermouth Road) as barriers to pedestrian movement around the City Centre.

If Swansea is to become a competitive European Waterfront City, its City Centre needs to change dramatically and rapidly. It needs to learn lessons from its European competitors and maximise the value of its assets. This change needs to focus on creating a City Centre which has a strong economy, a high quality environment, an attractive mix of uses and a top quality shopping centre. Most of all, it has to overcome the physical and traffic barriers which separate the City Centre from its most important asset, the waterfront. These are priorities which inform the Strategic Objectives to be set for the Strategic Framework. Firstly, this review of aspirations and benchmarks for Swansea confirms that, from all work which has been done in recent years on Swansea and the City Centre, the Vision for the future can and should be as follows:

The Vision for Swansea

The Vision for the City Centre, which emerges from the analysis and the aspirations of key partners, is of Swansea City Centre as:

> "A vibrant, exciting, attractive, sustainable, cultured European Waterfront City Centre, attracting businesses and visitors, driving the economy and enhancing the quality of life of residents of Swansea and South West Wales."



Bordeaux, France

Strategic Objectives

The Strategic Objectives need to be satisfied if Swansea City Centre is to achieve its Vision.

They are a response to the problems and issues identified in the City Centre today, and to analysis of what is needed to achieve the Vision. As important components of the Strategic Framework, they are grouped and organised to provide a coherent, comprehensive and deliverable approach for the future, and will require a range of proposals and actions to bring them to fruition. To emphasise the significance of each objective and the scale of effort required to achieve it, they are listed in this order - but all are very necessary:

- Building a Competitive City Centre Economy
  Swansea's City Centre economy must grow and diversify to support the development of existing and new sectors of the economy particularly:
  - growth sectors in financial and business services, including professional services
  - expansion in the knowledge economy, including sectors such as creative industries, media and design
  - links to higher education including skills development, research, academic-industry links

- Creating a Quality Regional Shopping Centre
  As a particular aspect of building a strong competitive City Centre economy, creating a strong "destination", and re-affirming Swansea's role as a regional centre, Swansea needs a quality regional shopping centre. To achieve this it needs to address the property issues identified through urgent action to:
  - provide new, high quality premises to attract high street names, and anchor stores
  - support a diverse range of quality specialist shops
  - create an enhanced City Centre environment which is particularly attractive, convenient and accessible to shoppers

- Achieving a High Quality Environment
  To create a high quality environment and develop a reputation for environmental excellence and responsibility, the City Centre environment will need to include :

- high quality new buildings, streets and spaces
- distinctive and iconic buildings
- attractive “gateways” to the City Centre
- a sense of place enlivened by attractive landscaping of the public realm and public art
- initiatives to encourage mixed-use and sustainable development

- Developing City Living
  To bring life, skills and spending power into the City Centre and support an inclusive, diverse and distinctive community:
  - ensure a wide range of high quality residential choices in the City Centre, particularly for key workers, younger households, professionals and executives
  - create a sophisticated cultural infrastructure and high quality services
  - build modern formal and informal leisure facilities
  - create more enjoyable “street life” through an improved environment, buildings and activities where safety and quality are important characteristics

- Making a Waterfront City
  Swansea needs to use its river and seafront effectively, as essential components of the City Centre. Priorities are to:
  - provide good access throughout attractive waterfront areas
  - developing mixed-uses on the waterfront (including supporting water-related leisure activities)
  - create much better links from the waterfront to the rest of the City

- Improving Accessibility and Movement
  Linking closely to environmental, retail development and economic objectives, the priorities for accessibility and movement are to:
  - reconnect the City Centre – removing barriers, especially for pedestrians and cyclists, and establishing much better links between all parts of the City Centre and with surrounding areas
  - create attractive streets and spaces for pedestrians and cyclists
  - design “shopper circuits” to make the City Centre more enjoyable and successful
  - serve the City Centre with good public transport services and facilities, improved parking, park & ride, and other facilities.

- Creating a Destination City
  Swansea needs to attract residents from a wide catchment area; businesses and business investment; and visitors on holiday and coming for business “tourism”. It needs to:
  - provide better, visitor attractions and facilities which are recognsed nationally and internationally
  - provide a wider range and higher quality of hotels and other accommodation (particularly in the waterfront areas of the City Centre)
  - achieve great improvements in the quality of the environment, shops, services and facilities in the City Centre
  - develop a reputation for hosting national events and conferences
  - Enhance, through the development process, the role of the City Centre as a cultural focus

- Affirming a Regional Role
  Swansea’s role as a major UK regional city should be reflected in its City Centre as:
  - a stronger focus of national government & public agencies
  - providing a “lead” as a City within its wider region
  - a centre for delivery of elements of education and health services, administration and related activities which can help to build a strong regional knowledge and service economy
  - a place of pre-eminence in local government services and facilities

- Expressing a Distinctive Identity
  To create a city of European distinctiveness, Swansea’s strong cultural identity and heritage should be expressed in the City Centre to:
  - prepare and implement clear design principles which contribute to a distinctive, high quality sustainable urban form
  - highlight key buildings which express and develop Swansea’s identity and heritage
  - organise events, marketing and other activities which create more life and a higher profile for the City Centre

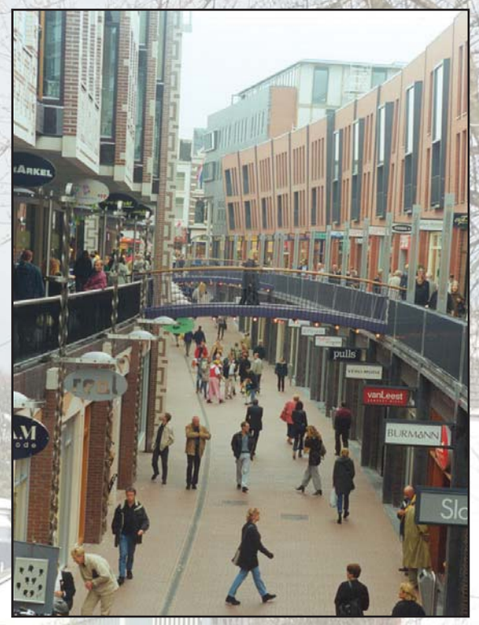
Achieving the Vision will also require attention to two themes, through the ways in which it is delivered:

- developing a reputation for environmental excellence and responsibility
- developing partnership working and providing strong, effective leadership

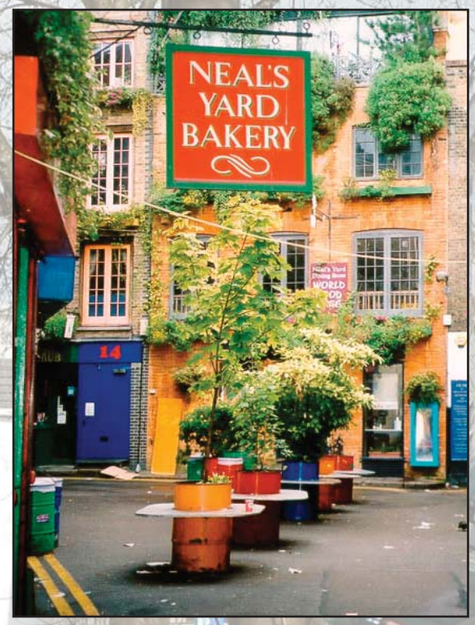
These themes are addressed later in the Regeneration Framework and through the Action Plan proposals.



The Castle and its square present a distinctive identity for Swansea



Nijmeigen, Holland



Covent Garden, London



Manchester City Centre

Regeneration Framework

Developing the Vision: Priority Themes and Priority Areas

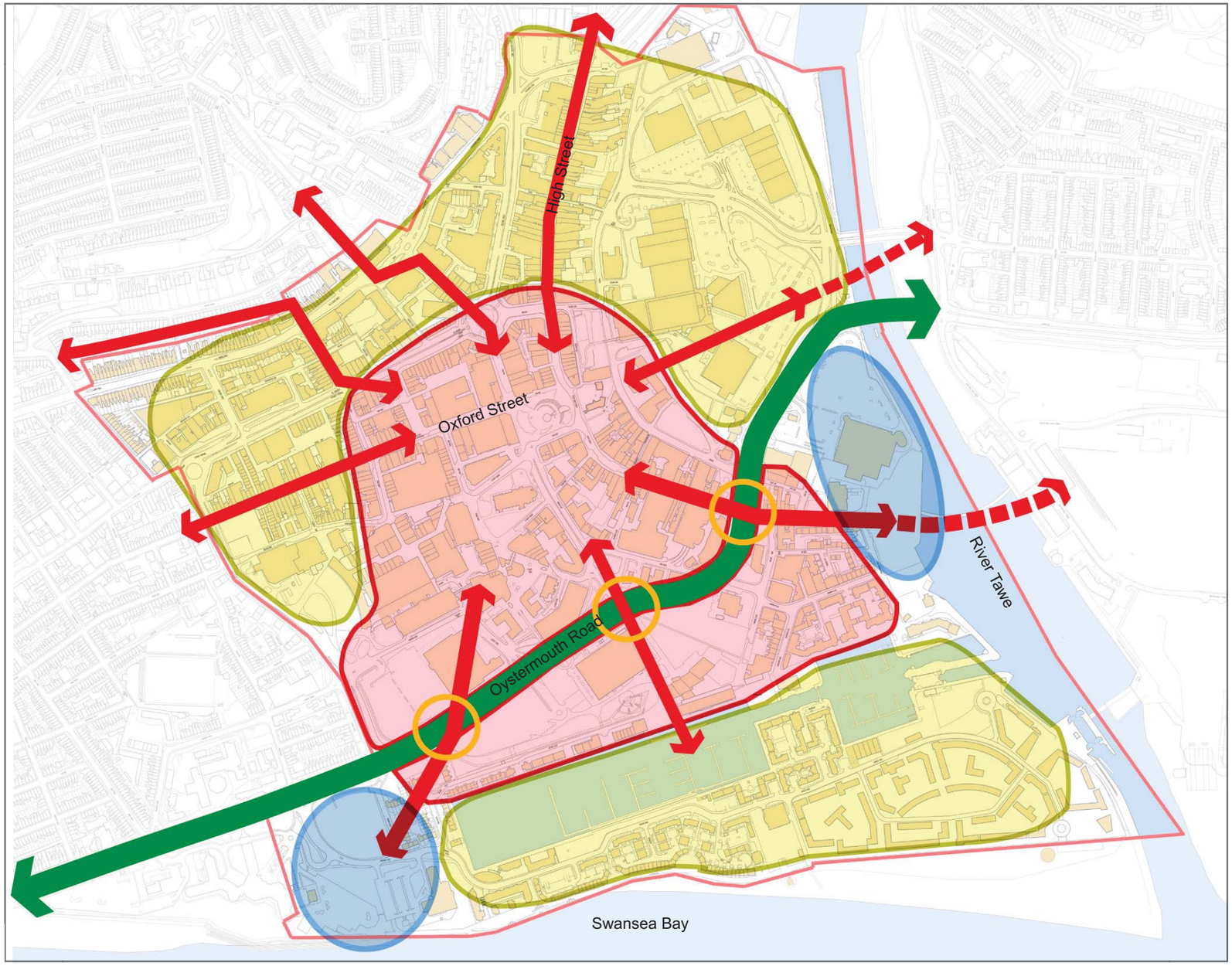
The Strategic Objectives shape the Vision for Swansea City Centre and lead to a series of simple themes that express the ways in which the Strategic Objectives will achieve the framework priorities.

Achieving the Strategic Objectives will depend on proposals and actions which group as four priority themes:

- Strengthening the City Centre retail core and developing it as a mixed-use hub for the city
- Creating a new environment and new development along Oystermouth Road so that it is no longer a barrier to pedestrians but forms an attractive link between the retail core and the waterfront, and so that its perception is that of an interesting urban highway as opposed to a fast through route
- Developing key waterfront sites to link the City Centre to the sea and the river
- Developing all parts of the City Centre to form districts with strong and distinctive characters and different functions, to complement each other and reinforce the strength of the City Centre and the links to the waterfront

Within each of these four priority themes, which flow from the Vision, key development proposals for each area have been identified as a result of analysis, and these proposals are explored and developed in further detail. Particular themes naturally focus on different parts of the City Centre.

The Regeneration Framework is structured, within the context of a sustainability strategy, to establish some key design principles across the City Centre, followed by complementary accessibility principles. These are followed by a development strategy which culminates in a set of proposals for “Priority Areas”.



Concepts for development of the City Centre
Scale 1:7500

Key:
- Mixed-use retail and leisure uses
- Oystermouth Road
- Waterfront destinations
- Complementary districts
- Linkages

Sustainability Strategy

Sustainable Development

The City and County of Swansea and the Welsh Assembly Government are both committed to embedding the principles of sustainable development into everything they do.

> "Sustainable development consists of 3 fundamental implications or foundations:
>
> - That we should strive to increase the quality of human life, now and in the future
> - That this should be done in a just and equitable manner
> - And that it should be done while respecting the limits of supporting eco-systems"
>
> 'Just Sustainabilities: Development in an Unequal World'
> Agyeman, Bullard and Evans, 2003

Sustainable development is a process of development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland Report, UN, 1987). A key factor in achieving sustainability is environmental quality, but true sustainable development depends on the "interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars" of economic development, social development, and environmental protection. Cities play an important role in social and economic development, however, environmental degradation can contribute a serious threat to improvement in the quality of people's lives, and can be caused by inappropriate urban development.

Sustainable Development and the City Centre

Swansea City Centre will contribute significantly to the sustainable development of Swansea and South West Wales in all three of the foundations indicated above:

- Environment: by creating a high quality, attractive environment through development of the City Centre, and making more efficient use of energy and resources, developing green spaces and public realm, and making more efficient use of energy and resources
- Social development: by creating a City Centre which provides a context to reduce inequality and achieve social inclusion, and meets the diverse needs of residents, including good quality housing, employment opportunities, civic, cultural, leisure and entertainment facilities
- Economic development: by reflecting the role of the City Centre as a major focus of the local economy and a driver for sustainable growth of the wider region.

The City Centre is particularly important in developing integrated solutions as it will:

- Accommodate a concentration and density of activities - housing, retailing, entertainment and employment which will encourage a more sustainable use of energy and resources, and reduce the need to travel by private vehicles
- Act as a hub for the city-region, stimulating use of more sustainable forms of transport and development

Application of sustainable development principles in the City Centre will require a high standard of design for all new developments. The Strategic Framework provides a structured approach to the promotion of sustainable development in that it will:



Minimise the need to travel and reduce car dependency by providing:

- An appropriate mix of land uses and accessible services and facilities
- Compact forms of development through the promotion of higher densities
- A safe and people-friendly environment with direct walking and cycle routes and good access to public transport
- Managed access for the private car and other motor vehicles

Provide a sense of place which:

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



Fareham High Street - a place with identity

Build a new urban economy which:

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

Meet community requirements:

- iInvolves the local community and the providers of community services in the design process
- Secures infrastructure for modern telecommunications and information technology to serve local residents
- Includes a mix of housing opportunities in mixed-use and residential developments in the City Centre
- Improves access to leisure, heritage, culture arts and recreation
- Designs for the needs of all sections of the community including children, the elderly and people with disabilities
- Designs new buildings, streets and environmental schemes to minimise opportunities for crime
- Encourages healthier lifestyles and enhances access to health services



Peace Garden, Sheffield - a community centre

Make efficient use of energy and resources by:

- Including energy conservation measures and energy efficient siting of buildings
- Utilising renewable energy sources, energy from waste or combined heat and power where possible
- Incorporating facilities for waste recycling
- Incorporating water efficiency measures

Sustainable development arising from the Strategic Framework will respond to the positive aspects of Swansea, making use of its natural features and integrating with its surroundings.



Encouraging green architecture- using green roofs

Sustainable Energy and Resource Plan for the City Centre

Climate change is one of the biggest environmental threats to our quality of life and the environment. The City Centre Strategic Framework will play a central role in helping to reduce carbon emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change. Many of the most important benefits of sustainable development will depend on the detailed design and construction of new buildings and transport infrastructure. The Strategic Framework cannot provide detailed recommendations on these issues, but a Sustainable Energy and Resource Plan prepared for the City Centre will establish the appropriate principles and guide all future development. The Sustainable Developers' Guide which the City and County Council is producing will provide a mechanism for delivery of many of these principles. It will provide detailed advice on building design and specifications, to ensure sustainable "whole life" use of energy and other resources in development. The Guide will be monitored to ensure that it can focus explicitly on the implementation of this advice throughout the City Centre.

Application of sustainability principles will allow the City Centre to contribute to the overall fulfilment of the aspiration to become a modern, sustainable, distinctive European city.



BedZED - an energy efficient development

Design Framework

Urban Design Principles

The Strategic Framework must ensure that the principles of good design highlighted in government policy are applied in the regeneration of Swansea City Centre.

Achieving sustainable design solutions

Sustainability in urban design is a complex concept but there are a few basic principles that should be adhered to in relation to Swansea. Firstly, large urban blocks should be avoided and all new designs should be based on comprehensive street layouts. This will allow for flexibility and adaptability in the future, and potential changes in use. New development in the City Centre should be informed by the principles of sustainable design, layout and construction. Mixed-use as a principle will also give greater security and vitality to the City Centre.

Further consideration of sustainability in the City Centre will be possible by reference to the Sustainable Developers Guide which CCS is currently producing.

Sustaining or enhancing character

The existing character of Swansea is diverse and this diversity should be reflected in the development of new schemes and areas of the City. The District concept should be developed to give distinctive and appropriate character to each District and ensure variety and interest is maintained. Monolithic and unimaginative architecture should not be permitted.

Promoting Innovative design

As a corollary to the development of defined strong character areas, innovative design, from the point of view of exciting and contemporary solutions, should be promoted. The innovations could take the form of special mixtures of uses, clever utilisation of existing buildings juxtaposed to the new, integration of sustainable principles and development of strongly branded design.

Promoting successful relationships between public and private space

Public realm in the City Centre is largely cleared public space, generally accessible at all times. However, there is scope to introduce clearly defined private space that adds to the amenity of future residents and users. Particularly, the use of roof top gardens and balconies can add vitality and interest to the architecture of the City and is appropriate to the maritime climate of Swansea. Mixed-use development will encourage a mix of public and private space and provide vitality during the daytime and evening.

Promoting High Quality in the public realm

A key element of the future success of Swansea City Centre is a comprehensively designed high quality public realm, easily maintained by design, with systems in place to ensure that its quality is not lost or eroded over time. This public realm needs to deliver long term quality and distinctive character and be part of the image of Swansea as a European Waterfront City.

Ensuring ease of access for all

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

Promoting legible development

The legibility of Swansea City Centre is currently compromised by its lack of visual and physical connection to the waterfront. This must be addressed in future development, but the legibility of the City Centre as a whole needs improvement. Redevelopment should concentrate on achieving better legibility with the inclusion of local landmarks, the opening up of potential views and the development of local district character. It will also be improved by the development of public squares and green spaces, in conjunction with key buildings and uses at locations defined in the accessibility patterns of the City Centre.

Designing for change

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

Promoting quality, choice and variety

Quality of development is often difficult to achieve in the face of developer pressure and it is imperative that the City Council defines quality levels for new development from the outset of the adoption of the City Centre Strategic Framework. Choice is also a difficult element to promote as it also depends to a degree on economic and market forces. The best city centres generate choice of leisure, retail, economic and work activity by addressing the issues listed above and ensuring that there is a sufficient critical mass and variety of place to allow choices to develop freely. It is essential to ensure that the City Centre embraces a vibrant mix of land use activity to complement the significant enhancement of the retail offer.

Urban Design Components

The design principles identified above will be applied through the activities and physical environment of the City Centre.

Streets

General commentary

New streets will be formed through proposals included in the Strategic Framework, building on the existing network of streets in the City Centre. They will need to maximise active frontages, add vitality, allow permeability and create a sense of place.

Retail-led Mixed-Use

In and immediately adjacent to the City Centre retail core, retail-led mixed-use development to a scale appropriate to each location should predominate for refurbishment or redevelopment projects. Retail should be the predominant ground floor use. Upper floors

should include a range of uses which include retail, residential, commercial leisure, office, hotel and civic uses.
These uses can provide security and surveillance at night in the City Centre. Residential uses can help animate facades with balconies and roof gardens, providing private space to complement high quality public space.

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

Leisure/Cultural

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

Waterfront

The qualities of the existing waterfront should be extended into two new waterfront areas highlighted in the Strategic Framework in the east and west of the City Centre. This would include the maximum utilisation of the water's edge – through development which takes advantage of views over the water, water-based activities and appropriately designed high quality public realm. Further opportunities may be presented on river frontages.

Spaces

General commentary

There are some existing high quality spaces in Swansea City Centre – Castle Square and the National Waterfront Museum gardens are particular examples. A network of further high quality spaces needs to be developed, to give a cohesive and strong image to the City Centre in line with its ambitions to become a European Waterfront City. Such spaces are intended to create vibrant places, and link together between existing and proposed areas of concentrated activity. A number of these are shown in detail in the following section of the report dealing with the specific potential development areas within the City Centre.

Conservation Areas

The Conservation Areas analysed previously in the report are well defined and encompass most of the quality buildings in the City Centre. Statutory requirements dictate that the local authority has a duty to fully interpret, preserve and enhance these areas. A key element in their protection is to ensure that new development does not overwhelm their character. New buildings should complement the old architecture and reinforce character rather than competing and diminishing it.

Nodes

The City Centre currently has a number of significant nodes such as the station forecourt where activity and movement coincide. These do not always have to be grand spaces but do need to be marked and celebrated as part of the movement hierarchy of the City Centre. Special landscape treatment and careful design of the public realm in these areas should be developed to celebrate their significance. The same principles will have to be applied to any new nodes, such as, for example, the Kingsway Metro node at the top of Princess Way, and those included within new development areas.

Gateways

The City Centre has several existing gateways – West Way and the Tawe Bridges at each end of Oystermouth Road, at the Station and Alexandra Road in the north of the City Centre, and at the western end of the Kingsway. These are not well celebrated and the Strategic Framework should ensure that they are properly expressed, as it is not clear that you are entering the City Centre at these points. This does not necessarily need to be done by creating obvious gateway structures alone, but can be achieved by other forms of emphasis and change, such as attractive frontage buildings and/or a strong landscape design.

Landmarks

General commentary

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

Destinations

General commentary

The new development opportunities described in the Strategic Framework's Priority Areas will potentially increase the number and quality of destinations within the City Centre. For example, the two new waterfront proposals can automatically create waterfront destinations with attractive public frontages.

New Districts

City Centre Retail Core

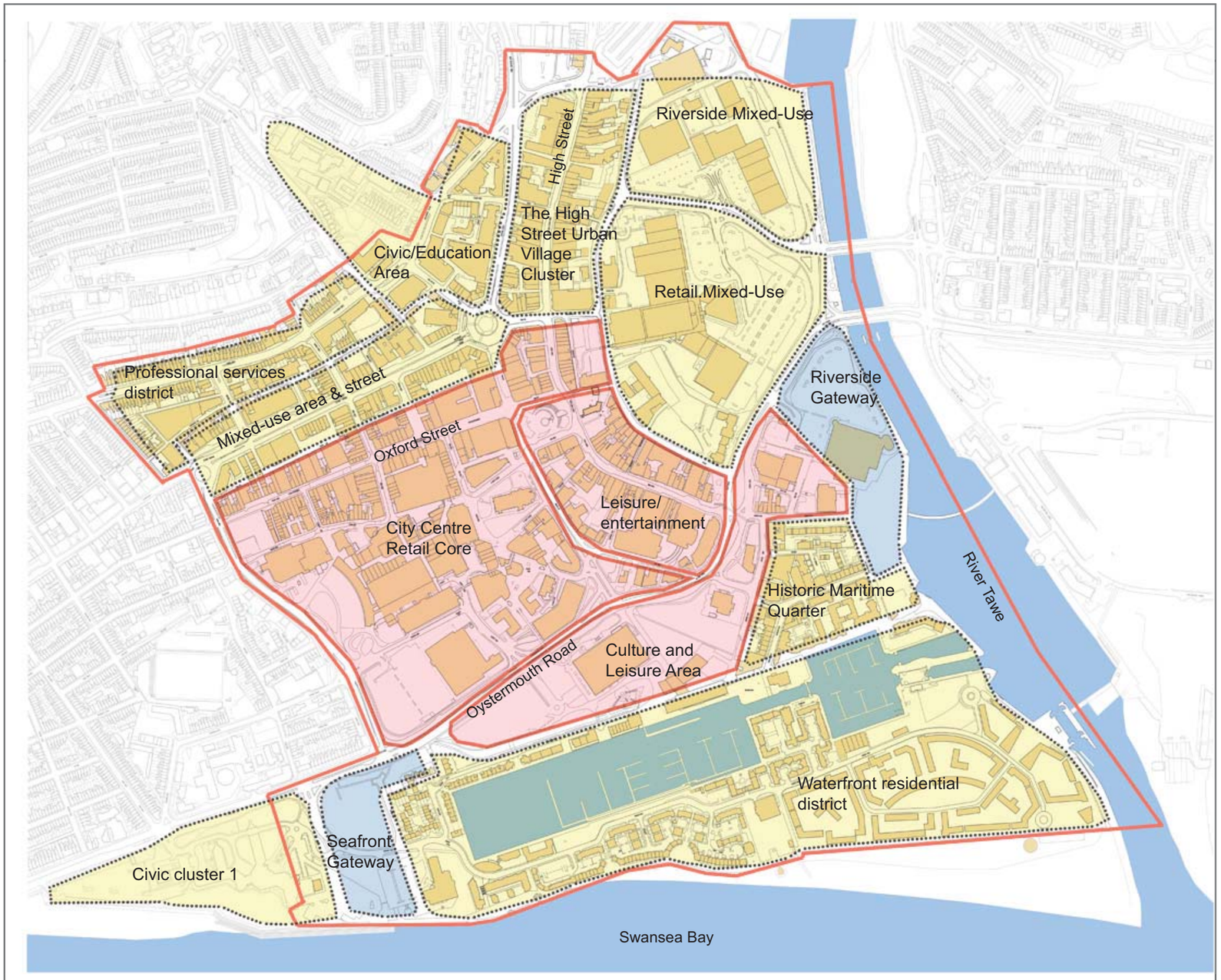
The City Centre Retail Core district forms the heart of the new Swansea City Centre. This area is expected to develop into a more mixed-use retail centre with residential and commercial uses being reintroduced wherever possible. This area needs a strong new public realm strategy that reflects its importance and the emphasis on quality. A major retail-led mixed-use development of the St David's/Quadrant area will be actively pursued and form a centre piece of Swansea's overall regeneration.

The Wind Street leisure and entertainment district is well established and the development of Salubrious Place has consolidated this district. The culture and leisure area south of Oystermouth Road is included in the City Centre Core as it has strong influences on the image of the city and complements the activities of the retail and leisure areas. The National Waterfront Museum, Swansea Museum, the Dylan Thomas Centre and the refurbished Swansea Leisure Centre create a strong activity cluster, with potential for further similar activities. The role of Oystermouth Road must change and improved links must be achieved across the street in recognition of its City Centre Core position. Therefore, the boulevard concept is of vital importance for it to succeed, and involves reduced traffic speeds, better pedestrian surfaces, and architecture creating active frontages.

Complementary City Districts

The Retail/Mixed-Use District at Parc Tawe is important as a potential redevelopment site and one that will create a new gateway to the City Centre. This links with the riverside/mixed-use district to the north that will contain an important element of residential to drive up activity and movement in this part of the City.

Urban Village living is already being developed in the High Street and this must be complemented by refurbishment and development of the better buildings. The Kingsway area is very mixed-use but provides another leisure focus that links onto the professional services district to the north. The civic and education area is a response to the activity generated by the Institute, the existing Police Station and Library in that area.



New Districts - Uses (1:7500)

Key:
- City Centre Core
- Complementary City Centre districts
- Proposed waterfront districts



Places and Movement (1:7500)

Key:

- New Public spaces
- Existing & Regenerated public spaces
- Enhanced public routes
- New public routes
- Existing public routes
- Green routes

The historic Maritime Quarter creates a link to new waterfront residential areas, which spread extensively towards the waterfront itself.

Waterfront Districts

The Riverside Gateway at Tawe Bridges creates a strong river frontage and a new destination for the City Centre that should support waterfront leisure and living.

The Seafront Gateway at Paxton Street adjacent to the civic cluster formed around County Hall is the only potential location for an important link to Swansea Bay from the City Centre Retail Core. A vibrant destination of city-wide appeal, accompanied by high quality public realm, will realise the full potential of this location.

Places and Movement

The success of the future City Centre will depend on a comprehensive network of pedestrian routes that links it together. These are demonstrated in the diagram opposite and show how any new development must feed into this network, and add to it. Similarly, a pattern of new spaces complementing the existing ones should be created to give people local destinations in specific districts and developments. The pattern of a vibrant and permeable City Centre is therefore established. The following studies of specific sites in the City demonstrate how this framework can be carried forward when development is undertaken.

Accessibility Strategy

Principles of Accessibility

Improving accessibility and movement is a key Strategic Objective for the City Centre. It links closely to environmental, retail and economic objectives, and proposals consequently need to be properly integrated. The Accessibility Strategy is a component of the overall Strategic Framework, and its proposals contribute to the wider regeneration objectives of the Framework accordingly.

Following recent transport initiatives and investment, Swansea City Centre is relatively well served by all the main modes for everyday travel, and current plans, including Swansea Metro and the new Quadrant Interchange, will make further significant improvements. However, it is essential that this rate of improvement is maintained in order to meet the future travel demands of Swansea, in its role as a modern regional centre for working, shopping, and living.

The Accessibility Strategy identifies general principles for addressing the future needs of the City Centre before highlighting the range of proposals to be pursued. The principles are:

- To ensure that the City Centre is served with good public transport services and facilities, encouraging people to use public transport rather than private cars
- To provide good quality Park & Ride facilities, Swansea Metro routes and priority lanes on routes serving the City Centre to support public transport
- To provide a balanced distribution of well managed and accessible City Centre car parking facilities. This involves consolidating provision at strategic locations to serve the City Centre
- To manage and develop the road network to ensure that traffic flows around the City Centre as efficiently as possible and with minimum environmental impact
- To create attractive streets and spaces for pedestrians and cyclists, including “shopper circuits” to make the whole City Centre more accessible, enjoyable and successful
- To improve pedestrian and cycle links between the City Centre and areas around it by providing crossing points at key locations, particularly across Oystermouth Road / Victoria Road / West Way and the Kingsway
- To ensure that pedestrian and cycle accessibility improvements are designed to be pedestrian-friendly and include high quality works which improve the public realm

Accessibility Proposals

Oystermouth Road, Victoria Road and Quay Parade

At the heart of the accessibility strategy is the proposal that Oystermouth Road / Victoria Road/Quay Parade remains as the main corridor for east-west movements. It will also provide access to some of the principal City Centre car parks. Traffic must be better managed along this corridor and infrastructure and environmental improvements need to reduce severance between the City Centre and waterfront areas. One new concept, therefore, which is critical to “crossing the divide” and integrating the whole City Centre into an attractive, functional urban centre, is the transformation of the corridor by adopting a “boulevard” approach.

The “boulevard concept” involves improvements along the length of Oystermouth Road / Victoria Road / Quay Parade to integrate it as a street within a City Centre, rather than acting as a physical boundary at the edge of it. The overall concept for the Oystermouth Road corridor “boulevard” is that the route would continue to carry high traffic flows but with greater roadspace and priority given to walking and cycling. This would be a key supporting measure to the improvement of linkages across the corridor.

From an access and movement point of view, measures to create a boulevard should include the following, along the length of the road:

- Footways: These should be improved throughout with new paving, kerbs and street furniture, and widened wherever possible to around 5m or more. On the south side, this widening will include a cycleway to assist routing of cyclists travelling between the foreshore cycle route and the City Centre. A key consideration in detailed design will be the presence of underground services which will need to be accommodated
- Central reservation: The central reservation currently varies in width and material specification along the corridor, and should be integrated into improved crossing facilities at some parts of the road. It could be widened generally along the whole corridor, and options for consideration include:
  - adopting narrower carriageways
  - shortening turning lanes.

The “boulevard concept” supports the provision of high quality pedestrian and cycle routes across Victoria Road / Oystermouth Road / Quay Parade, at several points where there will be strong “desire lines” between the retail core and the areas and facilities to the south. To achieve this, it is proposed to introduce ‘crossing squares’ into the road alignment at key crossing points:

- “Museum Green” at the bottom of Wind Street
- Princess Way, linking to the National Waterfront Museum Swansea
- “St David’s Plaza”, adjacent to the refurbished Leisure Centre with enhanced use of the footbridge to the redeveloped St David’s/Quadrant area
- “Gateway Plaza” at the West Way / Oystermouth Road junction, linking to the waterfront and the Civic Centre at County Hall.

The form of ‘Crossing Squares’ could be varied, but should be devised with the following principles in mind:

- traffic lanes adjusted to accommodate the needs of pedestrians with traffic capacity largely unaffected
- New kerb areas on either side of the road and widened, attractive, pedestrian-friendly, central reservation areas or squares, which effectively split the pedestrian crossing into distinct separate movements, thus presenting a more comfortable environment for pedestrians
- More effective linkage of traffic signals to ensure that traffic movement is ‘platooned’ through the local road system, to facilitate improved crossing times for pedestrians
- High quality design and materials in landscaping, street furniture, footpaths, carriageway and crossing areas to create attractive places which balance the needs of

pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and private vehicles

Further investigation of precise options would need to be undertaken to explore appropriate solutions at individual locations.

Roads and Traffic

Changes in road and traffic infrastructure will be necessary as a consequence of several existing initiatives, and to accommodate development needs in the City Centre. These are summarised below:

- A one-way system within the Kingsway and Mansel Street corridors of the City Centre will be provided as part of the Swansea Metro proposals. This will provide greater traffic management opportunities in terms of pedestrian crossings, junction operations, access to car parks, signage and loading activity
- Junction operations at the Tawe Bridges should be modified to address congestion problems. A potential solution is a gyratory using both bridges, with bus priority measures and enhanced pedestrian / cycle crossing facilities
- Redevelopment on the river frontage at New Cut Road may require a realignment of the road in conjunction with changes to the Tawe bridges. It may also be necessary to consider the implications of further highway changes immediately to the north arising from development of Parc Tawe and in the Morfa Road Corridor
- A new link road between Mansel Street and the northern end of West Way will effectively replace Christina Street as a north-south connector and provide an opportunity for rationalising traffic movements at Kingsway / West Way

City Centre Car Parks

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

All car parks should provide a safe, secure, efficient and convenient environment for drivers and passengers. They should be located so that they are readily accessible from the main distributor network and at convenient entry points to the City Centre. This should avoid the need for drivers to circulate within the City Centre, and reduce congestion. The existing VMS system should be upgraded as appropriate to give information on new parking locations, to assist in this respect.

Car parking should support priorities for development identified in the Development Strategy. Small-scale car parks should be used for development purposes, or designated for specific use, and lost spaces compensated elsewhere. A network of existing, improved and new development-related multi-storey car parks should, therefore, be provided, at the appropriate locations to serve the needs of shoppers. The overall aim should be to maintain the current number of parking spaces, but to change the balance, with multi-storey car parking facilities for short stay, and Park & Ride for long stay.

Key multi-storey car parks should remain open in the evening to serve the night-time economy, and should be well lit, with CCTV, whilst pedestrian linkages to the City Centre from car parks should be of a high quality in order to increase their attractiveness.

The total of approximately 8,000 off-street car park spaces would be maintained. However, subject to the development process and over the period of the Strategic Framework as a whole, the balance would change as follows:

- some 1,000 spaces (out of an existing total of nearly 2,000 spaces) to remain in a reduced number of surface car parks, with some reallocated for special users, e.g. disabled parking spaces
- spaces in multi-storey car parks to increase from nearly 3,000 in six car parks to about 4,000 spaces
- Park & Ride to increase from 1,100 spaces to over 2,000 spaces
- A minimum of 1,000 ‘retail superstore’ spaces to remain out of a current total of over 2,000

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

Park and Ride

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

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

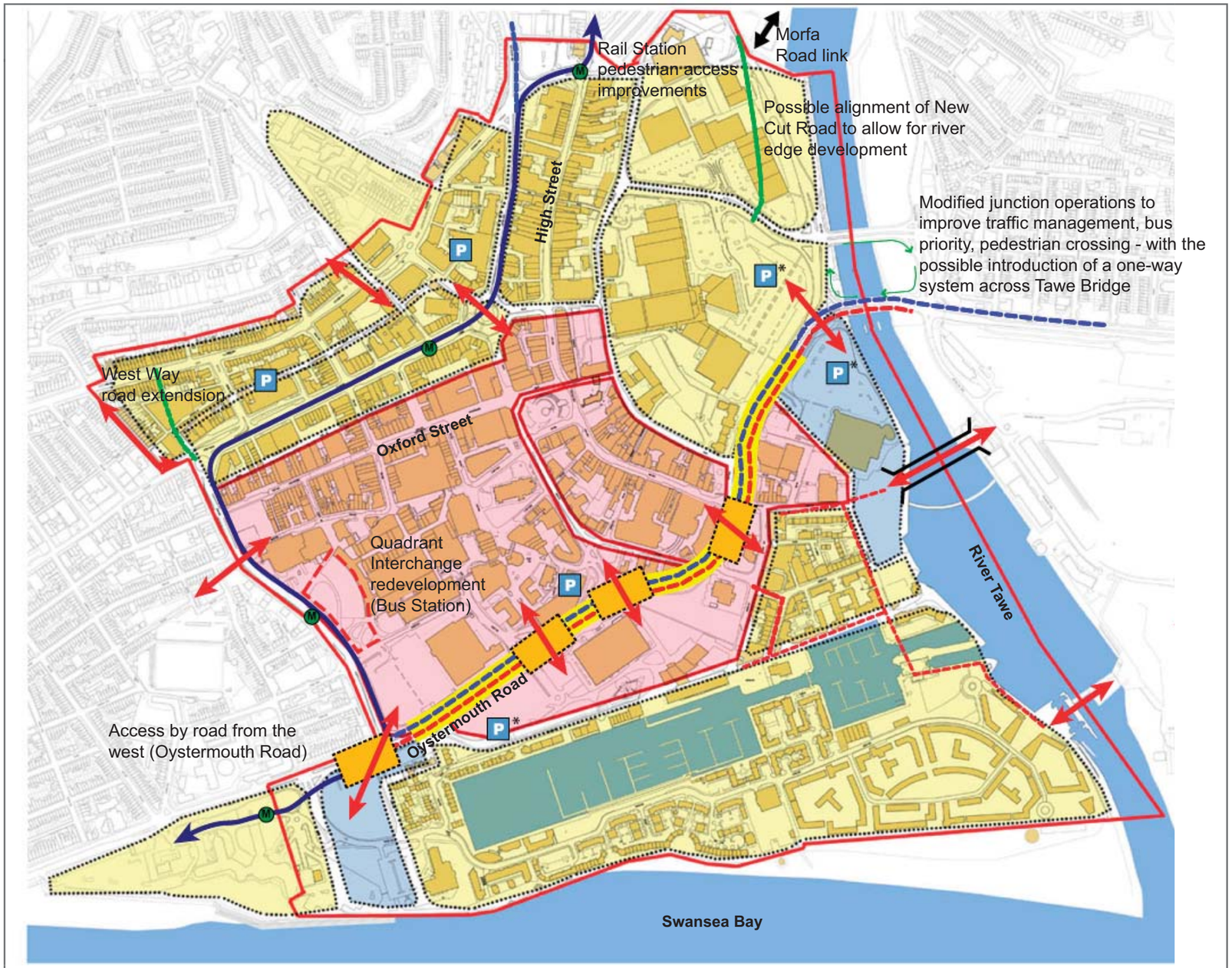
Parking Enforcement

Decriminalisation of parking enforcement should be a priority in order to deliver:

- Better traffic circulation
- Improved turnover of on-street parking

Rail Station

Proposals for an upgrade to customer facilities within the concourse area of High Street Station have been developed in outline by the Council, together with Network Rail and Arriva Trains Wales, and should proceed as soon as possible. The proposals include opening a new pedestrian access onto High Street, on the northern side of the station building. This will provide a more direct route for pedestrians to taxi stands and bus stops.



Strategic accessibility proposals (1:7500)

Bus Station

Redevelopment of the Quadrant Bus Station as the Quadrant Interchange, with upgraded facilities for passengers will proceed as a priority.

Swansea Metro

Phase 1 of the Metro proposals, to provide infrastructure within the City Centre, has already commenced. Following the implementation of further infrastructure work, the Metro service is likely to start late in 2008. The proposals make provision for Metro stops which serve the City Centre core retail area and surrounding districts.

Once the Metro is established, a second Metro route, along the Fabian Way and Carmarthen Road corridors, should be investigated.

Cycling and Walking

- Crossing facilities at Kingsway should be brought to road surface level and subways removed as part of the Metro infrastructure improvements.
- Off-road cycle paths at the northern end of the city should be provided as part of the Metro infrastructure improvements, and new Metro bus lane facilities within the City Centre should be available for use by cyclists
- Walkways and cycleways along west side of the River Tawe adjacent to Parc Tawe should be incorporated within development-related proposals and junction modifications at Tawe Bridges
- Lighting and other measures to enhance pedestrian safety should be included in any infrastructure improvements

Development Strategy

Aim

The purpose of this section is to clearly define a Development Strategy for Swansea City Centre that supports the vision and strategic objectives of the Strategic Framework.

The Development Strategy ensures that regeneration proposals for Swansea City Centre are evidence-based, and that a clear rationale for focusing major new development in key development areas has been identified. However, the development of the City Centre into a premier waterfront city and visitor destination requires more than just the enhancement of retail space.

It is important that opportunities are provided to enhance the visitor, cultural and tourism economy, encourage business growth in the commercial sector and increase residential provision within the core city centre. It is also essential that this strategy contributes to an attractive, sustainable and high quality environment which integrates and links all parts of the City Centre to the waterfront. The Development Strategy, therefore, complements the proposals included in the Sustainability Strategy, Design Framework and Accessibility Strategy.

This Development Strategy focuses on a number of key areas within the City Centre where there are real opportunities to achieve a significant impact through major redevelopment or environmental improvements. These proposals are deliverable, acknowledge the complementary roles of each development area and provide enhanced links and greater permeability throughout the wider City Centre. They will also serve all of Swansea's communities, and contribute towards economic prosperity and the wider aspiration of a strong regional shopping centre.

Themes

Retail-led Regeneration

The key to regeneration of Swansea City Centre is a retail-led regeneration strategy as part of a mixed-use city wide approach to regeneration. In this context, retail-led mixed-use regeneration, is envisaged to be directly comparable to the new style of high quality, high permeability mixed-use schemes, similar to those currently being planned in cities such as Liverpool (Paradise Street), Bristol (Broadmead), Belfast (Victoria Square) and Leicester (Shires West).

The emphasis on retail-led regeneration stems from the fact that, in many town and city centres, it is retail demand and higher land values associated with retail uses that kick start other development forms. For example, retail can stimulate new leisure uses and residential environments within town centres that have previously struggled to attract such markets. In addition, retail also has to be thought of as a leisure pursuit rather than simply a functional activity and in this regard the best retail environments do not simply serve their catchment areas and clawback expenditure which has leaked to other locations, but can also attract additional high yielding expenditure such as the visitor and leisure tourism market.

In addition, delivering a successful City Centre in Swansea must be about an overall experience with residential, business, commerce, civic, educational and entertainment uses collectively contributing to the mixed-use aspiration. It is often the range and quality of the retail experience that determines whether people visit one centre over another. This is particularly important for Swansea which has seen a significant amount of out of centre retail development, and will need to compete with other towns and cities who are currently improving their offer.

Justification for Retail-led Regeneration

The justification for retail-led regeneration in Swansea is based on the following key points:

- Meet the aims of the Regeneration Framework and to develop the City Centre into a premier waterfront city and visitor destination and provide the parameters for delivering a high quality mixed-use environment
- Provide a step change in retail provision with the aim of increasing the level of expenditure in the City Centre and strengthening the property market, particularly bearing in mind the level of investment that has recently taken place in out of centre locations
- Provide a critical mass of new space to clawback lost expenditure, but also to provide modern units that will attract retailers
- Provide a step change in the quality of offer to encourage high quality fashion and lifestyle retailers to Swansea, in and adjacent to the City Centre retail core, and to a new well anchored and serviced scheme offering prime new space
- Provide quality anchors within the development with the aim of attracting at least one or two anchor operators to a scheme at a priority location, which in turn will bring forth demand from retailers who would otherwise not consider representation in Swansea
- Improve Swansea as a visitor destination - new retail development can be used as a catalyst for city centre regeneration through its role as a commercially viable facilitator of development
- Provide design & environmental improvements through the delivery of a new retail-led mixed-use scheme with high quality design and public realm improvements within the very heart of the City Centre
- Support diversity and vitality by ensuring that retail viability and the retail driver within the City Centre provides an opportunity for mixed-uses and upper floor development and refurbishment

City Centre Economy

Generating a step change in the overall quality of the City Centre and encouraging a more diverse and successful economy requires a Development Strategy which has a number of components:

- Retail: New retail space will increase both employment and spending opportunities within the City Centre and reduce expenditure and visitor leakage to other areas
- Employment Space: It is essential to promote a pipeline of high quality modern employment space in the City Centre to encourage inward investment and expansion opportunities
- City Centre Living: This is an important tool in ensuring a more successful and diverse economy as it provides a level of vibrancy outside traditional retail opening hours and stimulates leisure and cultural activities

- Knowledge-Based Economy: Promotion of a diversity of employment opportunities and sectors, and further partnership with education bodies such as Swansea Institute, Swansea College and Swansea University will have significant benefits for the City Centre. Such partnership activity will address skills and training opportunities to attract inward investment, but could also involve increasing student accommodation within the City Centre
- Enhanced Visitor Destination: As a consequence of new development and greater activity in the City Centre, the opportunity for Swansea to become a more diverse and attractive destination will have a significant impact on the local economy

City Centre Living

A Development Strategy for the City Centre must support an aspiration for City Centre living, as new residential accommodation increases population and activity. At present, the Swansea's core City Centre is not viewed as a prime residential area by the local property market. In most city centres, increasing the amount of "city centre living" improves the city centre as a destination location, provides a level of vibrancy outside traditional retail opening hours, and stimulates leisure and cultural activities.

Whilst there is currently a programme of pending schemes for residential development in the City Centre, particularly in the Maritime Quarter and on the High Street, further residential should be encouraged, where viable, as part of mixed-use schemes across the City Centre.

This Development Strategy establishes key areas where residential development can be encouraged whilst acknowledging that timing, delivery and the type of residential units brought to the market are important considerations, and requiring that proposals are flexible enough to respond to market conditions and demand.

Public Services, Education and Health

Public services are important in the City Centre, not only through the significant level of employment generated but also through development opportunities which provide a focus for population and business.

The location of these services within the core City Centre, particularly those services with a civic and cultural role, and their proper integration, is critical. They can become a catalyst for development as they are key footfall generators. For this reason, this Development Strategy encourages the retention and enhancement of these services, where possible, in the core City Centre.

Cultural Life, Leisure and Tourism

Swansea has a strong cultural history and a diverse provision for culture and leisure. The Development Strategy for the City Centre, therefore, seeks to build on Swansea's existing range of cultural and leisure facilities, which should be safeguarded, enhanced and better integrated into the overall City Centre and through its proposals.

Comparator European Waterfront Cities such as Dublin and Bilbao have used cultural development extremely successfully as a major regeneration tool. However, the complexity of funding and delivery of such projects is often difficult to overcome.

The key regenerator in this strategy is soundly based on delivering regeneration through a retail-led approach. In supporting this approach, the provision of a major attraction to complement Swansea's existing culture/leisure/tourism offer could provide a major step change in visitor and business perceptions and therefore consideration should be given to exploring the potential for new attractors for Swansea that:

- Through aspirational development, improve the quality of the leisure, tourism and culture offer, and help build Swansea's image of a successful waterfront city
- Diversify the leisure, tourism and cultural role of the City Centre
- Are economically viable, supported by effective business planning destination management and marketing that can present a package including events, activities and branding

City Centre Environment and Accessibility

High quality public realm and accessibility are key attributes of a successful city centre and visitor destination. For this reason, opportunities to ensure that principles of good design and accessibility, particularly in terms of attractive built frontages, permeability and servicing will be included in the proposals of the Development Strategy.

Potential Development Areas

Rationale & Development Potential

Within the City Centre there are specific areas that require strategic assessment and development guidance, to ensure that they are properly integrated and considered in a holistic manner. This should be flexible, to ensure that they can react to changes in the City Centre, attributable to the property market generally or to new developments.

The Development Strategy provides a rationale for defining key development areas which can contribute to the delivery of the Strategic Framework's Strategic Objectives, addressing the importance of retail-led regeneration and mixed-use development.

The following areas of the City Centre were analysed and considered in preparing the Development Strategy:

- Princess Way
- Oxford Street
- Castle Square
- St David's Centre
- The Quadrant
- High Street
- Wind Street
- The Kingsway
- Parc Tawe

The analysis involved the development of an Assessment Matrix for individual sites, which focused on the aspirational uses of particular districts of the City Centre. Given the need to promote retail-led regeneration, areas were assessed according to their potential for accommodating and delivering a significant quality retail-based development, and other mixed-use developments at specific locations, according to the following factors:

- Planning policy
- Design considerations
- Commercial consideration (i.e. likely occupier acceptance; ability to deliver quality retail-based development, etc)
- Land Assembly (reasonableness of acquisition)
- Development finance and viability consideration
- Sufficient site footprint to accommodate a major redevelopment scheme
- Aspirations contained within Planning Policy and the Regeneration Framework

Given that the rationale highlights the significance of retail-led regeneration, the key decision is the location for the major retail expansion of Swansea City Centre. As a result of this assessment, the only area considered suitable is the area occupied by the St David's Centre and the Quadrant. The main reasons derived from the development site assessment matrix in support of this conclusion are as follows:

1. The existing St David's centre is a failing centre that lacks full integration with the existing City Centre retail core area. It is currently an underused brownfield asset within the City Centre retail core as designated in the Pre-Inquiry Modifications UDP at Policy CC2. The current retail floorspace provision is poor and there is a major opportunity to provide modern retail space in this location, rather than improvement through reconfiguration or visual enhancement.
2. The St David's area adjoins and could link with the The Quadrant area to form one large strategic development opportunity area which would provide a natural extension of the prime retail core southwards. Together the area would accommodate a large and comprehensive retail-led mixed-use scheme of sufficient quantum to provide the critical mass and step change that is required. There is no other such "opportunity" site in the City Centre with such attributes.
3. The St David's Centre and surrounding area provides an opportunity to create a prime retail circuit that links directly into the prime retail area - Oxford Street and the Quadrant - and enhanced links to the bus station and public transport interchange. The retail focus would still be concentrated in this part of the City Centre and redevelopment would complement and improve provision, rather than providing "competing schemes".
4. In addition to physical redevelopment and City Centre enhancement, the site provides more of a strategic opportunity for creating improved links across Oystermouth Road to the Leisure Centre, Civic Centre and the seafront.
5. The only other possibility for a major retail-led mixed-use scheme is Parc Tawe. Parc Tawe is located within the City Centre as defined by the Local Plan and the UDP, but outside the City Centre retail core as defined in the Pre-Inquiry Modifications UDP at Policy CC2. It comprises large format retail units and leisure uses and is largely reliant on car borne traffic. Pedestrian links to the City Centre retail core and the rest of the City Centre are of poor quality and involve major level changes. Parc Tawe is, therefore, secondary to St David's/Quadrant in sequential test terms and as such, development proposals at Parc Tawe should not adversely impact on the City Council's "highest priority" to bring about a major retail-led mixed-use scheme at St David's/Quadrant which form part of and are adjacent to the City Centre retail core.

Development Priorities & Proposals

The Development Strategy sets priorities for development, implementation and intervention across the City Centre. Key actions include:

Retail

- Plan for and promote a comprehensive retail-led mixed-use scheme at St David's/Quadrant, in the order of 35,000 sq.m. (net) retail floorspace of comparison goods, within and immediately adjacent to the current City Centre retail core (as designated in Policy CC2 of the Pre-Inquiry Modifications UDP). This figure reflects the findings of the Retail Capacity Study which calculated residual comparison expenditure capacity for approximately 35,550 sq.m. net of comparison goods up to 2016.
- Encourage the redevelopment, reconfiguration and refurbishment of other parts of the City Centre and in particular the City Centre retail core (Policy CC2), insofar as they are not prejudicial to the main priority of promoting the major new scheme and comply with other plan policies.
- Actively encourage a specialist retail quarter in a finer grain area of the City Centre, such as around the Grand Theatre, recognising that the benefits to such a specialist offer will arise from a strong and vibrant mainstream high street retail offer.
- Retail development outside the City Centre retail core area should be subject to the need, impact and sequential tests, although limited retail activity to create active ground floor frontages could be acceptable in mixed-use schemes.
- Ensure that Parc Tawe remains an important complementary retail area aimed primarily at bulky goods retailing and associated uses, such as commercial leisure or hotel. Encourage a greater mix of uses including residential and business, and better pedestrian linkage to the City Centre retail core. Resist any non-bulky or high street comparison retail use as this will adversely affect the vitality and viability of the City Centre retail core and be prejudicial to the St David's/Quadrant proposal.

Offices

- Promote office and commercial development to meet employment forecasts for the City, which suggest potential for a development target of 70,000 sq.m. in the City Centre itself over 20 years. Direct such development to the City Centre, potentially with public sector funding support or through other procurement vehicles, and certainly with a restraint on out of centre development (without constraining significant inward investment opportunities)
- Support the provision of a range and size of offices to rent or buy
- Promote the development of Paxton Street as a landmark mixed-use development containing offices in the short to

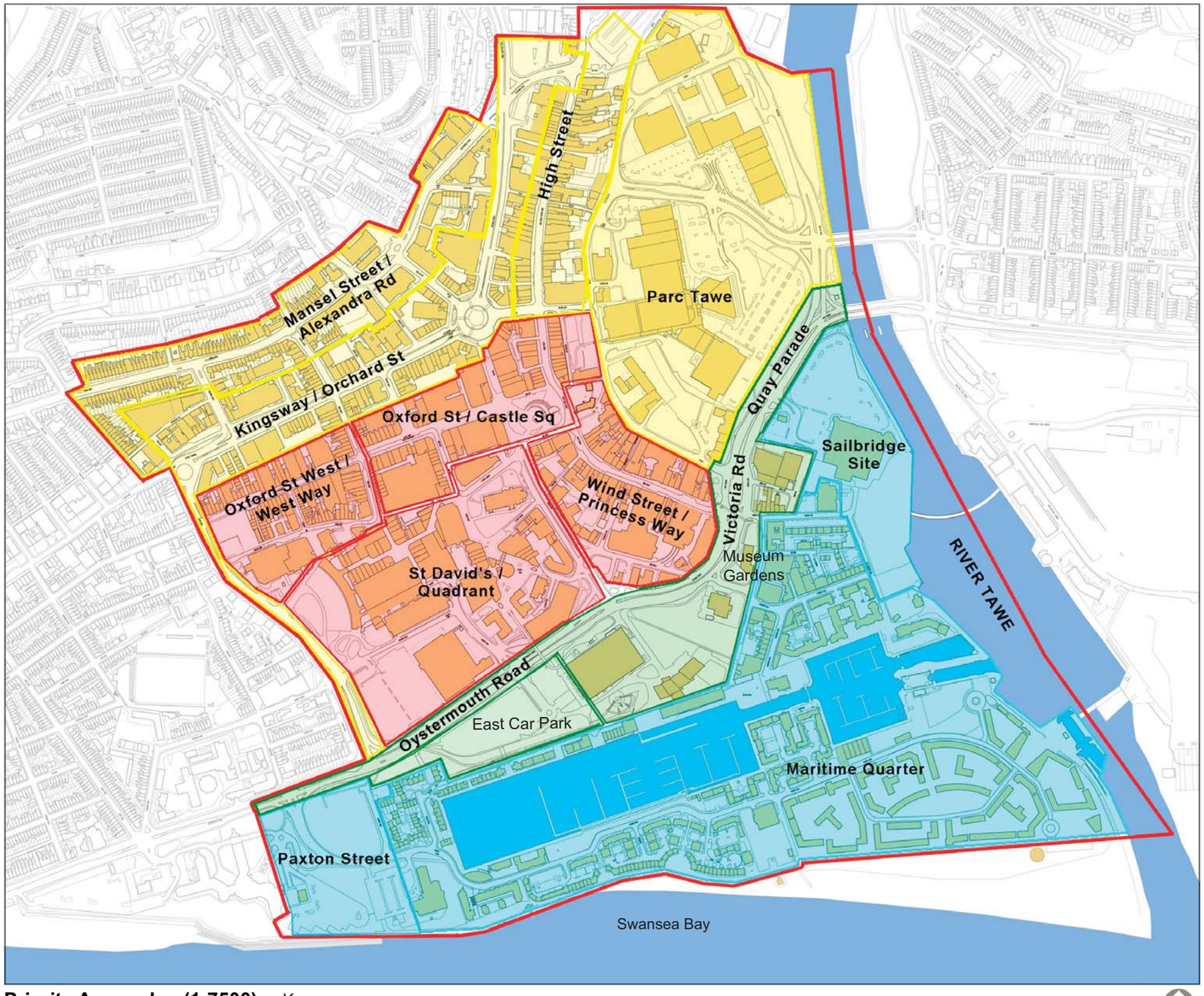
medium term
- Promote the development of commercially viable offices as part of new mixed-use developments throughout the City Centre, and place particular emphasis on the contribution of office development in secondary areas
- Acknowledge the potential need for public sector interventions to achieve financial viability and agree a strategy for phasing and implementation with the Welsh Assembly Government

Residential

- Continue and encourage further residential development within the City Centre to increase the resident population and the vitality of the Centre
- Encourage phased residential development within mixed-use developments throughout the City Centre, particularly in areas such as Oxford Street, Mansel Street/Alexandra Road, Kingsway/Orchard Street, High Street and Parc Tawe. The timing, delivery and type of residential units should be flexible enough to respond to market conditions at that time
- Continue to explore the introduction of more student accommodation within the City Centre, through partnerships with further education bodies such as Swansea Institute and Swansea University and the private sector

Other Development Priorities

- Retain and enhance public services delivery, administration and employment within the City Centre wherever possible; and improve physical links between the Civic Centre and the rest of the City Centre
- Facilitate growth in education activity in the City Centre, particularly higher education activities, including teaching/ learning, research, industry-academic links and business spin-offs
- Encourage health services delivery and administration activities in the City Centre, including delivery of primary care services through innovative projects
- Support the principle of developing culture, tourism and leisure facilities which contribute to a high quality



Priority Areas plan (1:7500)

Key:

- Vibrant Mixed-Use Heart
- High Quality "European Boulevard"
- Connecting City to Waterfront
- Developing Complementary Districts

destination, and particularly aspirational development which can create a major step change in the perception and offer of the City Centre
- Plan and implement improvements in the main visitor/leisure areas – Wind Street/Salubrious Place, Kingsway/West Way, Alexandra Road and south of Oystermouth Road – in support of existing facilities
- Encourage the provision of a diverse range of hotel accommodation and promote the development of a "hotel circuit", in support of business, tourist and conference activities
- Seek to meet the aspirations of Swansea's communities in the provision of services and employment opportunities

Defining Priority Areas

The rationale for this Development Strategy has clarified the important development themes and priorities for regeneration in Swansea City Centre, and highlighted the potential of development opportunities which could assist in delivering this regeneration. It is essential to identify those areas which can make the greatest impact in delivering the Vision and have particular potential in terms of their current ownership, availability or condition, in order to provide a clear opportunity for development.

The development strategy, therefore, culminates in identifying a number of priority areas and a series of development proposals which are phased over time, integrated in design, and complementary in functions. They are intended to be delivered through a structured programme with a focus on the most significant, but through a process which is robust and flexible enough to allow for some alteration of timing, scale or uses within each site or area.

In defining the Vision for the City Centre, four priority themes were identified. These are expressed in the Development Strategy through a number of priority areas and development proposals. They extend through an "arc of opportunity" from Paxton Street, along Oystermouth Road and the southern fringe of the City Centre to Parc Tawe and the Sailbridge Site, whilst recognising the significant role of established areas of the City Centre to the north. They are listed below:

1. Creating a Vibrant Mixed-Use Heart to the City Centre

St David's/Quadrant area
Oxford Street/Castle Square
Oxford Street West/West Way area
Wind Street/Salubrious Place/Lower Princess Way area

2. Creating a High Quality "European Boulevard"

Oystermouth Road/Victoria Road/Quay Parade

3. Connecting the City to the Waterfront

Paxton Street
Sailbridge
Maritime Quarter

4. Developing the Identities and Complementary Roles of All Districts

Mansel Street/Alexandra Road area
Kingsway/Orchard Street area
High Street
Parc Tawe

The Priority Areas are set out in the following pages, and identify detailed proposals for strategic projects that will make Swansea a distinctive European Waterfront City.



Encourage a diverse, mixed-use City Centre: Quincy Market, Boston



Connecting the City to the waterfront: Sydney

Priority Areas

The Development Strategy has identified locations where key developments need to be promoted in the City Centre, and in conjunction with the principles emerging from the preceding Design Framework, and Accessibility Strategy, define the way in which future regeneration of Swansea City Centre should progress.

These are related to a number of sustainability principles drawn from the Sustainability Strategy, which are expected to underpin the regeneration of all the Priority Areas. The sustainability principles will be developed further, as individual proposals come forward and are clarified in future documents. They include aspirations for :

- Vertical and horizontal mixed-uses which increase the density of population and provide greater / improved services and facilities for adjacent communities.
- A high quality built environment well integrated with existing residential and commercial areas
- Development that is flexible in design to allow the site and buildings to adapt to any changing spatial requirements of occupiers
- An integrated design approach promoting optimum energy performance in high energy efficient buildings encouraging the use of low carbon technologies and fuels
- The sustainable use and re-use of materials, such as natural, low-maintenance, durable products or waste from demolition
- Flexible and innovative public realm incorporating accessible green space, public art features and landmarks
- Informal public and private spaces to encourage social interaction accommodating the opportunity to 'design out crime' and anti-social behaviour.
- Improved accessibility of services and facilities to the wider Swansea area, developing a greater range and quality of sustainable transport options
- Sustainable transport solutions, including bus routes, park and ride, car sharing, cycling and walking, all of which are fully integrated with clear legible and recognisable routes to and from the City Centre and surrounding areas
- Development which considers the implications of local climate and possibilities arising from the efficient use of wind, water and solar
- Development that is interdependent and interconnected with the landscape and natural systems within individual sites and beyond their boundaries
- Green spaces and corridors which support indigenous species and enable migration and movement of species.

The key proposals and areas arising from the Development Strategy have been grouped according to the four priority themes identified in "Developing the Vision", and summarised below.

The Priority Areas will be described in turn demonstrating the vision for the areas, development, design and accessibility principles, development proposals and mechanisms for delivery.

1. Creating a Vibrant Mixed-Use Heart to the City Centre

…by improving the existing core retail area of the City Centre, encouraging greater mixed-use, promoting major new retail-led development and enhancing the specialist shopping and entertainment offers. All these initiatives will exhibit good urban design principles of permeability (streets), legibility (spaces and landmarks) and connectivity (links) to other areas. This Mixed-use Heart will become a vibrant, prosperous, attractive and safe place, accessible to all.

2. Creating a High Quality "European Boulevard"

…by changing the perception, experience and environment of the Oystermouth Road, Victoria Road and Quay Parade corridor, in order to "cross the divide" between the City and its waterfront. Whilst currently viewed as a busy east-west through road, it has the real potential to become a unique and interesting urban street, which although still used by traffic, will become a vitally important link between the City Centre, the sea and the River Tawe. This can be achieved by enlarging the City Centre Core to include land south of Oystermouth Road, thereby transforming a sterile road corridor into an exciting "European Boulevard". Whilst achieving an effective balance between vehicular and pedestrian movement particularly at key crossing points, such a boulevard would be enclosed by buildings with active frontages of high architectural design quality, and excellent public realm and landscape.

3. Connecting the City to the Waterfront

…will ensure that the river and the seafront play a far more active part in the life of the City Centre truly establishing Swansea as a distinctive Waterfront City. Its potential will be realised by fully utilising waterfront locations, so as to create new destinations and attractions which allow people to enjoy both City Centre and waterfront activities. Proximity within walking distance, vibrant spaces, high quality buildings and public realm will contribute to the success of this aspiration.

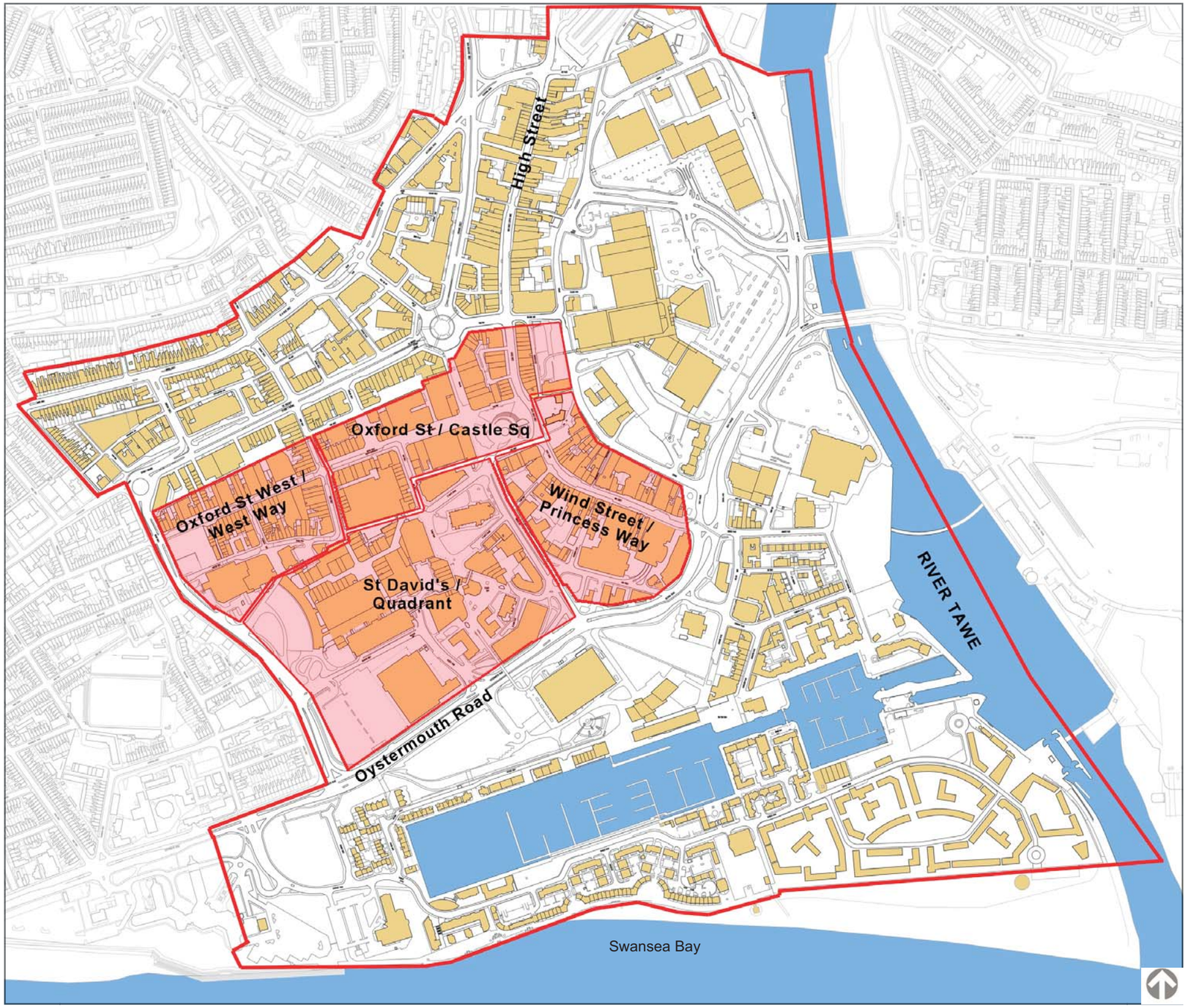
4. Developing the Identities and Complementary Roles of All Districts

…by maximising the respective strengths and attributes of the Districts around the City Centre Core delivering a range of appropriate activities and uses which complement the role of the Core area. Regeneration activity will be supported, along with improvements to connections, the public realm and the architectural quality of buildings, to encourage a sustainable role for each of the complementary districts in the future.

1. A Vibrant Mixed-Use Heart to the City Centre

A vibrant mixed-use heart for Swansea City Centre will be created by improving the existing City Centre retail core area, encouraging greater mixed-use, and promoting major new retail-led development. This Mixed-use Heart will become a vibrant, prosperous, attractive and safe place, accessible to all. Its regeneration will occur within four priority areas:

- St David's/Quadrant
- Oxford Street/Castle Square
- Oxford Street West/West Way
- Wind Street/ Princess Way



A Vibrant Mixed-Use Heart site plan (1:7500)

A Vibrant Mixed-Use Heart to the City Centre

St Davids/Quadrant Area

The Area

The St David's/Quadrant Area is highlighted as the key priority area for the regeneration of Swansea City Centre.

The Development Strategy identified the existing St David's Centre as a failing centre that lacks any draw, and is poorly integrated with the existing core retail area. It is situated in a high profile location but is currently an underused asset within and immediately adjacent to the retail core area. The current retail floorspace provision is poor and there is a major opportunity to provide new modern retail space in this location.

Vision for the Area

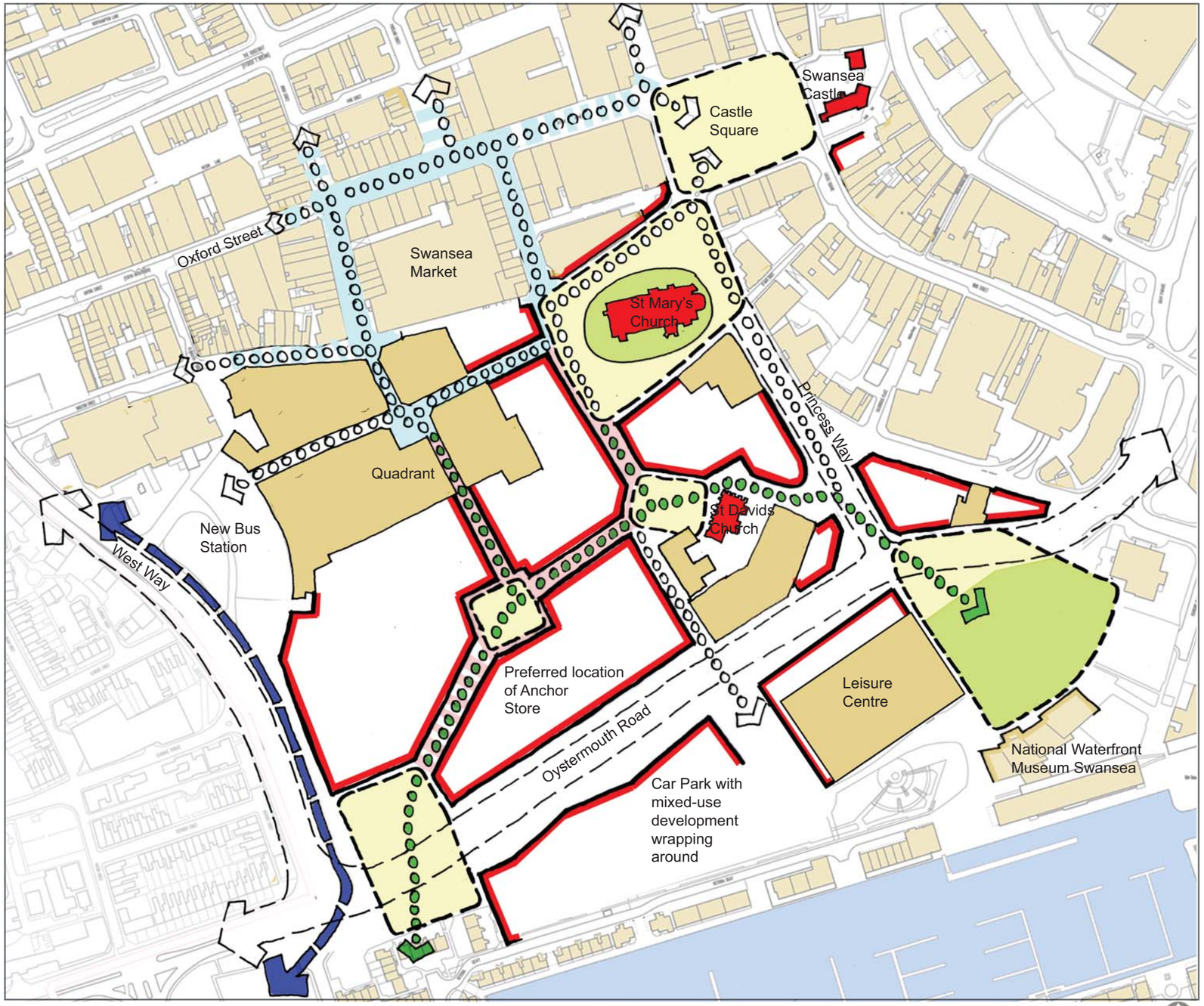
St. David's should be redeveloped so that it becomes integrated with surrounding areas, creating a new retail circuit and a lively, attractive, high quality shopping area at the heart of the City Centre.

The St David's area can potentially be linked to the Quadrant shopping centre area to form one large strategic development opportunity, which would provide a natural extension of the prime retail core southwards. Together the area would accommodate a large and comprehensive retail-led mixed-use scheme of sufficient quantum to provide the critical mass, anchor opportunity and step change that is required.

In addition to physical redevelopment and City Centre enhancement, the site provides an opportunity for creating more strategic, pedestrian friendly links across the Oystermouth Road to the Leisure Centre, Civic Offices, new development at Paxton Street and the seafront.

Key:

- Existing buildings outside area of influence
- Existing blocks within area of influence
- New development blocks with active frontages
- Existing blocks with frontage improvements
- Key buildings
- Public spaces (green)
- Public spaces (hard)
- Existing retail circuit
- Extended retail circuit
- Existing routes
- Proposed routes
- Route of the Metro



St David's/Quadrant concept diagram (1:2500)

Development Principles

Redevelopment of the St David's/Quadrant Area should include:

- A comprehensive retail-led and vibrant mixed-use scheme, of a critical mass that offers at least one quality anchor store and associated high street retailing, to create a step change in Swansea's retail offer and afford economic, environmental and social well being for the community
- Development which contributes to a high quality built edge to, and activity along Oystermouth Road
- Provision of excellent car parking facilities for the scheme, and for the City Centre generally
- Development which enhances the City Centre retail circuit, encouraging the flow of customers around the retail area
- Provision of enhanced links with the bus and public transport interchange
- Development which promotes improved pedestrian activity, linking to all parts of the City Centre and across Oystermouth Road
- Proposals which are clearly linked, visually and/or physically with the Paxton Street development, to deliver integration across Oystermouth Road and to the seafront
- Development which increases the residential stock within the City Centre

Design Principles

The following design principles should be applied to the St David's/ Quadrant area redevelopment:

- High quality new buildings to define vibrant new shopping streets within the area and an attractive 'shop window' for the City Centre Retail Core along the northern edge of Oystermouth Road
- New buildings which address the street with active frontage at the ground floor and above, adopting a layout and scale that provide a good sense of continuity, enclosure and overlooking of the street, thereby achieving high quality urban form
- A sense of cohesion in the design and scale of buildings
- Landmark buildings and features located at key points in new public spaces to provide legibility and hierarchy, particularly in relation to retail anchors
- Anchor store frontages augmented by the presence of smaller unit retail frontages and alternative uses above ground floor
- A new public space at the heart of the enhanced retail circuit, designed to provide a legible setting for anchor stores at this location and orientation toward Oystermouth Road and beyond
- New public spaces in the vicinity of the churches, which provide a finer grain of mixed-use development, in order to respect the scale, vibrancy and visual richness at these locations
- Layout of streets and spaces which provides a permeable and interesting choice of routes for the pedestrian, within the area, its linkages to the existing retail circuit, the wider City Centre movement network, and in particular to key crossing points along Oystermouth Road

Accessibility Principles

Recommended accessibility principles for the St David's/ Quadrant Priority Area are incorporated in the development and design principles above, and are summarised as:

- Pedestrian permeability throughout the scheme and high quality linkages to the rest of the City Centre and across Oystermouth Road
- Improved connection to the Quadrant and the bus station at the Quadrant Interchange
- Provision of high quality car parking and servicing for the scheme and the City Centre in general
- Improved cycle route links and facilities within the area and across Oystermouth Road

Development Proposals

A conceptual proposal is illustrated in this Framework to demonstrate how a new retail-led mixed-use scheme can regenerate the heart of the City Centre. Details are illustrative but show an area that can accommodate approximately 35,000 sq.m. net of retail floorspace in a mix of anchor store and high street units to meet modern retailer requirements.
Although primarily emphasising retail, proposals which deliver an integrated mixed-use development, to include an element of residential, office, civic or cultural uses, will be expected.

The scheme will create attractive new streets linking the core retail circuit to the rest of the City Centre, and to a new public space on Oystermouth Road. The scheme will also provide an attractive setting around St Mary's and St David's churches, whilst high quality buildings of several storeys in height will create a strong modern building frontage on Oystermouth Road.

Delivery Mechanism

This is a very significant Priority Area for the City Centre. The aspiration is to secure a scheme which is delivered through normal commercial (market) development processes, with no requirement for public sector intervention beyond normal planning and development processes.

The Council (CCS), Threadneedle, La Salle and Tesco are all major landowners in the area, and therefore, a potential partnership approach with these landowners, and led by the Council, could be identified to take the proposal forward. The Council should seek to encourage this partnership approach, and if necessary, consider more direct intervention and use of its powers (including CPO powers) to pursue this essential scheme.

As a first step, the Council should set out its objectives for the scheme, in line with this Strategic Framework, through the preparation of planning and development briefs.

Phasing

This scheme is the highest priority for the City Centre, and needs to be achieved within the short to medium term, if it is to have sufficient impact to deliver retail-led regeneration of the whole City Centre, and address the competition arising from other town and city centres.

Consideration should be given to the issue of phasing this proposal if possible and financially viable. However, it is important that the fundamental principles of a comprehensive retail-led mixed-use scheme, of a critical mass that offers at least one quality anchor store and associated high street retailing, are not compromised.

Achievements and targets

When completed, the St David's/Quadrant area will have achieved:

- A step change in the quality of Swansea City Centre's retail offer and creation of a critical mass of regeneration
- Introduction of a new high quality, comprehensive, mixed-use scheme at the heart of the City Centre
- A new pattern of land-use, streets and places forming better links between all areas in the City Centre
- Improved car parking, pedestrian and cyclist circulation

The proposals for the St David's/Quadrant Area will contribute to all of the Strategic Objectives for the City Centre:

Competitive Economy	✓	Strengthens City Centre and adds diversity
Quality Regional Shopping Centre	✓	Step change in quality, adds modern shops
High Quality Environment	✓	Attractive new buildings, streets and places
City Living	✓	Adds diversity including residential, street life
Waterfront City	✓	Facilitates key links to seafront locations
Accessibility & Movement	✓	Creates new attractive streets / boulevard for better movement
Destination City	✓	Raises quality and profile, adds modern shops
Regional Role	✓	Confirms Swansea City Centre as regional centre
Distinctive Identity	✓	New activity, new buildings, new streets, new attraction.

Precedents



Rejuvenate the retail core:
Canterbury City Centre





New public space:
Duke of York Square, London



City Centre regeneration:
Cathedral Street area, Manchester

A Vibrant Mixed-Use Heart to the City Centre

Oxford Street/Castle Square

The Area

This area focuses on the eastern half of Oxford Street and adjacent side streets. It comprises the main “high street” retail centre of the City. The area includes Swansea Market and is well connected to the Quadrant Centre, the bus station and other surrounding areas, which include car parking, offices and other City Centre functions.

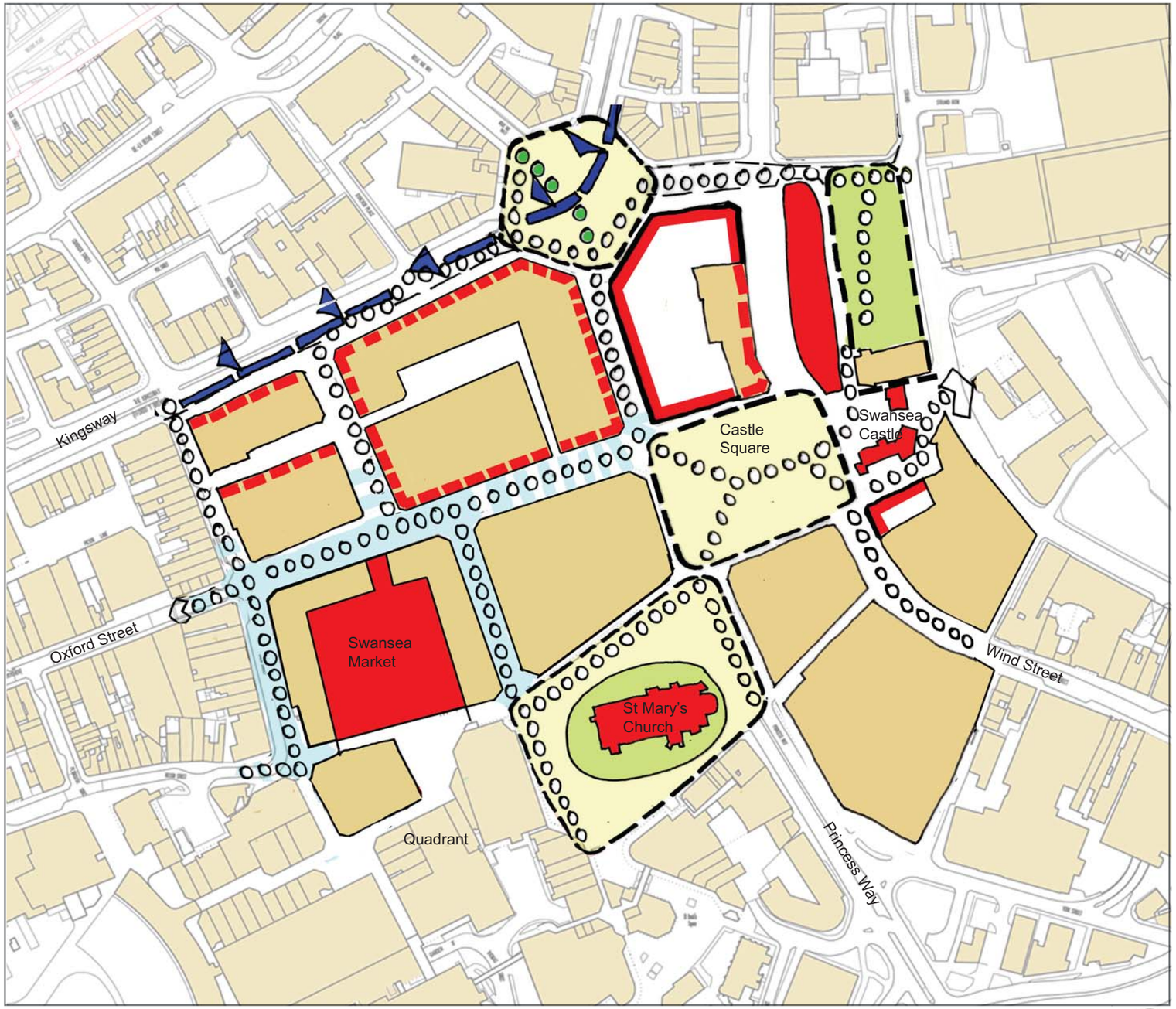
Swansea Market is a major asset to the City Centre. It is highly popular, and occupies a central position in the retail area, lying between Oxford Street and the Quadrant Centre. It reflects the distinctive identity of Swansea and South West Wales. It provides an important outlet for local produce, an essential sector of the regional economy, and should be improved to strengthen this role.

Vision for the Area

The Vision for Oxford Street/Castle Square is of a successful, attractive regional shopping area, accommodating an increasing diversity of uses. This area is seen as an important part of the Development Strategy, although there is limited potential to accommodate a significant retail redevelopment that would provide the required step change. Enhancement and improvement of Oxford Street/Castle Square, in conjunction with the proposals at St David’s/Quadrant, will create a strong retail circuit which is fundamental to retail-led regeneration of the City Centre.

Key:

- Existing buildings outside area of influence
- Existing blocks within area of influence
- New development blocks with active frontages
- Existing blocks with frontage improvements
- Key buildings
- Public spaces (green)
- Public spaces (hard)
- Existing retail circuit
- Extended retail circuit
- Existing routes
- Proposed routes
- Route of the Metro
- One-way traffic system



Oxford Street/Castle Square concept diagram (1:2500)

Development Principles

Development of Oxford Street/Castle Square should complement, and not prejudice, proposals for St David's/ Quadrant. Key development aspirations include:

- Improving and enhancing the City Centre retail core through investment in buildings and streets
- Providing the opportunity for further premises refurbishments to meet modern requirements
- Substantively improving Swansea Market, repositioning it and enhancing its economic role
- Encouraging redevelopment and conversion of buildings to provide an enhanced ground floor retail offer, together with a mix of uses on upper floors, to create a more mixed-use area
- Contributing to further development of the "retail circuit"
- Exploring ways of using wide areas of public realm for development, subject to this being acceptable in design and circulation terms

Design Principles

Recommended design principles at Oxford Street/Castle Square are to:

- Deliver new development of the highest quality in the vicinity of Castle Square, contributing active frontages, particularly along the link from Oxford Street to St Mary's Church, Castle Street and the Kingsway, and respecting the scale and character of the medieval castle
- Encourage owners along Oxford Street and in adjacent streets to deliver enhancement of poor quality frontages, or in some cases well-designed replacement buildings, enhancing the visual richness of the street scene, and considering measures (e.g. canopies) that build cohesion within the street
- Promote a significant improvement of the public realm which enhances quality and ease of use, and reduces clutter along Oxford Street and adjacent streets
- Provide new high quality paved areas which can be more easily maintained and designed to provide an accessible crisply detailed level finish

Accessibility Principles

Important accessibility principles at Oxford Street/Castle Square are to:

- Encourage improvements to streetscape, public lighting, car parks and other facilities which promote increased pedestrian use and improve pedestrian safety
- Improve public transport connections, particularly the network of bus and metro stops serving the retail core area
- Incorporate facilities for cyclists in enhancement schemes, including the provision of cycle parking

Development Proposals

The site of the former House of Fraser/David Evans store on Castle Square has planning permission for a £30m fashion-based retail development. This new development will provide the type of space required by retailers in the City Centre retail core, and will be an important first phase and catalyst for renewed retail and developer enthusiasm. The delivery of this development will be an important "early win" for the City Centre.

An immediate programme of work will improve the Swansea Market building in the short-term. However, the Market's prominence is such that it should be considered for development as a "flagship" project for the City Centre. It has the potential to improve its role and the quality of its "offer" as a source of local produce, and as a focus for local development of the food and drink industry. This could incorporate catering skills and supply chain development, as well as improved promotion and management. This concept should be considered further if the Market is to enhance its position as an "attractor" for local residents and visitors.

Improvement of existing premises within Oxford Street/ Castle Square will be expected to enhance provision and the attractiveness of the retail core area. Specifically, development that provides a mix of uses which improves the City Centre as a destination location, and provides a level of vibrancy to Oxford Street and Castle Square outside the traditional retail opening hours, is encouraged.

A programme of investment for repair and renewal of the public realm should be defined, building on recent improvements elsewhere and taking advantage of budgets already secured.

Delivery Mechanism

- Development and refurbishment projects should be delivered through normal commercial market mechanisms, and the local authority should assist in identifying any assistance in their delivery
- Refurbishment of Swansea Market and improvement of its profile should be coordinated by the local authority
- Environmental improvements and regular maintenance of existing areas should be a priority for the local authority, working with the City Centre Partnership and BID

Phasing

The redevelopment of the former House of Fraser store should be an early target for completion, and further projects or enhancements should continue throughout the lifetime of this Strategic Framework. Public realm work should commence immediately and be extended to other areas in due course. Detailed consideration of the role of the Market and its refurbishment should be a short to medium term target.

Achievements and Targets

Regeneration of the Oxford Street/Castle Square area will particularly contribute to raising the retail competitiveness and quality of the City Centre. It should also add to the diversity, life and attractiveness of the City Centre. Key targets relate to the:

- Delivery of the new retail development in the former House of Fraser/David Evans store
- Phased redevelopment of properties and encouragement of a mix of uses (particularly in upper floors)
- Improvements to Swansea Market
- Renewal of public realm

Over the period of the Strategic Framework, the following Strategic Objectives will have been addressed by this Priority Area:

Competitive Economy	✓	Strengthens City Centre and adds diversity
Quality Regional Shopping Centre	✓	Contributes improved quality, modern shops
High Quality Environment	✓	Improved buildings, streets and places
City Living	✓	Adds diversity including residential
Waterfront City		
Accessibility & Movement	✓	Improved streets for pedestrians and cyclists
Destination City	✓	Raises quality and profile, adds modern shops
Regional Role	✓	Confirms Swansea City Centre as regional centre
Distinctive Identity	✓	New activity, new and improved buildings and streets, new attractor

Precedents



Market upgrade and partial redevelopment: Spitalfields, London





Market upgrade and partial redevelopment: Borough Market, London

A Vibrant Mixed-Use Heart to the City Centre

Oxford Street West/West Way

The Area

The western half of Oxford Street and its surrounding streets is an area of distinctive character, based more on small, specialist shops in smaller buildings. It is markedly different from the eastern half of Oxford Street, which is the focus for multiple and variety stores and “high street” retailers.

The area has three important assets:

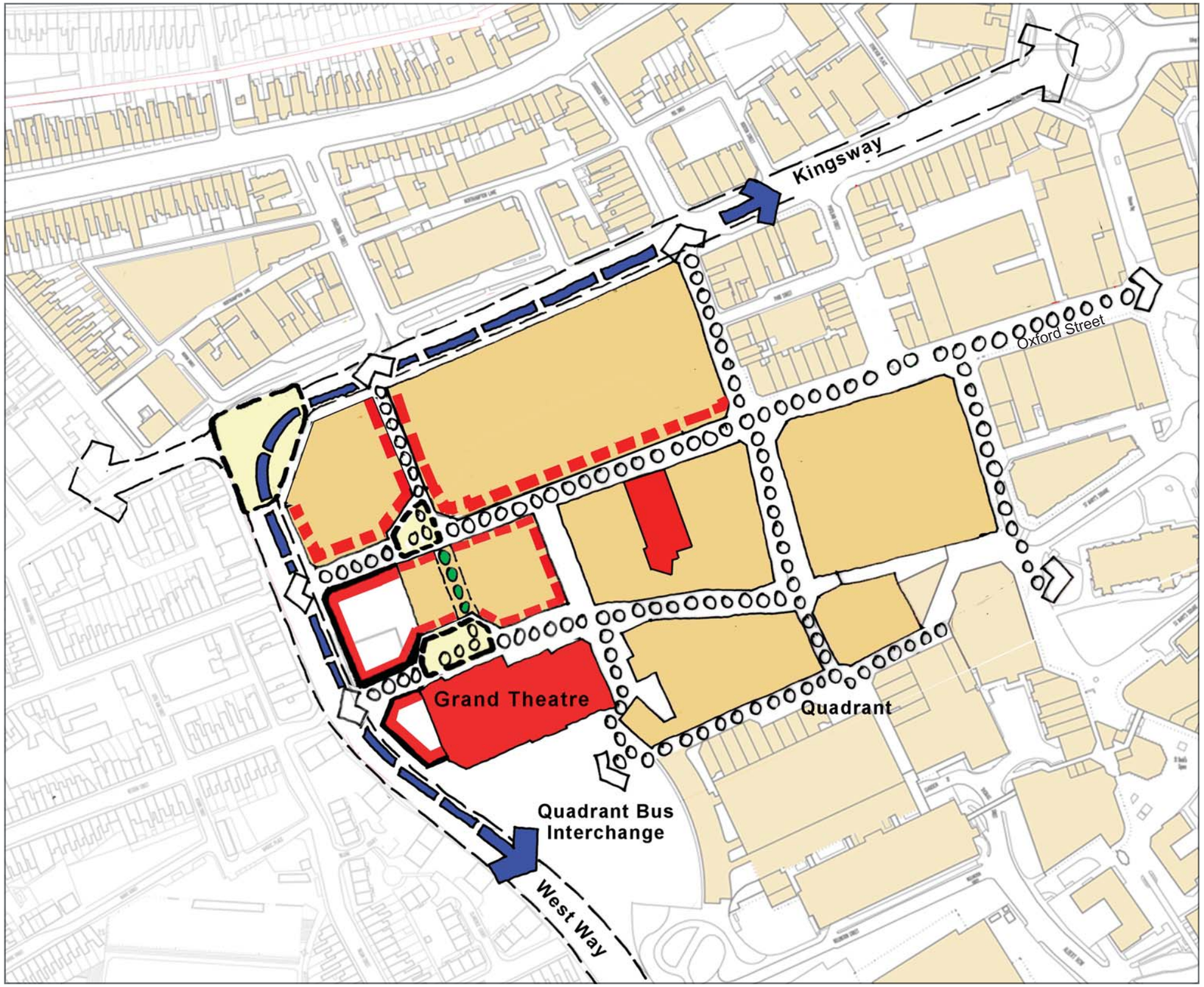
- The Grand Theatre, which has a range of cultural activities for all ages, including a conference centre, a theatre restaurant/bar and garden
- The wide range of independent specialist shops and arcade premises which add an essential and distinctive diversity to Swansea City Centre
- Proximity to the busiest retail areas of Oxford Street, Swansea Market and the Quadrant, and to the bus station This area, therefore, makes a significant contribution to Swansea City Centre.

Vision for the Area

This Priority Area should be developed as an area of special character, with a mix of specialist small shops, cultural activity and ancillary uses, and a specific focus on an improved area around the Grand Theatre.

Key:

- Existing buildings outside area of influence
- Existing blocks within area of influence
- New development blocks with active frontages
- Existing blocks with frontage improvements
- Key buildings
- Public spaces (hard)
- Existing routes
- Proposed routes
- Route of the Metro



Oxford Street West/West Way concept diagram (1:2500)

Development Principles

Development must strengthen the existing role and character of the area by:

- Maintaining the existing structure of uses, streets and pedestrian routes but redevelop and/or refurbish buildings to improve their quality and appearance
- Utilising the opportunity of developing the existing surface car park on Oxford Street to create a new public space in the City Centre and a proper setting for the Grand Theatre, replacing some car parking at basement or semi-basement levels
- Providing new and improved quality specialist shopping "lanes" or arcades, with new mixed-use residential and "creative industries" uses, and opportunities for street life

Design Principles

The following design principles will be important considerations for developments and improvements in this Priority Area:

- A new public square, Plas Grand Theatre, situated between the Oxford Street/Picton Arcade area and Singleton Street, reinforcing the Grand Theatre's position as a principal feature of the area
- Landmark buildings that front onto each street elevation with active frontages, which acknowledge the new square, and provide a suitably significant development at the start/end of Oxford Street
- Improved frontages along to the west end of Oxford Street and West Way renovated or redeveloped to improve spatial enclosure and their contribution to the street scene
- Enhanced public realm to build the distinctive character, identity and confidence of the area

Accessibility Principles

Recommended accessibility principles within this area include the following:

- An attractive, permeable pedestrian environment with easier crossing facilities for integration of adjacent areas
- Maximise the benefits of the Quadrant Interchange in pedestrian terms, and by reducing bus traffic through the area, whilst accommodating service traffic to the Market and other retailers via Singleton Street and Oxford Street
- Maintain parking provision for the Grand Theatre as part of the development process, and use improved car parks elsewhere in the City Centre, improving pedestrian links, lighting and safety, and extending opening hours

Development Proposals

The Design Principles envisage the development of "Plas Grand Theatre" on the current surface car park between Oxford Street and Singleton Street. This area should be developed generally to four storeys, around the new pedestrian square opposite the theatre, with small unit retail premises for specialist retail on the ground floor, and the opportunity for occupiers involved in the arts/cultural/creative industries and housing on upper floors. Although some car parking will be lost due to this proposal, it will be possible to include some spaces as part of the development.

Refurbishment of the two arcades is also recommended to create modern and improved quality premises for the retailers, and a more attractive "arcade" or "lanes" atmosphere in the area. Small to very small units, which can accommodate specialist independent retailers and resist the influx of standard 'high street' occupiers, will have to be the primary objective. Given the potential and the specific objectives set, consideration should be given, through the City Centre Partnership, to initiatives that would help retailers in this area. There may be scope for them to co-operate, develop joint marketing, improve their premises and shop fronts, and improve their trading competitiveness, thereby assisting in the sustainability of their activities and of the area.

Improvements at the Quadrant Interchange should be supplemented by an environmental improvement scheme for the whole area, improving the character and identity of the street environment, and where possible extending pedestrianisation.

Delivery Mechanism

Proposals for this Priority Area may need active intervention by the City and County Council and the Welsh Assembly Government to bring them forward. Although the key car park site is in the Council's ownership and there may be private sector interest, there are multiple land ownerships in the surrounding area, and some proposals will require co-operation. This is likely to demand some feasibility work, and there may be a need for mechanisms to create a development partnership or joint venture. Securing adequate funding for the early stages of the development will provide a significant boost to delivery of the later stages.

Phasing

These proposals should be treated as an important priority for achievement in the short to medium term. There will be greater emphasis on delivery following the significant development of the St David's/Quadrant scheme which acts as a catalyst for wider regeneration, and the Quadrant Interchange which will change use and perception of this area.



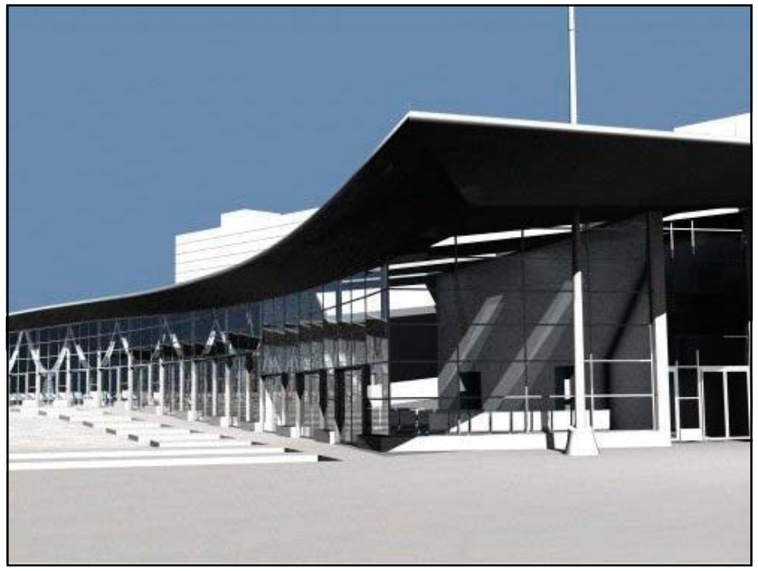
The Grand Theatre

Achievements and targets

When these proposals are implemented, Oxford Street West will be unique in providing a distinctive contribution to the character, role, competitiveness and diversity of the City Centre, thereby meeting the following Strategic Objectives:

Competitive Economy	✓	Strengthens City Centre and adds diversity
Quality Regional Shopping Centre	✓	Adds specialist, quality shops and character
High Quality Environment	✓	Attractive new buildings, streets and places
City Living	✓	Adds diversity including residential, creative sector
Waterfront City		
Accessibility & Movement	✓	Creates new attractive streets and local routes
Destination City	✓	Raises quality and profile, specialist shops & culture
Regional Role		
Distinctive Identity	✓	Swansea specialisms and cultural/creative activity

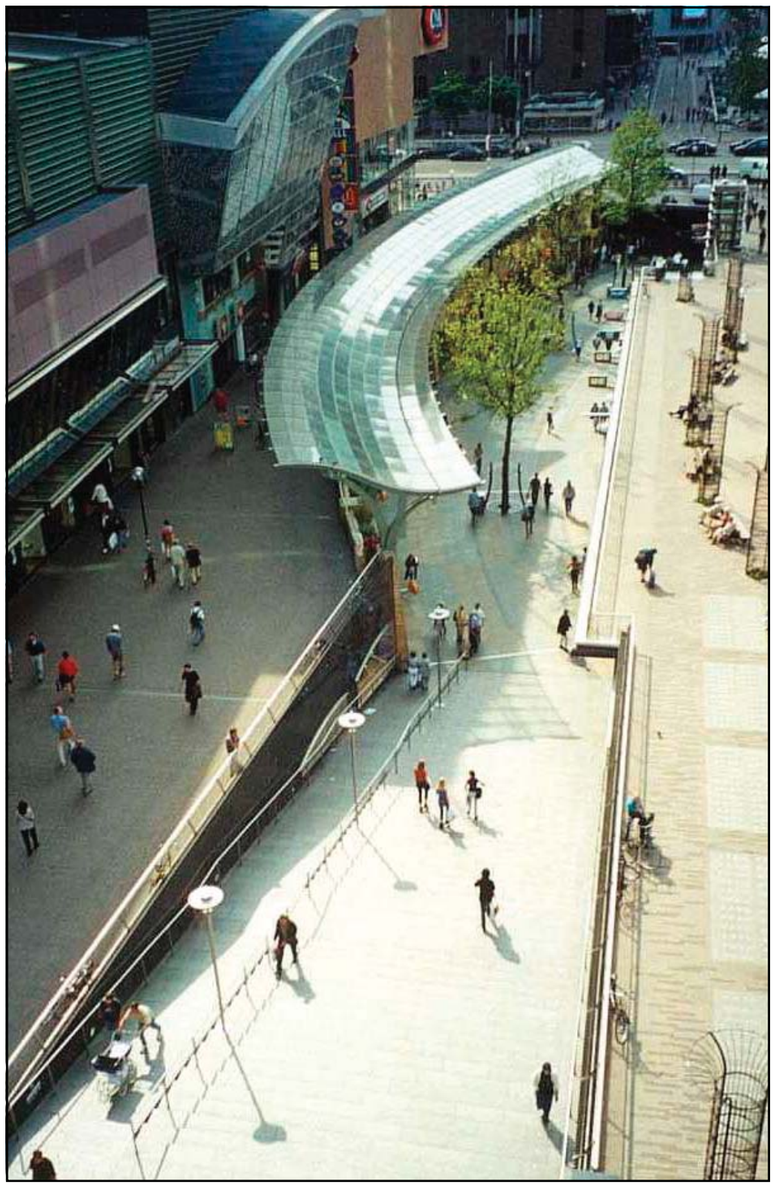
Precedents



Proposed bus interchange facility, The Quadrant, Swansea



Proposed Swansea Metro vehicle



Integrated transport and retail environment: Beursplein, Rotterdam

A Vibrant Mixed-Use Heart to the City Centre

Wind Street/Princess Way/Strand

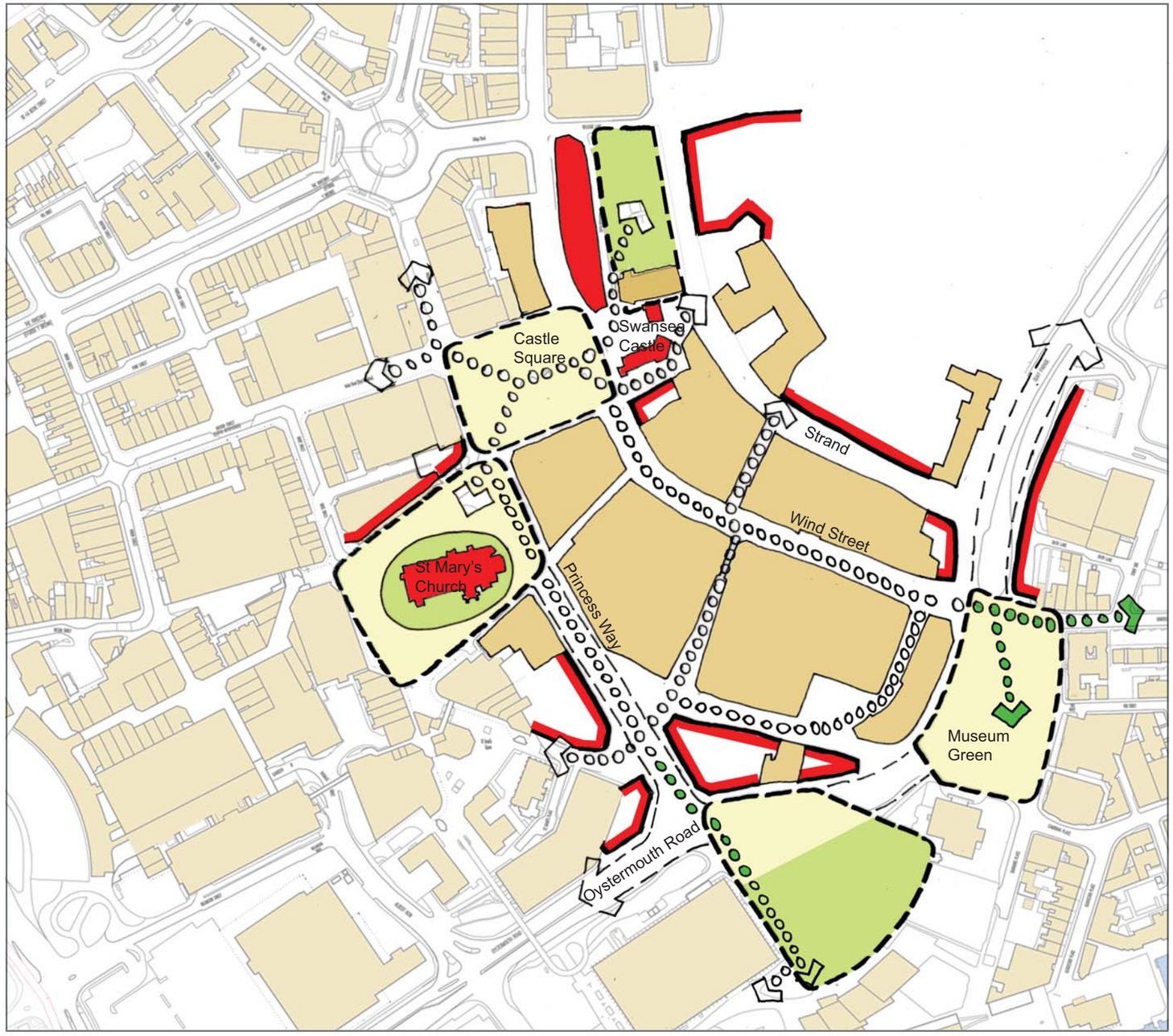
The Area

Wind Street is a Conservation Area containing a range of attractive historic buildings which have been very effectively refurbished and converted to serve modern City Centre uses. Wind Street now has a special ambience and character which is unique in the City Centre.

This area has become a major leisure and entertainment focus for the City Centre, with Princess Way and Wind Street providing two important pedestrian links between the core retail area and the cultural, leisure and commercial elements of the Maritime Quarter and waterfront.

Vision for the Area

This Priority Area will continue to be an attractive mixed-use part of the City Centre, based on its historic character and its emphasis on leisure and entertainment. Its role in linking the City Centre with the waterfront should continue to evolve through new development, and enhanced active pedestrian routes.



Wind Street/Princess Way/Strand concept diagram (1:2500)

Key:

- Existing buildings outside area of influence
- Existing blocks within area of influence
- New development blocks with active frontages
- Key buildings
- Public spaces (green)
- Public spaces (hard)
- Existing routes
- Proposed routes

Development Principles

Major new development is likely to be limited in this area in future as significant changes to the Wind Street area are already taking place or in the pipeline. However, it is crucial that landowners are encouraged to bring forward proposals for vacant sites, which present new opportunities. Key development principles should build on recent progress by:

- Reinforcing the mixed-use, leisure emphasis of the area
- Protecting and enhancing historic buildings and their setting in the Conservation Area
- Maintaining and improving the quality of pedestrian routes through the area particularly from waterfront areas to the retail core

Design Principles

The following design principles should be instrumental in guiding proposals in this Priority Area:

- Maintain and improve the quality of the public realm along Wind Street and enhance east-west routes into Princess Way and the Strand, and on into adjacent areas
- Design and build positive edges along the Strand frontage and at the rear of the Wind Street blocks
- Provide active frontage to development on Princess Way and respect the character and scale of any adjacent listed buildings
- Promote development at 1 to 4 Castle Square of the highest standard of architectural design, of an appropriate scale, and with active frontage to Castle Square, with full regard to the setting of the Castle

Accessibility Principles

Recommended accessibility principles for Wind Street/Princess Way/Strand are:

- Improve pedestrian and cycle permeability and facilities throughout the area
- Improve accessibility and links across Victoria Road, reflecting the concepts and improvements adopted at Museum Green and outside the National Waterfront Museum
- Improve accessibility into the retail core and to car park sites within the area which serve the retail core area.

Development Proposals

Developments currently in the pipeline should be completed and any new proposals that meet the development, design and access principles above will be encouraged. The following are significant priorities:

- Salubrious Place (Phases 1 and 2) is an important scheme which provides a quality mixed-use development of residential, bars/restaurants, hotel, 12-screen cinema, and casino, and includes new car parking provision
- 1 to 7 Princess Way is a scheme currently in the development pipeline that will provide a 70-bed hotel and residential apartments and a quality frontage to Princess Way
- Major improvements to “Museum Green”, the pedestrian crossing areas at the bottom of Wind Street, Princess Way and along the length of Oystermouth Road are critical enhancements contributing to the role and character of this area

Future developments with a significant effect on this Priority Area will include 1 to 4 Castle Square, the Princess Way frontage of the St David’s redevelopment, and the Strand frontage of the Parc Tawe proposals.

Delivery Mechanism

Any development in this area should take place through normal commercial mechanisms, and will be subject to the usual planning and conservation area policies. Interim treatment and/or use of some development sites might be of benefit in the short term.

Environmental enhancements and accessibility improvements should be a priority for the local authority and are likely to require support from the Welsh Assembly Government. Operational and maintenance measures in this busy part of the City Centre may be of particular interest to the City Centre Partnership and the BID company.

Phasing

Regeneration of this area has made considerable progress, but outstanding and new initiatives will continue for the duration of the Strategic Framework. Public realm improvements should be programmed to follow work on Museum Green and Princess Way, whilst the market and the private sector will dictate progress on commercial development.

Achievements and targets

This area is becoming established as a key contributor to a lively, attractive City Centre, and helps to attract visitors and define the distinctive character of Swansea. Continued regeneration will help to consolidate this role.

The importance of the links it provides to the waterfront cannot be overestimated, and quality pedestrian routes down Wind Street and Princess Way are essential to creating the “Waterfront City”. The proposals will meet the following Strategic Objectives:

Competitive Economy	✓	Strengthens City Centre and adds diversity
Quality Regional Shopping Centre	✓	Contributes to diversity and quality of the Centre
High Quality Environment	✓	Attractive buildings, streets and places
City Living	✓	Adds diversity, particularly residential and leisure
Waterfront City	✓	Facilitates key links
Accessibility & Movement	✓	Creates new attractive streets and boulevard
Destination City	✓	Adds special interest to the City Centre
Regional Role		
Distinctive Identity	✓	Emphasises heritage, character and new distinctive activities

Precedents



Manchester City Centre



Ropewalks, Liverpool



St Paul's Walk, London



Peace Garden, Sheffield



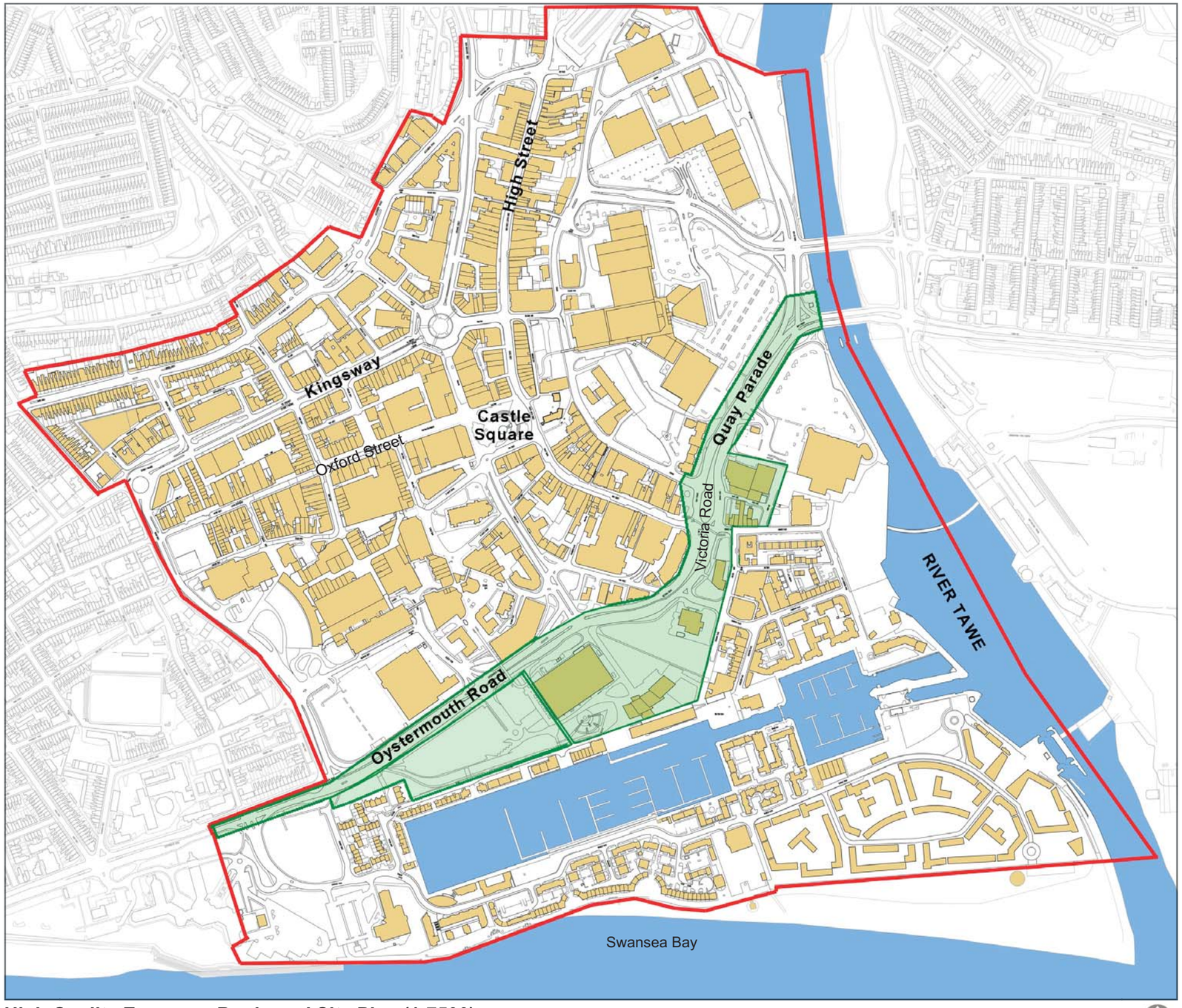
Fareham High Street

Public realm improvements in historic centres

2. A High Quality European "Boulevard"

A High Quality European Boulevard will be created by changing the perception, experience and environment of the Oystermouth Road, Victoria Road and Quay Parade corridor. This can be achieved by enlarging the City Centre Core to include land south of Oystermouth Road, thereby transforming a sterile road corridor into an exciting "European Boulevard". The following Priority Area is, therefore, critical in regenerating the City Centre:

- Oystermouth Road/Victoria Road/Quay Parade



High Quality European Boulevard Site Plan (1:7500)

Creating a High Quality European Boulevard

Oystermouth Road/Victoria Road/Quay Parade

The Area

Oystermouth Road, Victoria Road and Quay Parade form an important traffic route which separates the City Centre from the sea and adjacent development. It retains the character of a busy main road through fragmented sites. It is an unattractive route for drivers and passengers, and a major deterrent to pedestrians. It presents a poor image of the City to everyone who uses it.

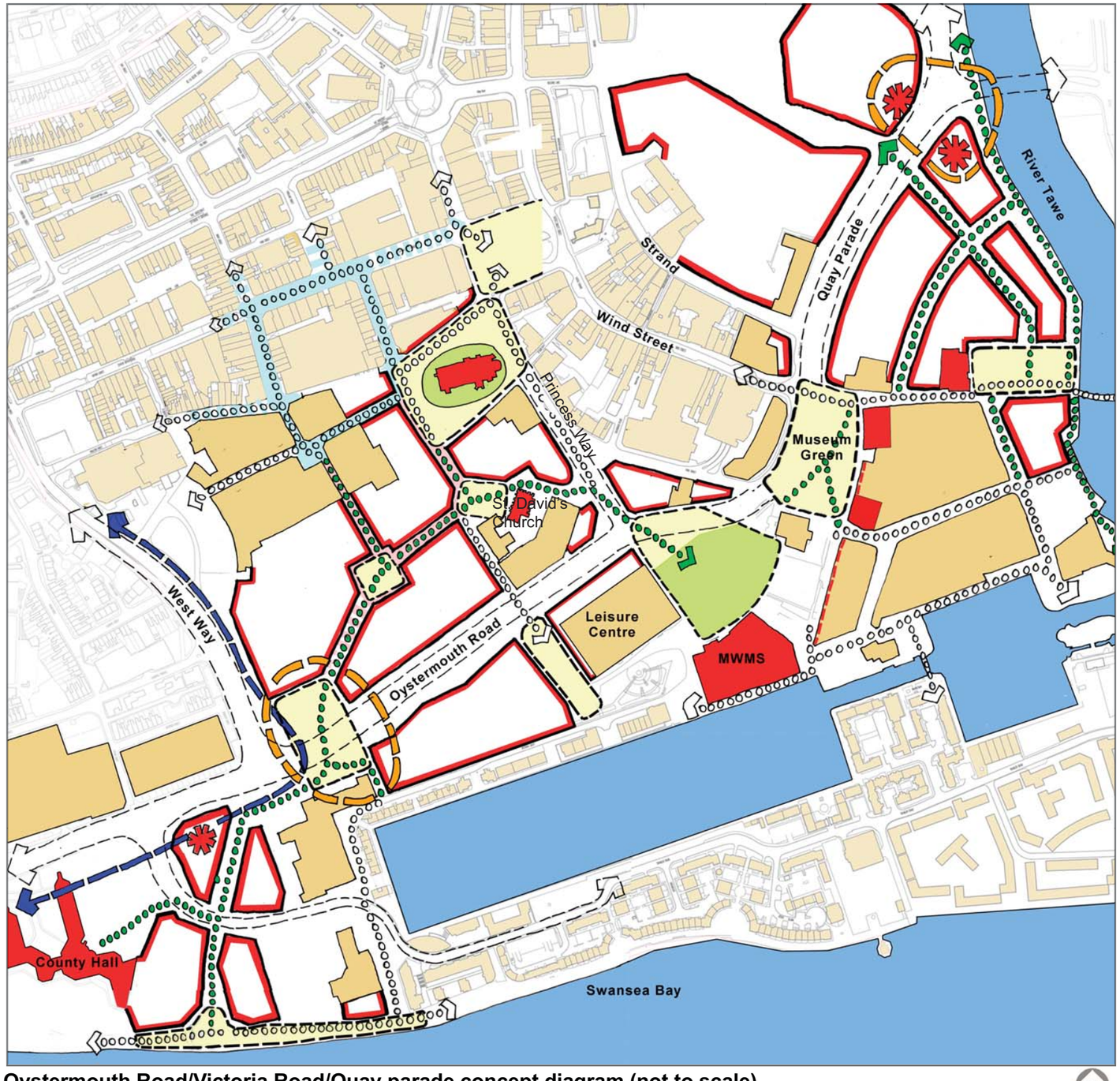
Previous studies have indicated the importance of "crossing the divide" created by this road corridor and a number of solutions have been explored. However, high costs, negative environmental consequences and potentially even greater "severance" would arise. The "boulevard" approach is considered feasible, following initial traffic assessments, within the existing context of a policy of constraint of growth in private vehicle traffic and provision of park and ride facilities serving the City Centre.

Vision for the Area

The Vision for Oystermouth Road/Victoria Road/Quay Parade is the creation of a "boulevard" from West Way to the Tawe Bridges, integrated into the City Centre along with areas to the south by:

- Improving environmental quality throughout the corridor
- Raising the image and profile of the City Centre
- Creating high quality pedestrian routes between the heart of the City and the waterfront/maritime areas

As stronger links develop between the Maritime Quarter, SA1 Swansea Waterfront and the Civic Centre's retail/commercial core, a transformation of Oystermouth Road/Victoria Road/Quay Parade will be necessary. It is essential that the quality of its environment is improved and that it becomes a street within the City Centre rather than a barrier which divides it. This will require consideration of the character of sites on the south side of the road as well as



Oystermouth Road/Victoria Road/Quay parade concept diagram (not to scale)

those on the north side, and a number of component schemes that will include:

- Gateways
- New public spaces
- Pedestrian crossing points
- Building frontages
- Parking and circulation arrangements
- Comprehensive enhancements

Development Principles

The creation of an urban "boulevard", with the character and quality of important streets in the heart of other UK and European cities, involves a series of developments that will change the perception of Oystermouth Road, Victoria Road and Quay Parade. Specifically, it involves:

- Making entry to the City Centre explicit by changing the scale of development beyond gateways
- Ensuring that the design of new buildings and landscape along the corridor creates a much stronger urban character
- Using buildings and spaces to introduce more life on the street frontage on both sides of the road
- Improving the quality of the pedestrian environment and traffic impact circumstances throughout the corridor without compromising traffic flow

Design Principles

Key design principles along the corridor will include:

- Attractive quality frontages through new buildings facing into the corridor, of an urban scale and mass that encourages activity and enclosure, at gateway locations and along the entire corridor
- Development that encourages exploration along the corridor towards interesting landmarks and facades which provide legibility
- Different treatment to surfaces and highway edges to emphasise priority links, connections and public spaces
- Introducing interesting quality public realm features in terms of landscaping, surface treatment, lighting and public art

Accessibility Principles

Recommended accessibility principles are to:

- Provide high quality pedestrian routes across the road corridor, at focal points where at-grade crossing activity is important - at the gateway locations to the City Centre, at Wind Street and Princess Way
- Enhance the overbridge crossing and setting to the Leisure Centre, if design proposals for the Leisure Centre and St David's will benefit
- Provide upgraded traffic signal control facilities to manage vehicle and pedestrian flows in a manner that significantly reduces severance while not unduly affecting through-flow of vehicles
- Deliver improvements to the roadside environment (e.g. treatment to footways and central reservation) whilst minimising the negative impact on traffic flows

Development Proposals

Key proposals to create the European Boulevard in Swansea are:

- The Tawe Bridges Gateway – development and circulation improvements linked to the Parc Tawe and Sailbridge sites forming a new "gateway" to the City Centre
- "Museum Green" – a new public space of real quality as a statement along the corridor, with improved at-grade crossing of Victoria Road
- "Princess Way Square" - creating an attractive, distinctive place linking the City Centre with the facilities south of Oystermouth Road, building on the work undertaken to date
- The St David's/Leisure Centre Link - enhancing the existing footbridge and its setting to create an attractive and safe pedestrian environment complementing the developments on either side
- West Way Gateway - development and circulation improvements linked to the Paxton Street and bus station sites, forming a new "gateway" to the City Centre and improved pedestrian link to the beach and the Civic Centre
- Design and construction of buildings at the new St David's development and Parc Tawe Phase 1 redevelopment, and at other locations north and south of the new street, to create attractive building frontages defining the boulevard's character, and introducing uses and activities to street level
- A coordinated environmental improvement scheme for the corridor, from the River Tawe to the Civic Centre highlighting the key corridor schemes
- Introduction of a second Swansea Metro route along Oystermouth Road, linking to Fabian Way, contributing to high quality public transport serving the whole City Centre, and a reduction of traffic on the Oystermouth Road corridor

Delivery Mechanism

Multiple land ownerships exist along the corridor, and it may be difficult to deliver development opportunities and priorities in a comprehensive manner. It will be necessary to focus on the key development priorities, particularly those in priority areas adjacent to the corridor, and on the package of environmental/ traffic measures which are needed to implement the "boulevard approach". Design principles and planning controls will influence other developments.

There are five priorities for delivery:

- Preparation of a detailed design code for development along the corridor, by the City and County Council
- Implementation of integrated environmental/traffic measures along the length of the corridor, but with a focus on the key "nodes" where high quality spaces and crossings must be created. The City and County Council will need to take the lead in designing a package of measures, assembling funding package and delivering works
- Integrate the redevelopment of St David's through a partnership approach with the private sector, but with CCS/ WAG defining design principles
- Integrate the redevelopment of Parc Tawe with the private sector, with clear direction from CCS/WAG as to design principles for the road frontage

- Investigation and implementation of a new Swansea Metro route with City and County Council lead and WAG support

Any changes to the road layout, signals and other infrastructure need to ensure that access to existing activities along the corridor are not adversely affected. This is particularly important bearing in mind that there are retail, commercial, leisure, civic and cultural uses in the area. Initial testing and sketch schemes have been reviewed, but the proposals will need to be developed in greater detail, and tested through normal appraisal processes to confirm a final package of measures.

Phasing

Implementation will be a gradual process, over the short to medium terms, with the ultimate quality of the boulevard only achieved in the longer term. It will be shaped much earlier through concentrated areas of significant investment and steady progress towards established design principles:

Short term:
- Preparation of detailed design code for the full corridor
- Design and implementation of a package of environmental, pedestrian and traffic improvements along corridor, including West Way and Princess Way
- Completion of “Museum Green”
- Coordinate with design of St David’s redevelopment, including pedestrian links to Oystermouth Road and pedestrian crossing
- Coordinate with design and construction of Parc Tawe Phase 1 redevelopment
- Undertake feasibility and funding appraisal for new Metro route

Medium term
- Completion of environmental/traffic improvements package
- Implement new Metro route
- Progress further developments along the road corridor within design code principles

Achievements and targets

These proposals form an essential part of the overall strategy to achieve a step-change in the quality, competitiveness and profile of Swansea, and will change the perception of Oystermouth Road, Victoria Road and Quay Parade. They make a significant contribution to almost all of the Strategic Objectives of the Framework.

Competitive Economy	✓	Strengthens City Centre and adds diversity
Quality Regional Shopping Centre	✓	Contributes to diversity and quality of the Centre
High Quality Environment	✓	Attractive buildings, streets and places
City Living	✓	Adds diversity, particularly residential and leisure
Waterfront City	✓	Facilitates key links to seafront locations
Accessibility & Movement	✓	Creates new attractive streets and boulevard
Destination City	✓	Adds special interest to the City Centre
Regional Role		
Distinctive Identity	✓	New activity, new buildings, new streets, new attractions

Precedents



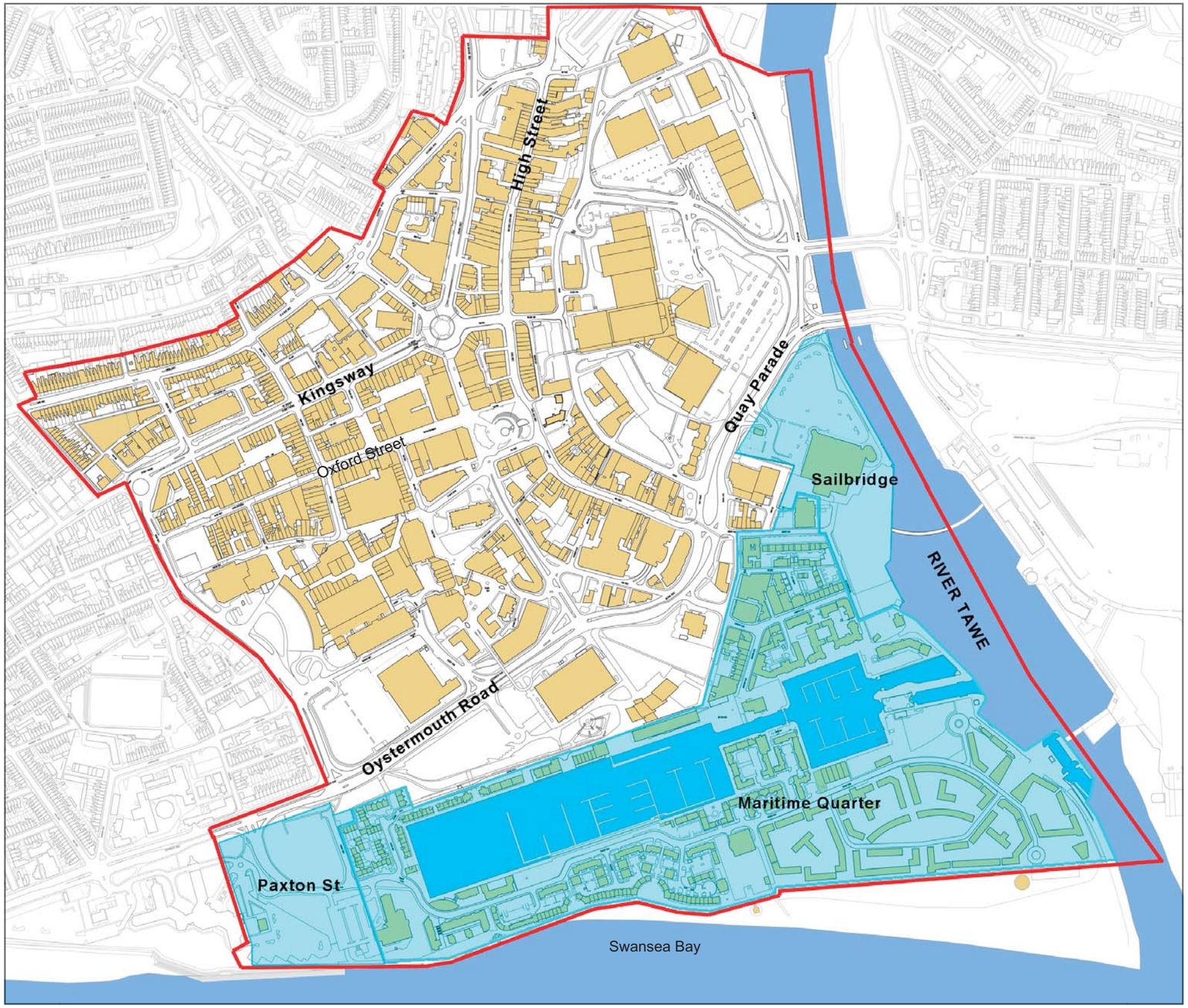


European solutions to boulevard treatments

3. Connecting the City to the Waterfront

Connecting the City to the Waterfront will ensure that the river and the seafront play a far more active part in the life of the City Centre, truly establishing Swansea as a distinctive Waterfront City. There are three waterfront areas which have the potential to create new destinations and attractions, and should, therefore, be considered as Priority Areas:

- Paxton Street
- Sailbridge
- Maritime Quarter



Connecting the City to the Waterfront site plan (1:7500)

Connecting the City to the Waterfront

Paxton Street

The Area

The area contains County Hall, the Marriott Hotel and car parks which serve the City Centre, County Hall and the seafront. Part of the area, the County Hall East Car Park, as a consequence of its elevation and orientation, provides spectacular views out to sea, across Swansea Bay westwards and eastwards. It also provides views back across the Marina and to the City Centre.

The site is isolated and poorly connected to the rest of the City Centre and whilst the car parks are well used, the site overall is an under-utilised brownfield resource, which is currently making minimal contribution to the City Centre.

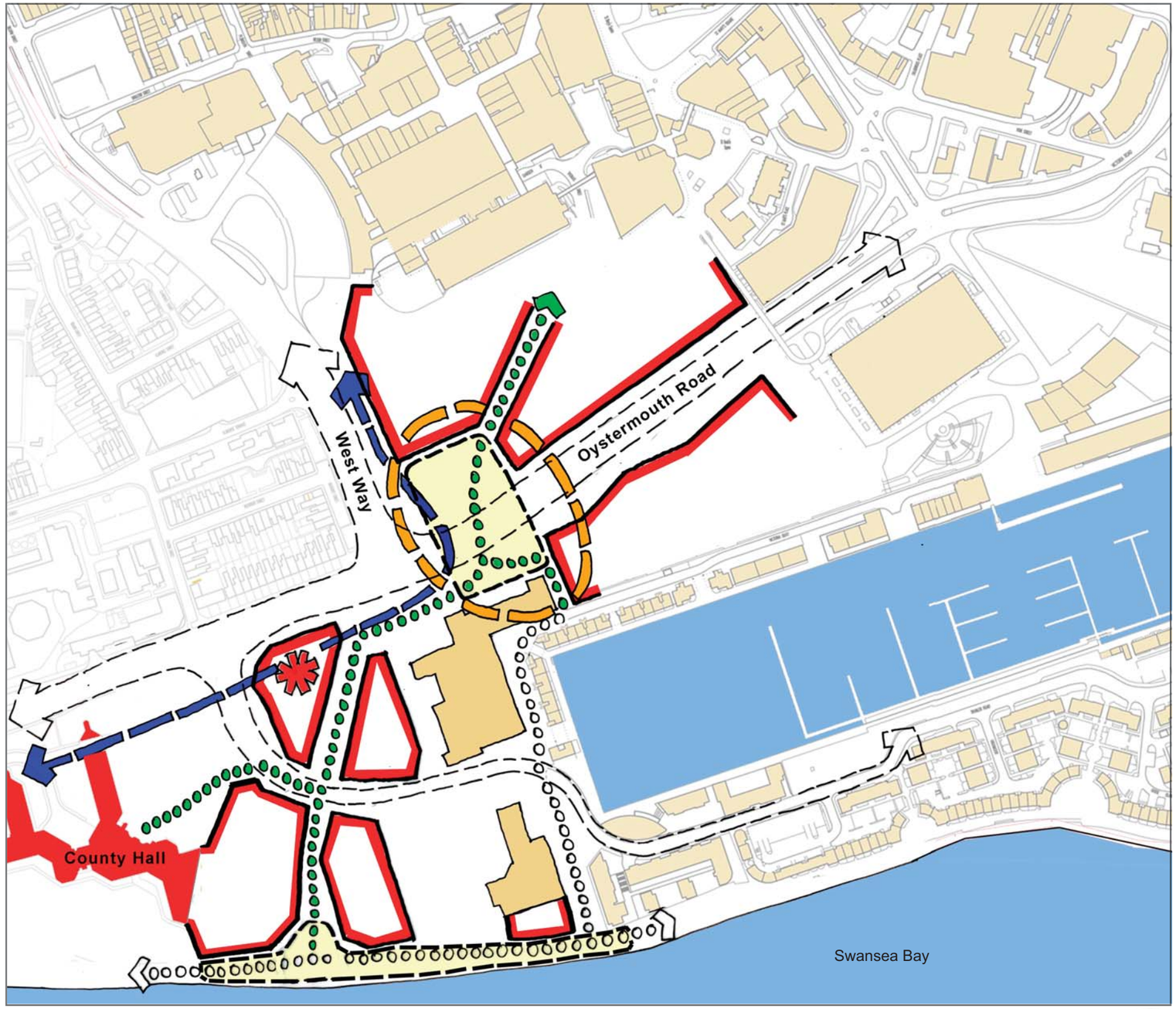
Vision for the Area

The site offers one of the last remaining opportunities to connect the City Centre to the sea and to create a quality profile for Swansea as a Waterfront City. It also provides an opportunity to deliver high quality commercial space in the City Centre.

The Vision for this Priority Area is to create an iconic mixed-use waterfront development that has the critical mass to become a destination in its own right, with excellent linkages across Oystermouth Road into the core City Centre, and around the Bay. Delivery of this Vision will substantially contribute towards meeting the aspiration of building a European Waterfront City.

Key:

- Existing buildings outside area of influence
- Existing blocks within area of influence
- New development blocks with active frontages
- Key buildings
- Public spaces (green)
- Public spaces (hard)
- Existing routes
- Proposed routes
- Route of the Metro
- City Centre gateway
- Landmark building



Paxton Street concept diagram (1:2500)

Development Principles

The key development principles are to:

- Create a high quality landmark development in a prominent location, particularly serving to improve the competitive business profile of Swansea
- Create a greater critical mass on the seafront alongside the Civic Centre in County Hall, incorporating effective links with the City Centre core
- Use the seafront location to create a destination which generates both formal and informal activity on the seafront, attracting people and businesses, and encouraging movement to and from the City Centre core
- Create the opportunity for pedestrians to easily and safely cross Oystermouth Road

Design Principles

The following key design objectives should be addressed through development of this site:

- A scheme of the highest design quality throughout, with a varied composition of buildings and uses ranging from an anchor landmark building to smaller units creating a sense of gravitas and vibrancy
- Next to the beach and promenade, a destination development comprising a beachfront public space, defined by high quality active built frontages facing the space and the promenade
- An architectural design which exhibits a character that reflects the seafront location, and exploits the opportunity and privileged position of being the only part of the City Centre next to the beach
- A development which exploits the changes in level between Oystermouth Road and the seafront, and creates interesting places and routes
- Improved connections between the City Centre core and the waterfront promenade, comprising a redefined West Way junction as a “gateway plaza”, and a route defined by active built frontage of an appropriate scale, and designed as a street to encourage pedestrians
- A continuation of the boulevard treatment and active commercial frontage of an appropriate scale (3/4 storeys) to enclose Oystermouth Road

Accessibility Principles

Accessibility principles for this Priority Area are to:

- Improve the pedestrian route between the Paxton Street site and the City Centre by introducing an enhanced at-grade pedestrian and cyclist crossing area, as a “gateway plaza” at the junction of Oystermouth Road / West Way, with a review of traffic management arrangements
- Accommodate the route of and provide waiting facilities for the new Metro rapid transit system at the “gateway plaza”
- Provide direct links from the seafront promenade through the development area, and enhance the promenade frontage

Development Proposals

Development of this area should comprise a mixed-use scheme of significant critical mass and focussed on business activity. It should include high quality office space, bars, restaurants, residential apartments, leisure uses and car parking. If land ownership/development issues can be resolved, the scheme should include a business hotel with an associated conference centre.

The scheme should attract an active business cluster and foster the competitive business role of the City Centre. Any conference centre use should be actively managed to support this focus for Swansea’s business development, and establish national and international links for the area.

With views across the Bay, a high quality public space and attraction on the seafront will draw people to the site. It is an essential and integral part of this comprehensive development scheme, contributing to the wider visitor and tourism offer around Swansea Bay.

Delivery Mechanism

It will be important to achieve the right mix of uses in this scheme to allow it to be delivered through normal commercial mechanisms. The scale of residential and office elements to be included must take into account the pipeline of new developments currently committed, under construction or already on the market in the City Centre, Maritime Quarter and SA1 Swansea Waterfront. However, the emerging Paxton Street proposals can be delivered through normal commercial processes. Good quality offices and other commercial elements of the scheme are likely to be attractive to occupiers if design issues are properly addressed.

High quality public realm should be included and delivered as part of the overall development, as should a high quality connection to the City Centre core. This linkage should be considered in conjunction with the proposals for the St David’s/Quadrant area.

Phasing

This scheme should be achievable in the short to medium term.

Achievements and targets

This site has the potential to contribute to some of the key Strategic Objectives for the City Centre, particularly that of establishing the profile of Swansea as a waterfront city.

Competitive Economy	✓	Major addition to business infrastructure
Quality Regional Shopping Centre		
High Quality Environment	✓	Attractive new buildings, and place
City Living	✓	Adds diversity including business uses, residential
Waterfront City	✓	Creates new City Centre activity on the seafront
Accessibility & Movement	✓	Creates new attractive links from City Centre to seafront
Destination City	✓	Adds new destination to the City Centre, possible hotel/conference centre
Regional Role	✓	New business presence and identity for Swansea
Distinctive Identity	✓	Iconic building on the seafront

Precedents



Brindley Place, Birmingham



Sydney Harbour



Copenhagen waterfront

Connecting the City to the Waterfront

Sailbridge

The Area

This area lies between the Dylan Thomas Centre, Victoria Road and the west bank of the River Tawe at the new Sailbridge. It is an attractive location overlooking the river and boat moorings and its setting will improve dramatically as the SA1 Swansea Waterfront commercial and housing areas develop. The character of the site also has potential due to its proximity to the Dylan Thomas Centre and the Conservation Area streets of Georgian terraces.

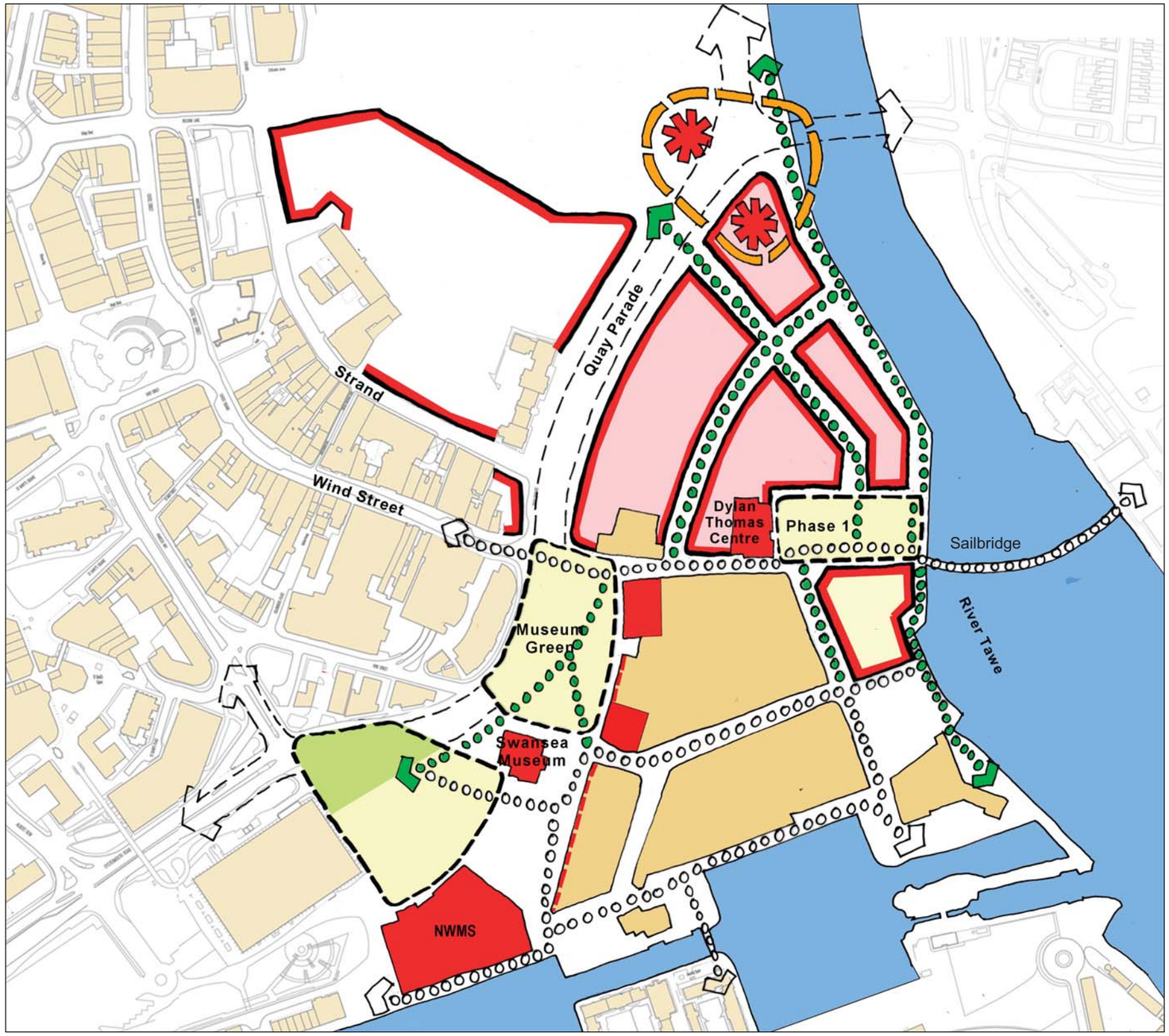
This area has a very important strategic position in the evolving City Centre, immediately adjacent to the eastern gateway to the City Centre, and a key pedestrian link between the City Centre, the River Tawe and SA1 Swansea Waterfront. As employment, business, housing and leisure activities increase in SA1 and as the City Centre core improves its retail offer, nightlife and business presence, this route will become increasingly vital to Swansea's competitiveness.

Vision for the Area

The Vision for this area is to create a significant new place in the City Centre, contributing to an improved "gateway", facilitating an important link between the core of the City Centre and SA1 Swansea Waterfront, and creating a new focus of life on the riverfront.

Key:

- Existing buildings outside area of influence
- Existing blocks within area of influence
- New development blocks with active frontages
- Existing blocks with frontage improvements
- Key buildings
- Public spaces (green)
- Public spaces (hard)
- Existing routes
- Proposed routes
- City Centre gateway
- Landmark building
- Phase 2 development
- Phase 3 development



Sailbridge site concept diagram (1:2500)

Development Principles

Development principles which are particularly significant for this Priority Area include the following aspirations:

- Development of a new high quality place which maximises the potential of its waterfront location and proximity to attractive buildings
- Introduction of a mix of uses to create a lively “destination” area, likely to focus on restaurants, bars, small offices or similar activities, as residential use is currently not possible because of the flood risk constraints
- Development of an attractive, lively pedestrian corridor, from the City Centre, via Princess Way, Wind Street and Museum Green to the Sailbridge and SA1 Swansea Waterfront
- Longer term selective redevelopment of existing sites for more appropriate uses, as opportunities arise
- Developments should give due consideration to utility services and flood risk consequences

Design Principles

Future development in this area will need to reflect the following design principles:

- Development should provide a strong “gateway” from the east with landmark buildings, defining Swansea as a major waterfront city
- Frontages along the Victoria Road boulevard should be positive and active
- The River Tawe riverbank should be a public area, designed as a pedestrian promenade/cycle way, with public art and active uses adjacent, linking to existing routes
- Development should include high quality riverside frontage that echoes the scale of SA1 Swansea Waterfront (4/5 storeys) and responds to the opportunity of river views
- High quality public space between the riverbank and the Dylan Thomas Centre should be activated by complementary ground floor uses (shops, cafés, etc.) and consideration should be given to providing an informal outdoor performance area
- Permeability through the site, visually and physically, should link existing spaces and streets with the Sailbridge, Dylan Thomas Centre and the new public spaces

Accessibility Principles

Recommended accessibility principles are:

- To include some continued provision for car parking to meet the needs of visitors in particular
- To contribute to the concept of an attractive, lively pedestrian corridor, from the City Centre, via Princess Way, Wind Street and Museum Green to the Sailbridge and SA1 Swansea Waterfront
- To provide quality cycling routes and facilities, in recognition that part of the National Cycle Network runs through the Priority Area
- To safeguard the potential for introducing bus priority along the Victoria Road corridor

Development Proposals

The aspirations for development and improvement of this Priority Area are likely to be delivered in three phases:

Phase 1: High Quality Public Realm & Improvement of Linkages. This can be achieved through the development of a high quality public “square” and pedestrian improvements in front of the Dylan Thomas Centre, contributing to the emerging public realm corridor from the City Centre, via Museum Green to SA1 Swansea Waterfront.

Phase 2: Development of the Surface Car Park. The current car park is currently of poor aesthetic quality but serves a useful purpose for cultural and leisure activities in the area. The site has potential for commercial/leisure uses, with some alternative parking provided and/or accommodated within the development.

Phase 3: Area currently occupied by Sainsbury’s and adjacent sites. On the basis that this Strategic Framework sets out proposals for development over the next 15 to 20 years, it is necessary to look at the potential of the existing Sainsbury’s site, and that of other sites, for example, adjacent to Victoria Road. Phase 3 of improvements to the Sailbridge Priority Area will offer redevelopment possibilities should sites become available, at some point in the future. If the Sainsbury’s site became available, it would contribute significantly to an enhanced scale and density of use where a high quality “gateway” to the City Centre is needed, as well as maximising the potential of the waterfront. Other sites along Victoria Road would benefit the “European Boulevard” in a similar way.

Delivery Mechanism

The Sailbridge site in front of the Dylan Thomas Centre is in CCS ownership, and development should progress through a partnership between the City and County Council and the Welsh Assembly Government.

Public sector funding will be required for public realm work under Phase 1, and potentially the car park developments and improvements envisaged in Phase 2. More intensive use of the car park for commercial uses should be deliverable through normal commercial mechanisms, with subject to alternative car parking provision being identified for the Maritime Quarter area.

The Sainsbury’s site and other sites are in private ownership, and if they became available, development should progress through normal commercial mechanisms, subject to planning and other requirements of the City and County Council. Due consideration of utility services and the need for flood risk assessments will need to be given.

Phasing

Phase 1 and potentially the car park improvements envisaged in Phase 2 should be considered in the short term, with other sites progressing on an opportunistic basis.
However, it would be preferable for commercial development to progress following the successful delivery of the Paxton Street proposals. Ownership circumstances may, therefore, dictate that this Priority Area should be progressed as part of a phased approach, throughout the Strategic Framework period.

Achievements and targets

The Sailbridge Priority Area has the potential to contribute a significant improvement to the City Centre, through the redevelopment of certain areas and improvement of the public realm. Strategic Objectives which will be addressed are as follows:

Competitive Economy	✓	Major link between business areas of the City
Quality Regional Shopping Centre		
High Quality Environment	✓	Attractive area and improved waterfront
City Living	✓	Adds riverfront business and leisure activity
Waterfront City	✓	Creates new City Centre activity on the riverfront
Accessibility & Movement	✓	Facilitates important new pedestrian link
Destination City	✓	Adds new destination area to the City Centre
Regional Role		
Distinctive Identity	✓	Attractive new area of waterfront life and identity

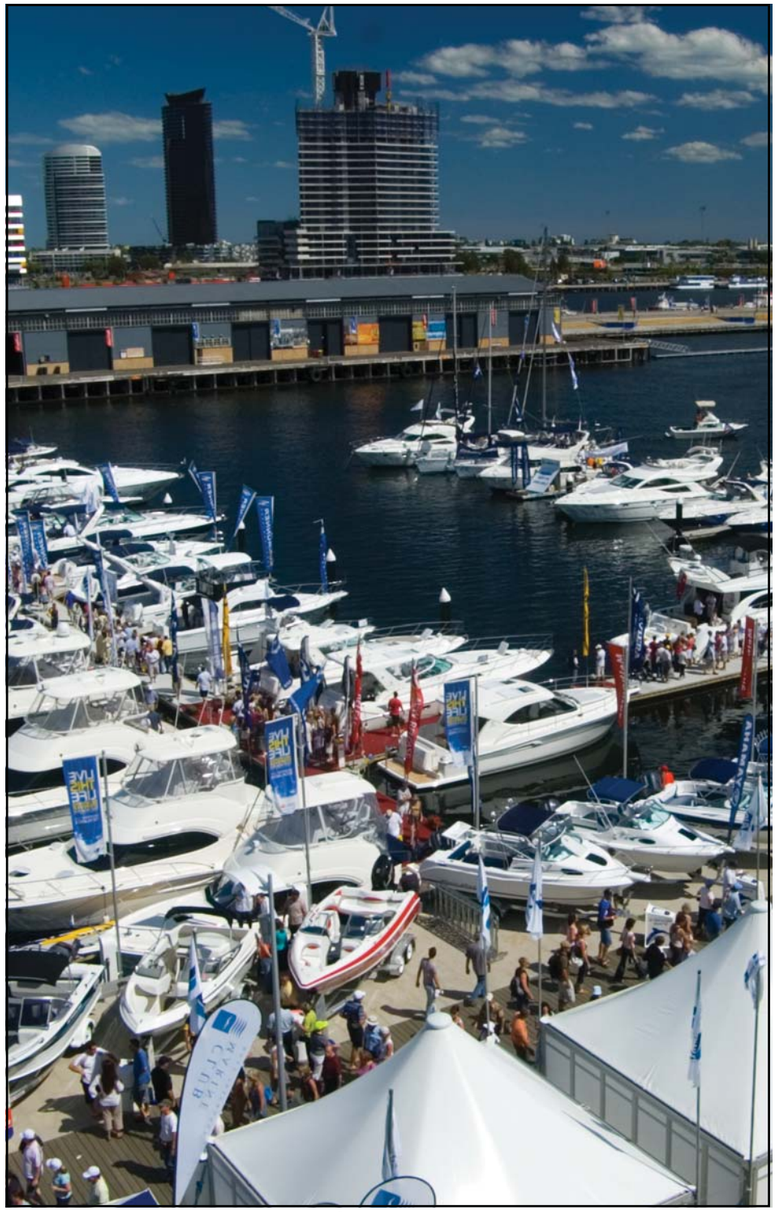
Precedents



St Katharine Docks, London



Sydney Harbour docks



Melbourne dockland waterfront

Connecting the City to the Waterfront

The Maritime Quarter

The Area

The Maritime Quarter in its current form is predominantly a residential area with limited variety or life around the waterfront and the dock. This area is introducing additional high quality residential development and must now create a mix of complementary uses which, together with the Paxton Street proposals, can create a critical mass that will stimulate greater vitality in this area.

In addition, the refurbishment of key buildings and revitalisation of the older parts of the area have contributed to the character of the Conservation Area. The emerging "cultural/leisure" destination area south of Oystermouth Road, which comprises the Swansea Museum, the Leisure Centre (under refurbishment) and the new National Waterfront Museum Swansea is important to stimulating greater vitality.

Vision for the Area

The Vision is of a Maritime Quarter which is strongly integrated with the heart of the City Centre, more lively and diverse in its character, and making a distinctive contribution to the life of an increasingly urban City Centre. It will need good access through the area and to the seafront, and good links back into the City Centre.

Development Principles

The development principles for the area are to:

- Ensure delivery of current proposals to a high standard, particularly ensuring quality of pedestrian and cycle routes and public areas
- Encourage a mix of uses, including business and leisure, within development wherever possible, without compromising the quality of life of the area, in order to add diversity and activity
- Create better connectivity with the rest of the City Centre
- Encourage the development of facilities or activities along the promenade and beach, particularly leisure activities, which can add life and create a stronger "destination" for the City Centre

Design Principles

Development within the Maritime Quarter will be expected to:

- Reflect the good architectural quality of the Maritime Quarter Conservation Area and respect the characteristics of both recent and older key buildings
- Deliver architectural design of the highest standard which promotes innovation and best practice
- Include high quality enclosed public spaces, along with effective and attractive links to the promenade and other circulation routes
- Introduce active frontages along all vehicular and pedestrian routes
- Acknowledge the significance of seafront, riverbank and dockside in their design and layout
- Include public art to enhance the attractiveness of the area

Accessibility Principles

Significant accessibility principles to be delivered are:

- Improved pedestrian and cycle environment on main routes throughout the area, particularly waterfront routes, to encourage use and linkages between areas
- Improved connections between the City Centre and the Maritime Quarter linking to key crossing points along the European Boulevard at Museum Green, Princess Way, St David's and at West Way
- Enhance existing public transport facilities and provide additional car parking selectively as part of wider development proposals

Development Proposals

There are no firm development proposals for the Maritime Quarter beyond the delivery of current commitments. These include new housing areas south of the dock, between the Marina and the sea. "Swansea Point", "Seagate" and "Ferrara Quay" and will jointly provide nearly 900 dwellings, a hotel and small commercial area. Other benefits arising from these developments include a new pedestrian bridge over the dock entrance, improvements at the area of dunes on the promenade, and an increase in the marina berthing capacity.

The main aim in future will be to focus on promoting high quality development and securing further benefits, in order to improve the overall character, connectivity and facilities of the area. For example, the provision of high quality car parking to support business and leisure uses in the Maritime Quarter should be investigated.

In addition, it may be possible to encourage a greater range of compatible uses and activities to the area, to encourage greater diversity and vitality. Developments at Paxton Street, the Sailbridge and south of Oystermouth Road will all offer opportunities in this respect.

Delivery Mechanism

The area is largely in a mixture of private sector ownerships, with active developers progressing the schemes currently in the development pipeline. Private sector investment will continue to be the main vehicle, with the local authority influencing the mix and intensity of uses, and the provision of facilities through normal planning processes.

A programme of improved public realm enhancements and pedestrian and cycle access improvements should be proposed for this area. This will need to be addressed through public sector programmes and also through the private sector.

Phasing

Development of the major housing schemes and subsequent public realm enhancements should be achieved in the short to medium term.

Achievements and targets

The Maritime Quarter is an important asset for the City Centre in terms of housing and limited leisure activity. It has the potential to add much more if it can increase its diversity and be better integrated into the City Centre. On this basis, it contributes to a number of the Strategic Objectives:

Competitive Economy	✓	Major link between business areas of the City
Quality Regional Shopping Centre		
High Quality Environment	✓	Attractive area and improved waterfront
City Living	✓	Adds riverfront business and leisure activity
Waterfront City	✓	Creates new City Centre activity on the riverfront
Accessibility & Movement	✓	Facilitates important new pedestrian link
Destination City	✓	Adds new destination area to the City Centre
Regional Role		
Distinctive Identity	✓	Attractive new area of waterfront life and identity

Precedents

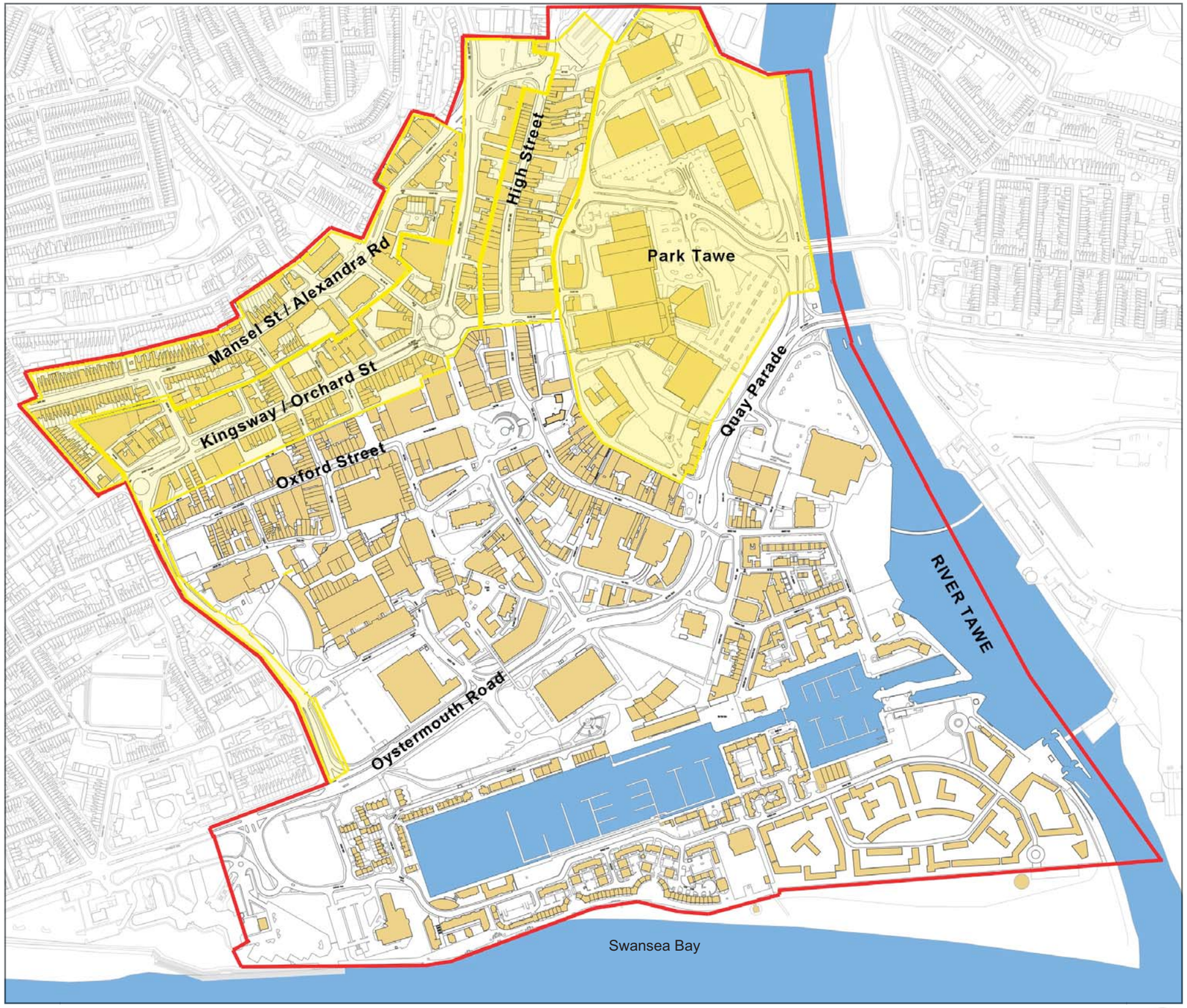


Den Bosch waterside housing, Holland

4. Complementary Districts

The Strategic Framework will develop the identities and complementary roles of all Districts, by maximising their respective strengths and attributes and delivering a range of appropriate activities and uses which complement the role of the Core area. There are four Priority Areas that merit consideration:

- Mansel Street/Alexandra Road
- Kingsway/Orchard Street
- High Street
- Parc Tawe



Complementary Districts site plan (1:7500)

Complementary Districts

Mansel Street/Alexandra Road

The Area

The area has a concentration of civic, cultural and educational activities accommodated in a number of good quality buildings. These include historic buildings at the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, the Old Police Station, the Central Library, and the Dynevor Centre for Art, Media and Design which is a recent refurbishment for Swansea Institute. A new Police Headquarters is also situated in the area.

These buildings are all situated within Alexandra Road or Grove Place, and the life they bring to the northern fringe of the City Centre creates a distinctive quality for the area, which should be reinforced and enhanced. The eastern end of Alexandra Road is an important gateway to the City Centre situated within the High Street Priority Area.

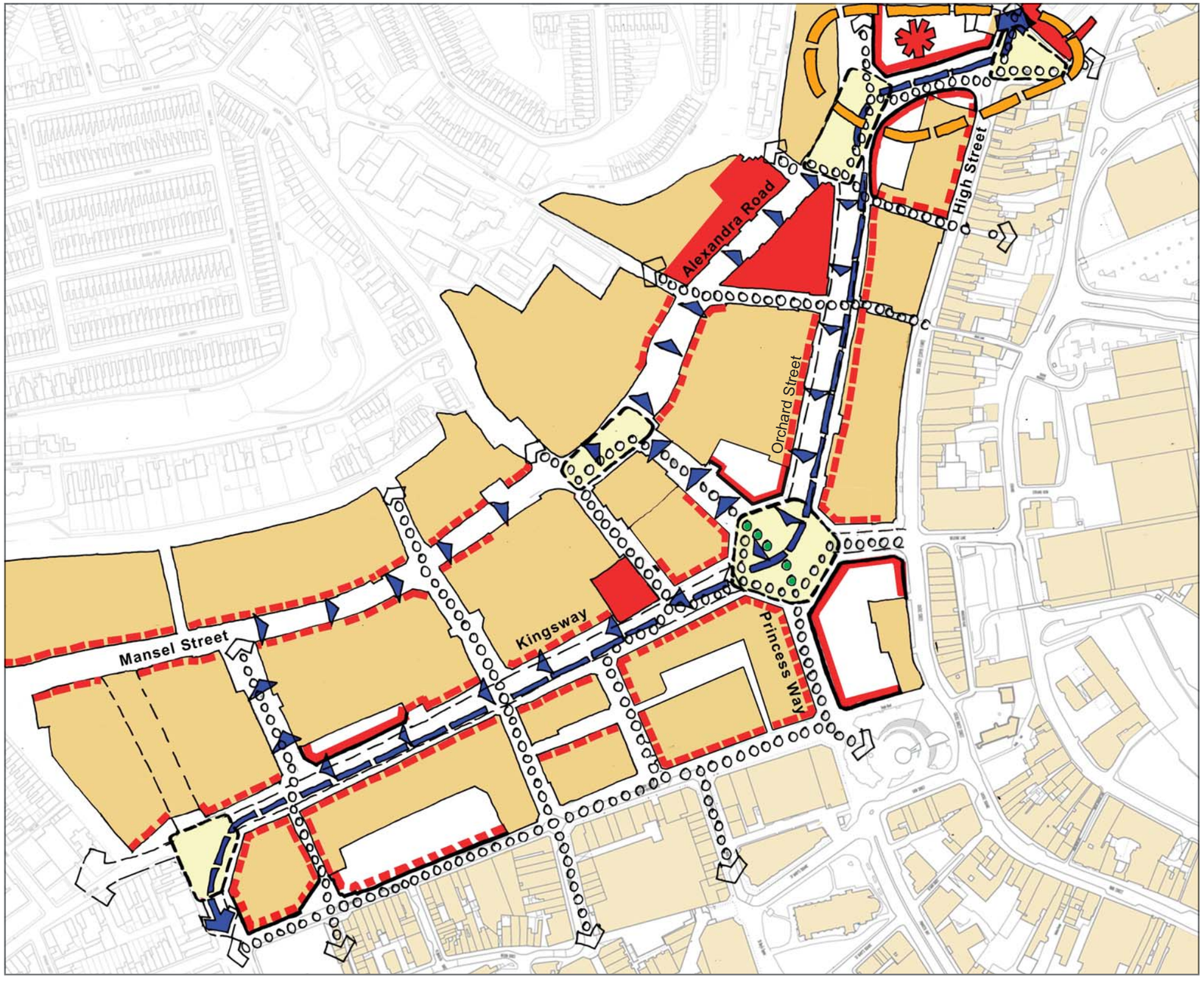
Further west, Mansel Street is an important road but has an undistinguished mixture of terraced buildings, largely used for small office-based services, and marginal retail uses. The street is important particularly in accommodating legal services close to the Courts and the new Police Headquarters nearby.

Vision for the Area

This area will be an important focus for the future civic, cultural and educational life of the City Centre, and will continue to develop in business and residential terms. It has the potential to extend its role, complementing activities elsewhere in the City Centre, and because of its increasingly important activities and its architectural merit, will be an area of special character within the City Centre.

Key:

- Existing buildings outside area of influence
- Existing blocks within area of influence
- New development blocks with active frontages
- Existing blocks with frontage improvements or potential longer term redevelopment
- Key buildings
- Public spaces (hard)
- Existing routes
- Proposed routes
- Route of the Metro
- City Centre gateway
- Landmark building
- One-way traffic system



Mansel Street/Alexandra Road and Kingsway/Orchard Street concept diagram (not to scale)

Development Principles

Development principles for Mansel Street/Alexandra Road are to:

- Prioritise development in both Mansel Street and Alexandra Road which contributes to the distinctive function of this area in the civic, cultural and education sectors and related business activities
- Increase redevelopment and refurbishment activity, particularly after the Central Library's planned move to the Civic Centre at County Hall, focusing on the need to find alternative uses for historic buildings
- Conserve, enhance and improve the character of this area by improving buildings and supporting uses which specifically contribute to culture and education
- Accommodate changes arising from the Swansea Metro, and improve the quality of environment along the road corridor, to reflect the area's character and minimise the impact of traffic

Design Principles

Important design aspirations in this Priority Area are:

- Reflect the good architectural quality of the Alexandra Road Conservation Area and respect the characteristics of both recent and older key buildings
- Deliver architectural design of the highest standard which promotes innovation and best practice
- Promote improvement of existing built frontages and introduce active frontages to bring vitality to the street scene
- Include high quality public spaces and links to integrate the area with adjacent districts
- Include public art to enhance the attractiveness of the area and to reflect its role

Accessibility Principles

Accessibility principles which need to be accommodated include:

- The introduction of a one-way system, as part of the Metro route, along with improved facilities for cycles
- A reduction in the impact of traffic, and better pedestrian crossing areas linking the cultural circuit and into adjacent areas

Development Proposals

Mansel Street and Alexandra Road should be subject to a package of high quality environmental improvements specifically designed to reflect the quality and quieter civic life of the area. In Alexandra Road, this should tackle buildings and their surroundings, and enhance the present ambience of the area outside the Art Gallery and other historic buildings. Re-use and refurbishment of these buildings is critical, and housing association plans for the Old Police Station, which include student housing, studio/workshops, offices, craft industries and function room provide a good example. Further initiatives for the Central Library and other buildings should similarly be supported, and the principle should be extended towards Mansel Street with a complementary mix of uses encouraged, together with the retention or expansion of civic, educational or cultural activities.

Buildings which house business uses in Mansel Street are likely to come under pressure in future. Some could be redeveloped to provide modern office accommodation and mixed-use with residential accommodation. There are proposals to create a new street block at the western end of Kingsway and Mansel Street through a highway scheme to extend West Way. This proposal may provide an opportunity to build a high quality office building in the City Centre core, and should be financially appraised in conjunction with the highway improvements.

Measures to reduce the impact of traffic should be put in place throughout the Priority Area, as the Metro proposals are delivered, and to create attractive pedestrian areas linking the cultural circuit.

Delivery Mechanism

Delivery of specific proposals will depend on a combination of public and private sector interventions and partnerships, and may depend on some considerable feasibility work.
The area has a mixture of public and private sector owners with the delivery of building improvements likely to be undertaken by individual owners or developers.

Apart from the Conservation Area and Listed Building context, there are no special planning issues in this Priority Area, and development will be subject to normal policy and development controls. However, there is a need for clear guidance on individual aspirations for proposals, to achieve momentum and to deliver the quality and mix of uses appropriate. The City and County Council will have to lead a proactive approach to public investment in order to promote and secure improvements to streets and the environment throughout the area. This will require public sector intervention to work with partners, assemble any site to be redeveloped, and generate enhancements.

Phasing

Metro infrastructure improvements are scheduled to take place in the short term, and will be followed by further investment. A programme of environmental initiatives should then follow. A programme of building refurbishment and new development should be explored in the short term for delivery during the entire Strategic Framework period.

Achievements and targets

This area has the potential to contribute a distinctive and attractive focus of civic, cultural and educational activity to the City Centre and should assist in meeting a number of the Strategic Objectives:

Competitive Economy	✓	Important focus of business, civic, cultural, educational activity
Quality Regional Shopping Centre		
High Quality Environment	✓	Area of historic buildings and quality environment
City Living	✓	Mix of important uses including city housing
Waterfront City		
Accessibility & Movement	✓	Important area for changes in circulation
Destination City	✓	Important activities contribute as destinations
Regional Role	✓	Education activity contributes to wider area
Distinctive Identity	✓	Important Swansea cultural and educational facilities

Complementary Districts

Kingsway/Orchard Street

The Area

The Kingsway and Orchard Street corridor is a busy main thoroughfare for cars, public transport, cyclists and pedestrians. It links important nodes in the City Centre, from the Kingsway roundabout to West Way and the Guildhall, and links the railway station to the bus station.

Orchard Street is an unattractive street with poor quality public realm and several inactive frontages on its eastern side. Despite this, there are signs of improvement to property along Orchard Street, and it does have a significant role, as it accommodates health authority services and an important multi-storey car park serving the northern part of the City Centre.

Kingsway Circle contains some of the larger and more imposing buildings from the post-war reconstruction. The majority of the other buildings along Kingsway are three-storeys in height with ground floors used for offices, banks, building societies, financial services and other service uses, such as hairdressers, beauty salons or café bars. Upper floors are generally used for nightclubs, offices and storage, although much of the upper floor space is currently vacant.
Many of the shop fronts and the buildings are in reasonable condition although some of the buildings suffer from a lack of investment. Kingsway as a whole has an old-fashioned, rundown appearance, which is particularly not helped by the concrete road surface, poor quality pavements, and the public realm in general

Carriageways and pedestrian areas on Kingsway are to be reconfigured to create the new route for Swansea Metro. This will entail new crossings and kerb lines in various areas, and major change at the Kingsway roundabout. The roundabout subway is to be filled in, and the carriageway will be moved to create a larger pedestrian area at the northern end of Princess Way.

Buildings towards the western end of Kingsway have become part of the leisure life of Swansea, with several major bar/club operators investing in their premises, and there is a lot of life on the street mainly during late night weekend evenings. This bright lights area has, however, suffered decline due to the success of Wind Street.

Vision for the Area

The vision for the Kingsway centres on creating a more attractive location in the heart of the City Centre for day and night-time economies. New-mixed use development will be encouraged seeking commercial and residential uses, but also progressing its important role for daytime and evening entertainment, and promoting greater use of upper floors. Future use as a significant public transport corridor will also encourage increased activity and vitality.

Development Principles

Development principles for the Kingsway area are to:

- Encourage investment in buildings to create modern mixed-use commercial premises for office, business, employment and pub/club related services
- Deliver improved public transport services and instigate major traffic changes based on the Swansea Metro proposals, including strategic location of Metro stops to serve the core retail area
- Improve the quality of the environment along the entire length of Kingsway and Orchard Street

Design Principles

Important design aspirations for Kingsway/Orchard Street will include:

- Prepare a design brief to guide a package of improvements along the Kingsway/Orchard Street corridor following implementation for the Metro proposals
- Promote improvement of existing built frontages which reflect the scale, function and use of buildings within the area, and introduce active frontages to bring vitality to the street scene
- Include high quality public spaces and links, particularly at the northern end of Princess Way, to integrate the area with adjacent districts
- Introduce improvements to pavements, feature lighting and other elements of public realm, to reflect its role and investment in the adjacent City Centre Core
- Include public art to enhance the attractiveness of the area.

Accessibility Principles

Recommended accessibility principles are:

- Implementation of the Metro concept and designation of Kingsway/Orchard Street as a major public transport corridor in the City Centre
- Improvements to the road, pedestrian routes, cycle ways, bus stops and street environment, and a further programme of improvements to create an attractive and effective pedestrian environment
- Improved pedestrian links to car parks and improved car park environments

Development Proposals

Implementation of the Metro concept with the attendant infrastructure and service implications is the most significant proposal for the Kingsway area. It will not only influence public transport use and traffic circulation, but will also affect activities in the adjacent retail and business areas, and along the Kingsway itself.

Specifically, redesign of the Kingsway roundabout area will provide improved crossings and will complement other environmental and traffic management improvements. Investment in prominent buildings through refurbishment and/or redevelopment, and the re-use of upper floors will provide new activities and consolidate the role of Kingsway as the key street for commercial, entertainment and service activities.

Delivery Mechanism

Road infrastructure and environmental improvements will be delivered by CCS, drawing funding from a range of public sector sources.

Delivery of development schemes for buildings in this area will depend on normal commercial (market) mechanisms, subject to the usual controls and requirements of the local authority.

Phasing

Road works to facilitate the Metro route commenced in 2006. Design of environmental improvements, including a special scheme for the northern end of Princess Way, should progress immediately, with implementation as soon as possible thereafter.

Refurbishment and redevelopment of development blocks to create new and improve existing commercial premises should proceed throughout the Strategic Framework period.

Achievements and targets

Change in this area is expected in the Kingsway and Orchard Street in the short and medium term, and will focus on environmental improvements, improving access and linkages around the City Centre. Ongoing improvements to property will consolidate the role of the Kingsway area. In the longer term, an improvement of its fabric will allow maintenance of a specialist role, in support of the functions which prevail in adjacent areas, and sustain it as a centre for late night entertainment. The following Strategic Objectives will be met:

Competitive Economy	✓	Swansea's centre for commercial and entertainment activity
Quality Regional Shopping Centre		
High Quality Environment	✓	Strong original qualities, to be enhanced substantially
City Living	✓	Mix of important uses including city housing
Waterfront City		
Accessibility & Movement	✓	New Metro route, better traffic, pedestrian and cycle routes
Destination City	✓	Major regional entertainment location
Regional Role	✓	Focus for City Centre business, regional health, and leisure functions

Precedents



Notting Hill, London



Back Bay area, Boston



Incidental space, Seville

Complementary Districts

High Street

The Area

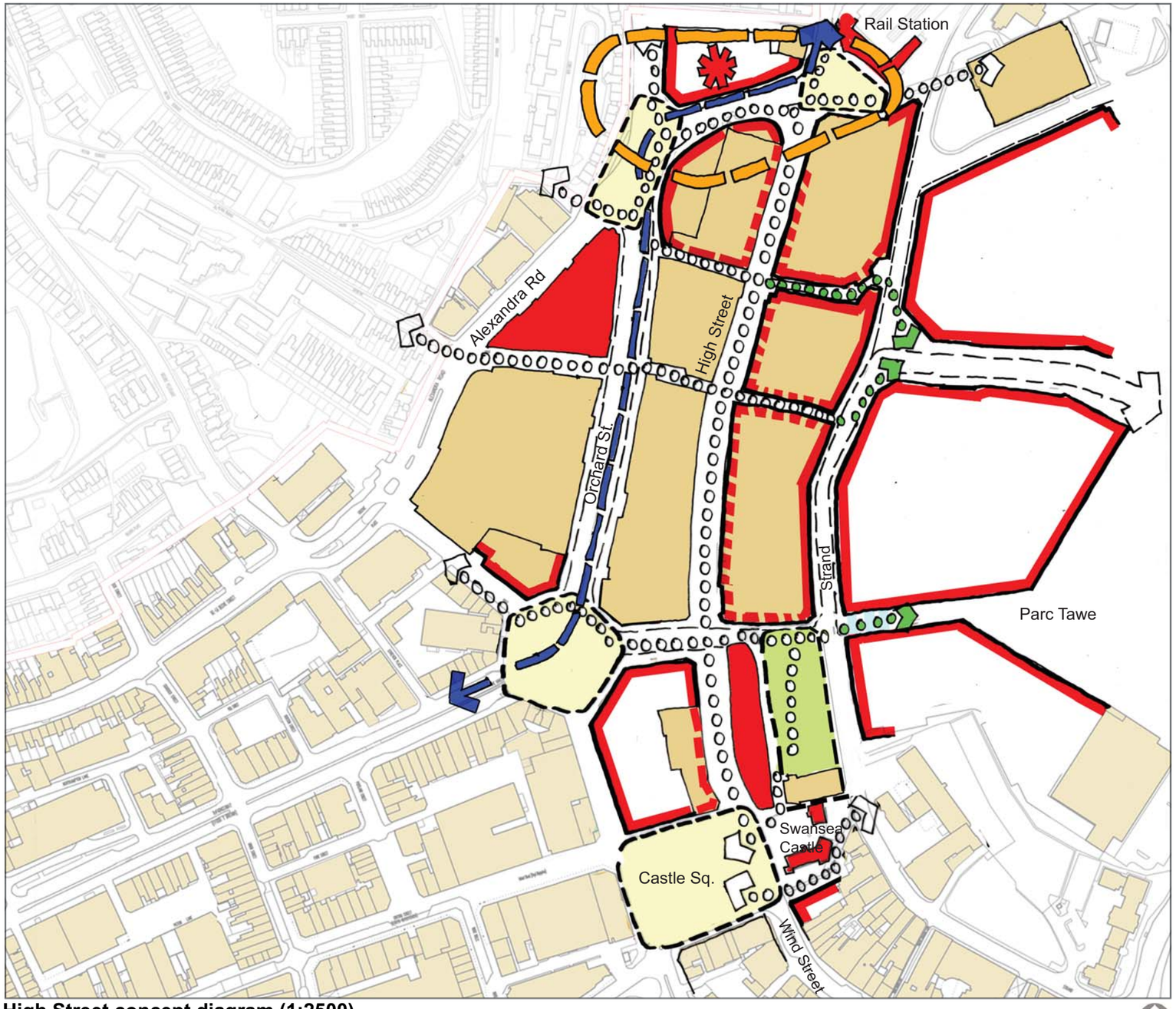
Historically, High Street was a key retail street in the City Centre, but it became less important in post-war years, following construction of the Quadrant and the establishment of Oxford Street as the main shopping street.

High Street remains an important route from the north of the City, past the railway station and on to a number of other parts of the City Centre. It has a variety of older buildings, some of which are in poor condition, and some recent buildings which have added colour and new life to the street. As the centre of retail activity has moved, High Street has increasingly become a secondary retail area, with the attendant problems which this type of change brings. Diversity has occurred with investment in other uses and housing in particular, and this has been of benefit.

With its changing role, the quality of High Street's environment has declined. Many frontage buildings are in need of attention. These include buildings on the eastern side of High Street, which stand at some height on the escarpment above Parc Tawe, with rear elevations at the Strand level below, which are often vacant, derelict, overgrown and un-maintained.

Key:

- Existing buildings outside area of influence
- Existing blocks within area of influence
- New development blocks with active frontages
- Existing blocks with frontage improvements or potential longer term redevelopment
- Key buildings
- Public spaces (green)
- Public spaces (hard)
- Existing routes
- Proposed routes
- Route of the Metro
- City Centre gateway
- Landmark building



High Street concept diagram (1:2500)

Vision for the Area

High Street will contribute a mixed-use area of distinctive character, and form a key link between the core retail area and adjacent Districts which provide employment, housing and other uses. New development and refurbishment will consolidate this mixed-use role, and with effective management, help to improve its environmental perception. The east side of High Street has development potential that would benefit from its attractive ridge setting with views to the east, and provide an attractive gateway vista of Swansea from the river bridges and approaches to the east.

Development Principles

Development principles for High Street are to:

- Establish an attractive mixed-use character street with individual buildings of an appropriate scale reflecting the existing pattern of development
- Encourage further housing development as part of mixed-use schemes, which should possibly also include offices, live-work premises, specialist or service retail, and education/ cultural/arts uses
- Encourage development or refurbishment on the eastern side of High Street to generate attractive frontage development to High Street, and a positive gateway impression of Swansea from the east
- Continue to address the issue of "problem buildings", and encourage refurbishment, modernisation or redevelopment where appropriate for active uses
- Continue to improve the street environment through environmental measures

Design Principles

The following are key design considerations in developing the High Street:

- Promote improvement of existing built frontages, both large and small scale, and introduce active frontages to bring vitality to the street scene at ground floor and beneficial use of upper floors
- Deliver architectural design of the highest standard which promotes innovation and best practice, and respects the scale and character of the area
- Promote a landmark "gateway" development opposite High Street Station
- Improve pedestrian links to integrate the area with adjacent districts

Accessibility Principles

Recommended accessibility principles are:

- Accommodate the Metro system and link it with other modes of transport at the station, with attendant provision for pedestrians and cyclists
- Promote improved use and activity at High Street Station to assist with its vitality and sustainability
- Improve pedestrian links between High Street and the Parc Tawe area
- Improve the Strand corridor and consider traffic management arrangements in the vicinity of the High Street multi-storey car park

Development Proposals

Developments in High Street will continue to promote its role as a small-scale, mixed-use vibrant area. The "urban village" scheme proposed by Swansea Housing Association between High Street and the Strand is a model of what may be achieved. It will stimulate further investment in individual or small groups of properties, and could itself be extended north towards the station. It should safeguard the specific qualities of High Street, and deliver real improvements along the Strand as well.

The surface level car park north of Alexandra Road is a development site opportunity for commercial and or residential development to a quality that reflects this important "gateway", with due consideration given to its currently important role as a car park at the design stage.

Existing buildings with particular potential include the railway station, where development and environmental possibilities prevail, and Alexandra House. This latter building is visible from many parts of the City, and significant improvements to its external appearance would not only benefit its surrounding environment, but also maximise the competitive advantage of having such an office block within the City Centre.

A programme of environmental improvements, including work to improve shop fronts and ground floor uses, has been in place for some years but could be extended if resources and other commitments permit.

Delivery Mechanism

Development in this area will be progressed through normal development mechanisms involving the private sector and Housing Associations active in the locality. Partnership working and public sector intervention may be necessary where difficult circumstances and "problem buildings" are involved.

The local authority, together with the Welsh Assembly Government, should support the development process with environmental improvements, and by adopting a pro-active stance, applying its development guidance and using its planning and other powers accordingly.

Phasing

The condition of several properties in High Street requires action in the short term, with other development proposals encouraged over the medium and long term. Early progress is, therefore, likely on more advanced projects such as the Urban Village and some of the "problem buildings", and on smaller scale improvements throughout the street.

Achievements and targets

High Street will continue in its role as a mixed-use district to complement other parts of the City Centre, and make further progress through a process of steady regeneration and renewal. Accordingly, it will contribute to a number of Strategic Objectives:

Competitive Economy		Consolidates business activity in the City Centre
Quality Regional Shopping Centre		
High Quality Environment	✓	Improvements to the street and buildings
City Living	✓	Attractive mixed-use area focussed on city housing
Waterfront City		
Accessibility & Movement	✓	Improvements to a key route linking City Centre and other Districts
Destination City	✓	Important gateway at station
Regional Role	✓	Significant government employment location
Distinctive Identity	✓	Contributing an important area of character

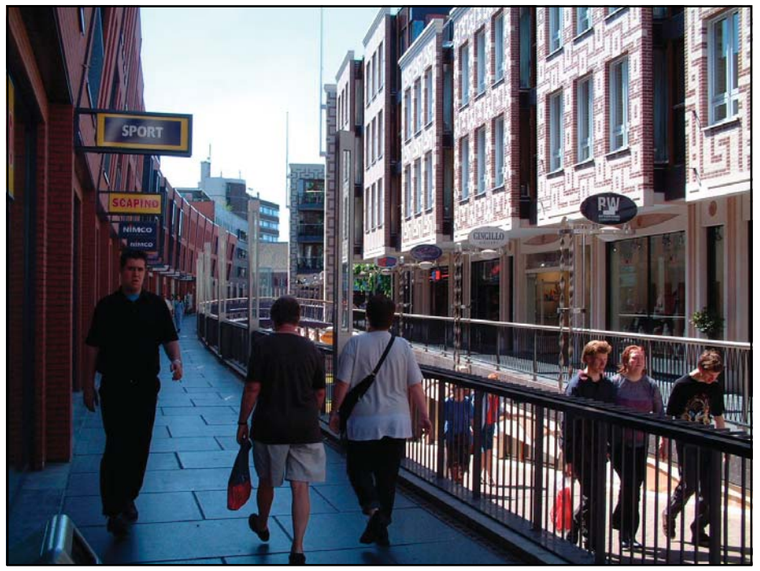
Precedents



Phoenix Quarter, Coventry



Duke of York Square, London



Marikenstraad, Holland



Davygate, York

Complementary Districts

Parc Tawe

The Area

Parc Tawe is located on the eastern side of the study area with frontage to the River Tawe, Quay Parade and the Strand.

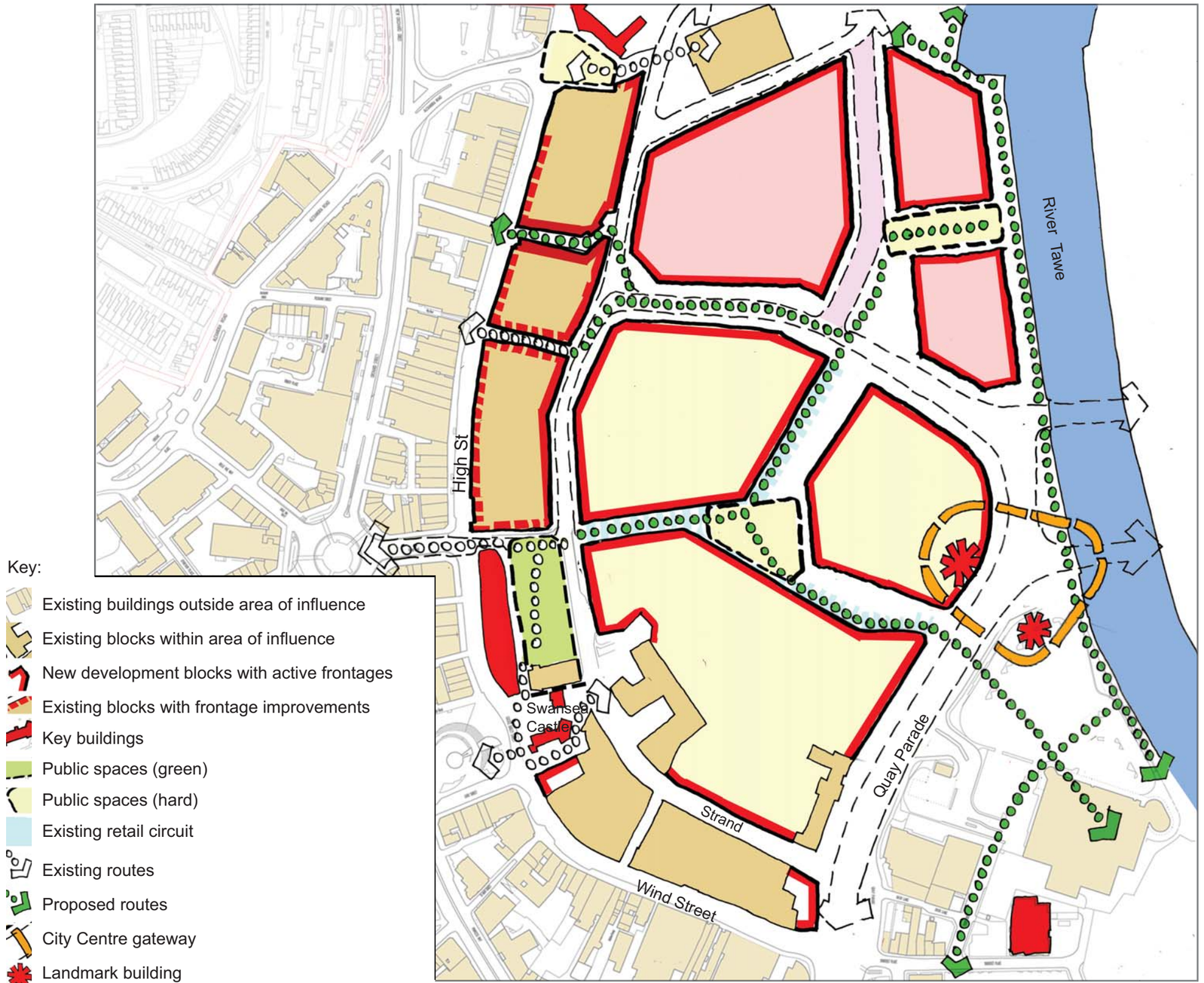
It is a prominent site at a very important gateway to the City Centre. Generally it has a poor environment and building quality. The whole area now contrasts badly with the new development facing it at the entrance to SA1 Swansea Waterfront. Links to both the City Centre core and the riverfront are poor, interrupted by major road carriageways to the east and the escarpment and poor quality development on the western fringe of Parc Tawe.

Vision for the Area

It is envisaged that the area will continue to play its role as an important retail and leisure area, complementing and not competing with retail provision in the City Centre retail core area. Linkages to the City Centre retail core, the riverfront and the surrounding environment must be fundamentally improved, if Parc Tawe is to contribute to an improved physical gateway to the City Centre and become a distinctive urban place in its own right.

The area should be retained as an established and important retail location aimed at bulky goods serving the City Centre generally. However, there should also be the inclusion of a genuine mix of other commercial and residential uses. The inclusion of high street retail uses should be strongly resisted, as this could adversely impact on the vitality and viability of the designated City Centre retail core. Parc Tawe is located within the City Centre as defined by the Local Plan and the UDP, but outside the City Centre retail core as defined in the Pre-Inquiry Modifications UDP at Policy CC2. It currently comprises large format retail units but also a multi-screen cinema, a bowling alley and “Plantasia”, an indoor public botanical attraction run by the City and County Council. It is largely reliant on car borne traffic. Pedestrian links to the City Centre retail core and the rest of the City Centre are of poor quality and involve major level changes.

Any redevelopment proposals must be at a higher density, incorporating a genuine mix of uses and a high quality public realm. In the longer term, the density should increase with surface car parking replaced by multi-storey/underground carparks with mixed use development above.



Parc Tawe concept diagram (1:2500)

Development Principles

The development principles for Parc Tawe are to:

- Ensure that new uses are complementary to and do not compromise retail-led mixed-use development in the City Centre retail core
- Ensure Parc Tawe is retained in predominantly bulky goods/commercial leisure use with no significant rise in the level of bulky or other retail goods floorspace, whilst ensuring that unit sizes do not attract traditional high street retailers
- Ensure a greater mix of uses is included in redevelopment proposals, including offices, hotel and residential uses
- Firmly establish the gateway function of the site through appropriate architectural treatment, public art and iconic features, whilst recognising the commercial development requirements of sight lines, accessibility and car parking
- Promote a development along the river frontage that is well connected through Parc Tawe and ultimately the City Centre core

Design Principles

Key design principles that will be important in the Parc Tawe area include:

- An improved urban environment throughout the area and along the riverfront, with significantly better permeability and pedestrian linkage to the City Centre retail core, and improvements to the road network to reduce traffic impact
- Active and high quality frontage along Quay Parade, the Strand and within the layout of the site
- The scale of buildings and the quality of architecture must be appropriate to achieve an urban character and sense of place. Large single storey pavilion buildings or other solutions that would result in an 'out of town' retail park character would be considered highly inappropriate at this location
- A quality public realm including new public spaces within the layout of the site to act as focal points for the retail and commercial leisure area, and adjacent to the riverside
- Gateway buildings at the Quay Parade frontage, to form part of the wider gateway improvements, of a scale which emphasises a sense of arrival at the entrance to the City Centre

Accessibility Principles

Recommended accessibility principles are to:

- Improve operation and ease of use of Tawe Bridge junctions for pedestrians, cyclist, buses and general traffic by introducing one-way system
- Consider the implementation of a gyratory at the northern apex of the site to improve traffic flows, enhance junction design and linkage to adjacent roads, and facilitate the potential for internal integration of development plots
- Consider the opportunity to move New Cut Road in order to enlarge parcels of land for a critical mass of development on the riverside
- Create improved pedestrian linkages through the site to connect with existing roads and streets beyond the Strand to High Street, Castle Street and Wind Street

Development Proposals

Development of Parc Tawe should be phased in the following manner:

Short to Medium Term

- Redevelop Parc Tawe Phase 1 to improve the provision of bulky goods edge of centre larger retail units, retaining current levels of retail floorspace and types of unit, and not aimed at high street retailers, as part of a higher density mixed-use solution that exhibits a distinctive urban character
- Ensure complementary uses such as residential, offices, hotels and further commercial leisure are included in any redevelopment proposals
- Improve car parking and road access from the Tawe Bridges road system
- Create attractive high quality development, with active frontages along Quay Parade, Victoria Road and Worcester Place
- Significantly improve links to the City Centre retail core and riverside
- Undertake environmental improvements to the rear of Worcester Place as part of improved linkage to the City Centre
- Consider the possibility of implementing traffic management system at the northern apex

Medium to Long Term

- Consider the redevelopment of Parc Tawe Phase 2 for higher density mixed-use activity as part of the reconfiguration of bulky goods larger retail units, and develop the waterfront area for high quality residential development with complementary uses
- Investigate the realignment of the road to maximise development of the waterfront whilst retaining the key link from the Tawe Bridges to the north
- Intensify development at Parc Tawe Phase 1, possibly through multi-storey car parking, and further "wrap around" mixed-use development with active road frontages
- Encourage complementary uses such as commercial leisure to increase density in Phase 1 and Phase 2

Delivery Mechanism

Development of all proposals for Parc Tawe should take place through normal commercial (market) mechanisms. The City and County Council will retain a freehold interest in Parc Tawe with the head leases being controlled by private sector developers/funds. The future of Plantasia will be discussed as part of the commercial negotiations.

As a consequence of the Council's land interest in Parc Tawe a proactive stance should be taken regarding the key stakeholders. The Parc Tawe Phase 1 head lease has recently been purchased and there is potential to effect a positive partnership approach to the delivery of the short to medium term options for the Phase 1 area.

Phasing

Redevelopment of Parc Tawe Phase 1 should occur within the short to medium term, including resolution of access, car parking and design issues within the site. Redevelopment of Parc Tawe Phase 2 and further development of Phase 1 is a longer term aspiration.

Achievements and targets

If these proposals are implemented, Parc Tawe will make a significant contribution to the retail competitiveness, environmental quality and image of Swansea City Centre, particularly improving the quality of a key gateway. Long term aspirations would ultimately create an attractive mixed-use waterfront district, complementing other parts of the City Centre. Parc Tawe will meet the following Strategic Objectives:

Competitive Economy	✓	Strengthens City centre and adds diversity
Quality Regional Shopping Centre	✓	Complements core retail area functions
High Quality Environment	✓	Improvements to gateway, Parc Tawe streets and buildings
City Living	✓	Adds options for residential and leisure
Waterfront City	✓	Draws riverside in to City Centre development
Accessibility & Movement	✓	Improvements to gateway corridor, links to City Centre, traffic circulation
Destination City	✓	Improves City Centre as destination
Regional Role		
Distinctive Identity	✓	Creates a distinctive area identity

Precedents





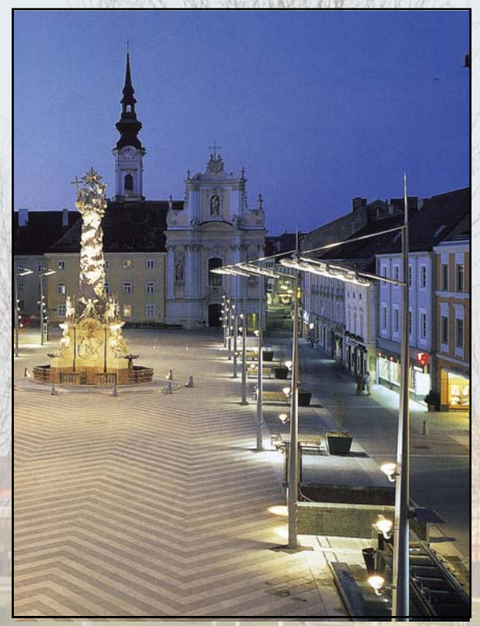
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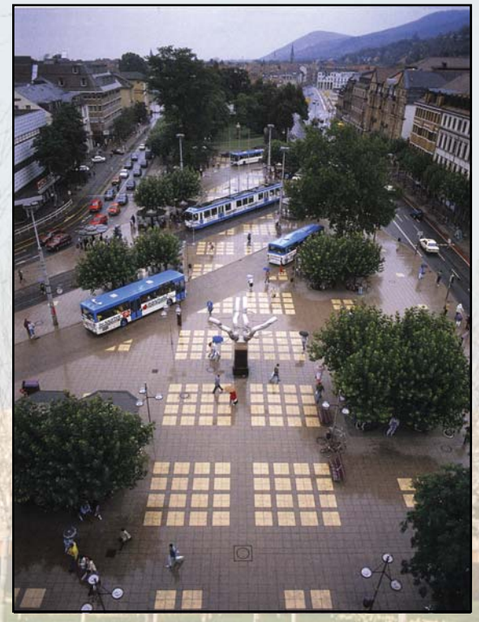
Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth



The Oracle, Reading



Rathausplatz St. Polten, St. Polten, Austria



Bismarckplatz, Heidelberg Germany



Piazza Matteotti, Cantanzaro, Italy

Framework Review

Delivery

The strategy and proposals established in the Regeneration Framework are based on an assessment of what is realistically deliverable, but will require focused energy and resources if they are to be achieved.

Therefore, a Delivery Strategy and Action Plan is an integral part of this Strategic Framework. The Action Plan in particular sets out a schedule of activities, and will be used to programme inputs from a range of organisations, to achieve a phased and viable sequence of development and change.

To ensure that the programme is delivered, there are some key issues relating to planning context, management and maintenance, delivery mechanisms and partnership activity, which require attention.

Planning Policy

The Pre-Inquiry Modifications Unitary Development Plan incorporates amendments following a round of public consultation. Following a public inquiry and inspectors report in 2007, the plan can move forward to the final stages of adoption.

It is recognised that the policy set out in the Pre-Inquiry Modifications UDP is complemented by the greater level of detail as set out in this Framework. Accordingly, it is envisaged that the SCCSF is adopted as Council's corporate policy and elements of the Framework will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in due course. In addition, planning and development briefs will be prepared where necessary for key City Centre sites, with priority given to the City Centre retail core area, and St David's/Quadrant in particular. Therefore, the Framework will, in due course, be a material consideration in the development and implementation of planning policy.

It is fundamental to the delivery of the Strategic Framework, that planning policy prevents retail development coming forward which could be seen as prejudicing the vitality and viability of the retail core area within the City Centre. The Pre-Inquiry Modifications UDP makes it clear that any retail development either within or outside the City Centre must be evaluated against the aim of not compromising the early delivery of the "highest priority" of St David's/Quadrant.
As with retailing, the City Centre needs to be a focus for office growth with new development opportunities being brought forward within this area as a priority. The UDP recognises also that residential development represents an important means of breathing new life back into the City Centre.

Management and Maintenance

It is essential that the longer term management and maintenance consequences are considered during the early planning and design stages of a development. This will ensure that the regeneration of the City Centre is secured and maintained in the future. Proposals in the Strategic Framework fall broadly into three categories, each of which pose different challenges for management and maintenance:

- Larger development projects
- Other development and infrastructure projects
- Public realm and environmental improvement projects

Common issues in securing appropriate standards of management and maintenance include:

- Establishing and maintaining clear environmental, service and management standards for all areas and buildings
- Negotiating appropriate terms and funding, for implementation and maintenance of new development projects and environmental improvements, at the outset of each project
- Establishing clear lines of responsibility for management and maintenance

Such issues can be addressed by the commissioning agencies ensuring that agreements with developers and specifications for schemes are suitably drafted, and that any such requirements imposed by funding bodies are adhered to. The City Centre Partnership could potentially play an important role, particularly through the Business Improvement District, in securing these standards in specific areas where it has an interest, for example, in service level agreements for maintenance.

Local delivery mechanism

Delivering the City Centre regeneration agenda will be a major challenge. No one authority or agency has the full range of resources, powers and experience available to meet that challenge, and deliver the scale of change which is involved. While the private sector is expected to deliver large parts of the development programme, there will be a significant need for public funding, particularly for public realm and infrastructure projects. A significant level of capital and revenue funding will also be needed to start the process, in order to undertake detailed feasibility work, especially for early projects.

Experience suggests that a team with a dedicated staff of around seven or eight people, with specialist skills, should be established to co-ordinate delivery of the Strategic Framework. Such a team should be established and should operate from its own office with its own brand identity. If this is not feasible, other resources should be explored to ensure progress on the Strategic Framework.

There is a need for a properly established structure to co-ordinate delivery, for which there are realistically three possible approaches:

- A joint working arrangement, informally constituted as a partnership between public sector agencies, with mechanisms in place to involve the private sector as appropriate
- A joint venture (JV), formally constituted as a partnership between public sector agencies, and possibly the private sector
- A formally incorporated organisation, normally a company limited by guarantee, along the lines of the Urban Regeneration Companies (URCs) established in England and in Newport

The latter option would involve establishing an organisation which has the status, resources and direction to lead regeneration in Swansea City Centre for many years. The board of the company would need substantial private sector representation and an independent chairman. The company would work very closely with the City and County Council and the

Welsh Assembly Government.

The Joint Venture option would replicate existing arrangements which prevail for part of the City Centre already, but would need to be extended to cover all of the study area. It would require formal legal documentation that would cover financial commitments, executive and administrative arrangements. This option would primarily involve the City and County Council and the Welsh Assembly Government as key partners charged with delivering regeneration over a specified period of years, with attendant requirements in terms of funding and the submission of financial bids.

The joint working arrangement is less formal, but would essentially involve a similar approach to the Joint Venture, without entering into a legal commitment. It would facilitate and require wider partner representation, and detailed structures for participation by and involvement of those partners in terms of strategy and delivery. This model could be a development of the existing relationship between the City and County Council, the Welsh Assembly Government (formerly the Welsh Development Agency) and the City Centre Partnership.

Whichever model is pursued, it will be fundamental to establish formal funding commitments, on a three-year rolling programme basis, from the City and County Council and the Welsh Assembly Government, consistent with the requirements of the City Centre Strategic Framework Action Plan. It would also be significantly enhanced by a commitment from the City and County Council to recycle capital receipts and revenue income from land and property within the City Centre, to support the implementation and sustainability of the Framework.

The Role of the City Centre Partnership

The City Centre Partnership will be a main player in the delivery of the Strategic Framework. It draws key partners from across the different sectors together, and establishes a profile for the City Centre. It is also entering a new phase in its development with the establishment of the Business Improvement District, and this will provide further opportunities for partnership activity. The City Centre Partnership should be the guardian of the Vision and Strategic Objectives of the Framework, and will need to work closely with the delivery organisation.

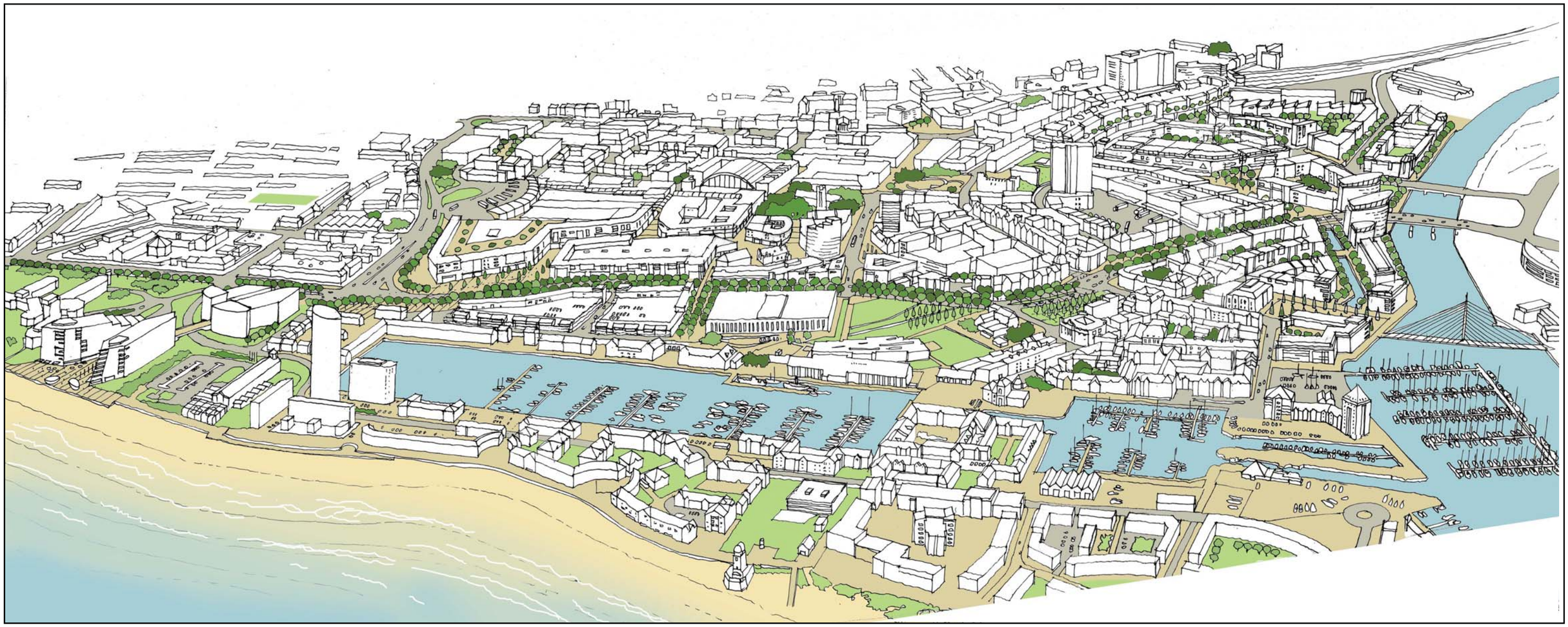
Whichever mechanism is chosen to cement the relationship between the local authority and the Welsh Assembly Government, as lead partners they will jointly need to prepare and agree an annual business plan and a longer term programme of implemention, with appropriate arrangements for monitoring and review. The City Centre Partnership has assumed an important role in this respect in the past. Along with the BID company, it will need to consider its role in the future, at a strategic and operational level, in the planning, delivery, management and maintenance of the City Centre.



Creating a safe and friendly public environment



Swansea City Centre



A successful, European Waterfront City – an indication of how Swansea City Centre could look

The Future for Swansea City Centre

The proposals in the Regeneration Framework provide ambitious but deliverable ways to achieve the Vision established for the Strategic Framework. Within 15 years Swansea City Centre should be:

> "A vibrant, exciting, attractive, sustainable, cultured European Waterfront City Centre, attracting businesses and visitors, driving the economy and enhancing the quality of life of residents of Swansea and South West Wales."

By creating a vibrant, mixed-use heart to the City Centre, creating a European boulevard through the City Centre, developing the waterfront areas, and creating distinctive, complementary districts throughout the City Centre, Swansea will have been transformed through its regeneration.

The physical outcome of this transformation can only be expressed in indicative terms, as the Strategic Framework needs to be both strategic and flexible to respond to changing circumstances over the fifteen-year period. However, each of the stated Strategic Objectives should be achieved to support this Vision by 2020, and Swansea would then benefit from:

- **A Competitive City Centre**, more diverse and stronger in the knowledge economy, supporting nearly 10,000 new jobs in financial and business services, retailing, hotels and other sectors
- **A Quality Regional Shopping Centre**, through development of key sites to achieve a "step change" in the quality of the centre. It will have new, high quality premises accommodating high street names and department stores, a diverse range of quality specialist shops, and an attractive and accessible City Centre environment
- **A High Quality Environment** and a reputation for environmental excellence and responsibility. The City Centre will have high quality new buildings, streets and spaces; distinctive and iconic buildings; attractive City Centre "gateways"; a strong sense of place enlivened by attractive landscaping of the public realm and public art; and initiatives to encourage mixed-use sustainable development
- **Attractive City Living** bringing skills and spending power into the City Centre and supporting an inclusive, diverse and distinctive community. It will provide a wide range of high quality residential and employment choices in the City Centre, a sophisticated cultural infrastructure and high quality services, modern formal and informal leisure facilities, and more enjoyable "street life"
- Its **enhanced role as a lively Waterfront City**, providing good access throughout attractive waterfront areas, mixed-uses on the waterfront, and better links from the waterfront to the rest of the City
- **Improved Accessibility and Movement**, reconnecting the City Centre with its waterfront and hinterland, with attractive streets and spaces for pedestrians and cyclists, "shopper circuits" to make the City Centre more enjoyable and successful, and good public transport services and facilities, improved parking, park & ride, and other facilities
- Its **new status as a Destination City** with nationally and internationally recognised facilities, a wider range and higher quality of hotels and other accommodation, and significant improvements in the quality of environment, shops, services and facilities in the City Centre
- **A stronger Regional Role**, providing a focus for national government and public agencies, a significant centre for strategic delivery of education, health and local government services, reflecting its responsibilities within the wider city-region
- **A Distinctive Identity**, reflecting Swansea's strong cultural identity and heritage in design principles for new development with key buildings which express and develop that identity and facilitate cultural, business and leisure activities.

Competitive Economy	✓
Quality Regional Shopping Centre	✓
High Quality Environment	✓
City Living	✓
Waterfront City	✓
Accessibility & Movement	✓
Destination City	✓
Regional Role	✓
Distinctive Identity	✓