

SWANSEA CITY CENTRE RETAIL & LEISURE REVIEW & REPURPOSING STRATEGY

Final Report
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INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1 Introduction

BDP was commissioned to develop, together with Rivington Hark, PJA, and AECOM a repurposing strategy for Swansea's City Centre in response to the accelerated contraction of the retail offer within the city.

The baseline study has been based on site visits, a desktop analysis of current uses in the city centre, movement and traffic appraisal, a review of planning policy and meetings and interviews with stakeholders and retailers. The masterplan vision and strategy underpinning the proposed interventions were informed by a series of workshops with SCC officers and relevant stakeholders.

The masterplan strategy and proposed interventions will be evaluated and feed into an Action Plan, developed in liaison with Rivington Hark, that will outline the potential benefits of the interventions and make a recommendation on their phased implementation.

1.2 Context of the Study

Swansea Council has been actively involved, since 2016, in the regeneration of Swansea's City Centre, with a particular focus on the transformation of its post war retail core. In Swansea this has been illustrated by the Swansea Central Area Regeneration Framework's strategic approach which identifies the need to diversify the city's economic base as a mixed use leisure and retail destination that also offers good opportunities for quality employment and living. The delivery of Copr Bay, a £135 million public funded mixed use development which includes a new multi-purpose arena, hotel and high quality public realm showcases the Council's success in leading the drive for positive change for Swansea. This has been further supported

with additional interventions such as the greening and enhancement of the Kingsway, or the imminent construction of a new hub for tech and creative industries in 71/72 Kingsway which has been part funded by the Swansea Bay City deal.

Changing perceptions of Swansea as an attractive and vibrant waterfront city to live, work and visit have been instrumental in attracting private investment for development. The positive response of the private sector to the Shaping Swansea procurement process for the development of 7 strategic sites further reinforces the implementation of an urban regeneration and economic agenda with strategic support from the Welsh Government.

However, the economic downturn experienced world over as a result of Covid-19 has greatly impacted Swansea too and has accelerated structural change in the retail sector. Changing consumer habits and the growing influence of online shopping had already been driving in recent years a rethink of the role and character of town and city centres in the UK as retail destinations. The effects of the pandemic have catalysed the transformation of the high street and brought forward the need to prepare for a post lockdown scenario where the retail offer in town and city centres further contracts as internet shopping continues to attract a growing proportion of consumer spending.

The recent loss of Debenhams and Topshop, and the expectation that Next will follow suit underline the speed at which the contraction of retail offer in Swansea is happening. Amongst other impacts, this may slow down the momentum generated by public sector investment to regenerate and rejuvenate the Central Area.

Swansea Council has acknowledged the need to rapidly intervene and manage the contraction of retail via a strategy to repurpose areas of the City Centre (buildings and public realm) with

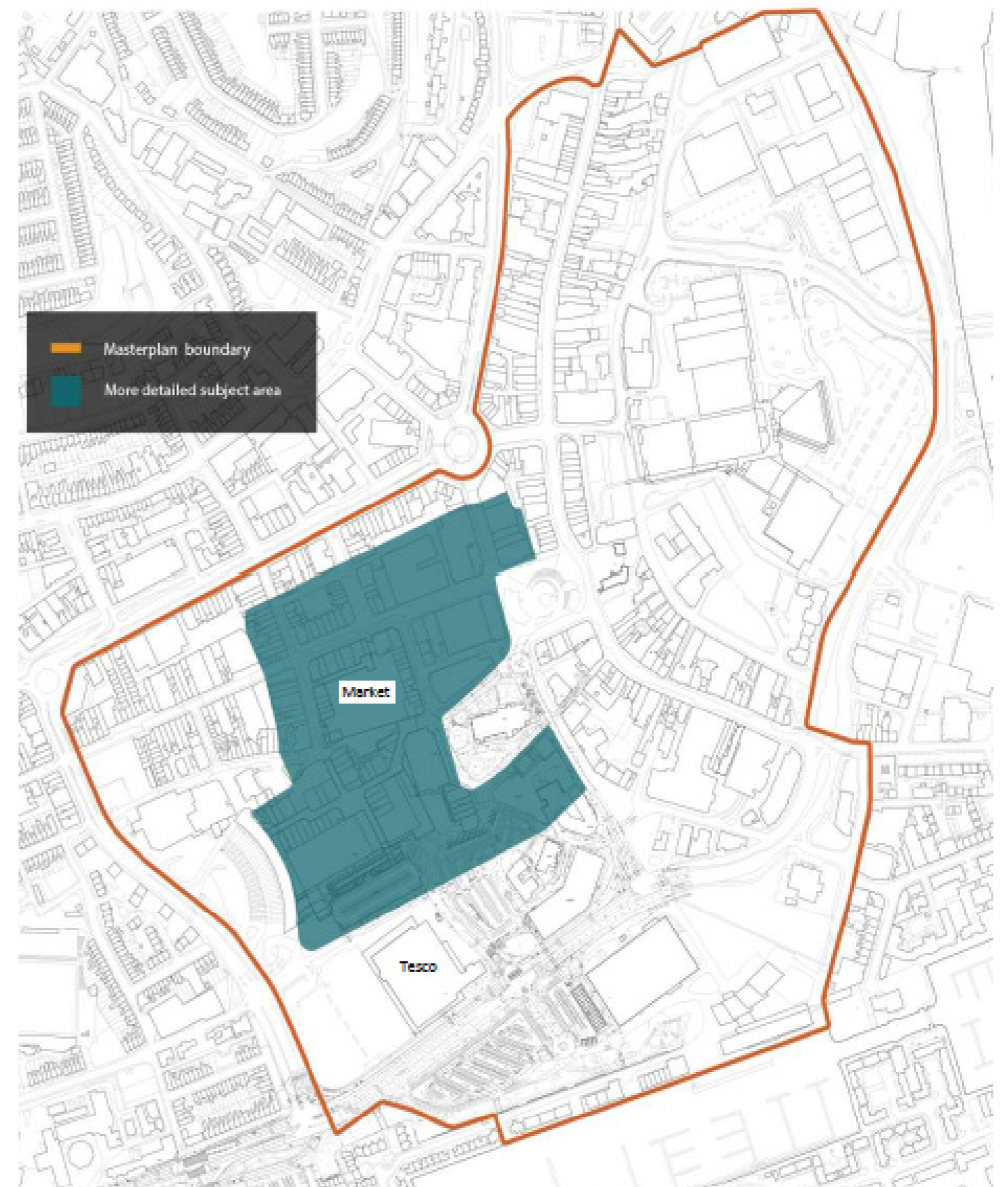


fig 1.1: Scope of Study

new uses to underpin an engaging, meaningful and sustainable regeneration process.

1.3 Objectives and Approach

The principal objective of the study is to design a strategy to manage the rapid contraction of Swansea’s retail offer, and plan the repurposing of parts of its city centre to redirect its future regeneration. The methodology to develop the strategy has been based on an approach structured around the following actions:

- Reviewing current retail and leisure outlook
- Assessing city centre uses
- SWOT analysis in respect of the previous point
- Reviewing relevant updates to local, regional and national planning policy
- Developing criteria to identify and assess potential interventions
- Designing detailed proposals of preferred interventions to be costed and evaluated in terms of viability
- Identify delivery mechanisms and funding strategies for the interventions
- Make recommendations on future short term, medium term and long term actions

The project has focused on the geographic area indicated in the project brief. This includes a masterplan boundary and a more detailed study area around Swansea Market, St.Marys, Quadrant and Oxford Street. Inevitably the study has extended beyond this boundary and considered the city’s Central Area as defined in the Swansea Central Area Regeneration Framework (SCARF), and other opportunity areas from the Shaping Swansea initiative.

GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Given the time constraints of the study it was important to focus the work on a specific area. Figure 1.1 shows the outline of the agreed study boundary edged red. The boundary was set purposefully to include all the principal retailing areas of the city whilst also including major cultural attractions and transport nodes. Given the importance of connecting the city to the waterfront the boundary extends to the marina in the south. The green shaded area is focused on the prime retail area identified for more detailed study and the principal focus of the interventions strategy.

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

Swansea has suffered for a long time from the legacy of the 1960’s rebuilds after the bomb damage of the Second World War. For over 25 years the City Council had worked with major private sector developers who failed to deliver the promised transformation. Namely, to create a vibrant and healthy retail and leisure core that attracts the whole of the Swansea catchment.

In 2016 this led to the City Council stepping in. It was acknowledged that to improve the city as a place to shop, work, live and play, the perception, environment, and growth momentum had to change. This resulted in the delivery of Copr Bay, the £135 million publicly funded mixed-use development in the heart of the city due for completion in 2021. Copr Bay is delivering a major new Arena for entertainment and conferencing events, a hotel, a new public park, public realm improvements, improved connectivity between the city and the beach, car parking and residential accommodation.

The development’s positive impact has already been evidenced by the response received from private sector developers to the Shaping Swansea tender currently under way for the 7 strategic sites.

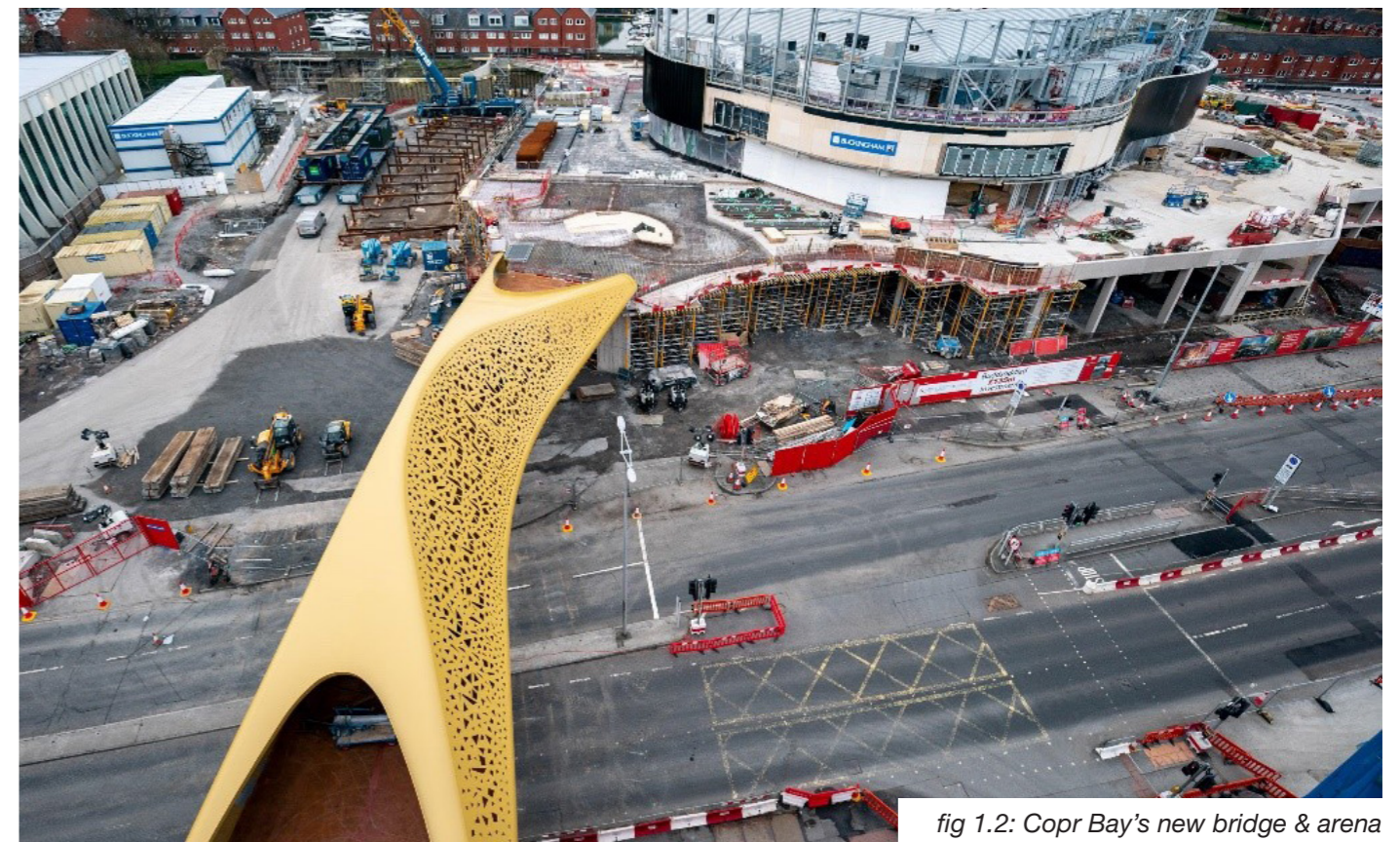


fig 1.2: Copr Bay’s new bridge & arena

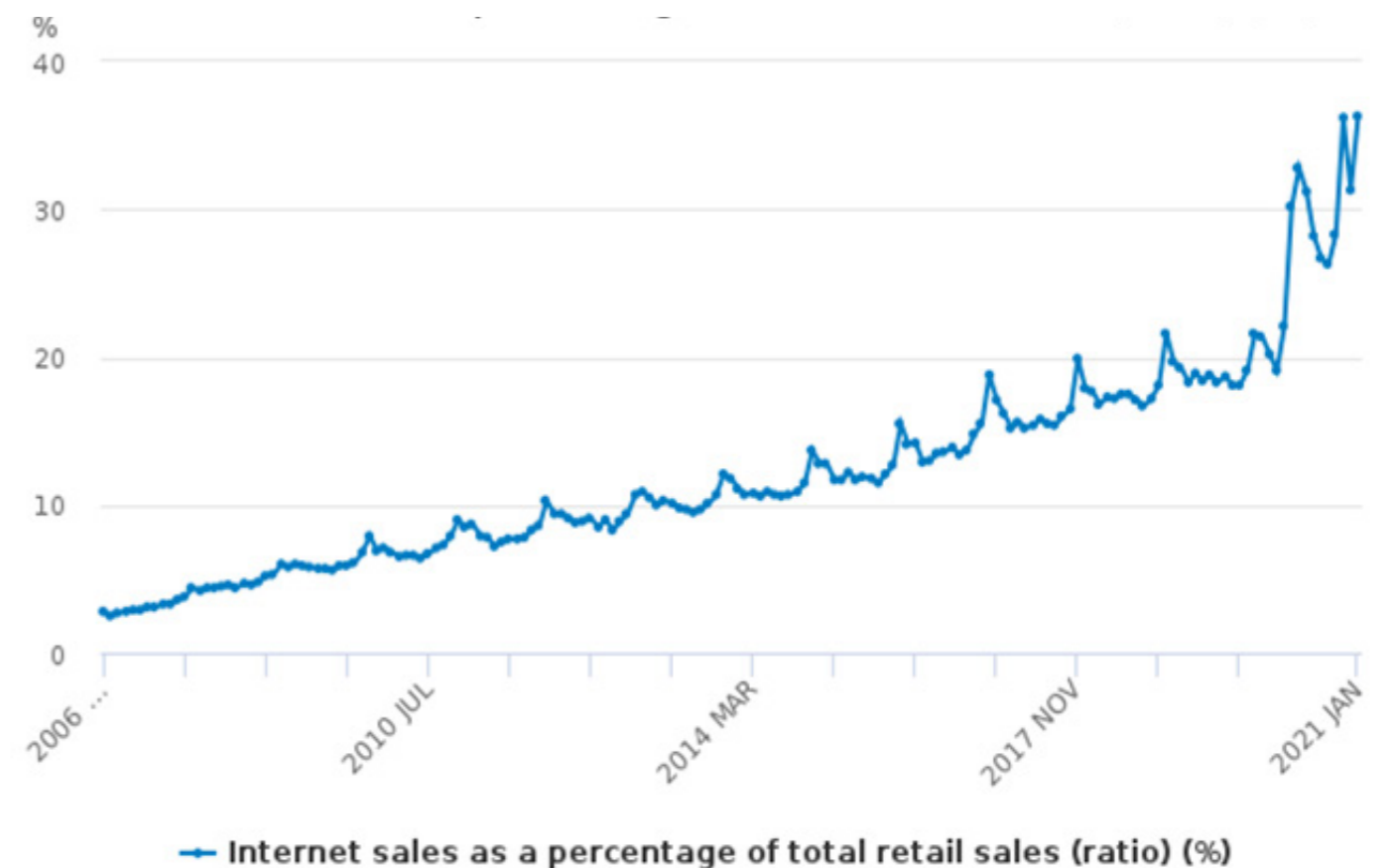


fig 1.3: Internet Sales

Regretfully, the structural change in the retail sector has gained momentum having been accelerated by the impact of Covid-19, the internet, and the continued use of insolvency practices such as Company Voluntary Arrangements (CVA's) to exit lease obligations or reduce rents. The cliché of 10 years trend being consolidated into 10 months is well used. Thus, despite the positive action being taken by the Council, like many other major cities, Swansea is being devastated by these national trends.

Internet sales that were already progressively increasing for a decade have been turbo charged by lockdowns and, whilst shoppers will return to the high street, the internet is going to continue to make up a significant proportion of consumer spending. It is widely accepted that all towns and cities in the UK are now over provided with retail property. The recent collapse of Debenhams and the Arcadia group at the end of 2020 and the expectation that Next will close in the city centre means Swansea's retail attraction is diminishing fast and is not commensurate with Wales' second city.

The reality is there is now a rapid contraction of the retail offer in the city. This is happening faster than the speed with which the interventions are coming out of the ground. If this contraction and rejuvenation is not managed strategically, Swansea could end up with a significant loss of sustainability and vibrancy at just the time we should be driving forward following the delivery of Copr Bay.

Whilst these rapid changes are not welcome, their immediacy does necessitate rapid intervention if the city centre environment is to be appropriate for Swansea's status. Considered consolidation of retail is required and this is unlikely to be forthcoming from the private sector. It is also imperative that action is taken to protect the investment already being made by the public sector in the City Centre,

particularly Welsh Government and the Local Authority with the likes of Copr Bay, Digital Village and Wind Street public realm.

1.4 Setting

One very important aspect to be considered in the study is Swansea's unique setting. The city centre is set against a backdrop of 3 hills, Town Hill and Mayhill to the north and Kilvey Hill to the east.

It also has a stunning water front to the east and south formed by the river, docks, marina and of course the beach.

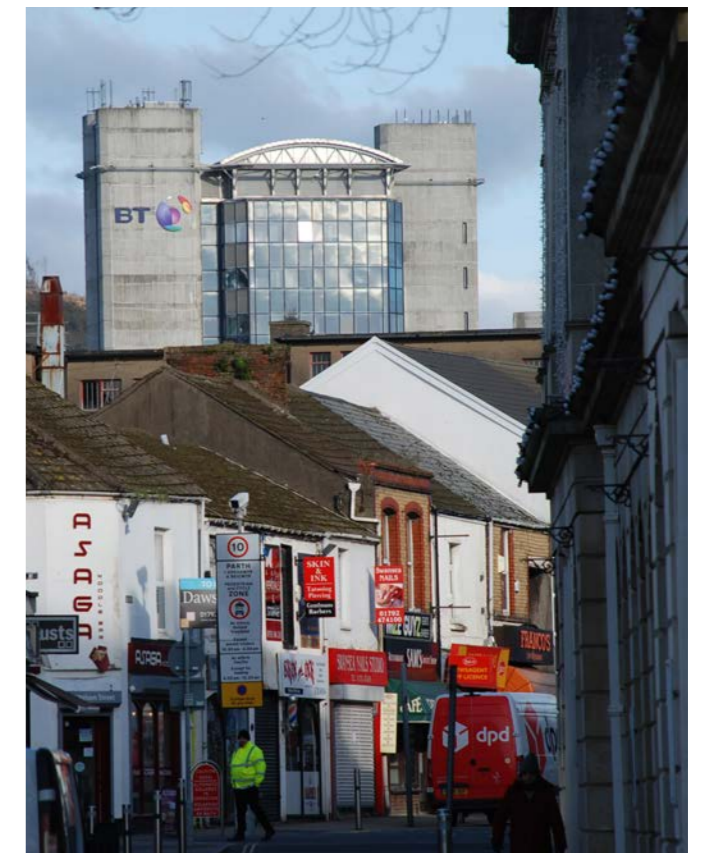
This environmental capital is a vital asset and gives the city quite a very powerful and distinct setting.

Whilst much of the hillside has been developed there are a number of green ribbons which wrap the upper contours. These green flashes provide important glimpses of nature from the city centre which aid both legibility and wellbeing.

There are a few taller buildings which block these distant views so careful consideration is needed in future planning particularly along the east west grain.

One of the key challenges facing the city and flagged in the SCARF is the need to increase awareness and exploit the river and seafront setting.

There is no visual connection at street level with the waterfront until you climb the hills or look out from the taller buildings in the centre. Promoting awareness and access to the waterfront needs to remain a key objective.





2

ANALYSIS

2.1 POLICY REVIEW

2.1.1 Introduction

This section sets out the main planning policy considerations relevant to Swansea city centre, to support the masterplan visioning exercise. It draws on the national, regional and local planning policy of the Welsh Government and Swansea Council. In particular, it focuses on the key themes of wellbeing, placemaking and design, sustainability, economic regeneration, transport and movement, historic and cultural and housing.

2.1.2 Wellbeing

Wellbeing is an overarching focus of the Welsh Government which filters into planning policy at all levels. It is not only a guiding principle for all development but a legally binding duty placed on public bodies by the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which sets out seven 'National Wellbeing Goals for a Sustainable Wales' including:

A globally responsible Wales

A prosperous Wales

A resilient Wales

A healthier Wales

A more equal Wales

A Wales of cohesive communities

A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language

Swansea is designated as a National Growth Area in Policy 1 of the Welsh Government's Future of Wales National Plan 2040 (adopted 2021). This designation means it is an area where sustainable growth in employment, investment in infrastructure and essential

services is recommended and anticipated. Policy 28 of this same National Plan elaborates on the expectations for this National Growth Area, noting that Swansea Bay and Llanelli will be the main focus for growth and investment in the South West region of Wales.

Policy 2 of the National Plan 2040 aims ensure that the growth and regeneration of towns and cities contributes positively toward building sustainable places that support active and healthy lives. Policy 6 also requires that town centres are a focus for public services such as health and education and becomes a centre of community and cultural activity, moving away from the traditional retail role of a city centre.

To ensure the 2015 Wellbeing Act is executed at a local level, the Swansea Public Services Board produced a Local Well Being Plan (2018) which summarises more broadly how Swansea can achieve development that matches Wales' seven core well-being goals. In addition to this, Swansea's Future Wales and Planning Policy Wales documents (adopted 2021) then form a more specific planning framework for achieving Wales' shared wellbeing goals and sustainable development.

In accordance with these wellbeing goals, the Future Wales National Plan provides more strategic direction as to where investment and growth should be focused to best maximise development's contribution to each well-being goal.

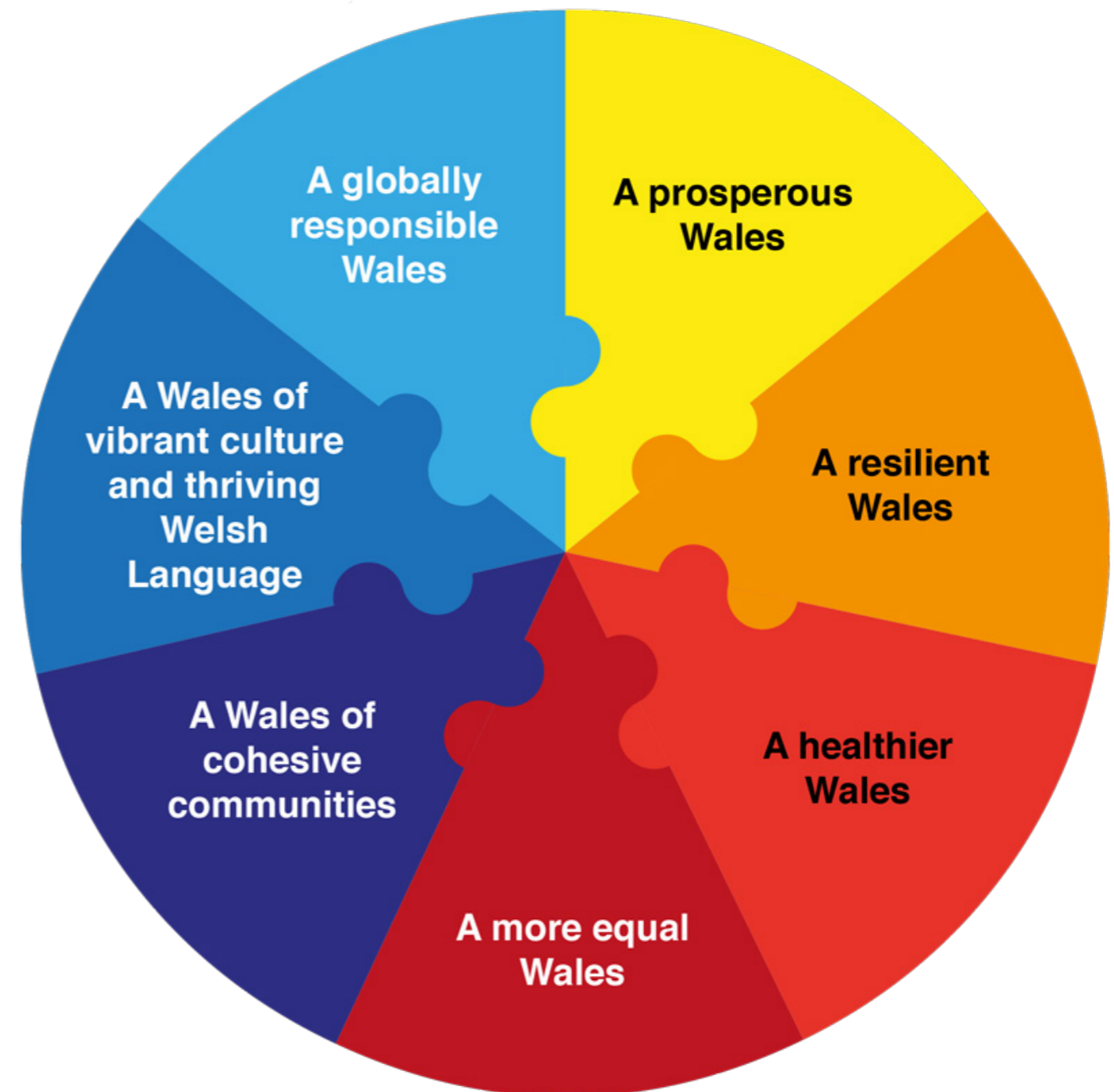


fig 2.1: National Wellbeing Goals for Sustainable Wales

2.1.3 Placemaking and Design

Planning Policy Wales (2021) specifies that ‘Placemaking’ is an holistic approach to the planning and design of development and spaces that promote peoples’ prosperity, health, happiness and wellbeing in the widest sense (p. 14).

There are a number of policy documents for Wales and Swansea aiming to create more sustainable communities, which present principles of good housing and urban design. These include the national Technical Advice Note on Design (TAN12) and Swansea’s Places to Live SPG. The recently published Placemaking Charter and Guide for Wales (2020) takes the PPW’s policies further to provide specific guidance on how Placemaking might be achieved:

People and Community – equality and health and well being

Movement – walking, cycling and public transport priority

Public Realm – well defined and welcoming areas

Location – efficient and sustainable

Mix of Uses – mix of development density, uses and tenures

Identity – positive and distinct qualities

The Swansea Central Area Regeneration Framework 2016 (SCARF) includes a number of placemaking principles which align with Wales’ national policy initiatives, focusing on:

- Creating a living, working and learning area
- Developing a retail leisure-led mixed use centre
- Connecting to the city waterfront
- Creating a green artery

The Swansea Local Development Plan (2019) builds on this, setting out general principles for placemaking and sustainable places in Policy PS1 and PS2 and specific Swansea

City Centre guidance in Policy SD J. This is a comprehensive policy that sets out the future of the Swansea Central Area and presents a number of specific principles relating to the development of each of its 9 subareas, which will be considered in any proposals coming forward:

- St Davids/Quadrant Site: a retail and leisure-led mixed-use place organised around St Mary’s Church and St David’s Priory with strengthened active edges, cycle linkages, a new gateway and new public realm with greening.
- Wind Street: mixed-use place with diversified leisure offer, improved pedestrian routes public spaces, Castle Square.
- Oxford Street: mixed-use redeveloped car park (residential or employment with active frontages), refurbished Shoppers Walk and Picton Arcade for small independent traders, upgraded entrances to Swansea Market.
- Kingsway and Orchard Street: a new business district catalysed by the redevelopment of the Oceana building for employment complemented by public realm improvements (better, wider pavements, greening)
- High Street: developed Mariner Street Car Park for high density city living, improved Alexandra/Oldway House with active ground floor uses, re-use the Palace Theatre to catalyse the regeneration of Upper High Street
- Mansel Street/Alexandra Road: relocation of existing businesses to the new business district, improved environment highlighting Glynn Vivian gallery as a cultural hub, re-use Albert Hall as a catalyst project.
- Maritime Quarter: new public and green space at Sailbridge redeveloped Pilkington site in sympathy with the adjacent Conservation Area, leisure schemes and facilities at the Swansea Point waterfront sites.

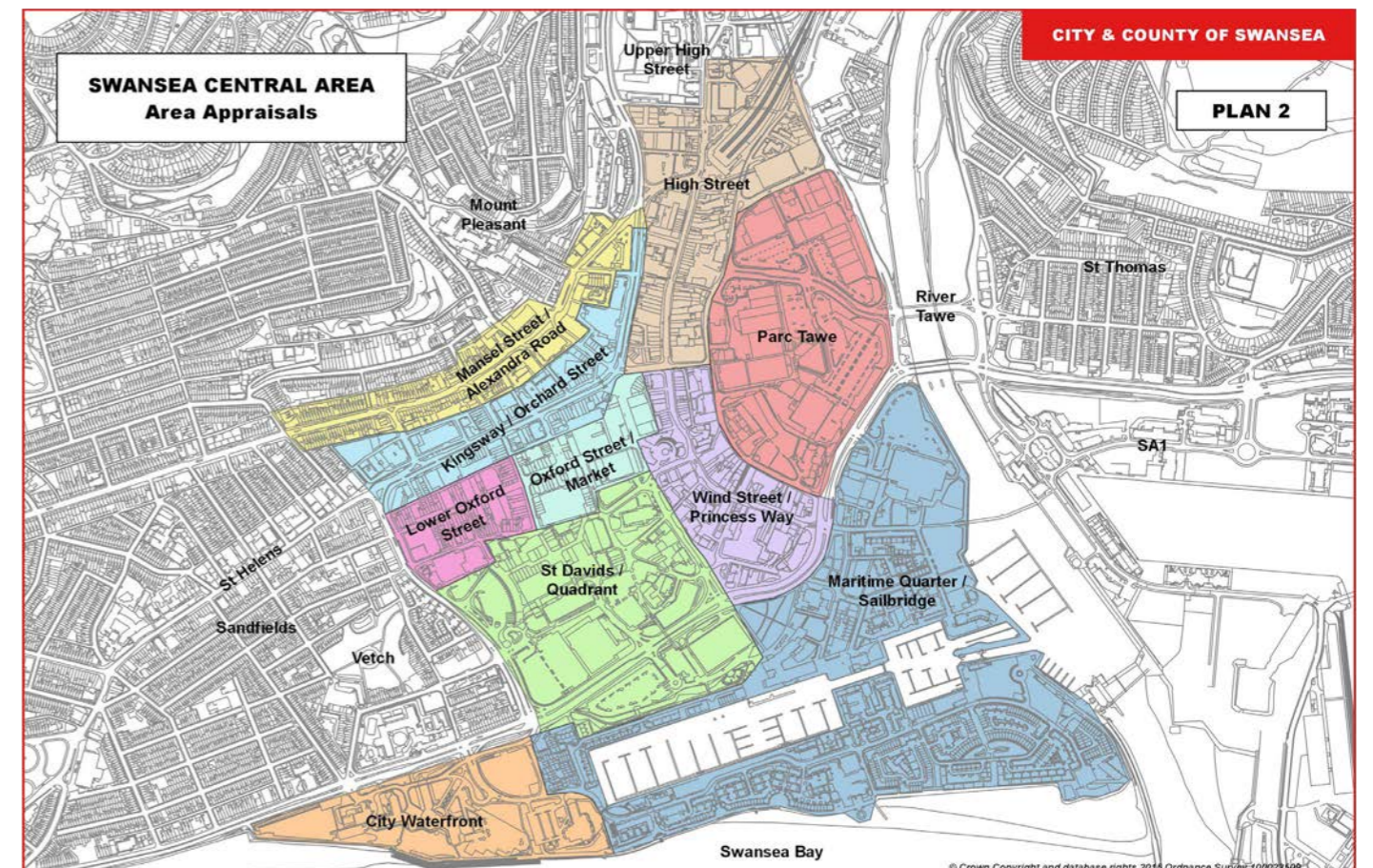


fig 2.2: SCARF : Central Area subareas



fig 2.3: Concept Plan for SDJ (Central Area)

- City Waterfront: relocated Civic Centre to give way to a destination development with a landmark and public realm for events/activities linking the centre to the seafront with appropriate public facilities, commercial-led mixed-use scheme with residential and community uses.
- Parc Tawe Urban Gateway: well-connected new residential district with active frontages and upgraded built environment and public realm including the Retail Park.

2.1.4 Tall Buildings

To further promote a high quality and attractive urban environment for residents and visitors, Swansea City and County Council created a Tall Buildings Strategy (2016) to guide the location of tall buildings in the city. This document

notes that the central area of Swansea has the potential to deliver a tall building (taller than 6-10 storeys) as the strategy allocated the northern part of the Central area as a 'welcome zone', and at least half of the site is designated as a 'consider zone'.

The welcome zones are those areas of the City where well-designed tall buildings can have a positive impact on the character and image of the City and where development is likely to be supported by sustainable transport initiatives. The consider zones are those areas of the City where tall buildings may have a positive impact, subject to the availability of supporting information to justify the proposals.

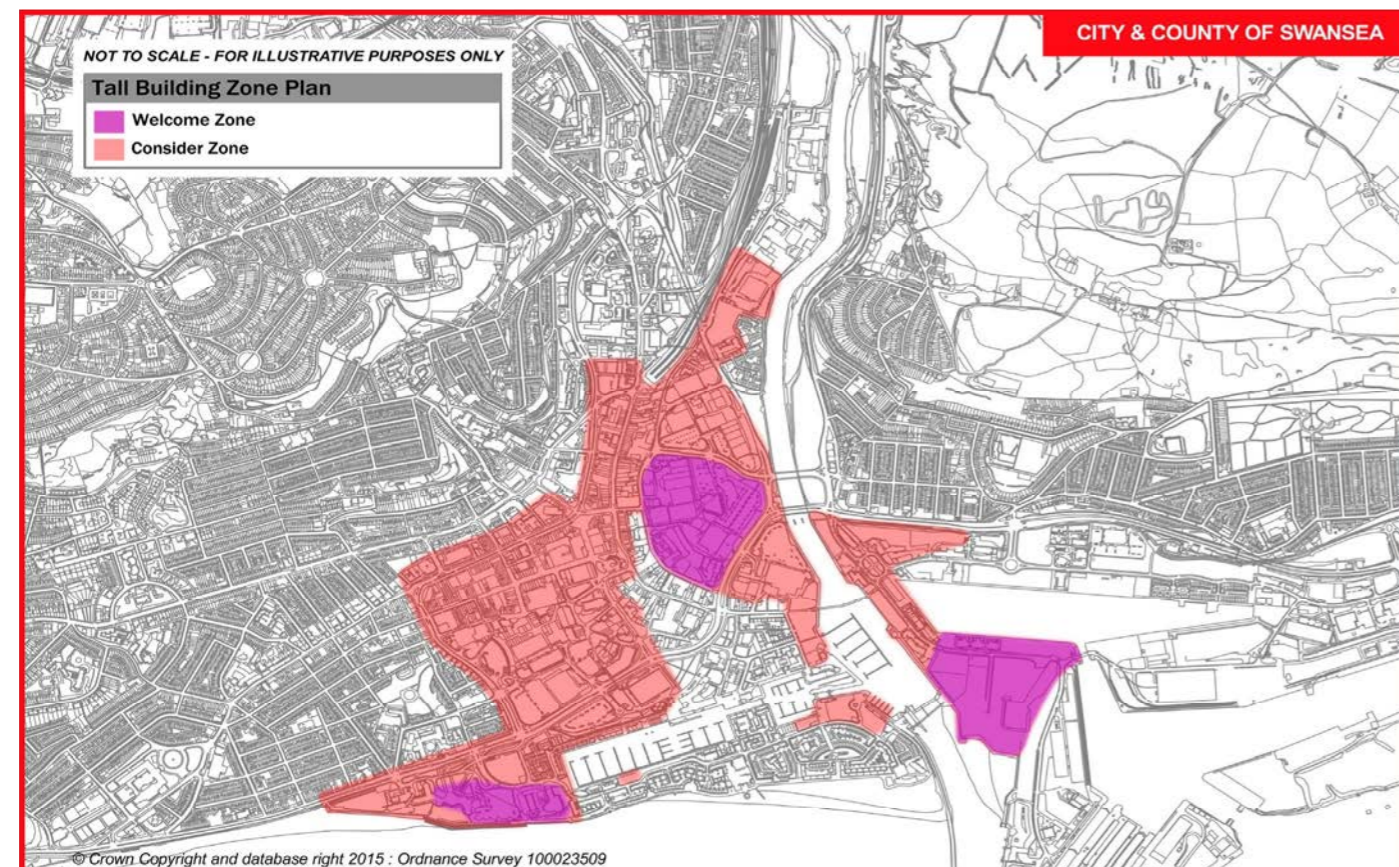


fig 2.4: Tall Buildings Strategy: Tall Building Zone Plan

2.1.5 Sustainability

The Welsh government has set a high standard for sustainability through legislation and national policy including

- The Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) (2010)
- Environment Act (2016), Well-being of Future Generations Act
- Planning Policy Wales' (2021) planning principles and number of statutory guidance documents related to biodiversity and flood risk.

Sustainable Objectives are also enshrined in Swansea's Local Development Plan (2019), the Charter on Climate Action (2020), the Swansea Central Area Green Infrastructure strategy (2021) and the draft Development and Biodiversity SPG (2020). Swansea Council has committed to making the city net zero carbon by 2050 in their Charter on Climate Action. To address climate change, Swansea Council has committed to reversing decline in biodiversity, maximising the use of renewables and reducing energy use. One of the strategic principles within the 2019 Local Development Plan sets out the need for development proposals to adapt to the implications of climate change at both a strategic and detailed design level in terms of carbon emissions, energy, flood risk and ecological resilience (ER 1). The Central Area Green Infrastructure Strategy outlines a vision of creating 'a city with high quality multi-functional green infrastructure' which 'delivers resilience, prosperity, nature, health, wellbeing and happiness to the citizens and visitors of Swansea', while the draft Development and Biodiversity SPG seeks to ensure development within Swansea 'maintains and enhances the County's biodiversity and delivers long term ecosystem resilience'.

Flood risk

Protection against flood risk is embedded in legislation in Wales. Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act sets out that developers of at least 2 properties or over 100 sqm construction area are required to ensure that surface water drainage for the development comply with mandatory National Standards for Sustainable Drainage (2019). At a local level, Swansea also has a Flood Risk Management Plan (2015) and a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2013).

Flood risk is a potentially significant issue in parts of the Central Area of Swansea which will need to be considered within the masterplan and for specific sites. Some of the Central Area is shown to be within flood zones referred to in TAN15 (Development and Flood Risk) and at risk from both fluvial and tidal inundation. Policy RP5 of the LDP (2019) dictates that development will not be permitted in areas of flood risk unless it can be demonstrated that the development can be justified in-line with national guidance and is supported by a technical assessment that verifies that the new development is designed to alleviate the threat and consequences of flooding.

Energy

The masterplan will have the opportunity to contribute to making the Central Area more sustainable by maximising renewable energy technology (LDP Policy EU 2) and connecting to district heating and cooling (LDP Policy EU 3). Significant Energy Consuming Developments will be expected to facilitate the development of, and/or connection to, proposed District Heating and Cooling Networks.

Biodiversity and green infrastructure

Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 creates a legal duty for the Council to protect and enhance the biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems which is effectuated on a local level through the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2005), the LDP (2019), the Green Infrastructure Strategy (2019) and the draft Development and Biodiversity SPG (2020). The TAN5 guidance on Nature Conservation also needs to be considered. The duty does not a particular target level of enhancement, meaning judgement is made on a case-by-case basis as to whether proposed developments meets the relevant local requirements.

LDP Policy ER2 requires development to take opportunities to maintain and enhance the extent, quality and connectivity of the County's multi-functional Green Infrastructure network. The Draft Development and Biodiversity SPG sets out how the relevant LDP policies should be applied in order to ensure development within Swansea maintains and enhances biodiversity and delivers long-term ecosystem resilience. These include policies ER6 (Designated Sites of Ecological Importance), ER8 (Habitats and Species), ER9 (Ecological Networks and Features of Importance for Biodiversity).

The SPG sets out an 'ecosystem' approach and steps that must be integrated into the development process in order to ensure the sustainable management of natural resources. It stresses that development decisions take into account the needs of biodiversity alongside the needs of other GI benefits and ecosystem services (such as open space provision and surface water management) and vice versa. The SPG supports the delivery of green infrastructure as a core facet of placemaking and requires that biodiversity and ecological features are considered at the earliest possible stage.

Placed at the heart of the Green Infrastructure Strategy is the green artery, which cuts across the area in the north-south direction, expanding in the centre, encompassing the City Waterfront and connecting to existing green space in all directions.

The green artery and the identified opportunities for greening in each sub-area are important to consider in designing the masterplan for the central area.

The implementation of the Strategy is supported by the use of the Swansea Green Space Factor (GSF) tool and by a catalogue of green infrastructure interventions, which cover a wide range including semi-natural vegetation, green roofs, rain gardens, bird boxes etc.

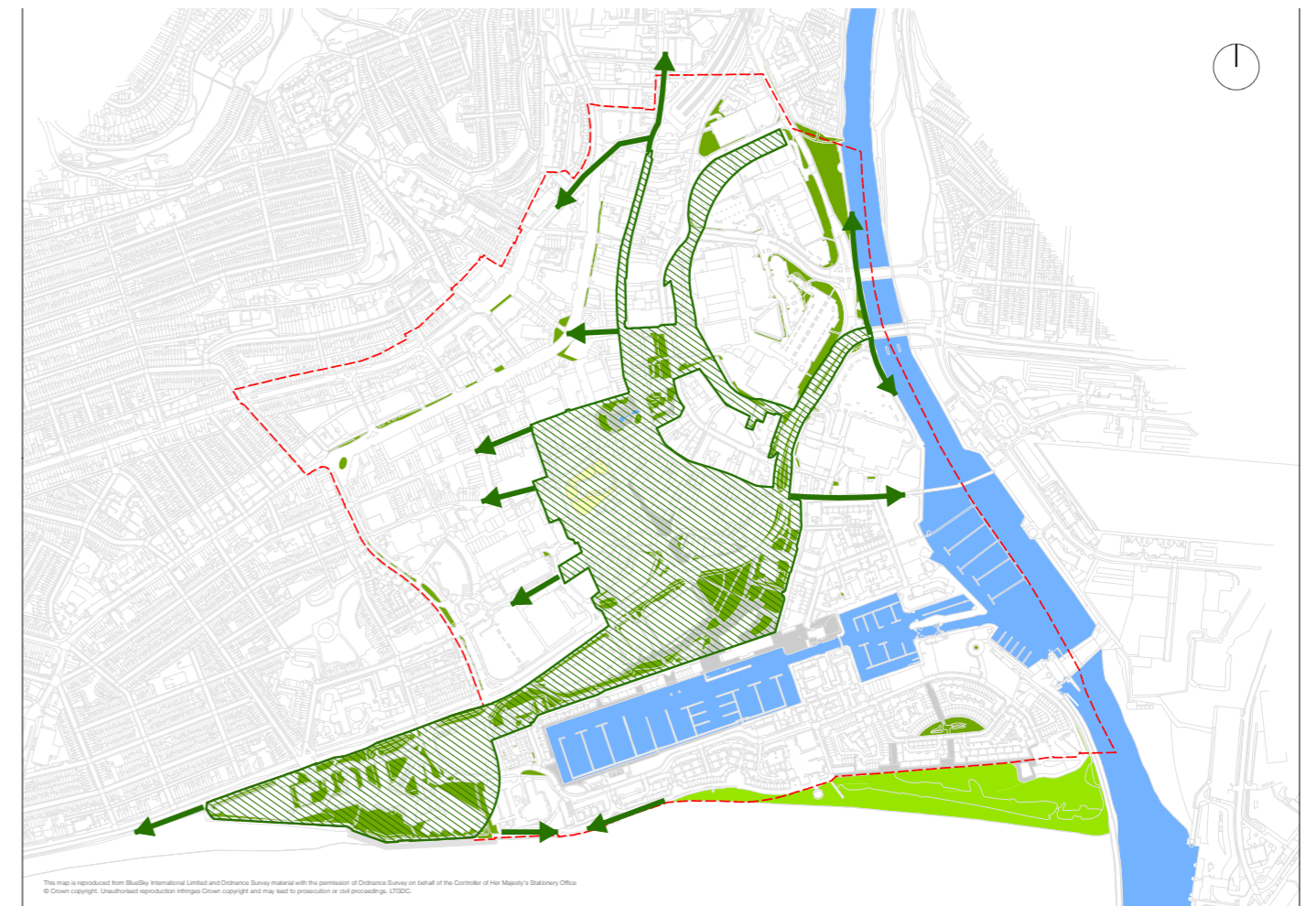


fig 2.5: Green Infrastructure Strategy: Green Artery

2.1.6 Economic Regeneration

The Swansea Bay City Region Economic Regeneration Strategy 2013-2030 guides regeneration in South West Wales. It is intended to provide clarity, consistency and focus for collective action, setting out an innovative approach for tackling structural challenges holding back the economy. Its vision is highly relevant for the Central Area masterplan, including an emphasis on

- Innovation and knowledge-based growth;
- Becoming a leading centre for advanced manufacturing and engineering, renewable energy and high value service delivery; and
- Becoming one of UK's most attractive places to live study work and recreate partly through a network of dynamic urban centres.

The strategy specifies that the future economic growth of the City Region will be increasingly dependent on 'knowledge economy' firms, which create competitive advantage through innovation in products and processes, development of universities and up-skilling of existing workforce.

The PPW (2021) supports the regeneration and diversification of city centres. The Active and Social Trends and Issues theme expresses the need for diversifying retail and commercial centres so they can adapt to future retail trends. It also indicates that existing retail and commercial centres should be capitalised on as hubs of social and economic activity and the focal point for a diverse range of other services such as places of employment, education, civic identity and social interaction

The SCARF (2016) promoted the development of a retail leisure-led mixed-use centre. This aim is supported by LDP (2019) policy which

seeks to maximise investment by facilitating significant new retail and leisure investment within the Retail Centre, complemented by new high quality office space and housing development.

Diversification of retail

LDP Policy RC 1 reinforces that the regeneration of the Central Area is vital for the Swansea Bay City Region and must enhance its history and sense of identity and is a focal point for commercial, leisure, civic, education and cultural developments.

The Central Area needs to ensure the right balance of retail and leisure with improved connectivity between the centre and the waterfront and enhanced frontage (Policy RC3). Retail frontage should be protected (Policy RC9). Policy RC4 shows that diversification has to be strategic, specifying that identity and roles be developed which are complementary to the Central Core. LDP policy SD J requires improved and diversified retail offer particularly in the St David's/Quadrant Site, Wind Street, Oxford Street areas.

Offices and employment

The Central Area is the preferred location for office development (RC 12). LDP Policy SDJ allocates 4ha of B1 uses in the Swansea Central Area. A number of LDP policies are aimed at protecting employment (PS4 Sustainable Employment Strategy, IO2 Employment and Training Opportunities, RC10: Employment and Enterprise Development RC11: Alternative Uses at Employment Locations) which show that employment land location/types/support will be an important consideration in the masterplan. Policy SDJ sets out a new business district at Kingsway and Orchard Street.

Tourism

National guidance on tourism is set out in Technical Advice Note 13: Tourism, however,

as this was published in 1997, LDP (2019) provides more up-to-date and place-specific policies on tourism in Swansea. Policy TR1 specifies that within the Swansea Central Area, proposals must contribute towards the revitalisation and regeneration of the Retail Centre and City Waterfront.

2.1.7 Social & Community Infrastructure

National, regional and local policy on social and community infrastructure is contextualised in terms of the overall aim of wellbeing. The Well-Being Act and PPW principle of 'Creating and Sustaining communities' are planned to be achieved through the Swansea Local Well-Being Plan and the LDP.

The Local Well-being Plan's Cross Cutting Action for Change includes the need to invest in and maximise the value of community assets. The LDP has a number of policies that set out that development proposals must be supported by appropriate social infrastructure and community facilities, with good interconnectivity between places and land uses.

New community facilities must be accessible by active travel and development must not adversely affect existing ones (SI 2), need to consider education facilities (SE 3), protect open space (SI 5), and provide new open space in line with the Open Space Assessment and the Open Space Strategy (SI 6).

Technical Advice Note 16 on Sport, Recreation, Open Space and the District Centres, Local Centres and the Community Facilities SPG (2010) both provide more guidance on protection and enhancement of social and community infrastructure. The latter offers a broad definition for community facilities that

can include shops, public houses and else in addition to community centres, key issues and development pressures and guidance on how to safeguard their provision in development proposals.

LDP Policy SDJ requires improved public realm and green space at Mansel Street/Alexandra Road, Maritime Quarter, and importantly a new destination development at the City Waterfront with complementary community uses and appropriate public facilities.

2.1.8 Transport & Movement

Promoting sustainable transport and active travel are an important part of both national and local policy. The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 is corroborated by the PPW (2021) which contains a core principle focused on 'Facilitating accessible and healthy environments'. The Act is accompanied by a Design Guidance (2014) (and the Technical Advice Note 18: Transport) which includes best practice on infrastructure design and gives guidance on designing and providing related facilities such as cycle parking.

Swansea has created two maps which show the routes which are intended to be delivered up to 2033:

- The Existing Route Map (August 2016) which sets out the existing infrastructure for walking and cycling within the areas covered by the Active Travel Act.
- The Integrated Network Map (approved February 2018).

In addition to this, the Joint Local Transport Plan for South West Wales (2015 – 2020) determines the strategy and programme for transportation and transport infrastructure within the City and County of Swansea.

Swansea Council also has a number of other policies for transport and movement including the 'Pavements are for People' Policy and the Transport policies of the LDP (2019).

LDP Policy T1 specifies that development must be supported by appropriate transport measures and infrastructure in line with Placemaking approach, reducing car reliance and improving active travel. Policies T2 (Active Travel), T3 (Strategic Bus Based Rapid Transit), T4 (Transport Interchanges), T5 (Design Principles For Transport Measures and Infrastructure) and T6 (Parking) give more details about the ways in which T1 should be achieved.

Policy T8 (Canal Network) highlights the importance of considering the canal as an opportunity to enhance connection. All developments including must be served by appropriate cycle and car parking provision and where necessary fund transport interchange enhancements. Parking numbers for different land uses are specified in the Parking Standards SPG.

Policy SDJ sets out the development requirements related to Transport for the Central Area that includes highway infrastructure improvements, measures to provide good quality pedestrian and cycle linkages in accordance with Active Travel Design and appropriate parking provision as per the Parking Standards SPG.

2.1.9 Historical, Cultural and Housing

Historic and cultural

The masterplan study area includes 4 conservation areas, a large number of listed buildings and other non-listed heritage/cultural

assets such as the market. It is therefore key that national and local guidance and policies on their conservation and celebration are complied with.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Wales) Regulations and the PPW (2021) provides the national framework for protecting historic and cultural assets. They are supplemented by the Wales Technical Advice Note 24 on Historic Environment that provides specific guidance on how different aspects of the historic environment should be considered.

LDP (2019) Policy HC1 requires quality design standards in all development proposals to respond positively to local character and distinctiveness. Policy HC2 gives specific guidance on the Preservation or Enhancement of Buildings and Features related to their alteration, change of use, demolition and adjacent development. It is particularly important that proposals safeguard and promote the use of Welsh language.

LDP Policy SDJ points out that re-use/improvement of historic assets such as Castle Square, St Mary's Church, St David's Priory, Palace Theatre, Albert Hall should be the focal point of design and serve as a catalyst for future development.

Housing

The Swansea Central Area site is designated as a retail and leisure led scheme with mixed use waterfront developments in the LDP (2019) and is expected to provide 856 homes by 2025, as per Policy SD1. The LDP Annual Monitoring Report 2019-20 show that 83 homes have been completed to date with 52 flats under construction.

The area will need to incorporate a mix of market and affordable housing, tenures and sizes as required by the PPW (2018), TAN2 (Affordable Housing) and LDP Policy PS3

(Sustainable Housing Strategy), H2 and H3. The target percentage of affordable housing in the Central Area is 20% (30% intermediate rented homes and 70% social rented homes) in line with Local Plan requirements.

Policy on residential development within the centre is primarily concentrated on the High Street through redeveloping the Mariner Street Car Park and in the Parc Tawe Urban Gateway envisioned as a new residential district (LDP Policy SDJ).

2.1.10 Conclusion

In summary, the masterplan for the Swansea city centre should have a strong placemaking approach to promote well-being in the area.

As a central facet of placemaking, green infrastructure initiatives, especially the Green Artery, will need to ensure that the city is regenerated sustainably with wildlife in mind.

The placemaking principles of the Central Area Concept Plan (LDP Policy SDJ) highlight the importance of the re-use and improvement of existing assets, which will have to be at the heart of the masterplan.

Plans for the area require the creation of a cohesive high quality public realm linking the centre to the waterfront, with the waterfront itself becoming an attractive destination.

While the traditional city centre tends to be high quality retail and leisure-led, future schemes should embrace broader town centre uses and incorporate a diverse and innovative range of community, social and economic activities.

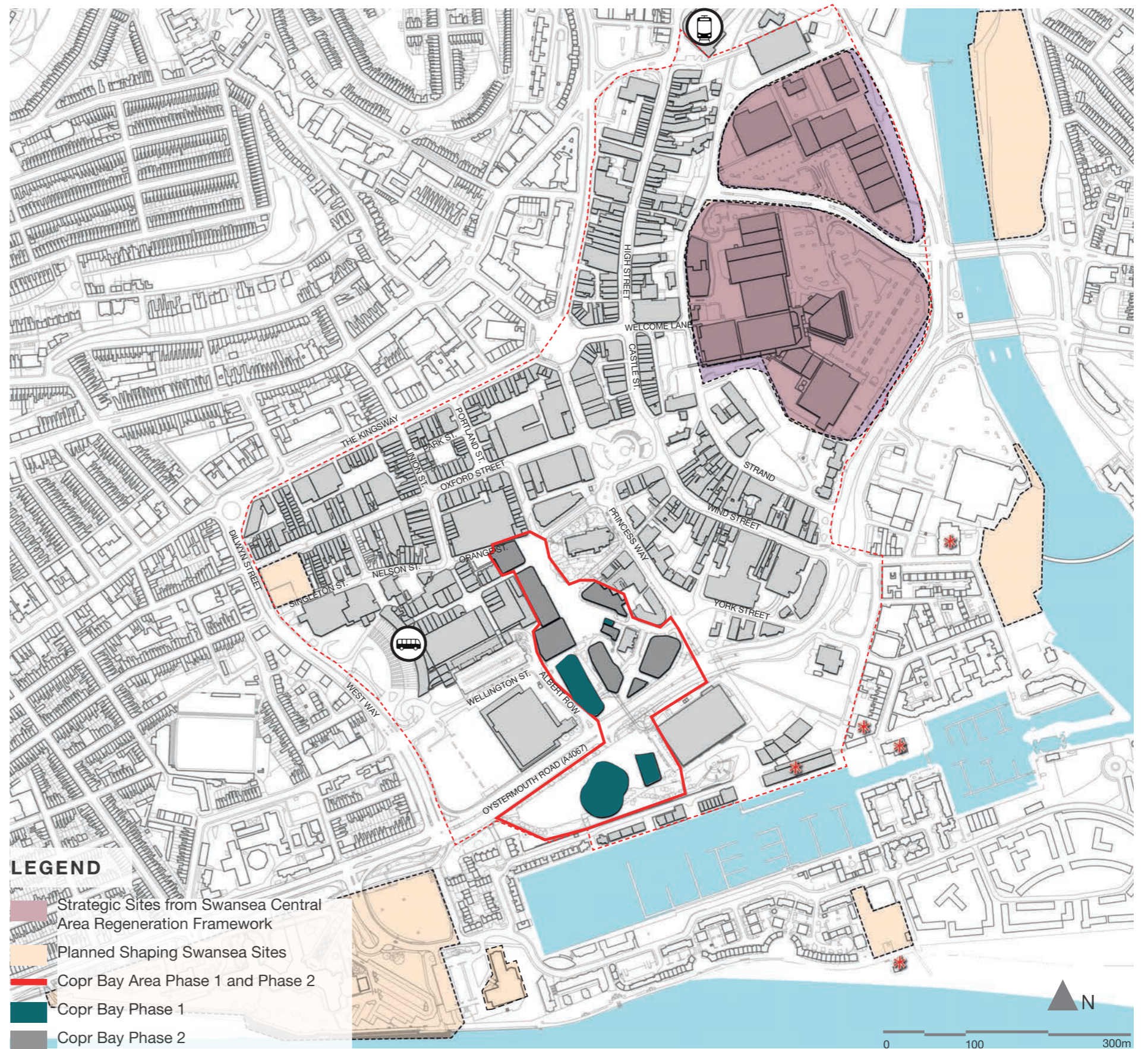
In addition, the area has 4 hectares of potential to accommodate B1 uses, is planned to include a new business district and should deliver 856 new homes through the re-use of existing buildings and new development.

2.2 COMPLETED AND PLANNED PROJECTS

Swansea council has initiated projects to the city centre and surrounding areas to improve the city’s appeal as a leisure destination. Online shopping has led to the decrease in dependency on high street shopping and the council are restructuring the city centre to reduce the reliance on retail and repurpose part of the city centre for various mixed used activities.

In particular, the arena which is being built as part of Copr Bay phase 1 is emphasising the role to increase the city’s appeal as a leisure destination and introduces good quality events and conferencing facilities to support the local and national businesses. Similarly 71/71 Kingsways is repurposing a secondary retail/ leisure location.

These planned projects are also complementing the works done as part of ‘Shaping Swansea’. Shaping Swansea is a project currently being led by Swansea Council to drive forward development in and around the city. The Council is seeking to partner with the private sector on a multi-sited basis to enable it to continue the implementation of its regeneration strategy for the city on a large scale. Seven strategic sites have initially been identified and the procurement of the Council’s development partner is currently underway, due to complete in Autumn 2021. The redevelopment of these sites will deliver a number of the Council’s key aims such as encouraging city centre living, providing high quality employment floorspace and improving the leisure and cultural offer in the city.



URBAN VILLAGE



The Swansea Urban Village completed in 2016 is a regeneration mixed-use scheme on the High Street with housing, offices, creative cluster, shopping and new public realm with parking. This project is developed as part of the regeneration to Swansea High Street whilst bringing back into use a derelict area of the Strand.

The Urban Village/Creative Clusters provides 30,000 square feet of space for small, independent tech businesses and entrepreneurs. The courtyard spaces serves as a focal point for a collection of ideas for new and upcoming creative industries and open space for the resident population.

The design of the scheme creates a development which is compatible with the neighbouring area, and integrates into the existing urban fabric. The scheme also maximises the sites role along a key gateway into the city.

KINGSWAY



As part of the regeneration of Swansea City Centre, the Kingsway and Orchard Street has been transformed into a more pedestrian/cyclist orientated street. The new public realm improvements reduces the issues around noise and air quality through reduced road infrastructure by favouring more green spaces which have wider benefits for the area.

The public improvements include creation of a pocket park or new high quality greenspace to Kingsway till Castle Square and thereby creating a new sense of place and reference. This consecutively attracts major employers thereby creating new jobs for the local people.

This project has helped to create a benchmark for other areas in the City Centre to transform to a more vibrant and inclusive City Centre core.

FUSION STUDENTS SWANSEA



Swansea city centre has an increased demand in residential and student accommodation from the expansion of the two universities in the city. Fusion Students Swansea located adjacent to the railway station creates a landmark both for people arriving by train and is part of the new city skyline.

The campus consists of the main building 60m high, the second tallest in Swansea and surrounded by 6-8 storey buildings with residence and various communal activities for the students. The project houses 780 students and is expected to open in time for the start of 2021 academic year.

COPR BAY PHASE 1

As part of the ambitious city wide redevelopment, Copr Bay creates a vibrant new neighbourhood for culture and leisure by connecting Swansea City Centre with its spectacular beach.

As part of the regenerative scheme the project is divided into 2 phases, with phase 1 boasting of an indoor arena of 3500 capacity and conference centre, a new hotel, coastal park, plaza, landmark pedestrian bridge, homes, offices, retail and multi-storey car park. The phase one transformation is due to be completed in 2021.

Phase 2 for future development will look into in need of commercial, retail and/or leisure uses.

The Arena is operated by the global leader in live theatre, The Ambassador Theatre Group (ATG). The venue aims to hold 160 performances a year across various disciplines like comedy, theatre, live music and gaming, attracting 230,000 visitors per year to the city.

The new bridge link which will further connect the city to the marina and the new coastal park is a pedestrian and cycle bridge which is designed by ACME architect in collaboration with Marc Rees, a locally based artist whose work is in recognised on an international scale. The design to the bridge also takes inspiration from Swansea's history as a world capital of metal production.

The coastal park is stone throw away from the beach and has a landscaped garden space of 1.1 acres. The park will house the Pavilion cafe dining concept.

With the expected 10.4% growth in population by 2036 and projected 4.7 million visitors each year, phase 1 also looks into 33 new affordable homes with 960 new parking spaces as MSCPs and 8000 sq ft of commercial/F&B units, all in the city centre.

Copr Bay aims to bring back the vibrancy of the city centre and create a destination for numerous activates and the potential for Swansea to become the most exciting places in the UK to live, work, visit and study.



fig2.6: Site development photos May 2021¹

71 /72 KINGSWAY



71/72 Kingsway or “The Digital Village” is one of the upcoming projects anchoring The Kingsway and the Swansea City Bay region creating growth spaces for indigenous innovative technology business and new ‘start up’ companies.

This project revitalises the city centre and creates a catalyst for private sector commercial development in the city. With active frontages onto the public realm area of The Kingsway, the footfall in the area reinforces recent investment in infrastructure and new pedestrian connections.

With such upcoming projects, Swansea is moving forward to become a smart and sustainable city.

CASTLE SQUARE



Swansea City Council has taken the initiative to improve and develop a critical artery of the city in Castle Square.

The Square is currently under used, poorly maintained and lacks any active use. The challenge to this upcoming project is to keep the heritage factors intact, at the same time blend the modernist aspirational future.

The project looks into different spaces to be utilised as green open spaces for the public also help in conducting various large events. By activating one side of the periphery of the square with structures enable retail and F&B units.

WIND STREET



Swansea Council and Swansea BID have developed a project which started early 2021 and set to complete in 11/21, to revitalise Wind Street pedestrian and business environment. Lately, Wind Street has been known for its pubs, bars, clubs and restaurants focussed to a younger demography and hasn't maintained a good reputation with links to anti-social behaviour.

The project looks to retain the heritage of the crowded streets with late night ‘eclectic mix and edginess’ of Wind street but transform the street both visually and operationally to help change the mind-sets and customer behaviours. The area will provide significant evening, night-time, leisure and entertainment focus, simultaneously providing an important pedestrian link between the city centre and the waterfront.

WELLNESS CENTRE

Swansea is getting a new wellness centre on the High Street as part of a partnership between Swansea University Health Board and Coastal Housing Group. The project is being developed as part of the Welsh Government's Primary Care Plan, which aims to provide a series of new integrated health and care centres across Wales.

The new Wellness centre is said to be based on the rear of the Volcano Theatre building and will consist of GP, community health and specialist services in modern, purpose built environment. The centre will add on to the ambitious redevelopment for the high street along with the new student accommodations, urban village and the spring cleaning of the street.

FORMER BHS BLOCK

Swansea council has taken the initiative to repurpose the former BHS store as a community hub. The project is intended to promote community cohesion, opportunities for self-development and growth, support digital inclusion, improve well-being and unite and strengthen social activities, learning and support groups.

The community hub will locate a central library, local studies centre and archive in the heart of the city centre as well provide space for community events, engagement and focal point to meet. It will also house an employment hub that would include services from a variety of sectors.

69-70 BARCLAYS

As part of the regeneration of The Kingsway and to stimulate employment and economic growth in the city centre and the surrounding areas, 69-70 site incorporates the former Barclays bank which is adjacent to 71/72 Kingsway project.

The project allows for a coherent facade of that to Kingsway, Picton Cut, Yard and becomes home to flexible workspaces for a range of companies.

ALBERT HALL



Swansea's landmark building is to be brought back to use as a music venue which will accommodate 900 music fans and introduce office space, flats and a rooftop bar.

Swansea Council is working with LoftCo. to bring forward proposals to open the doors of the 156- year old building and would open again for the first time since 2007, when it was a bingo hall.

SUMMARY

Swansea Council's focused strategy for transformative regeneration of the city centre, set out in the Swansea Central Area Regeneration Framework (2016), is now delivering significant change. The £135m Copr Bay digital arena scheme is currently on site, and 71/72 The Kingsway starts on site in August, delivering the city centre's first office development since the 1990s. Key areas and routes through the City are starting to be transformed with the Kingsway infrastructure and public realm project, completed earlier this year, followed by the Wind Street scheme that is currently on site and upcoming Castle Square improvements. This first phase of projects are raising the profile of Swansea and attracting private sector interest. For example the Hacer Biophilic Building, an innovative mixed-use development, providing affordable new homes and workspace alongside a community urban farm, mixed use redevelopments on Orchard Street and College Street, plus multiple quality student accommodation schemes. Swansea now looks to build upon this momentum by progressing the next stage of the regeneration programme, which aims to attract people to live and work in the city centre. To facilitate this crucial next stage further significant private sector investment and public sector gap funding is required to continue delivery of high quality and large scale projects such as Swansea Central North.

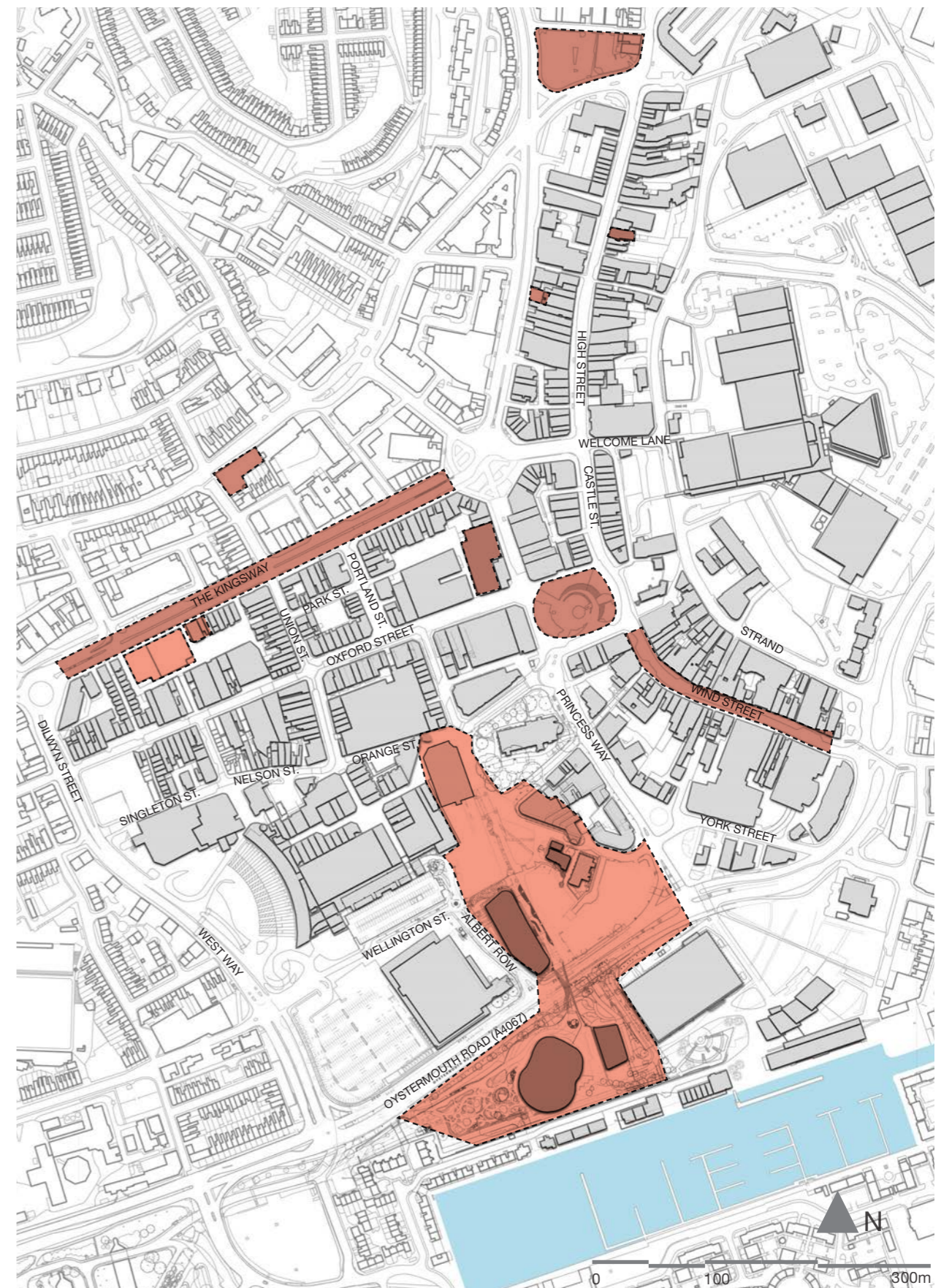


fig2.7: Completed and Planned projects

2.3 MOVEMENT AND TRANSPORT

2.3.1 Introduction

The Study Area is defined on Figure 2.8 opposite and 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, St David's and the Quadrant Shopping Centre. It is constrained by key transport corridors at The Kingsway, West Way, Oystermouth Road/Victoria Road and Wind Street. It also includes more established areas around Alexandra Road, High Street, Wind Street and the Castle.

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

Swansea is well connected to the regional highways network, with good connections via the M4 to Cardiff, Bristol and London. Swansea is also connected along this corridor by regular direct train services to London (via Cardiff and Bristol), regular and frequent services west to Pembrokeshire and via mid Wales to Birmingham and the north west of England. Cardiff is the nearest international airport which is 45 miles away.

The population of Swansea is 247,000 (mid-2019 estimate) with a population density of 650 people per sq. km¹. Data provided by the Office of National Statistics show that the total population of Swansea is currently projected to increase to 254,400 by 2028, an estimated increase of 7,900 people (+3.2%) over a ten-year period.

Analysis of the 2011 census population data is shown on Figure 2.9.

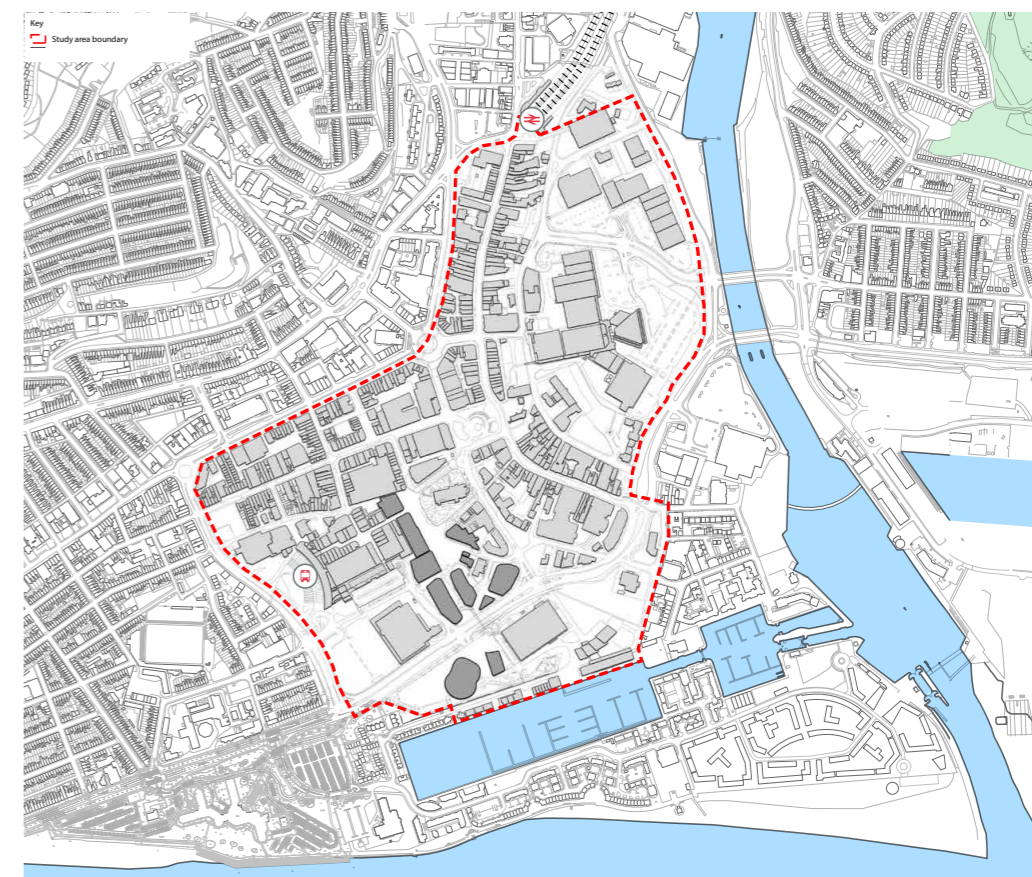


fig 2.8: Study Area

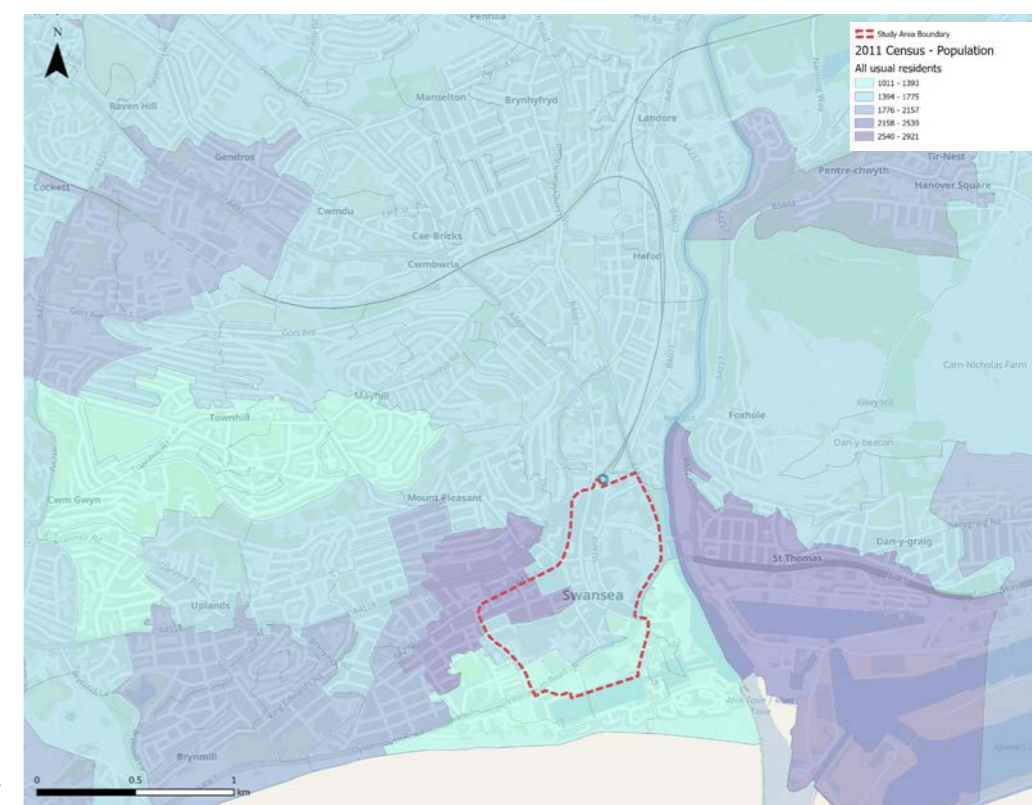


fig 2.9: 2011 census - population

¹: [Mid-year estimates of population 2019, ONS. Further statistics, including population by age, available at \[www.swansea.gov.uk/population\]\(http://www.swansea.gov.uk/population\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/middleincomeandwealth/bulletins/mid-year-estimates-of-population/2019)

²: [ONS mid-year population estimates, 2009-19. Further information at \[www.swansea.gov.uk/populationtrends\]\(http://www.swansea.gov.uk/populationtrends\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/middleincomeandwealth/bulletins/mid-year-estimates-of-population/2019)

2.3.2 Vehicular Access

Street Hierarchy

Swansea is well served from the M4 motorway, with junctions 42-47 all linking to the City Centre via radial routes.

The A4067 Fabian Way provides the principal link into the city centre from the east. Department for Transport (DfT) AADF data show circa 36,000 vehicles use this route into and out of the city³.

The A483 Carmarthen Road provides a link into the city centre from the north west, providing the primary arterial route into the city centre for destinations to the west of Swansea. DfT AADF data show circa 25,800 vehicles use this route into and out of the city⁴.

The A4067 Ffordd Cwm Tawe from the north via Neath Road through Hafod or via Pentreguinea Road connects into The Tawe Bridge gyratory carries approximately 33,800 vehicles per day⁵.

The Morfa Distributor Road provides a link on the western side of the Tawe from the A4217 at Pentre-chwyth.

The A4067 Oystermouth Road (Mumbles Road) provides an important east-west corridor into the city via Fabian Way. This busy route carries an AADF on approximately 32,500 vehicles.

The retail core is focussed on the pedestrianised grid of streets around Oxford Street and Temple Street, including the north-south streets of Union Street and Whitewalls.

Figure 2.10 shows the vehicular network and movement restrictions.

Loading and Servicing

The units in Park Tawe retail park, and larger retailers with their own sites such as Tesco have dedicated off-highway service areas, however the vast majority of businesses in Swansea rely

on on-street or rear service yards for deliveries and loading.

Disabled Access

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

A tactile guidance path to assist blind and partially sighted people visiting and shopping in the City Centre was introduced some years ago and enhanced when the pedestrianised retail core was upgraded in 2008. The route uses a special type of paving which enables blind and partially sighted people to navigate the space helping them to travel safely and independently. The City has also produced a tactile map which is considered the first of its kind in Wales.

Tactile paving is widely used to signify entry into a shared surface, such as within the new shared space at Adelaide Street and Cambrian Place and along the Waterfront Connections improvements to the promenade.

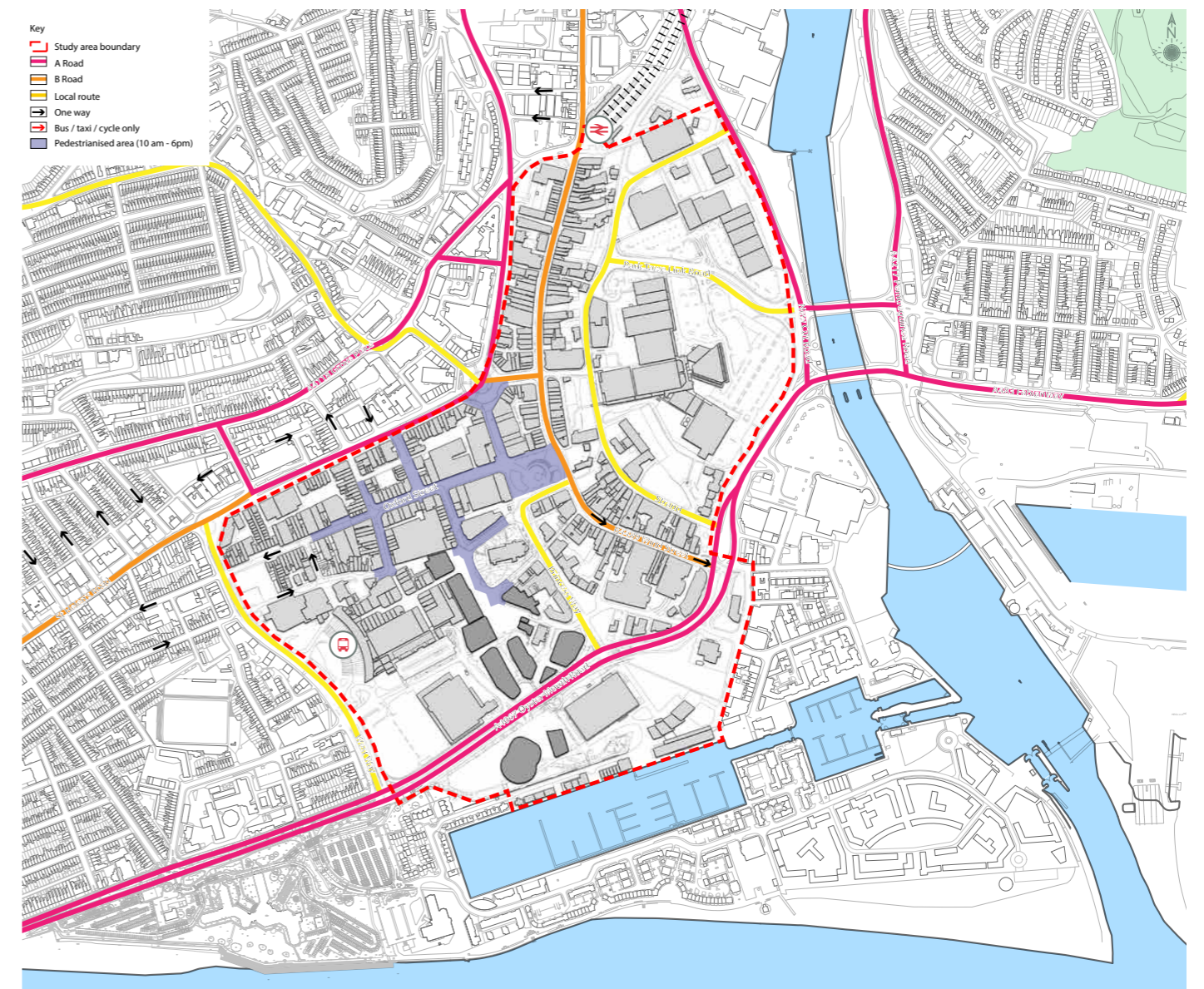


fig 2.10: Street hierarchy - Vehicular routes

³: <https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/manualcountpoints/74086>

⁴: <https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/manualcountpoints/50596>

⁵: <https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/manualcountpoints/50625>

⁶: <https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/manualcountpoints/50584>

2.3.3 Car Parking - Off Street

Car parking

There are a number of multi-storey and surface level car parks located throughout the study area operated by both the City Council and NCP. The majority are located close to or within the city core. The purpose of these car parks is to provide convenient, short stay car parking close to the city centre for shoppers and visitors. Season tickets are also sold by the City Council for a number of the car parks which operate on a first come, first served basis.

Some smaller privately controlled car parks are also located around the city, such as those serving standalone retail units such as Tesco, Sainsbury's and the Park Tawe retail park. In addition there is privately operated parking at the railway station.

The Copr Bay development includes the redevelopment of the St Mary's surface level car park and St David's multi-storey car park. The Copr Bay will provide two new car parks to cater for the proposed uses. The new car parks will set a new standard in the quality of provision for car parking within the city centre.

Figure 2.11 shows the existing public off street parking locations situated around the city and their capacity.

The breakdown of spaces provided within each respective car parks are set out in Table 2.1 opposite.

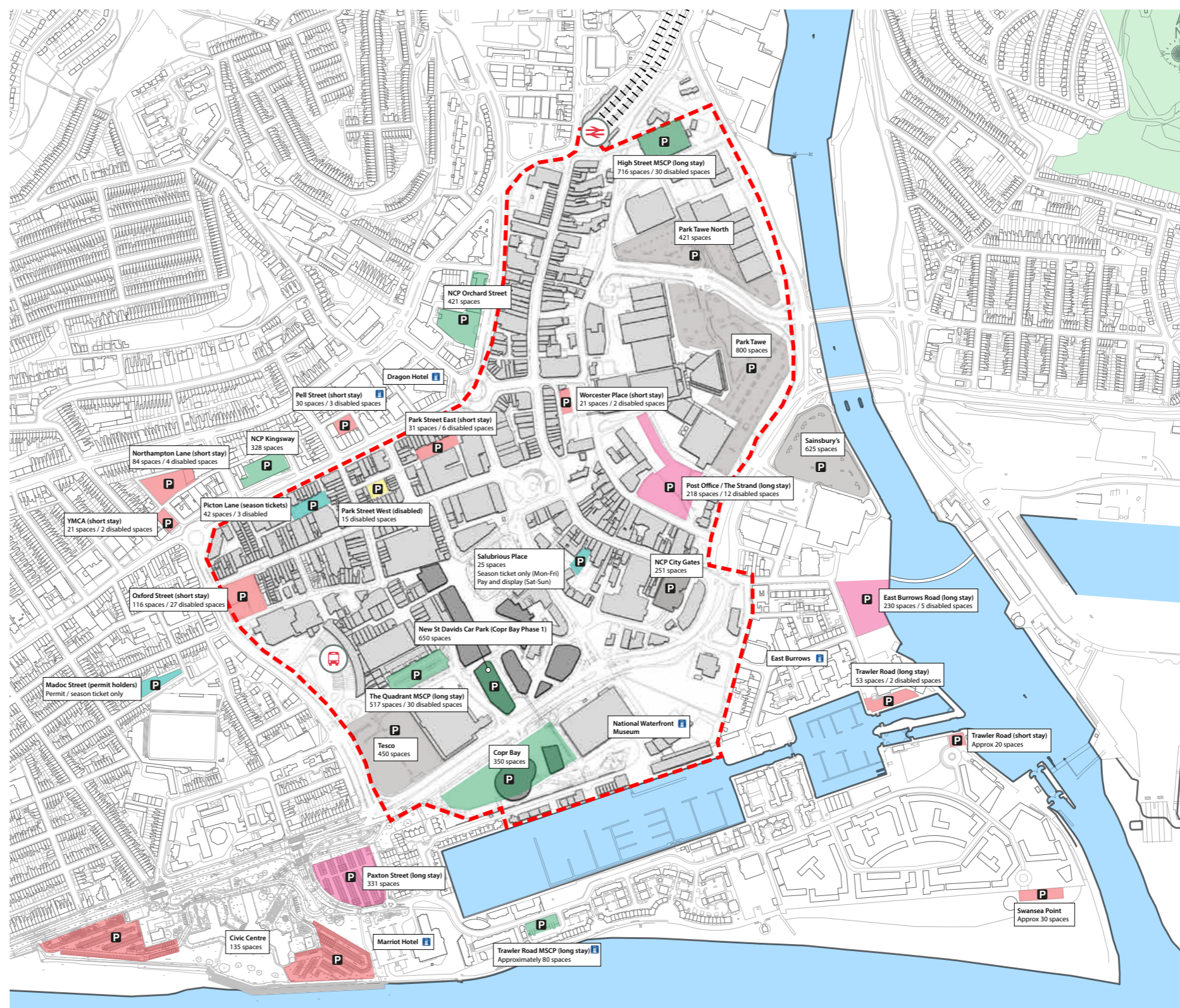


fig 2.11: Off street car park locations

Car Park Location (Public Car Parking)	Type	Capacity	
		Spaces	Disabled Spaces
Short Stay			
Park Street East	Short Stay	31	6
Northampton Lane	Short Stay	84	4
Pell Street	Short Stay	30	3
Worcester Place	Short Stay	21	2
YMCA	Short Stay	21	2
Oxford Street	Short Stay	116	27
Trawler Road	Short Stay	53	2
Trawler Road	Short Stay	20	Unknown
Swansea Point	Short Stay	30	Unknown
Long Stay			
Paxton Street	Long Stay	331	
East Burrows	Long Stay	230	5
Post Office / Strand	Long Stay	218	12
Civic Centre	Long Stay	135	Unknown
Multi Storey			
The Quadrant	Multi Storey	517	30
St David's	Multi Storey	480	33
High Street	Multi Storey	716	30
Trawler Road (Sea Gate)	Multi Storey	80	Unknown
Copr Bay (Arena car park)	Multi Storey	350	Unknown
Disabled Spaces Only			
Park Street West	Disabled	-	15
Season Ticket			
Picton Lane	Season Ticket	42	3
Madoc Street	Season Ticket	Unknown	Unknown
Salubrious Place	Season Ticket	25	

Car Park Location (Privately Operated)	Type	Capacity	
		Spaces	Disabled Spaces
NCP			
Swansea City Gates	NCP	251	Unknown
Swansea Orchard Street	NCP	421	Unknown
Swansea Kingsway	NCP	328	Unknown
Retail stores			
Park Tawe retail park	Customers only	800	Unknown
Park Tawe north retail park	Customers only	421	Unknown
Sainsbury's	Customers only	625	Unknown
Tesco	Customers only	450	Unknown
TOTAL		6,996	141

Table 2.1: Off street public, private and retail parking capacity (source: Swansea City Council / Parkopedia.co.uk)

2.3.4 Car Parking - Park and Ride

Park and Ride

Swansea has two Park and Ride (P&R) sites. Park and Ride is operating in Swansea with funding from the Welsh Government.

Both sites operate between 6.45am - 7.00pm, Mondays to Saturdays.

Extending the operating hours would be expected to offer little benefit/increase in P&R trips as outside of these hours travel into the city centre would be less affected by congestion. There is extensive car parking availability in the city centre. P&R is effectively a parking measure and is effective where parking in the central area is limited and/or expensive.

Fabian Way

Fabian Way Park and Ride is situated just off the A483, approximately 1.5 miles east of the city centre.

It provides 550 spaces including 23 disabled bays; and cycle racks.

Landore

Landore Park and Ride site is situated just off the A4067, approximately 1.5 miles north of the city centre. It provides 450 spaces including 25 disabled bays; and cycle racks.

Both sites provide a frequent bus link to and from the city centre using fully accessible vehicles. It costs £2.50 to park a car all day and return bus travel for up to 4 passengers.

Parking at the P&R sites was suspended in January 2021 as a result of COVID-19.

Landore Park and Ride is one of the Shaping Swansea sites and will therefore require

relocation in the medium term. Future consideration will need to be given to the most appropriate site for the Park and Ride.

2.3.5 Taxis

Swansea city centre has been awarded Purple Flag status for its taxi provision, which aims to raise standards and improve the quality of our towns and cities between the hours of 5.00pm and 5.00am.

The prestigious Purple Flag award is a national accreditation scheme that recognises excellent management of city centres at night, similar to the Blue Flag for beaches and Green Flag for parks, and is backed by the government, police and business.

Swansea is the only place in Wales to hold all Blue, Green and Purple flags currently and only one of a handful of places in the UK to hold them all.

Figure 2.13 shows the extent of the city centre purple flag zone and also the location of approved taxis, hotels, car parks and drop off and pick up points.



fig 2.12 : Park and Ride car park locations

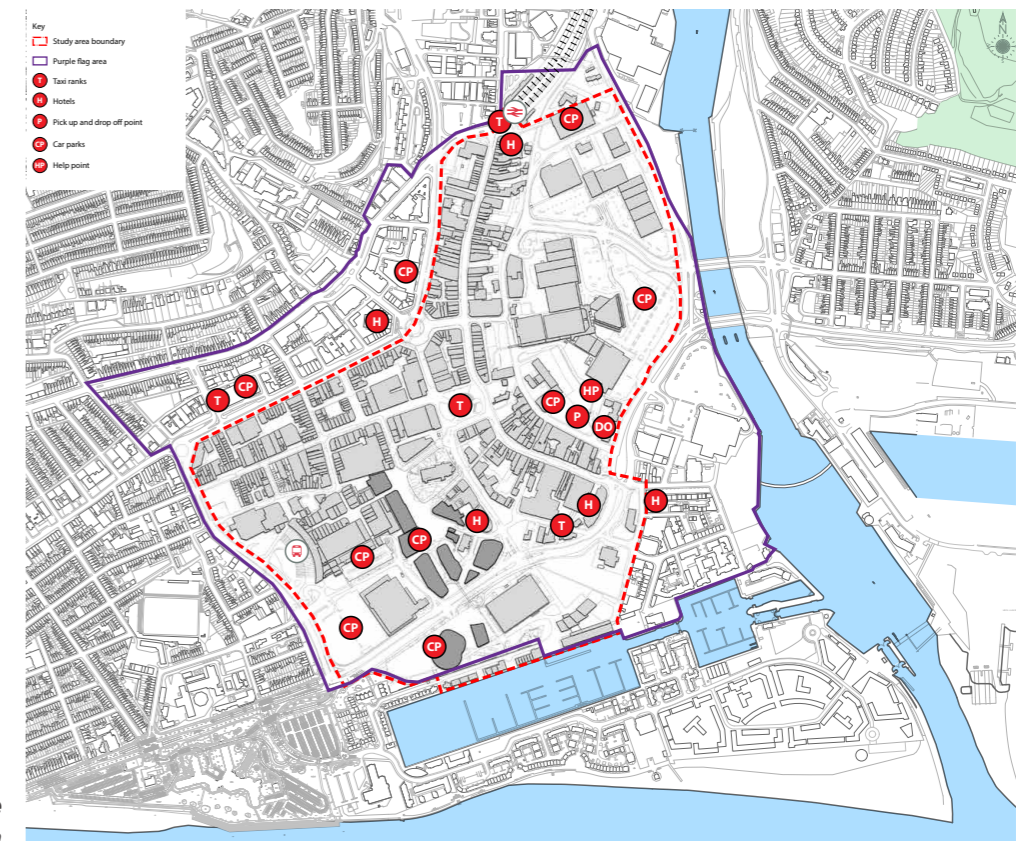


fig 2.13 : Taxi purple flag area

2.3.6 Car Parking - Demand

A car parking strategy document was prepared in 2019 by WSP covering the city centre area, broadly conforming to the study area adopted by this project.

The study captured observations on the level of utilisation of the car parks within the city centre in 2019 which identified a significant level of spare capacity across the majority of the car parks.

Of the 27 car parks captured by the baseline data for the 2019 study (including the Park and Ride sites), 14 recorded less than 50% utilisation on a weekday, and 15 less than 50% utilisation on a Saturday as illustrated in the data in Table 2.2.

The 2019 study also undertook future year modelling of parking demand informed by forecast background traffic growth and also changes in demand anticipated in connection with specific developments. Weekday and Saturday scenarios were run for 2021, 2025 and 2030. The results across all scenarios consistently showed an excess of parking capacity compared to forecast demand for standard parking bays. For blue badge parking bays, the reverse was true, with demand consistently reaching capacity across the majority of car parks.

Based upon the WSP analysis, across all of the future scenarios tested, the city centre parking stock (including the Park and Ride site) over-provides in the region of 2,300 parking bays in the 2030 future modelled scenario.

To summarise, the car parking demand analysis prepared by WSP highlights:

- In all scenarios assessed, an excess of car parking capacity is modelled in all future years.

- In all scenarios blue badge parking is assessed as being oversubscribed across the city centre.
- The assessment did not consider any additional growth that the new Masterplan may identify.
- The way in which car parks are used appears key to the changes in the city centre. The car parks that come under most pressure (i.e. a level of demand higher than supply) are the smaller car parks with ~30 spaces or less. This leads to the view that parking stock consolidation through the masterplan is essential. Recommend that this occurs at / near the key gateways to the centre and that blue badge parking is increased – option to retain some of the smaller car parks for blue badge parking only, dependant on access and location.

Car Park Location	Weekday	Saturday
Park Street West	157%	153%
Pell Street	119%	123%
Park Street East	82%	83%
YMCA	76%	86%
NCP Kingsway	74%	52%
Trawler Road	65%	107%
Worcester Place	62%	73%
High Street MSCP	61%	17%
St Mary's	59%	98%
Northampton Lane	58%	24%
NCP Orchard Street	57%	20%
The Strand On-street	54%	77%
Parc Tawe South	53%	91%
Mariner Street	46%	23%
St David's MSCP	40%	59%
The Strand	38%	43%
Oystermouth Road	38%	95%
The Quadrant MSCP	36%	65%
Fabian Way P&R	35%	43%
Castle Street	34%	33%
Landore P&R	33%	32%
Oxford Street	29%	33%
Oxford St & Plymouth St On-street	20%	22%
East Burrows Road	12%	22%
Paxton Street	9%	13%
Pocketts Wharf	9%	10%
Salubrious Place	-	49%

Table 2.2: Observed Max Average Daily Capacity - 2019 Extracted from WSP Swansea Parking Strategy Work Package 2 Report

2.3.7 Public Transport Routes

The city centre is well served by public transport, and there has been significant investment in public transport infrastructure over the last decade, including a new bus station and Metro bus services in the city.

Railway station

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. The station provides access to local and national rail networks.

The station is perceived as being somewhat remote from the retail core, however, in reality, the distance between the railway station and The Kingsway is only some 500m.

The existing station gateway is relatively poor, with the station forecourt dominated by taxi drop off and vehicle turning. Despite its proximity to the key city centre streets, legibility for visitors is relatively poor.

Bus station

The Swansea bus station was completed in 2011 adjoining the Quadrant Shopping Centre. It provides an enclosed concourse environment which is an extension to the retail environment

The bus station is located immediately adjacent to the west of the core retail area.

Figure 2.14 shows public transport routes within the study area.

2.3.8 Public Transport Frequency

Figure 2.15 shows public transport frequency on key routes into the study area.

Interchange between modes

The separation of the bus station from the railway station is such that interchange between transport modes is difficult although bus routes north out of the city do provide some link between bus and railway station.

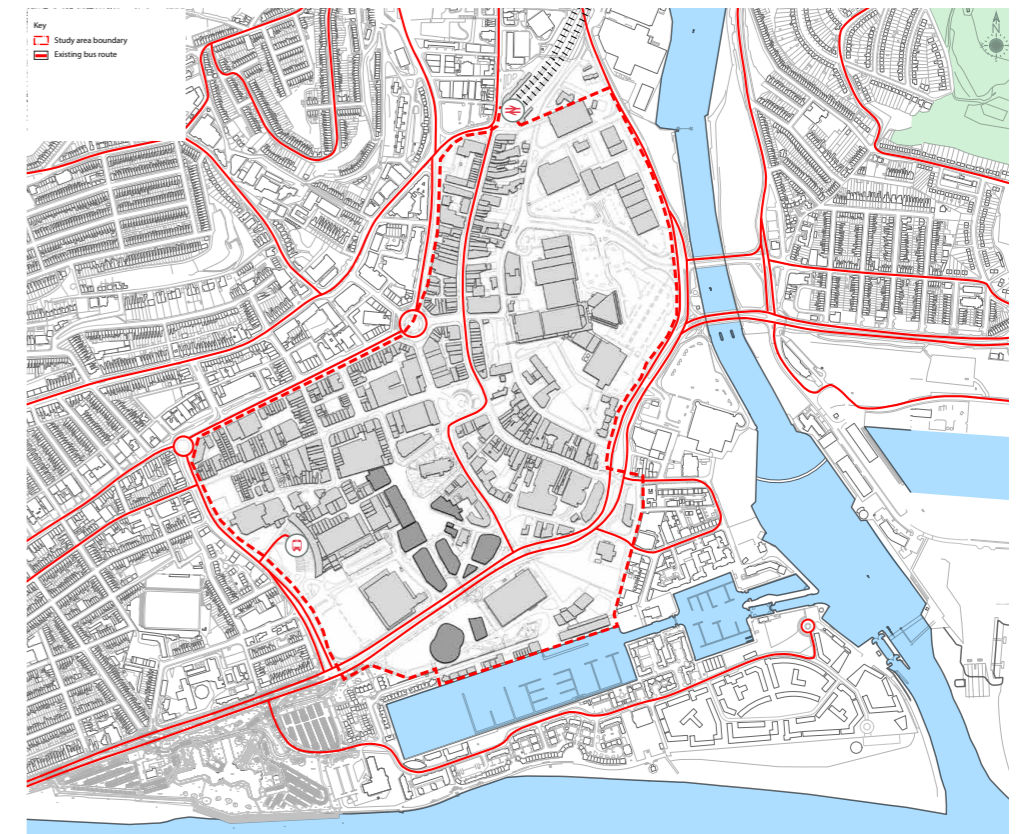


fig 2.14: Public transport - Bus and railway network

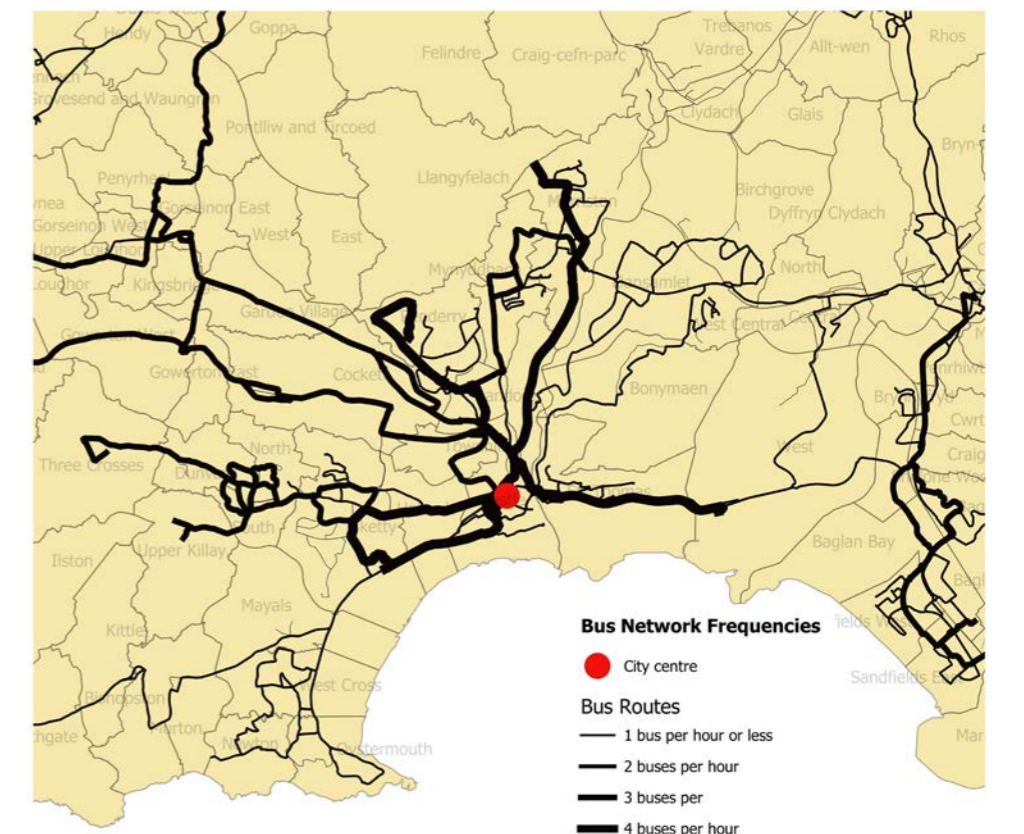


fig 2.15: Public transport - Bus network frequencies

2.3.9 Active Travel

Walking

Swansea city centre is a walkable city, with a compact retail core. However, the strong east west alignment of the core area's main shopping streets means that north-south permeability through the city, providing important routes between the sea front, railway station and to the Quadrant are somewhat limited.

The northern section of streets such as Union Street and Portland Street are used by vehicles to access small but important servicing areas and car parks adjacent the core area. Other significant north-south routes, such as the Picton and Shoppers Walk Arcades have little sense of presence on The Kingsway and poor quality entrances to Oxford Street that do little to attract or encourage pedestrians to visit or walk through. As a consequence areas of the city centre can feel disjointed and uncoordinated.

There are areas of full/part pedestrianisation such as Princess Way and Oxford Street and from Castle Square.

There is a sharp change in the topography between High Street and The Strand and this change in level is poorly negotiated by existing pedestrian routes. The main current access to Parc Tawe from the Castle and City Centre retail core is via a pedestrian route through Worcester Place, and across a poor quality pedestrian footbridge, and via stepped and ramped access routes within the Parc Tawe retail complex down to the ground floor levels of the buildings and its extensive surrounding surface car parks.

Cycling

The city centre comprises a good network of cycle routes, including National Cycle Network

(NCN) Route 4 which serves Swansea Marina and the river connecting north to Route 43 to the Swansea Valley.

New wide pedestrian and cycle crossings as part of the Boulevard scheme have strengthened the connectivity to the Sailbridge, Maritime Quarter SA1 and the seafront promenade.

Whilst the strategic cycle network and links are generally of good quality, provision for cyclists within the city core lacks consistency and continuity in provision and form

To the east of the city centre the River Tawe acts as a barrier to east/west movement. A number of bridge connections are provided however, to the north of Parc Tawe, it is a long way to the next bridge crossing at the Hafod Copperworks which acts as a barrier to increasing walking and cycling trips to the city centre from areas of St Thomas.

Figure 2.16 shows the cycle routes and controlled crossing locations within the study area.

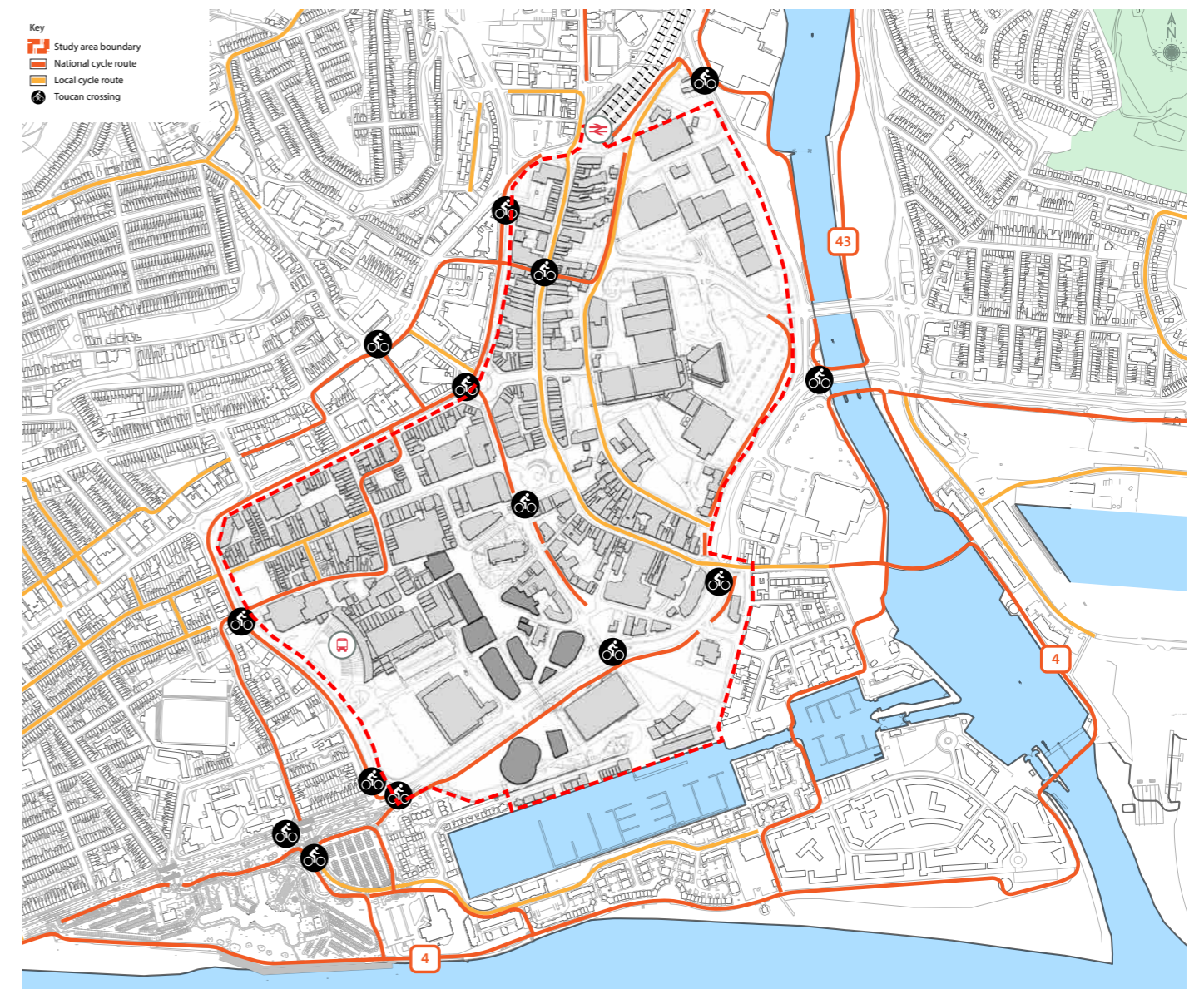


fig 2.16 : Active Travel - Cycling routes and crossing locations

Summary

The recently approved Swansea Central Area Transport Strategy Report : Work Stage One - Defining the Challenge has reviewed the data available on current and future transport in the city centre, including the effect of growth.

The overall challenges associated with transport and movement in Swansea central area can be summarised as:

- Congestion and delays on key highway approaches into the City, notably on Fabian Way and at Dyfatty Signals. Oystermouth Road severance remains a live issue;
- Air Quality Management Area to the north of the central area remains effective at least until a workable EV package is developed for the city centre;
- Contradiction in parking needs between the weekday and weekend. Analysis of future year modelling (which does not account for any additional growth associated with the masterplan) suggests an excess of car parking provision, but blue badge parking being in high demand;
- The way in which car parks are used appears key to the changes in the city centre. The car parks that come under most pressure (i.e. a level of demand higher than supply) are the smaller car parks with ~30 spaces or less. This leads to the view that parking stock consolidation through the masterplan is essential. Recommend that this occurs at / near the key gateways to the centre and that blue badge parking is increased – option to retain some of the smaller car parks for blue badge parking only, dependant on access and location.
- Dominant car journeys for trips to, from and through the Swansea central area, rail to bus connectivity poor;
- Multi-functional highway network to cater for ‘through’ commuting trips, and origin destination trips will remain in place until public transport offer improves;
- The Oystermouth Road and Kingsway routes seem sensible to be the main foci for traffic although it is recommended that typologies are such that through traffic is deterred through urban design.
- Gaps in public transport provision with challenges for multi-modal public transport interchange, lack of cross city routes a key issue driven in part by traffic congestion;
- Limited route choice resilience for trips from the east and west of the city;
- Limited cycle hire scheme presence within the Swansea central area.

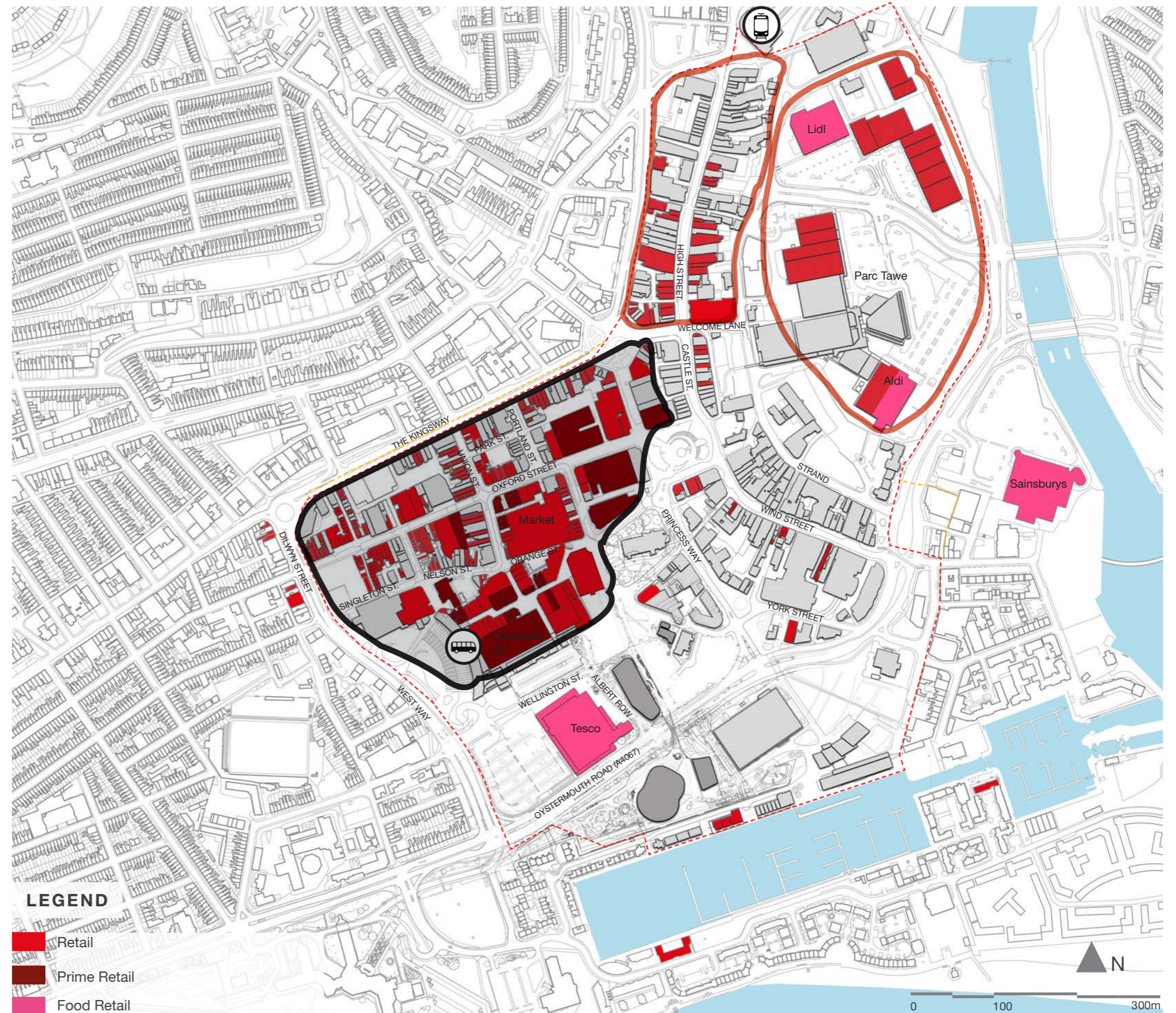
2.4 MAPPING

2.4.1 Retail

As can be seen from this map of existing Retail uses in Swansea City Centre, the 'Prime Retail Zone' marked in dark red dominates almost one third of the City Core area.

The High Street (Oxford Street) provides ample Secondary Retail uses and is arranged in a linear fashion.

The retail park and leisure centre of Parc Tawe, located to the North East of the City Centre Area, is currently underperforming in its intended Retail role despite occupying approximately 20% of City Centre.

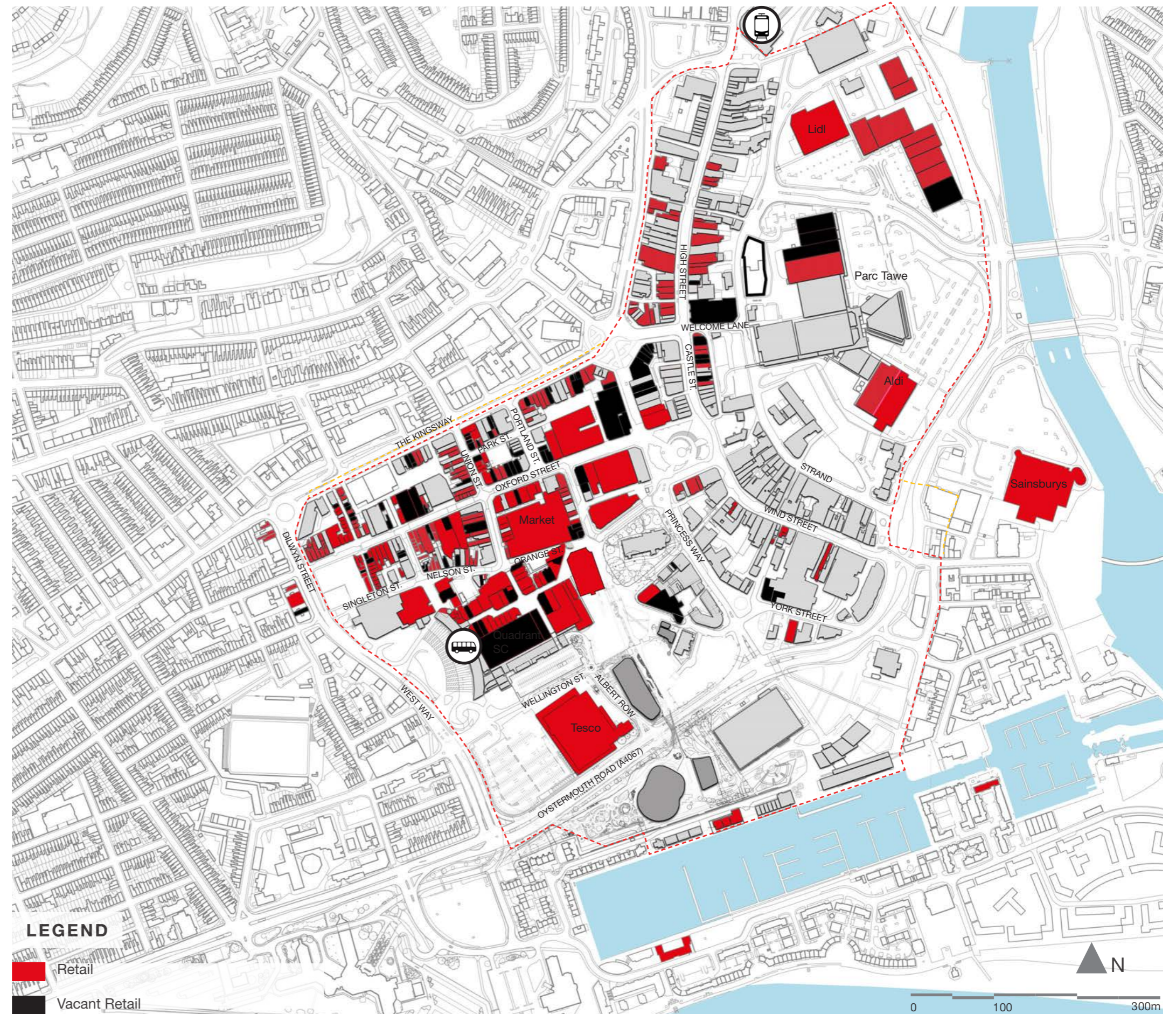


2.4.1a Retail

The map opposite provides a summary of the current vacancy rates for Swansea's existing Retail uses.

Of the circa 500 Retail units included in the study area (denoted in red and black), 25% are currently vacant.

Conclusion - there is an overprovision of retail spaces in the Central Area and in particular in the Central Core.



2.4.2 Footfall

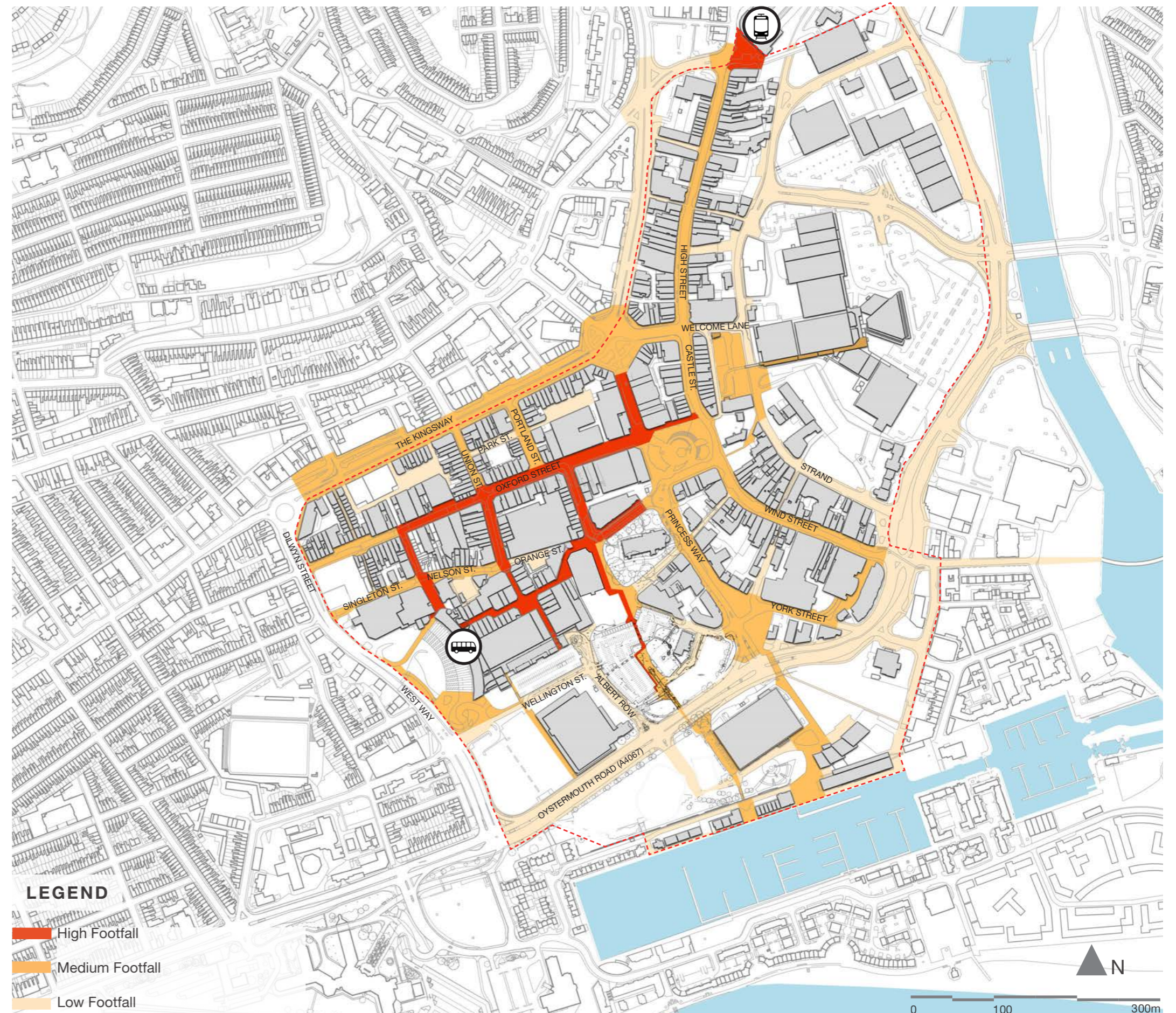
The map opposite depicts Footfall in the City Centre area, with areas of highest footfall shown in darker colours.

As can be seen from this map, the highest footfall areas in the city are in the Quadrant, with Oxford Street showing particularly high footfall rates.

In terms of trends over time, overall footfall decreased by 5% year on year between 2017 and 2019. This figure is evidently pre pandemic, and Covid-19 will likely have had a further detrimental impact on these footfall rates.

To put these figures in context, this 5% year on year decrease in footfall is 35% worse than the national average for footfall in shopping centres.

Conclusion - Footfall had been declining before the Covid19 pandemic.



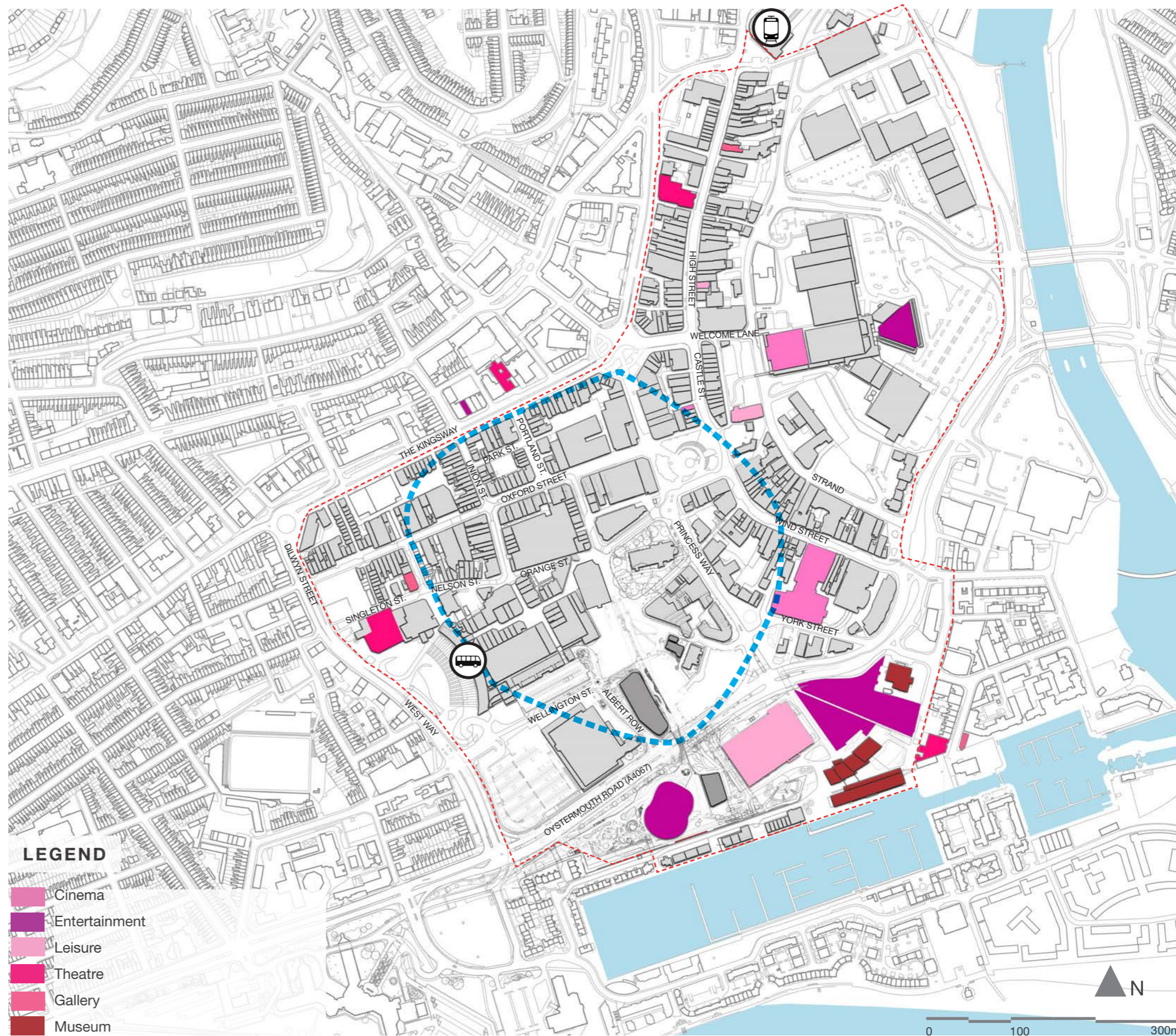
2.4.3 Leisure & Entertainment

Entertainment and Leisure uses in the City Centre area are depicted in colour on the map opposite.

From this map is clear that there are no cultural, entertainment or leisure uses in the central core area of Swansea (shown here as the dotted line area).

In terms of permeability, there are poor linkages across this central core area between the existing leisure and entertainment destinations.

Conclusion - Leisure and entertainment facilities are located outside of the central core and dispersed in the Central Area without a clear circuit linking them.



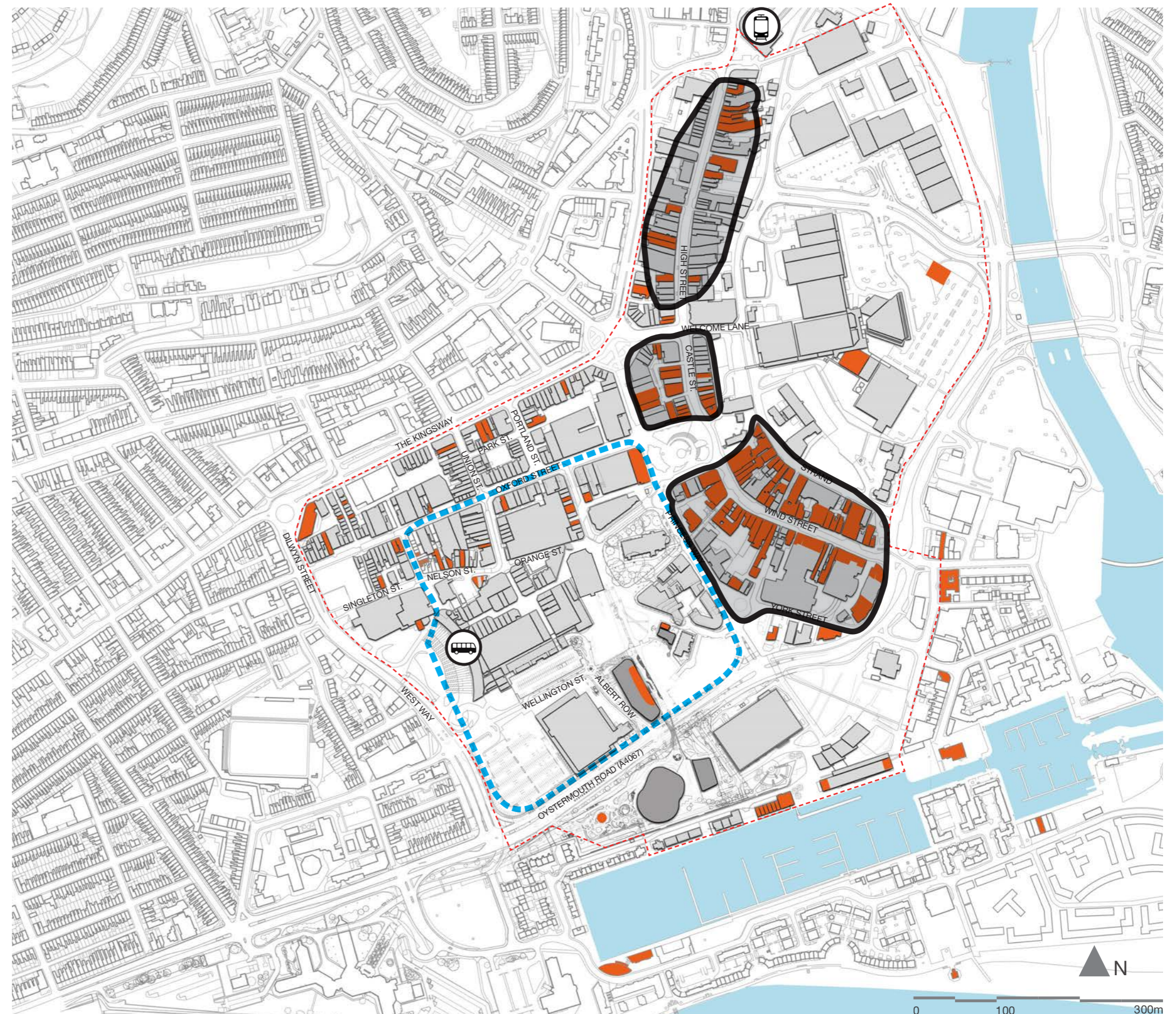
2.4.4 Food & Beverage

Beyond Entertainment and Leisure uses, there is a major lack of Food and Beverage land uses and little diversity of offering in the core area of the City Centre (indicated by the dotted line).

Instead, there is a concentration of Food and Beverage uses in the three small pockets, outlined in black on the map.

The strongest Food and Beverage offer exists on Wind Street, although even these have a limited target audience and lack variety.

Conclusion - lack of 'grown up' offer in the City Centre, and very limited offer within the central core.



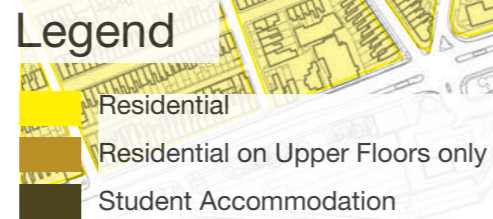
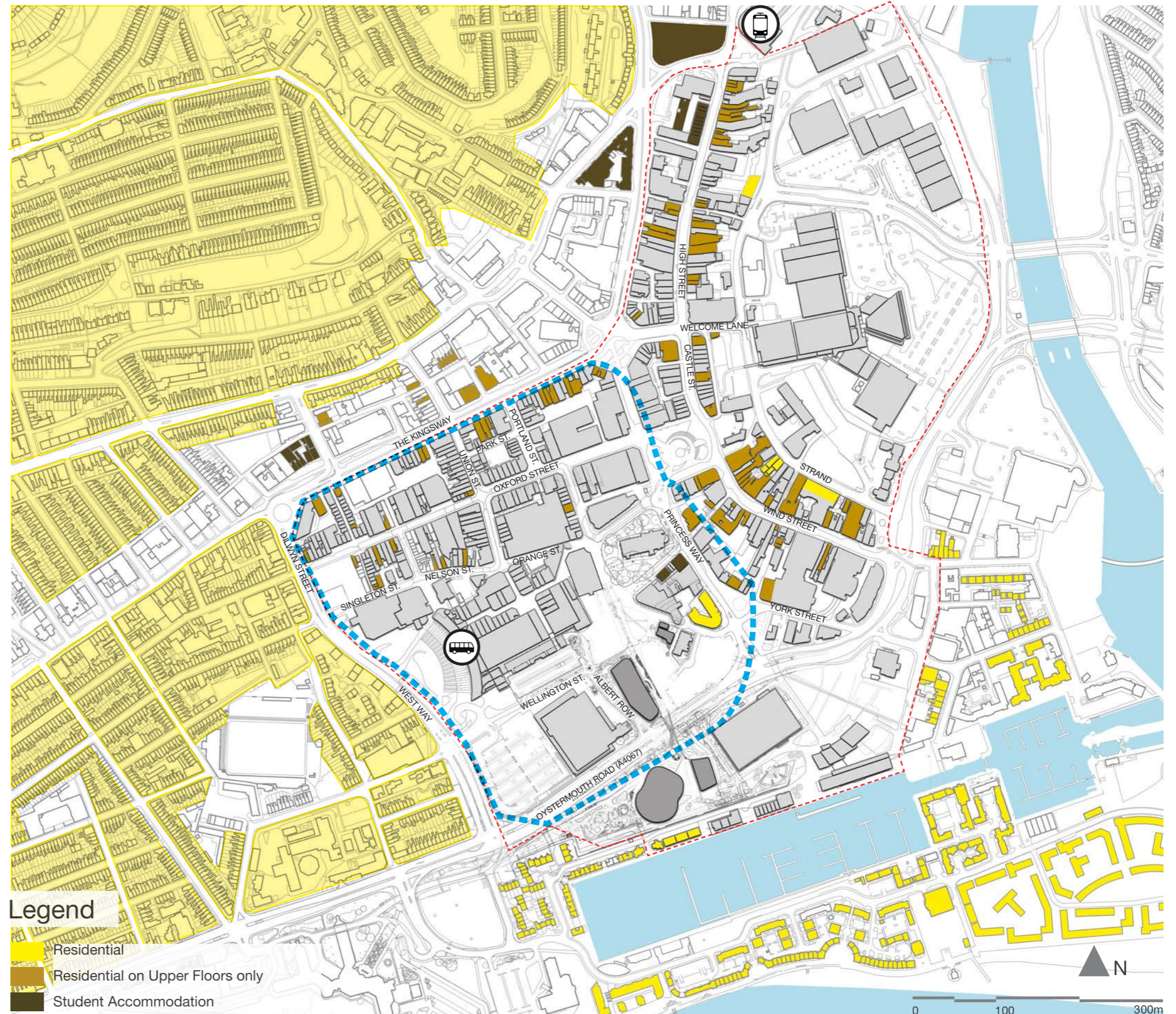
2.4.6 Residential

Turning to Residential uses, the land use map opposite demonstrates that there is very limited provision of Residential in the Core area of the City Centre. The yellow areas of Residential use are concentrated towards the North and East of the City Centre.

Where Residential uses are present, there is a noticeable predominance of Housing Associations due to low housing values in the area.

As can be seen from the map in darker yellow, there is a concentration of Upper Floor residential on the High Street and Wind Street which is common in City Centre areas.

Conclusion - Lack of quality residential in the core and very limited variety of types of tenure.



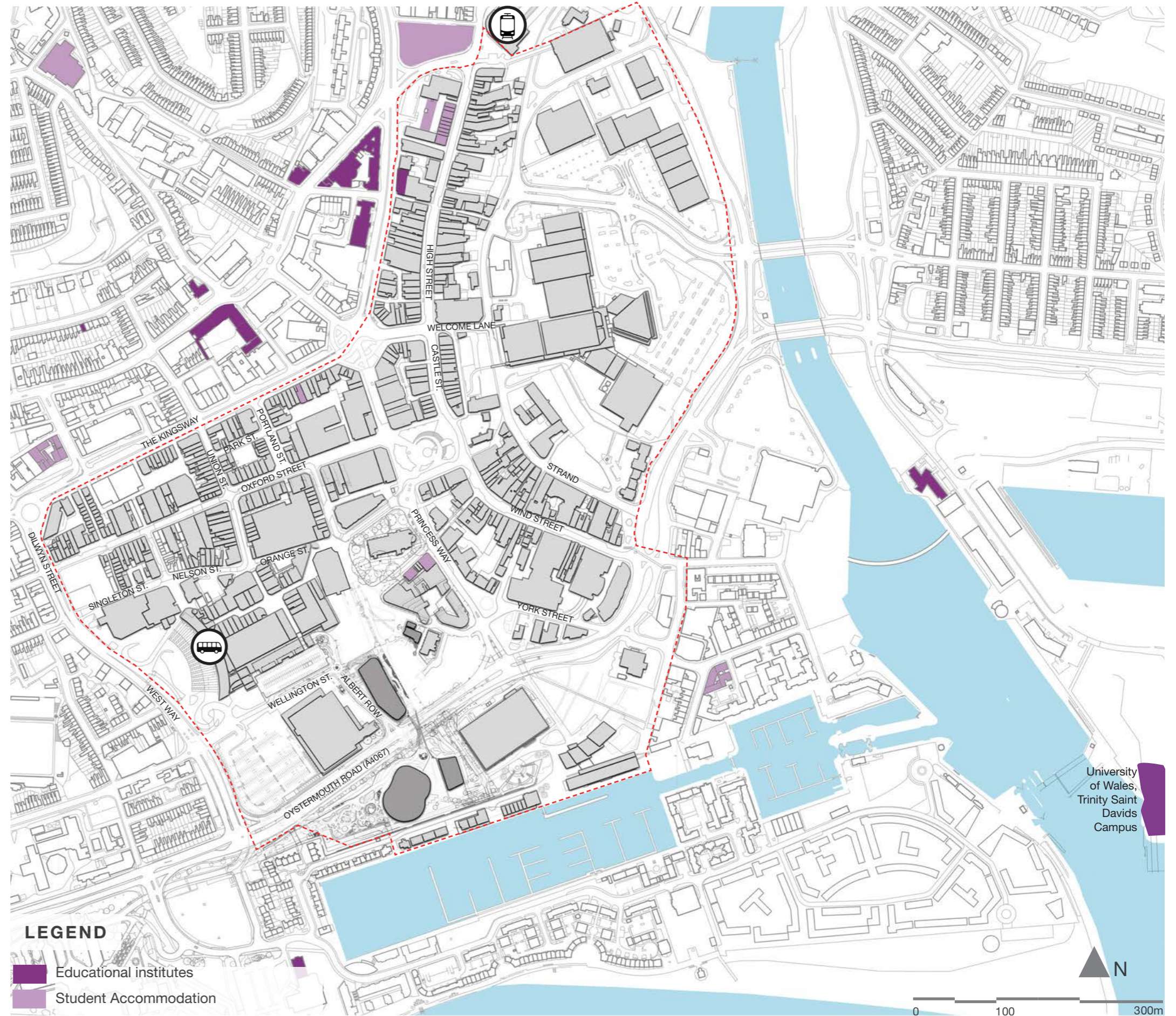
2.4.7 Education

The map demonstrates that to the North of the City Centre area there are numerous Educational institutions.

Despite boasting two high quality Universities, there is only a very small provision of education facilities within the City Centre.

Geographically, Swansea City Centre is very well located for a student hub which would be easily accessible to most.

Conclusion - Need of adequate provision of schools (early age, primary and secondary) to support regeneration of the City Centre as a liveable city for all.



2.4.8 Gateway

VEHICLE MOVEMENT

The map opposite depicts the key vehicular, pedestrian and public transport gateways in Swansea City Centre.

What is evident is that vehicular through traffic around the core of the City Centre is an issue with clear congestion and delays concentrated on the key highway approaches into the City.

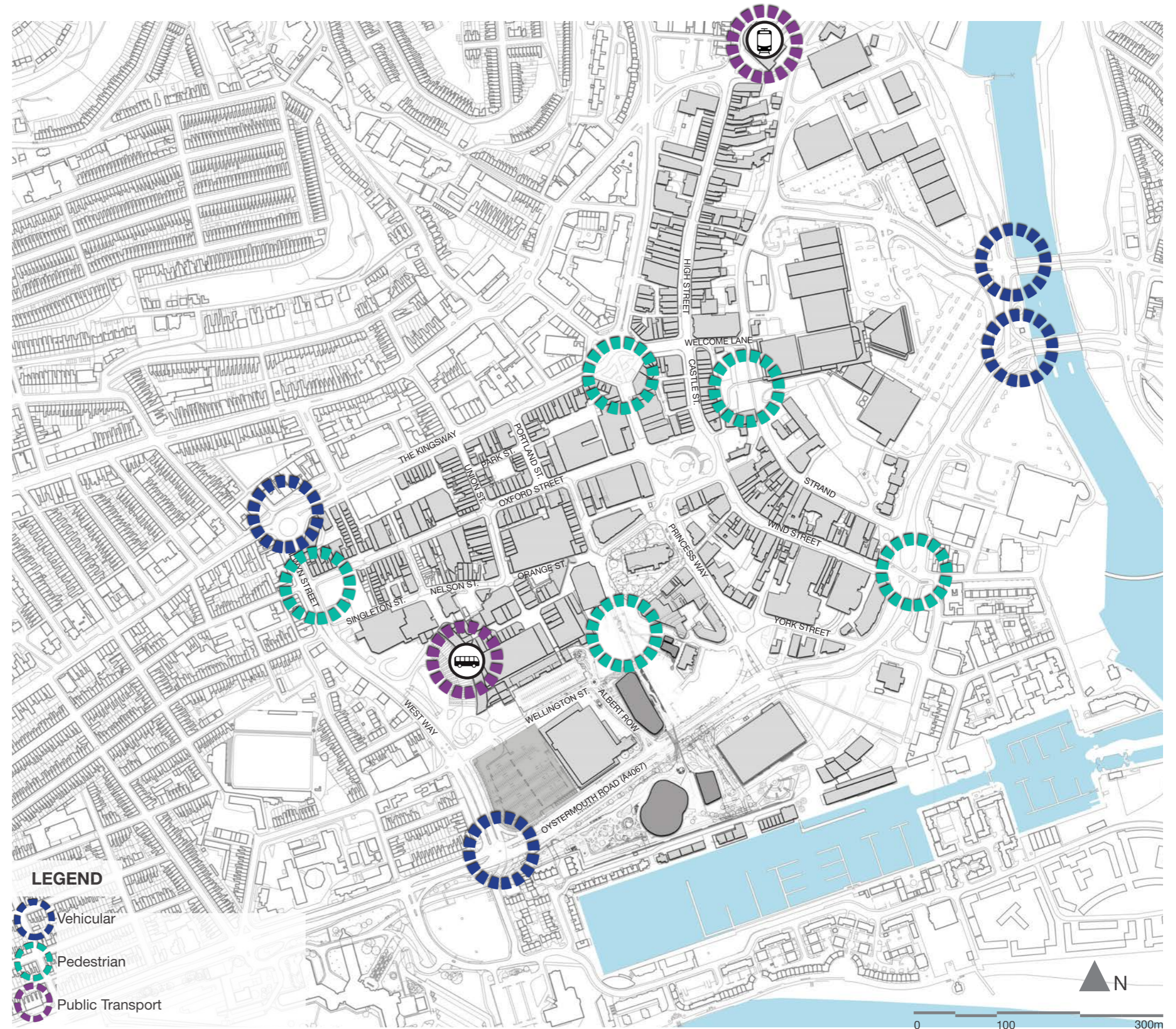
There is also clear severance of the City Centre caused by main vehicular through roads.

Public transport movement in the City Centre core is limited. Without an improved public transport offering, origin destination trips will remain.

GATEWAYS

There are limited high quality gateways to the City Centre core which inevitably leads to challenges for (and discourages) pedestrian and cycle access into this area.

City Centre Gateways is an issue appears that three points – Tescos, north west corner and River bridge / Parc Tawe. It is recommended that from these gateways, traffic (except cyclists and buses) should be filtered into car parks, with the exception of Oystermouth Road and Kingsway which enable travel across the city centre. The link from the rail station to the bus station via the central area is the fourth ‘gateway’, albeit linear and it is recommended that pedestrian and cycle priority is provided along the route between the two.



2.5 SCC VISIONING WORKSHOP

..... Visioning Workshop

On 4th February 2021 a virtual Analysis and Visioning workshop for Swansea City Centre took place to discuss the structure and functioning of the existing the city centre (with particular regard to Retail) and review potential repurposing strategies.

The workshop was divided in two sessions.

Session 1

The first part of the workshop consisted of a project overview in which BDP set out the aims of the project; to promote vibrancy and healthy living in the city centre, to repurpose failing city centre Retail and to transform the central area into a destination with diverse uses.

The presentation that followed this was led by BDP and PJA. This presentation referenced the 12 key ingredients of a successful city centre, recommended by Rivington Hark, which can be seen in the image opposite.

Session 2

The second section of the workshop focused on providing the group with an opportunity to make observations on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats with reference to the 12 key areas outlined above. The group then agreed upon a score for Swansea City Centre against each of these 12 criteria.

The overall comparative ratings for Swansea against each of these twelve criteria showed Leisure and Entertainment, Education and Tourism clearly deliver the strongest performance and areas of immediate opportunity become apparent in the Retail, Food & Drink and Employment sectors.



2.6 OCCUPIER ENGAGEMENT

2.6.1 Introduction & methodology

In order to analyse the true sentiments of the core retail occupiers and stake holders of Swansea, an extensive engagement exercise with over 80 key occupiers within the agreed study area was undertaken between December 2020 – Jan 31st 2021. The engagement has allowed the team to gain detailed insight into occupier sentiment and perception of Swansea for both immediate and long term future plans. The data gathered through this exercise allows the team to form and identify trends which will be drawn upon and may directly influence proposals for the long term future of Swansea.

The methodology used to gather this data was set out in stages which we have detailed below:

Stage 1 - The team identified and compile list of targeted core occupiers within the study boundary and more focussed study area. List agreed with Swansea City Council.

Stage 2 – Five key questions to ask occupiers identified and agreed with Swansea City Council;

1. How does your store perform generally in Swansea?
2. What are your rent and turnover figures?
3. Do you have any upcoming lease events?
4. What are your floor area requirements?
5. What are your short/medium/ long term plans for your Swansea store?
6. Other – comments and Swansea interventions?

Stage 3 – Team members agree target approach based on existing relationships and commence engagement via phone calls, email and zoom/ teams meetings.

Stage 4 – Data gathered and fed into central database.

Stage 5 – Data analysed and key trends identified. *RAG system implemented to identify sentiments.

Stage 6 – Detailed analysis and conclusions.

*RAG system – this system was used to identify key trends and sentiments as a result of occupier conversations.

2.6.2 Key Findings and Conclusions

Generally, the analysis has provided a series of positive conclusions for Swansea:

1. Occupier sentiment in Swansea is positive with the majority (75%) being either happy or neutral with their stores performance.
2. 77% are planning to stay for a longer term future.
3. *50% are of the view that their rent is stable and sustainable.

As a result, the task is to identify and produce exciting, realistic and implementable solutions to tackle this problem for the immediate future. Please refer to the Master planning section of this report for further information.

2.7 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

A number of virtual stakeholder sessions took place to inform the project's analysis work. During the one hour calls participants were invited to state and comment on what they viewed were Swansea's Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Individual engagement sessions were held with several key stakeholders and landowners in and around Swansea City Centre. Additionally, 3 Working Group meetings between the consultant team and SCC served to steer the emerging baseline, masterplan strategies and proposed interventions.

The stakeholders ranged from town centre managers through to university employees and local landowners. It should be noted that the majority of those engaged with are local to Swansea and therefore provided what could be seen as a more personal view of the cities analysis.



3

SWOT

3.1 SWOT

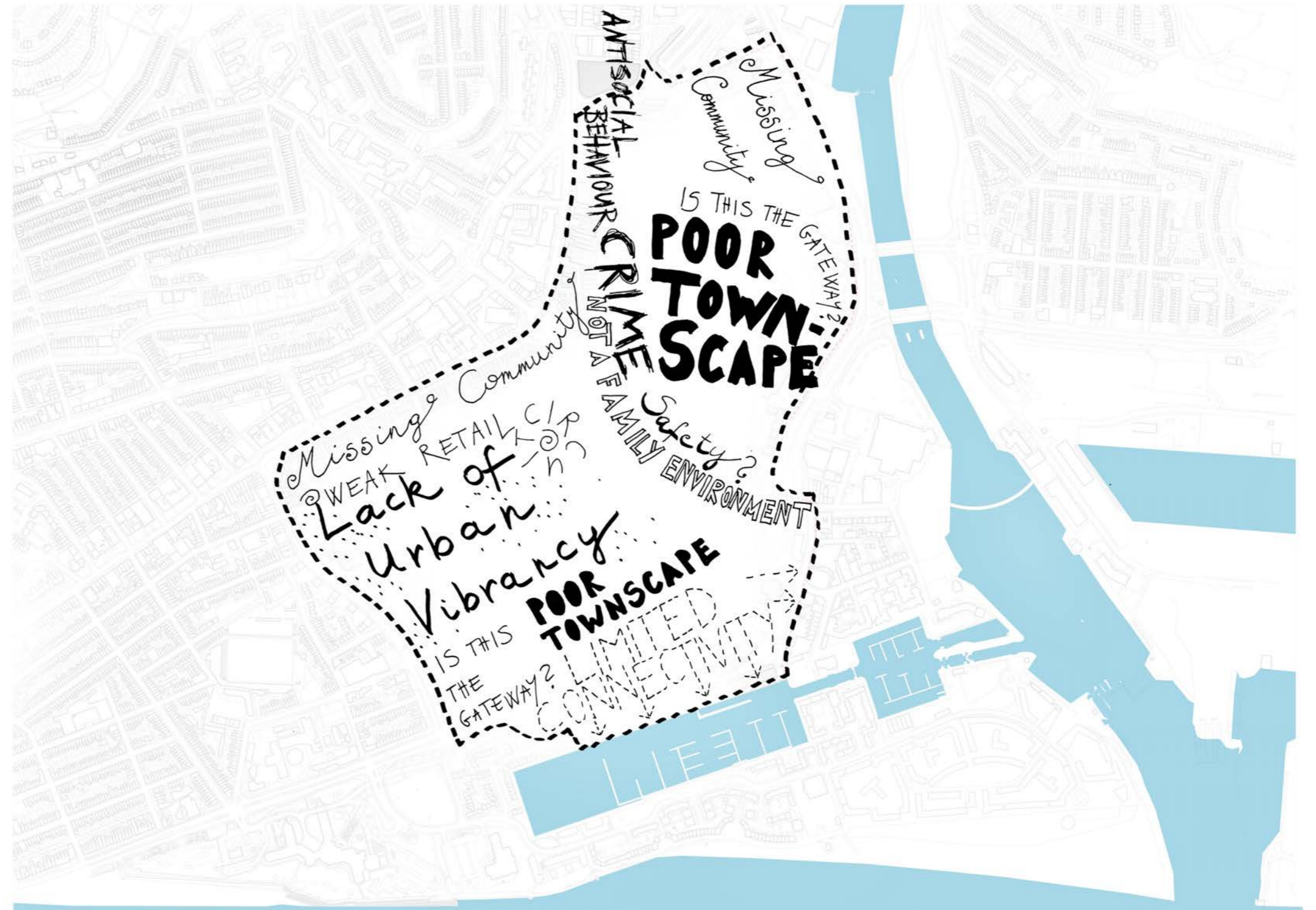
3.1.1 Strengths

- Location and Setting: A powerful environmental capital with a unique setting on Swansea Bay and surrounding landscape
- Urban Form: A compact, walkable city centre with distinct character areas
- Connectivity: good public transport links and parking provision for visitors
- Education: Links to two major universities
- Planning framework: Strong and supportive planning policy framework
- Culture and events: A growing cultural and creative sector underpinned by city wide cultural and public arts strategies.
- Transformative projects: Key regeneration strategies underway, underpinned by projects such as the Kingsway public realm enhancement or delivery in the short term of Copr Bay 1 or 71/72 The Kingsway.
- Leisure and Entertainment Offer
- Identity and Pride



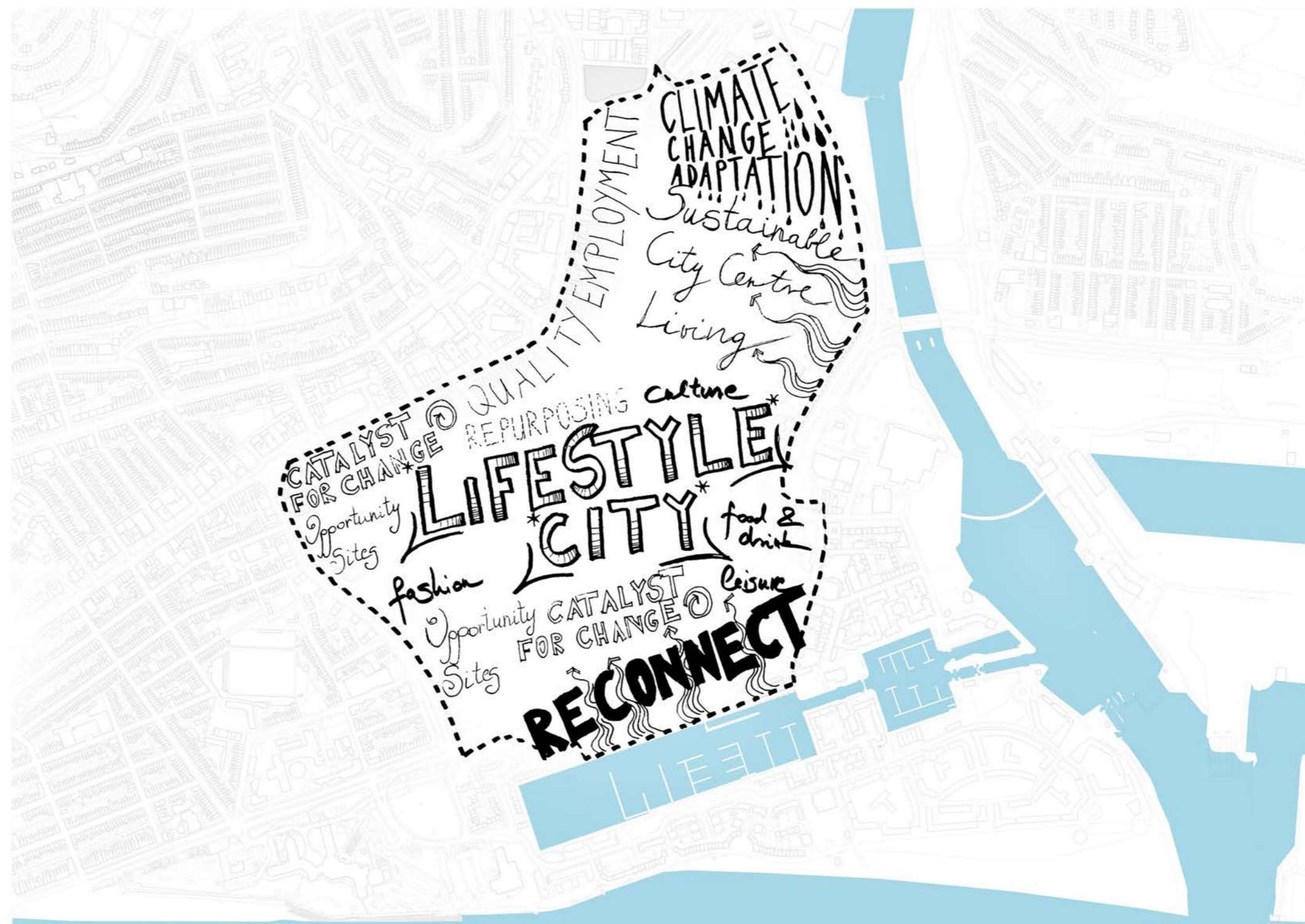
3.1.2 Weaknesses

- Urban vibrancy: Lack of all day visitor experience and event led food and drink, together with very small residential population mean that the city centre has a very limited evening animation.
- Townscape: Post war developments have resulted in non descript environments with poor urban and architectural identity.
- Retail: Loss of Debenhams as a primary retail anchor has affected an already weak retail circuit
- Not a family environment: Limited family friendly leisure offer, with food and drink options focussed for younger age groups.
- Community: Limited social and community infrastructure together with public open spaces that do not cater for all ages.
- Safety: Anti social behaviour issues generate the perception of an unsafe city centre in the evening, particularly in the Wind Street area.
- Access and gateways: Poor spatial quality of key gateways to the city centre, with a predominance of surface car parks.
- Connectivity: Lack of direct and accessible links to the marina and beach, and poor connectivity with neighbouring residential communities.
- Limited Education offer in the city centre
- Limited office accommodation and no grade A space
- Quality of car parks and public transport links



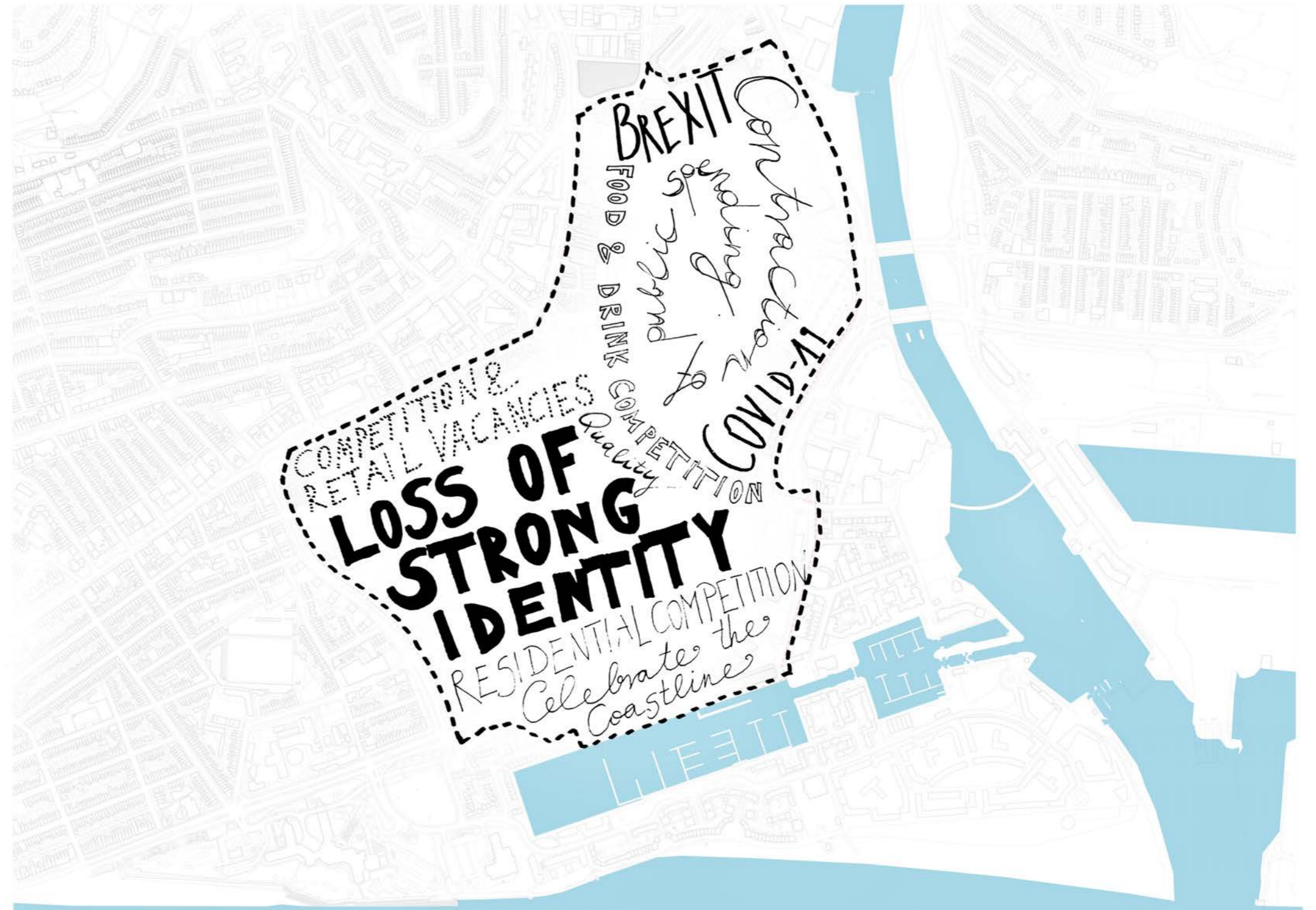
3.1.3 Opportunities

- Lifestyle: Remarket Swansea as a lifestyle city that includes larger and more varied offerings in terms of food and drink, leisure, fashion and culture.
- Sites: There is a high number of sites and buildings available for redevelopment or repurposing. These include surface car parks, vacant upper floors of commercial buildings, significant buildings such as Swansea Market and large retail units.
- Transformational projects: Projects such as Copr Bay, 71/72 the Kingsway or the Urban village will be catalysts for change in attracting a new mix of used and activities (leisure, employment, residential) to the city centre.
- City centre living: Residential projects can drive and unlock regeneration opportunities, and assist in transforming the city centre's character.
- Employment: Demand for quality office space and workspace generates investment and regeneration opportunities.
- Policy: Growing emphasis of statutory policies on sustainability, climate change adaptation, and health and wellbeing will drive the requirement for a healthier and more inclusive city centre environment.
- Public realm: Quick wins to improve perception when visitors return to the city centre
- Parking: Cutting back on high provision can release land for redevelopment
- Connectivity: Reconnect the city centre with sea
- Re-occupy the Debenhams with new occupants
- Tidy up public realm and improve arrival/welcome
- Consolidate retail core, address vacancy and encourage local independent retailers



3.1.4 Threats

- Retail vacancies: Loss of Debenhams may accelerate further retail vacancies
- Viability: Unfortunately the underlying values of both commercial and residential land uses do not support viable commercial returns and thus is a reliance on gap funding
- Competition: Neighbouring attractions and destinations such as Mumbles pose a threat to the city centre in attracting quality retailers and food and drink establishments
- Residential offer: The waterfront competes with the city centre as an attractive residential location.
- Identity: Progressive loss of a strong identity of Swansea as a thriving city centre
- Anti-social behavioural issues





4

Masterplan Framework and Strategic Objectives

4.1 SWANSEA CENTRAL AREA REGENERATION FRAMEWORK

4.1 Swansea Central Area Regeneration Framework

One of the principal aims of the City Centre Masterplan and Vision is to provide a refresh of the Swansea Central Area Regeneration Framework (SCARF) of 2016 and establish robust principles to guide future investment. The SCARF divides the Central Area into 10 character areas, and identifies a vision for four broad conceptual areas:

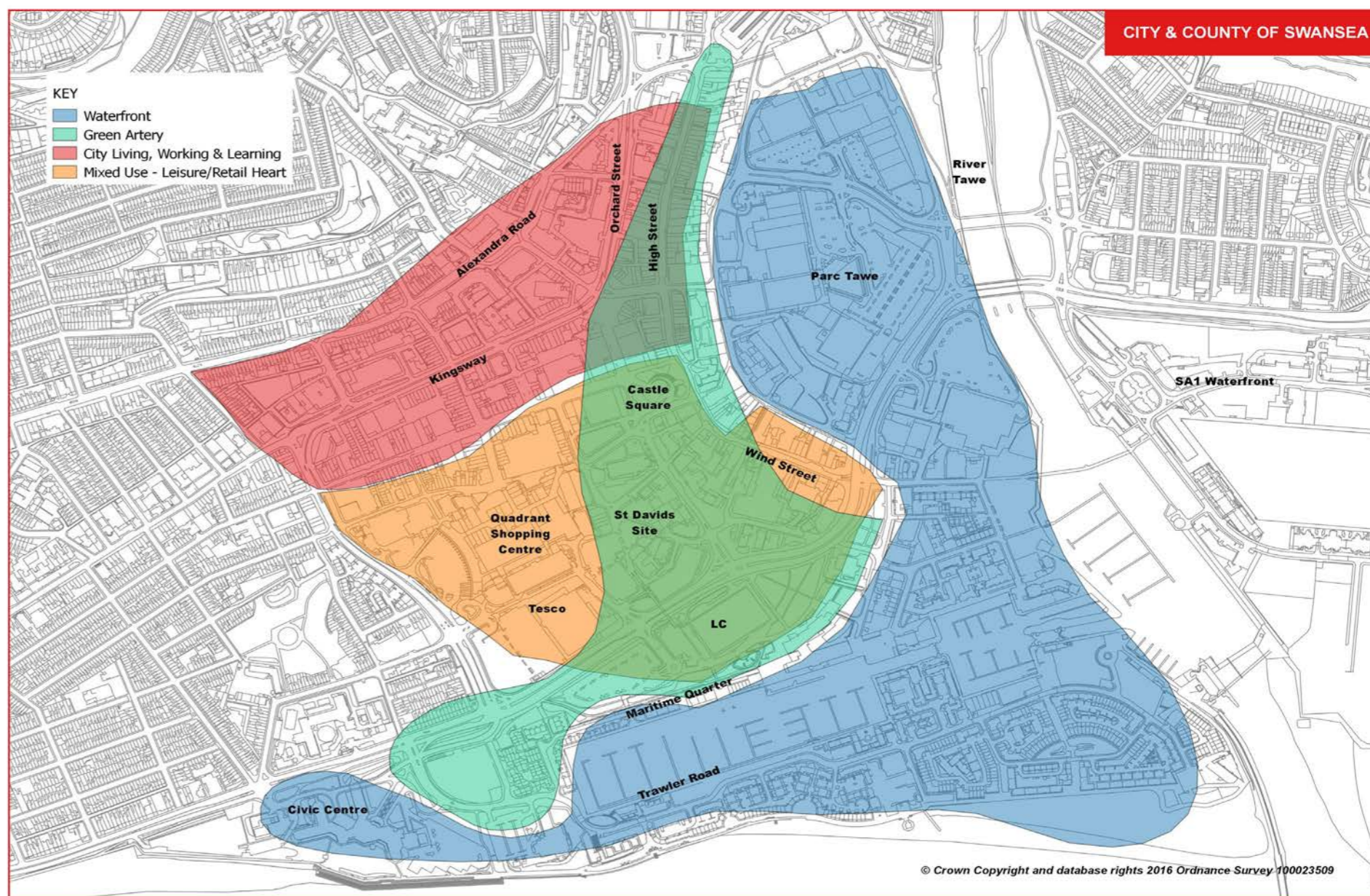
- Creating a Working Living and Learning Area
- Delivering a Retail and Leisure Led Mixed Use Centre
- Connecting the Centre to the Waterfront
- Developing a City Green Artery

The Area Visions define the strategic role of different segments of the Central Area in response to the Regeneration Framework's themes and objectives in relation to sustainability, design, economic prosperity, access and connectivity and distinctiveness and innovation. As illustrated by the Indicative Concept Plan (opposite), the conceptual areas identify the principal uses that will drive the regeneration of specific zones within the Central Area. These have informed and guided key investments in recent years, and have underpinned the delivery of, amongst others, the following projects and interventions:

Swansea Central - Responds to the key regeneration proposals for the St.Davids / Quadrant character area. The new Arena establishes a new leisure anchor appropriate for a Regional Centre that complements the existing uses of the Retail Leisure Led Mixed Use Centre. The project also improves the pedestrian and cycle linkage over Oystermouth Road, creates a new high quality gateway to the Centre, delivers high quality car parking, creates new and innovative open spaces such as the Digital Square and Coastal Park, and provides a new church hall facility servicing the St Davids priory.

Wind Street - The pedestrianisation and enhancement of Wind Street, together with the refresh of Castle Square, are included as regeneration proposals and design principles for the Wind Street Area.

71-72 The Kingsway - The redevelopment of the former of the former Oceana nightclub site is a priority project for the



Kingsway/Orchard Street Complementary Area. As one of the three schemes of the Swansea City Deal project, 71-72 Kingsway is envisaged as a catalyst for the employment led regeneration of the Area. It is worth noting that the SCARF supports the relocation of the Civic Centre Offices and Library to the Kingsway area to reinforce its role as an employment district within the Central Area.

The Kingsway - Recently completed, the transformation of the Kingsway into a green boulevard rebalances the use of the street's space with a greater emphasis on pedestrians. The enhanced urban environment creates an adequate setting for Swansea's Tech Quarter whilst improving links with adjacent residential neighbourhoods.

The SCARF also prioritises the regeneration of the Civic Centre and Park Tawe Complementary Areas in response to the Vision Themes of Linking the City to the Waterfront, and City Living, Working and Learning.

The above examples evidence the progress to date in the drive to transform the Central Area and shift away from the dominance of retail as the primary use and economic activity within the city centre. It is evident that the regeneration agenda supported by local, regional and national policy, and by initiatives and programmes such as Shaping Swansea, have provided a robust framework that is delivering positive results. The Masterplan Vision for the Repurposing Study will need to acknowledge this, but also reflect on recent changes and emerging conditions that require a refresh of specific strategies and objectives. Based on the key messages from the analysis exercise, the following considerations are to be taken into account in updating the strategic framework:

- Review and refresh the Area Visions so as to further integrate the Retail Leisure Led Mixed Use Centre with Complementary Areas such as Kingsway and Orchard Street, and High Street. This will reflect the growing importance of residential and employment uses to redefine the character and vocation of the Central Area, particularly in light of the contraction of retail.
- Emphasise the role of the Central Area not just as an economic driver but as a space of social cohesion, care and wellbeing, and cultural innovation for the city's residential neighbourhoods and quarters.

- Enhance connectivity and integration between the City Centre, waterfronts (river, sea and marina), and wider natural environment.
- Improve the City Centre's social infrastructure, with a focus on education for all ages, day centres, and cultural and community hubs.
- Attract a wider residential population to the City Centre, with a focus on intergenerational living.
- Reinforce the role of the Green Artery as a key spatial device to support the Swansea Central Area Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- Develop a long term strategy to reimagine new uses for vacant retail spaces that will support a model for a more compact urban centre that capitalises on the proximity and complementarity of uses and activities that have not traditionally had a strong presence in the City Centre.
- Design for a greater involvement of local communities and collectives. This will be particularly important in relation to the use of vacant sites with no prospect for short or medium term development, and the activation of public open spaces.
- Review the spatial framework for the redevelopment of Park Tawe, the Civic Centre site and other key waterfront opportunity sites. These must be developed as integrated growth areas of the City Centre, and incorporate clear guidance on key aspects such as green infrastructure, urban morphology, residential typologies, streetscape and provision of social infrastructure.

It should be noted that this is not a departure from the strategies and recommendations of the SCARF. The principal challenge is to review the regeneration framework's strategy of expanding, strengthening and diversifying the provision of retail spaces, particularly in the St.Davids/Quadrant Area. This aspect, together with a strengthened emphasis on increasing the social and environmental value of any regeneration initiative, are the principal considerations that inform the proposed updated masterplan vision.

4.2 MASTERPLAN VISION

The refreshed Masterplan Vision for Swansea's Central Area stems from a rethink of its spatial framework structured around a Retail Leisure Led Mixed Used Centre and a series of Complementary Areas. It is based on the following key principles:

- Consolidating the Central Area into a Lifestyle Quarter with a greater mix of uses, particularly within the central core of St.Davids/Quadrant
- Expanding the idea of the Green Artery as a system that extends beyond the Central Area and connects the water with the hills.
- Giving greater consideration to the integration of the City Centre with its surrounding residential neighbourhoods. As well as a regional shopping and leisure centre, the Central Area must provide high value social services to local communities that are accessible and inclusive.
- Ensuring that the future redevelopment of Park Tawe and the City Seafront (Civic Centre Site) envisages these opportunity sites as natural extensions of the central core.
- Reinforcing the role of historic streets and public spaces such as High Street/Wind Street, Oxford Street, or St. Mary's Square as key urban environments that continue to define Swansea's character and identity.
- Identifying a 'heart' of the City Centre as a meeting place for all that celebrates Swansea's distinctiveness and urban legacy.



Following on from these considerations, the review of the SCARF and the main messages from the analysis work in section 2 of this report, the proposed vision for the masterplan is to “transform the city centre as a lifestyle quarter where one can visit, play, eat, shop, enjoy, live and work.”

The vision complements Swansea’s Council commitment to deliver a vibrant, 24 hour, living, working, and leisure destination. The concept of the Lifestyle Quarter updates the definition of the SCARF’s Retail Leisure Led Mixed Use Centre, and incorporates adjacent areas of the Complementary Area of Kingsway / Orchard Street and Maritime Quarter Complementary Areas.

The masterplan framework is structured around six spatial components that are explained in the following pages of this section. Four complementary themes update the vision for the city centre’s development and regeneration:

City Centre Mix - reconfigure the current mix and distribution of uses (as analysed in section 2) to incorporate flexible and diverse uses for a mixed economy city core – retail, employment, food and drink, leisure, education, community and housing.

Urban Culture – Facilitating events-led tourism through linking a series of multi-functional open spaces (existing and proposed), cultural and historical points of interest, and leisure attractions of the city.

Green Core – Capitalise on the existing network of open and green and blue spaces to create a healthy environment that is also instrumental in mitigating the effects of climate change.

Accessible and Connected – Creating a 15 minute city of interconnected laneways which are safe, accessible, walkable and interactive through high-quality placemaking and data-driven digital infrastructure.



fig4.1: Vision - Shaping Swansea¹

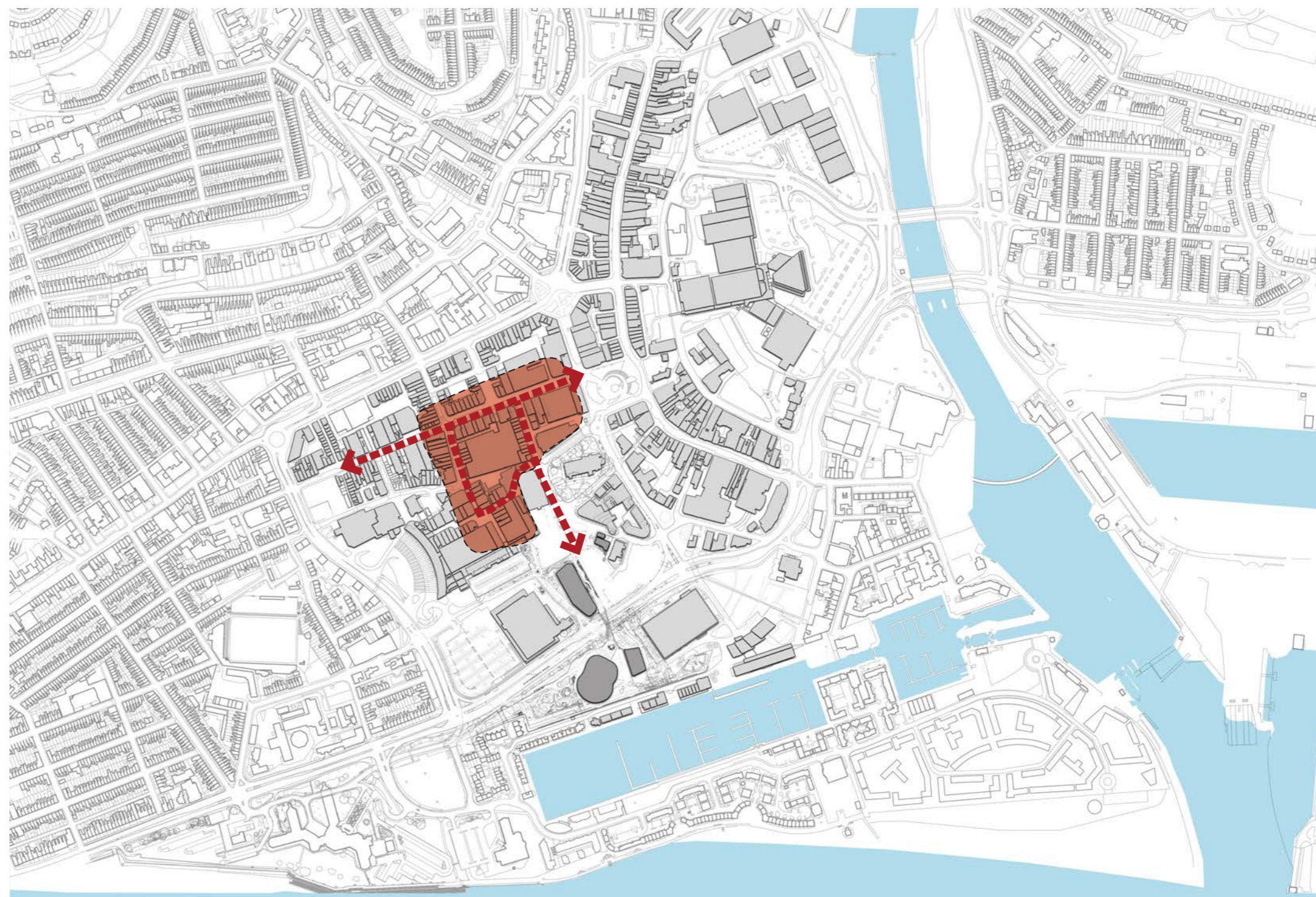
4.2.1 A Contracted retail circuit

Swansea has a loosely structured retail circuit that will be further weakened by the loss of primary retail anchors such as Debenhams and Topshop, and the prospect of an imminent exit of retailers such as Next. The proposal for the Lifestyle Quarter is to establish a contracted circuit at the city's retail core.

The proposed circuit wraps around Swansea Market (Oxford Street, Whitewalls and Union Street) and links into the Quadrant Shopping Centre. It is envisaged that it may stretch along Oxford Street (between the existing Zara to the east, and Waterstones to the west), and link with Swansea North Central to the south.

The retail core is envisaged to attract prime or national retailers. In order to respond to their spatial requirements, existing commercial units (in particular in Whitewalls) may need to be extended or reconfigured.

Secondary circuits and independent retail clusters

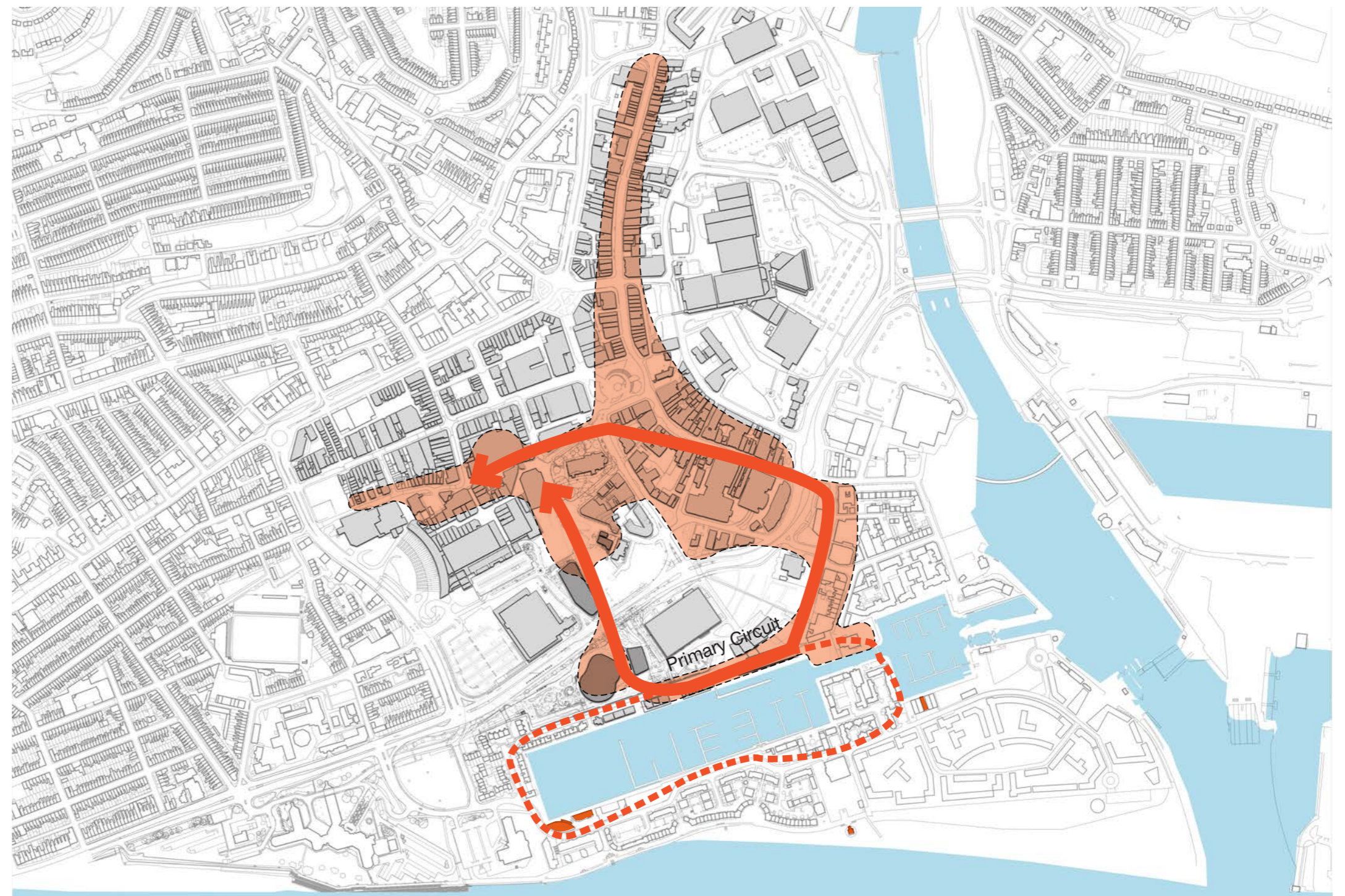


4.2.2 Food and Drink Circuit

A redefined food and drink circuit will underpin an extended leisure offer within the core area that will cater for a wide range of demographic groups, including families and 'grown up' visitors to the City Centre.

Swansea's current food and drink offer is concentrated along High Street and Wind Street. It is primarily focused for students and, in this sense, not inclusive. The proposed circuit capitalises on the transformational effect of projects such as Swansea Central North, the enhancement of the city's public realm and planned revitalisation of Spaces such as Castle Square, and the potential to 'rediscover' local assets such as the Market or Marina. A varied offer within a compact urban realm, together with the opportunity to integrate it with other cultural and leisure uses can support an engaging all-day experience for visitors to the City Centre.

The proposed circuit can establish secondary links with future regeneration areas such as the Civic Centre site and support the drive to reconnect the City Centre with its various waterfronts.

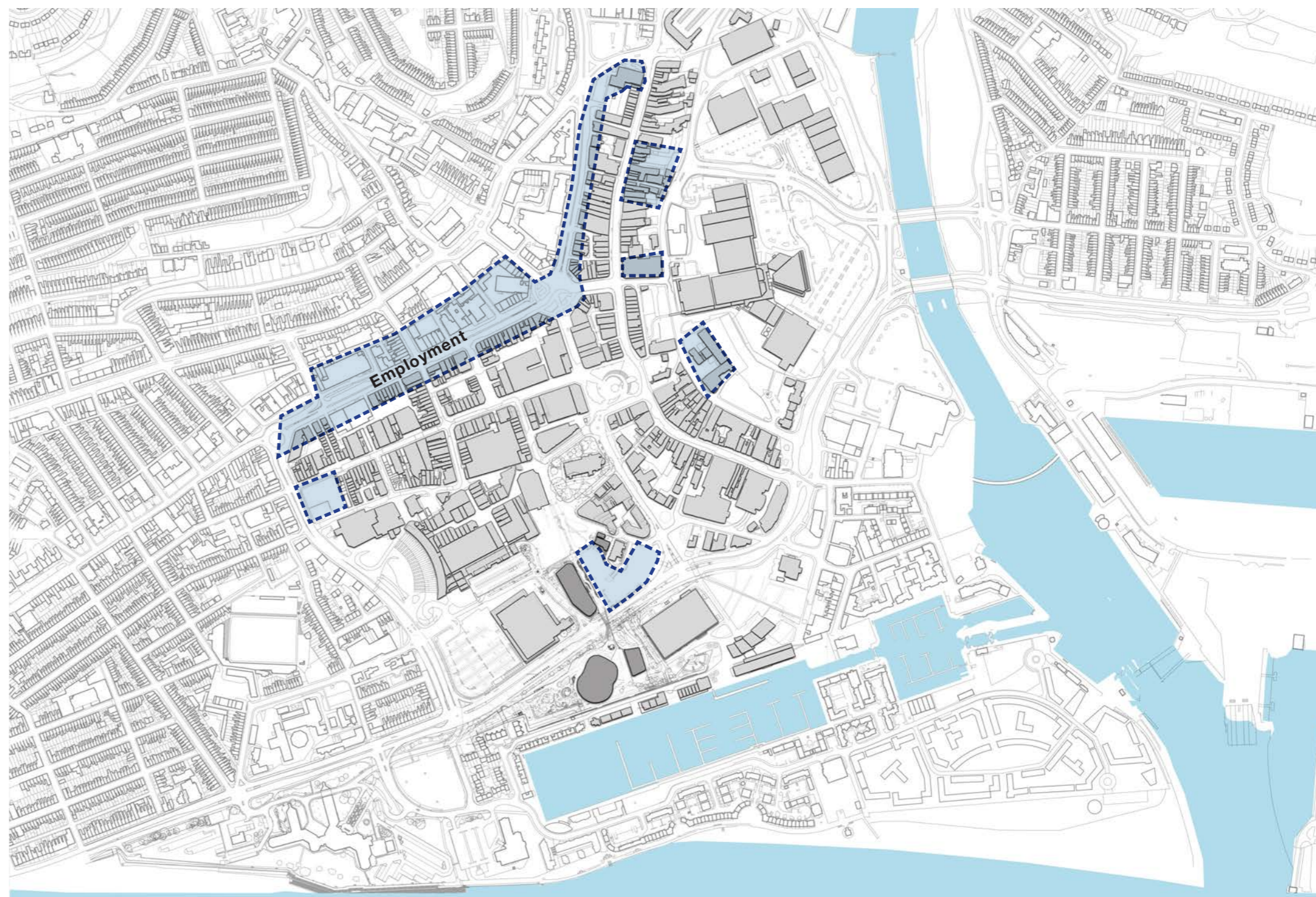


4.2.3 Employment

The SCARF's Economic Prosperity Strategy highlights the role of the Central Area as an economic hub of Regional importance. Swansea City Centre needs to play a pivotal role in providing adequate spaces and infrastructure for high value economic sectors whilst creating an environment that will support attracting and retaining talent

There is a growing demand in the Central Area for modern, flexible workspace, and for grade A office space for SMEs. Swansea has an ideal environment to support a robust business and economic ecology, integrated with a wider urban infrastructure and mix of uses. Within this study's context of a contracted retail sector, this is facilitated through the following strategies:

- Support the role of Kingsway and Orchard Road of attracting knowledge-based and innovation economic activities by creating an attractive urban environment with high quality facilities.
- Reimagine Oxford Street as a mixed use area that provides room for expansion for new businesses through the use of upper floors or vacant retail units.
- Use strategic sites such as the Oxford West surface car park to support new economic uses and attract key actors such as universities or start-ups.
- Provide space for larger commercial offices along Oystermouth Road, capitalising on its accessibility and visibility.
- Allocate space for future growth in opportunity sites such as the Civic Centre site and Park Tawe.

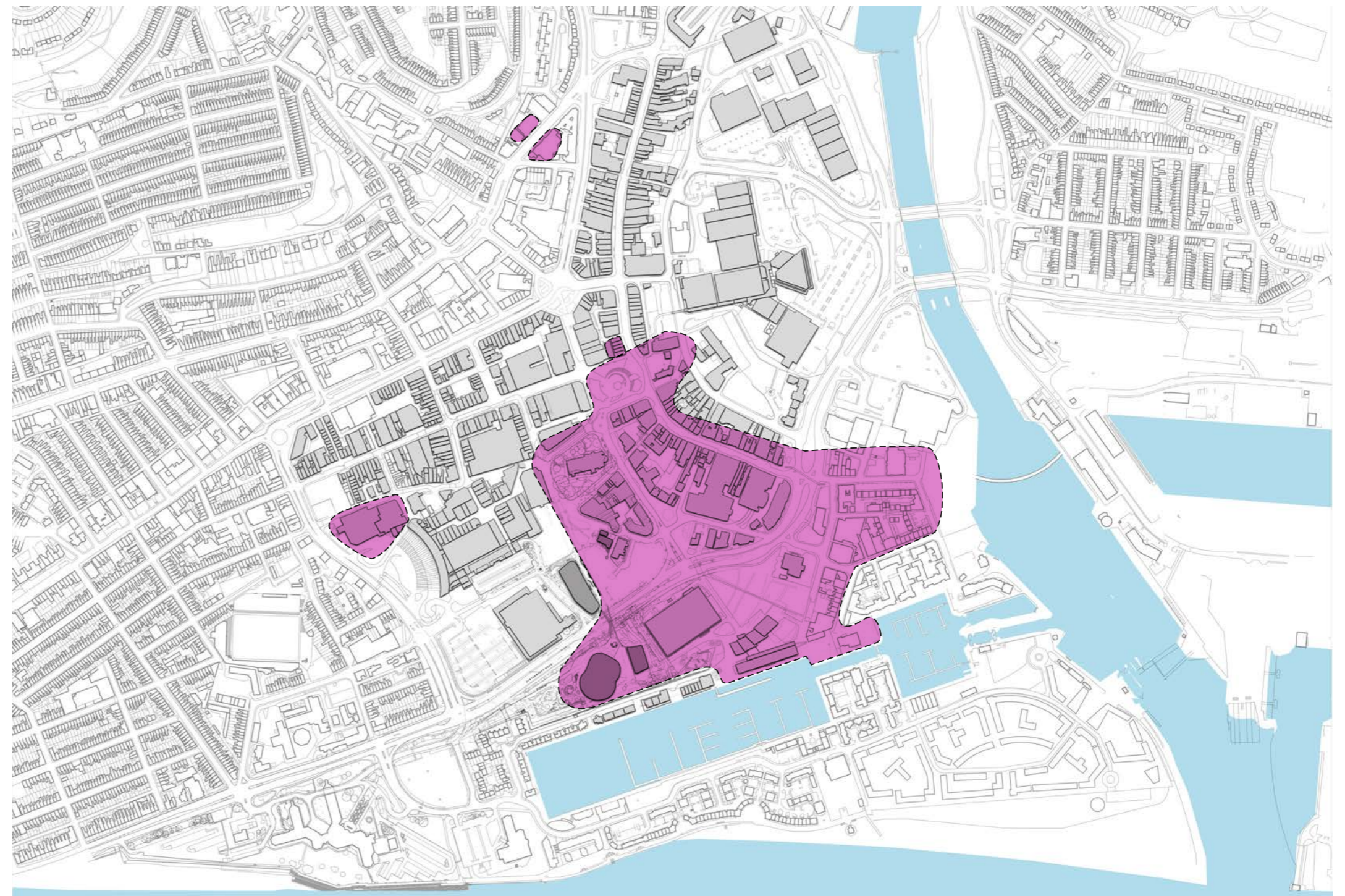


4.2.4 A Leisure and Culture District

Leisure and culture uses are key elements for the refresh and regeneration of the City Centre both as a visitors' destination and space to support the wellbeing and prosperity of local communities.

The Leisure and Culture District is a compact area that draws together a rich variety of high quality urban environments (existing and planned). These will include:

- New Arena, Digital Square and Coastal Park - an entertainment and events hub that integrates technology and sustainability and establishes a strong link between the urban centre and Marina and beach waterfronts.
- Swansea Central North - new family oriented leisure and enhanced public realm
- St.Mary's / Quadrant Entrance / Swansea Market - A refresh of existing uses and a redesigned square as the beating heart of the City Centre.
- Castle Square / Wind Street - Enhanced public realm to support the diversification of the food and drink offer.
- Princess Way / Lanes - Mix of food and beverage offers for a variety of customer groups.
- Marina and Museum Green - Opportunity for open air leisure, sport and cultural activities.



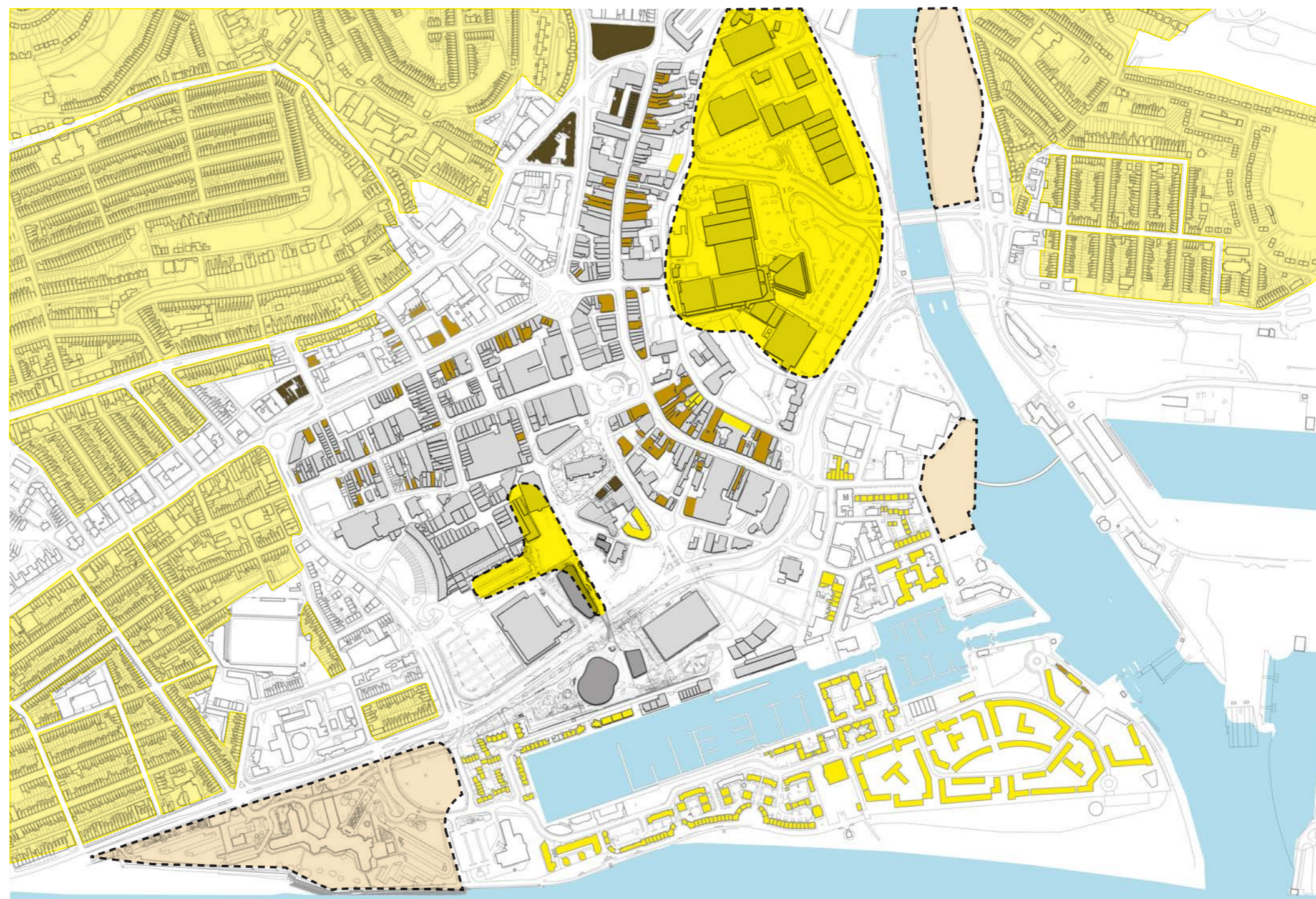
4.2.5 Urban Living

The provision of adequate housing is vital in supporting the growth of sustainable and distinct communities in the City Centre. The LDP's Sustainable Housing Policy (PS 3) indicates a preference for brownsite development, particularly in the Central Area, to drive sustainable growth and regeneration. It also acknowledges the limited availability of such sites.

The repurposing of the City Centre can unlock new opportunities for residential developments, including:

- New housing blocks as part of the Swansea Central North regeneration project
- Redevelopment of the Quadrant MSCP to build new housing, potentially as an initial phase of a future transformation of the Tesco site into a residential led mixed use quarter.
- Future redevelopment of Parc Tawe as a residential led mixed use district.
- Redevelopment of vacant commercial buildings, particularly in Oxford Street, and upper floors of commercial units.

New housing provision will need to cater for a variety of tenancies and user groups. Importantly, it must be understood as a key driver for the transformation of the City Centre, supported by good social infrastructure. Residential typologies will need to be incorporate high standards in relation to wellbeing, sustainability, space and construction.

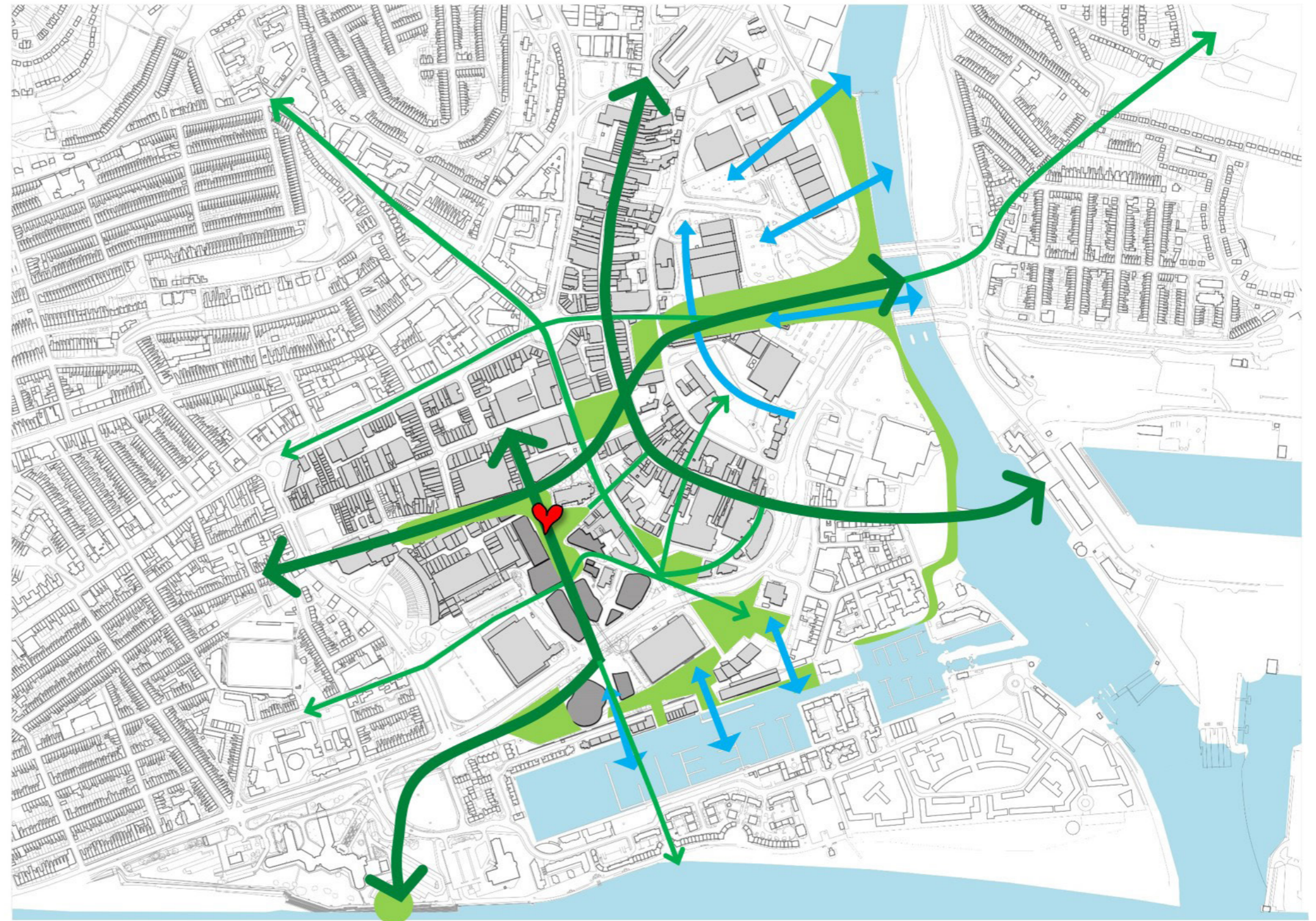


4.2.6 Green and blue network

The vision concept for a Green Artery introduced by the SCARF has been recently reinforced by the Green Infrastructure strategy for Swansea's Central Area. This sets out a vision for "A city with high quality multi-functional green infrastructure delivering resilience, prosperity, nature, health, well-being and happiness to the citizens and visitors of Swansea."

The green and blue network establishes a spatial framework to support the above strategies and the wider repurposing of the City Centre. The network has several layers:

- Primary green links that cut across the central core and connect with various waterfronts.
- A finer network of secondary green routes that reinforce linkages with residential neighbourhoods around the Central Area
- Blue links that requalify the River Tawe and Marina waterfronts.



4.3 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The refreshed masterplan establishes a spatial framework to guide the City Centre's repurposing strategy and its associated interventions. Additionally, four supporting strategic objectives establish criteria to assess, in first instance, the impact of any proposed intervention. These also complement the SCARF's strategic objectives and reinforce the environmental, social and wellbeing themes of the local and national policy framework.

The Strategic Objectives are:

SO1 - Create A Vibrant And Sustainable City Centre Core.

Supported by the following actions:

- Address vacancies and enable repurposing empty buildings/spaces
- Constructively manage the contraction of retail and define a new sustainable retail core
- Create a 'grown up' day and evening leisure offer
- Address the requirements of major retailers (unit sizes, servicing, parking) to retain existing and attract to the city centre
- Retain and encourage independent retailers and cluster their offer around the market
- Promote a mix of uses to support an all-day experience
- Capitalise on the transformational projects that are underway
- Repurpose vacant and historic buildings

SO2 - Change Perceptions And Make Swansea A Destination

Supported by the following actions:

- Create a distinct and vibrant sense of place, invest in events, connect the city centre's arts and culture institutions and get people talking about Swansea
- Create attractive and welcoming arrival spaces to support positive first impressions
- Tackle anti-social behaviour

- Reconnect to the waterfronts and surrounding natural landscape
- Enhance quality of public realm and streetscape
- Celebrate Swansea's identity
- Project local passion and pride

SO3 - Enable New Living And Working Opportunities In The City Centre

Supported by the following actions:

- Provide more quality office accommodation
- Promote a high quality, attractive and diverse residential offer in the city centre
- Promote use of vacant upper floors as workspaces or residential
- Reinforce the business ecology for creative, knowledge and digital sectors

SO4 - Promote A Healthy, Inclusive And Connected Livable City

Supported by the following actions:

- Opportunity for a green and blue city
- Develop active and sustainable travel strategies
- Improve and grow the city centre's social infrastructure
- Promote active leisure
- Define a public realm framework with a clear hierarchy
- Enhance the city centre's environment



5

Proposed Interventions

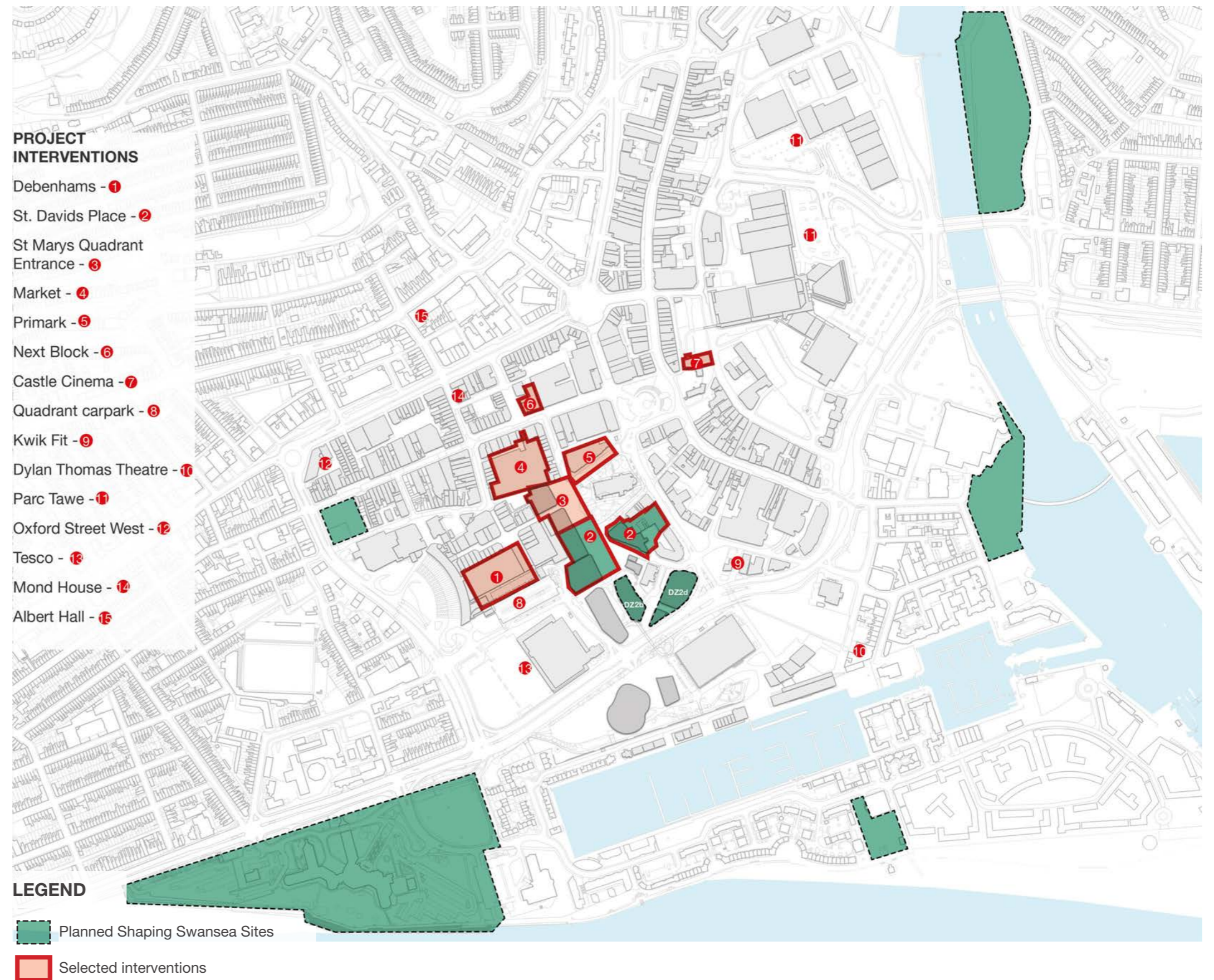
5.1 BUILDING INTERVENTIONS

Following the analysis exercise, SWOT and strategic objectives described in the previous sections of this report, an initial selection of potential interventions was identified as short, medium and long term initiatives to support and structure the repurposing strategy. The selection was based on the team's knowledge of Swansea, site visits and engagement sessions with a wide range of stakeholders, including SCC officers. It was also informed by additional criteria, including:

- Vacancies and potential of buildings or structures to accommodate changes of use.
- Intervention opportunities in key sites or gateways to the city centre.
- Potential to capitalise on the success of current uses or recent implementation of previous initiatives.
- Potential to unlock wider regeneration initiatives.
- Potential to introduce new uses in the city centre (in particular community or social uses).

The map opposite indicates the location of the 15 identified initiatives. These include buildings or commercial units that have recently become vacant (such as Debenhams or the 'Next block'), buildings where new uses or spaces could underpin further urban transformation (Swansea Market or Castle Cinema), larger sites for longer term development such as the Shaping Swansea initiative and Park Tawe or current private led developments (such as Mond House or Albert Hall).

The following pages summarise the key considerations supporting each proposed intervention and their potential outputs or benefits. Each of the proposed interventions are scored against each of the strategic objectives as mentioned previously in section 4.3.



1 - DEBENHAMS



SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 ENABLE NEW LIVING AND WORKING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CITY CENTRE	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY
✓	✓		

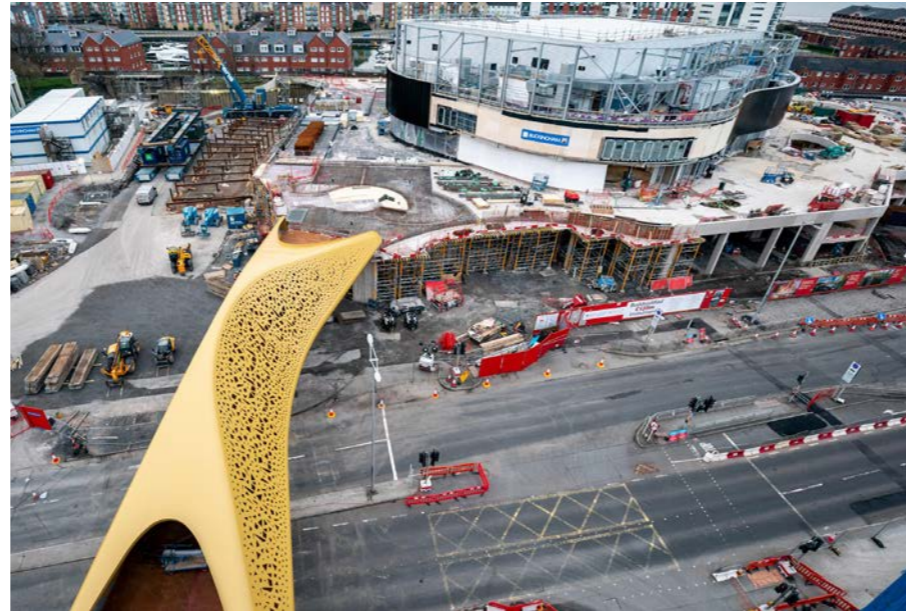
Why

- Major loss of retail anchor for whole city
- Anchor store for the Quadrant (part owned by SCC)
- Dominant and unattractive building
- 160,000 sq ft of space lying empty

What

- Refurbishment and reconfiguration to attract new occupiers and alternative uses

2 - ST DAVIDS PLACE



SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 ENABLE NEW LIVING AND WORKING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CITY CENTRE	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY
✓	✓	✓	✓

Why

- Links Copr Bay to heart of the city – located on the new city spine
- Becoming major city arrival point with completion of Copr Bay car parks and Arena
- Site of former St David's Shopping Centre that makes an unattractive contribution to city
- Opportunity to repurpose redundant retail property

What

- New mixed use development incorporating:
 - new office buildings suitable for large public and private sector organisations, bringing employment and day time vibrancy
 - new “grown up” F&B cluster overlooking new public space adjacent to St David's Church
- New residential
- Potential for other public sector uses

3 - ST.MARY'S QUADRANT ENTRANCE



SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 ENABLE NEW LIVING AND WORKING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CITY CENTRE	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY
✓	✓	✓	✓

Why

- Need to improve connectivity between the market and Quadrant shopping centre
- Important location on the spine linking Copr Bay to Oxford Street
- Opportunity to reduce quantum of retail floorspace
- Currently an uninspiring highly important node on the prime retail circuit – opportunity to enhance the retail environment

What

- Consolidation of retail
- Reconfiguration and improvement to the Quadrant entrance and integration of the market
- Enhancement of the market prominence
- New residential overlooking St Mary's Church

4 - SWANSEA MARKET



SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 ENABLE NEW LIVING AND WORKING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CITY CENTRE	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY
✓	✓	✓	✓

Why

- Market has significant unlocked potential
- Currently lacks prominence
- Opportunity to expand its offer and include more F&B
- Major landmark and key element of Swansea’s identity

What

- Significantly improve prominence in the city
- Expand the offer and trading times
- Potential to reinstate Orange Street an important East / West connection and link to the Theatre

5 - PRIMARK



SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 ENABLE NEW LIVING AND WORKING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CITY CENTRE	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY
✓	✓	✓	✓

Why

- Major retail anchor for city
- Unattractive property with potential for aesthetic and trading layout enhancement
- Large and poor façade facing St Mary’s on important route linking to Castle Square

What

- Facilitate investment by occupier to upgrade the appearance and layout of the property
- Improve the environment of St Mary’s Church

6 - ‘NEXT’ BLOCK



SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 ENABLE NEW LIVING AND WORKING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CITY CENTRE	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY
✓	✓	✓	✓

Why

- Next has confirmed they will be leaving the city in 12-18 months
- Prominent corner unit adjacent has been long term vacant
- Corner building makes negative contribution on city scape
- Prominent and central location in retailing core

What

- Potential redevelopment to create attractive prominent retail unit
- Potential to create rare high quality office suites in the heart of the centre helping footfall

7 - CASTLE CINEMA



SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 ENABLE NEW LIVING AND WORKING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CITY CENTRE	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY
✓	✓	✓	✓

Why

- Currently very unattractive historic building with potential to be very attractive
- Important location immediately adjacent to the historic Castle and also on the busy link between the core and Park Tawe

What

- Relatively modest extensions and refurbishment to transform appearance on contribution to cityscape

8 - QUADRANT MULTI STOREY CAR PARK



SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 ENABLE NEW LIVING AND WORKING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CITY CENTRE	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY
✓		✓	✓

Why

- Dated MSCP in need of refurbishment
- Will suffer due to demise of Debenhams and the introduction of 2 new MSCP's in Copr Bay
- Potential to release major redevelopment potential from both the Debehams building and Tesco in the future
- Based upon the WSP car parking strategy, the parking demand at the Quadrant car park is forecast to be around 40% on a weekday in their 2030 future year assessment. This increases to 80% on a Saturday. The car park provides 30 disabled parking spaces and so is significant in that regard given the high level of demand for these spaces. Any proposal to remove the Quadrant car park would need to carefully assess the impact on parking provision elsewhere in the city centre, and in particular disabled car parking.

What

- In two stages, Stage 1 retain as parking in order to support covid-19 and encouraging people back to the city centre
- Longer term, comprehensive residential led mixed use regeneration scheme that improves connectivity between city centre and the beach.

9 - KWIK FIT



SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 ENABLE NEW LIVING AND WORKING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CITY CENTRE	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY
	✓	✓	

Why

- Prominent unattractive buildings in strategic location
- Opportunity to improve the environment and connectivity at important node between Marina Quarter, Wind Street, Copr Bay and City Core

What

- Refresh & Repurposing of unattractive building and immediate surrounding.

10 - DYLAN THOMAS THEATRE / TRAM MUSEUM



SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 ENABLE NEW LIVING AND WORKING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CITY CENTRE	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY
✓	✓	✓	✓

Why

- Unattractive and underutilised properties and important junction between the marina and Museum Gardens
- Opportunity to improve visual connection to the marina
- Opportunity to enhance the commercial offer at the marina helping to make it more of a destination
- Helping promote Swansea as a waterfront city

What

- Comprehensive mixed use redevelopment for leisure, F&B and residential uses

11 - PARK TAFE



SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 ENABLE NEW LIVING AND WORKING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CITY CENTRE	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY
✓	✓	✓	✓

Why

- Underperforming retail park that occupies 20% of city core
- Unwelcoming major arrival point from the east
- Opportunity to enhance connectivity to the water front
- Opportunity to create a whole new urban quarter that makes an economic and social contribution to the city
- Opportunity to consolidate the retail floorspace provision in the city

What

- Comprehensive mixed use redevelopment incorporating residential, offices, parkland and parking

12 - OXFORD STREET WEST



SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 ENABLE NEW LIVING AND WORKING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CITY CENTRE	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY
✓	✓	✓	✓

Why

- Major gateway location from the West
- Dominated by poor quality unattractive property
- Opportunity to relocate successful independent traders closer to the higher footfall locations in the heart
- Opportunity to consolidate retail floorspace and introduce a new residential quarter

What

- A site which forms part of the Shaping Swansea initiative.

13 - TESCO



SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 ENABLE NEW LIVING AND WORKING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CITY CENTRE	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY
✓	✓	✓	✓

Why

- Major gateway location dominated by a surface car park and low quality architectural structure
- Major barrier to improving connectivity to the beach
- Use is in wrong location and dominates a key arrival point

What

- Reconfiguration to incorporate high quality pedestrian link to the beach and introduction of residential uses

14 - MOND HOUSE



SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 ENABLE NEW LIVING AND WORKING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CITY CENTRE	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY
✓	✓	✓	✓

Why

- Fine prominent historic building in central core.

What

- Reconfiguration to incorporate high quality city centre living or work space

15 - ALBERT HALL



SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 ENABLE NEW LIVING AND WORKING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CITY CENTRE	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY
✓	✓	✓	✓

Why

- Important heritage site to be saved for future generations

What

- Revival of the building as a multi-functional mixed use venue

5.1.2 Building Interventions

The study brief asked to develop a selection of intervention proposals to be costed and appraised, and feed into an Action Plan for the repurposing strategy. The evaluation and prioritisation of the interventions was based on the following criteria:

1. Satisfaction of the objectives
2. Timing – short / medium / long term (with a weighting towards more immediate)
3. Level of impact
4. Net Cost - being the cost after any value generated
5. Deliverability

The matrix on the opposite page shows the shortlist of interventions, and the selection criteria which they had to deliver. The interventions have had to score against:

- Score against Strategic Objectives SO1 to SO4
- Short/Medium/Long term with short being less than 1 year, medium being 1-3 years and long being 3 years or more.
- Impact measured from high to low.
- Cost measured from high to low with High being £5m +, Medium £1m- £5m and Low being under £1m. Costs are Net to Swansea Council.
- Deliverability measured from high to low with High being easiest to deliver and low being the most complex.

The final selection is as follows:

- Debenhams
- Swansea Central North Phase 2 / St. Davids
- St. Mary's / Quadrant Entrance

- Primark
- Swansea Market
- Next Block
- Castle Cinema

It was concluded that the 7 selected projects can, as part of an integrated programme of interventions, both sustain the momentum of committed regeneration projects and respond to new requirements for the repurposing strategy the central core. Key considerations for the final selection also included:

- Introducing new residential and work uses to drive a step change towards a mixed-use environment in the city centre.
- Potential to challenge negative perceptions of Swansea City Centre and create a more attractive leisure, dining and cultural offer for a variety of visitor groups.
- Enhancement of the public realm in the central core and pedestrian links with the wider network of open spaces in the city centre.
- Capitalising on the transformational change to the centre brought forward by projects such as Copr Bay.
- Reinvigorating buildings and spaces such as Swansea Market or Castle Cinema that are integral to Swansea's history and identity

The exclusion from the final group of interventions of The Quadrant car park, Kwik Fit building and Dylan Thomas Theatre was based on the consideration they were either outside of the central core, or a long term delivery opportunity.

The shortlisted interventions are explained in more detail in the following pages, based on a high level analysis of their architectural or spatial character, appraisal of the urban

context, identified opportunities and design proposals.

Mond House and Albert Hall were worthy of exploration but were not included for more detailed analysis owing to them being in private ownership or private sector led developments, that are well underway.

The interventions have been costed and evaluated in terms of financial viability, delivery, risks and impact. These are summarised in Appendices B.

SHORTLISTED INTERVENTIONS

INTERVENTIONS		SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY	SHORT/MEDIUM/ LONG TERM	IMPACT	COST	DELIVERABILITY
1	Debenhams	✓	✓	✓		SHORT	HIGH	MEDIUM	HIGH/MEDIUM
2	St Davids Place	✓	✓	✓		MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH/MEDIUM
3	St Marys Quadrant Entrance	✓	✓	✓	✓	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM
4	Market	✓	✓		✓	SHORT	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
5	Primark	✓	✓			SHORT	MEDIUM	LOW	HIGH
6	Next Block	✓	✓	✓	✓	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH/MEDIUM
7	Castle Cinema	✓	✓		✓	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM

5.1.3 Debenhams



Key Plan

The Debenhams site has been chosen as the first focus for potential design intervention in light of the recent announcement that Swansea City Centre will soon lose this major retail anchor. The Debenhams store has been a key driver of retail traffic for the Quadrant and its loss is symptomatic of a wider declining retail trend.

The building itself is large scale and dominant in the urban skyline, currently representing 160,000 of empty square footage. Its design does not contribute positively to Swansea City Centre’s townscape and is not particularly sympathetic to its surroundings.

Evidently there is huge potential for this large scale site to contribute significantly to not only the vibrancy and business of the area but also to the wider townscape of Swansea.

The proposed intervention detailed in this report looks at the potential for a complete refurbishment and reconfiguration of the existing unit in the hope of attracting new

occupiers and alternative uses, bringing animation back to the area. This refurbishment is proposed to include the external elevations which are highly visible in short and long views and which would benefit from a design refresh.

This intervention could realistically come forward in the short term and is considered to be deliverable given the space is already vacant. Despite being of only low to medium cost we believe a refurbishment of the building and the welcoming of diverse new uses to the site would have a highly positive impact on the immediate area and on the City Centre as a whole.

Highlighted in white in the illustration is the existing vacant Debenhams demise. The different colour markers denote the existing entrances to the site, with strong entrance points in green, compromised points in orange and weak arrival points in red.

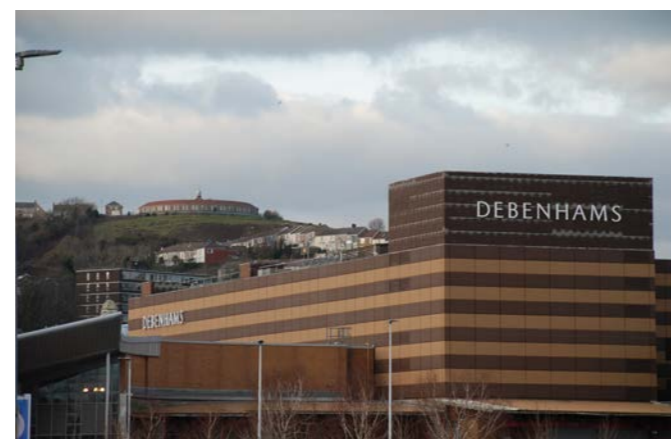


fig5.1: Existing Debenhams building



fig5.2: Context for Debenhams

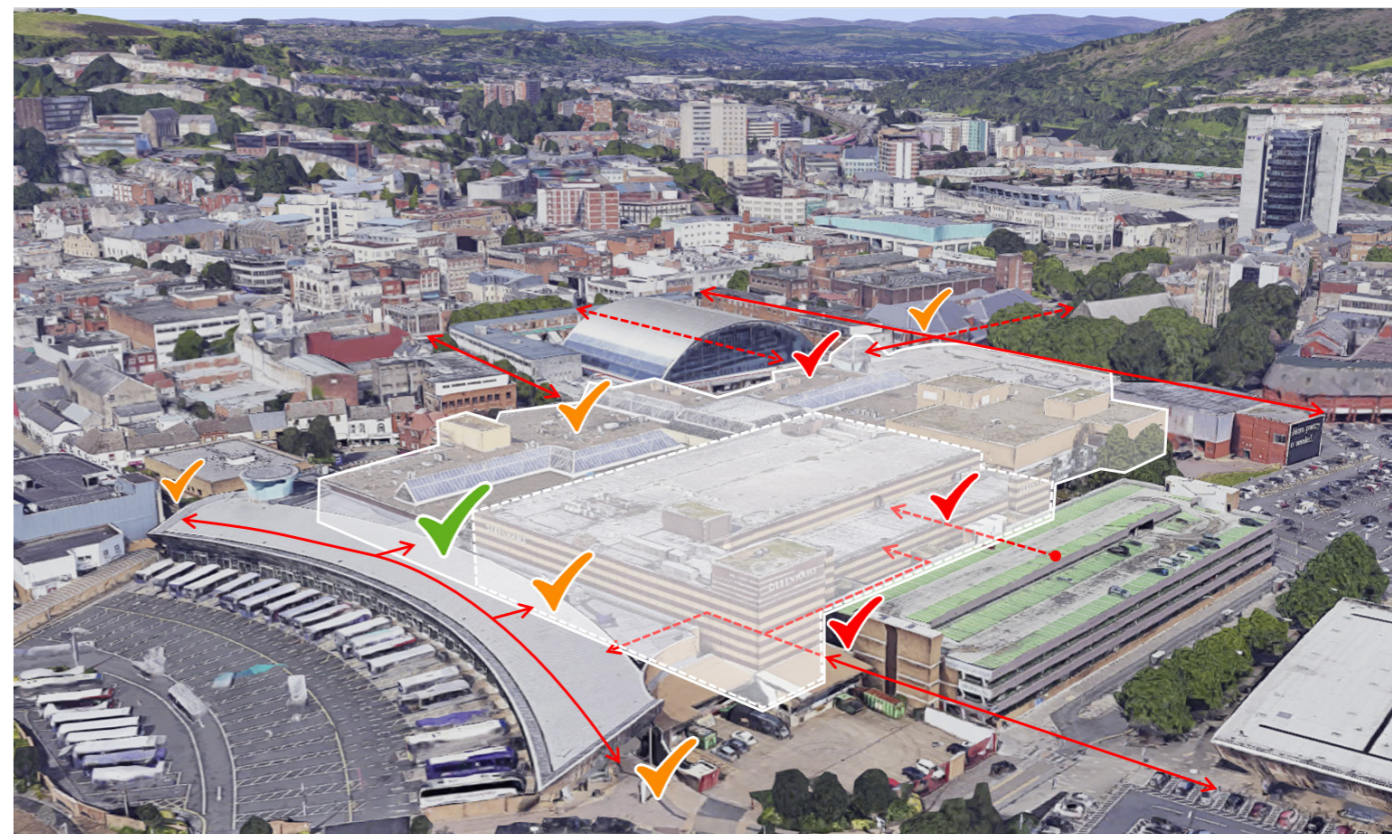


fig5.3: Entrances to Debenhams

Arrival

There are numerous potential points of arrival to the former Debenhams unit, with the main entrance to the Quadrant shopping centre being the most welcoming and positive. Other entrances pictured opposite, such as via the Quadrant Multi Storey Car Park, are much less welcoming and do not encourage pedestrian traffic. Similarly the access via the new bus station is rather hidden and arriving at the southern entrance is compromised by the visibility and proximity of the service yard adjacent.

Observations

The diagram opposite shows the capacity of the existing Debenhams site.

In Swansea City Centre currently there are no similar scaled occupants available or in the market for this type of retail space. As such, it is likely that this large circa 160,000 sq ft. space would need to be subdivided.

It is likely that the second floor would not be of interest to potential occupants and the neighbouring Multi Storey Car Park does not complement the site, given the new parking for the Copr Bay development creating a much stronger draw to visitors.

There is considered to be limited potential for residential on the roof as this would complicate the site ownership and could conflict with any structural loading permits.

There is also the potential to remove the first floor projection over the service yard which would reduce overall retail capacity which would help reduce the over supply of retail space and also offer residential development potential. This is further explored in the opportunities section.

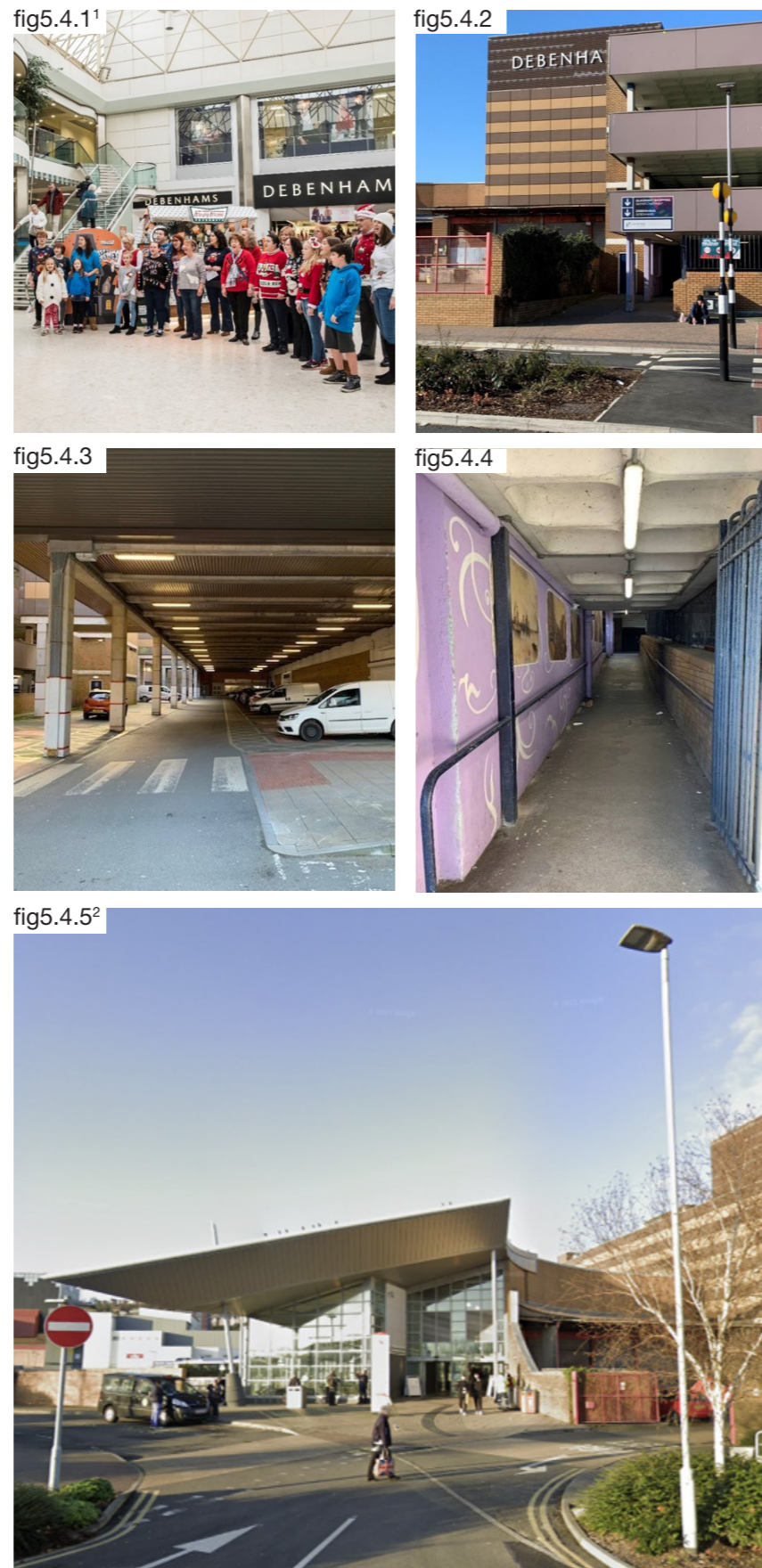


fig5.4: Arrivals to Debenhams

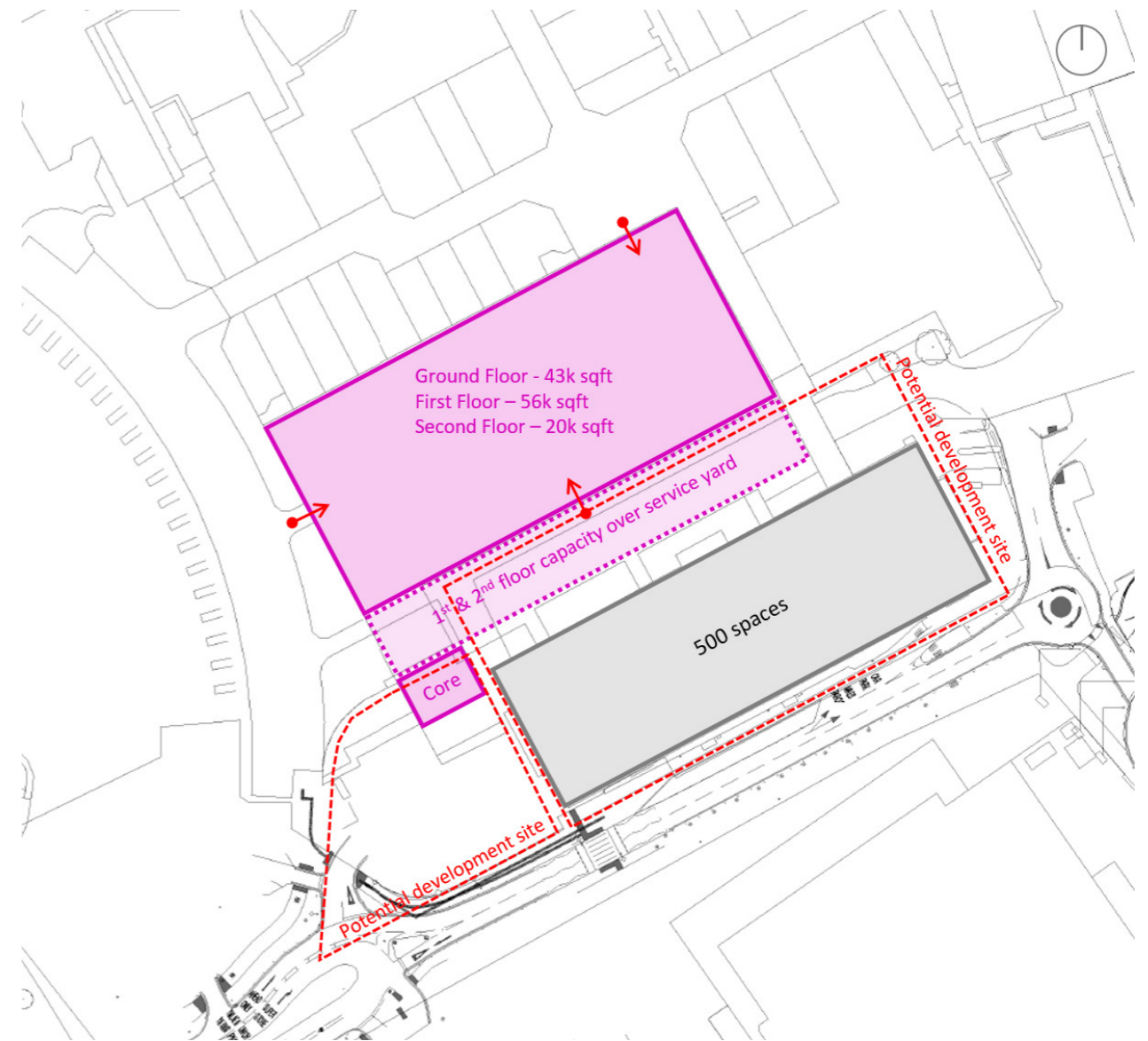


fig 5.5: Observations

1 © Flash mob perform for Quadrant customers | Quadrant shopping centre
 2 © Google Earth

Opportunities

In terms of opportunities for the site that would overcome the challenges previously outlined, the floorplates could be subdivided to provide larger multi storey unit offers at Ground Floor and part of the First Floor.

An indicative layout has been provided in the diagram opposite. This proposes a split of the ground floor area in to 2 units with a reconfiguration of the unit frontages facing the mall. The first floor could remain as a single plate with the second floor could serving as storage given its loading capacity.

Other options for the reconfiguration and subdivision are not precluded by this approach and the benefit of the large floor plate and relatively high floor to floor heights is that it offers a great deal of flexibility for other retail and leisure offers. This issue limiting its conversion to other uses such as residential, hotel and offices relate largely to providing sufficient natural light to comply with both regulations, best practice and achieving a viable market value.

The other aspect affecting deliverability would be the adaptation of the current primary structure and the significant disruption to the centre and the other tenants.

As mentioned in the Observations section, there is the potential to remove the First Floor overhang onto the service yard, reducing retail capacity and offering redevelopment of the area to the south which has been left as an option on the diagram. We note that the existing Multi Storey Car Park and service yard have significant redevelopment potential and when combined with the removal of the First Floor overhang could open up a large long term opportunity site for regeneration in the city centre, or in a scenario when the shopping centre no longer requires its car park.

Sketch Options

The sketches opposite provide indicative

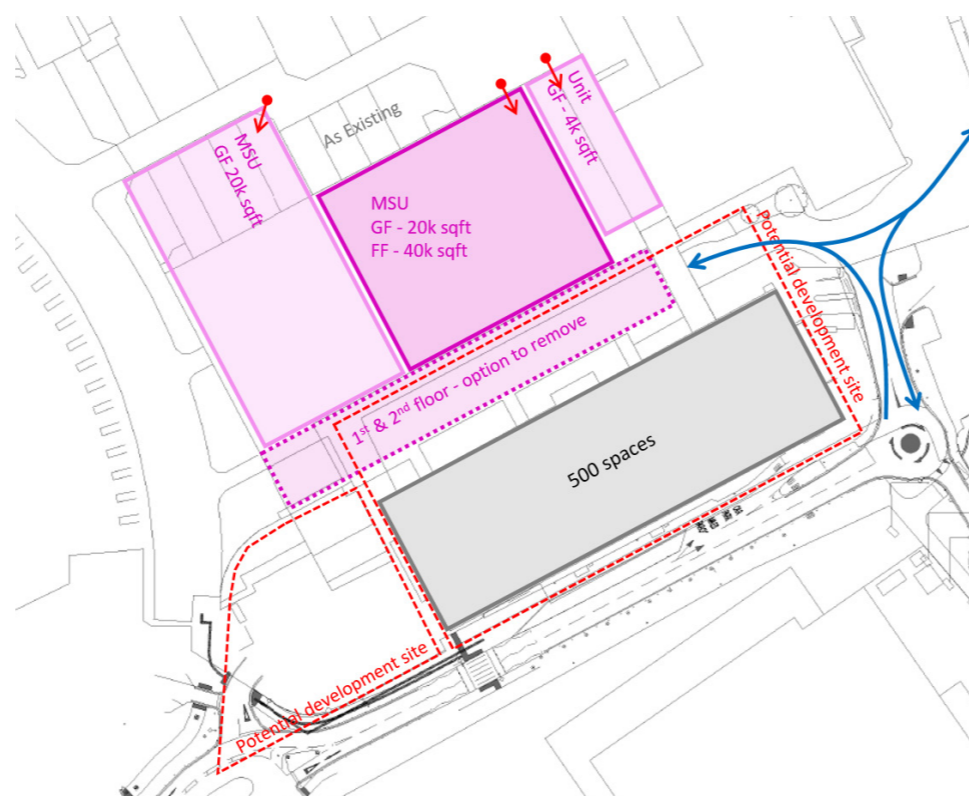


fig 5.6: Opportunities



fig 5.7: Indicative new elevation

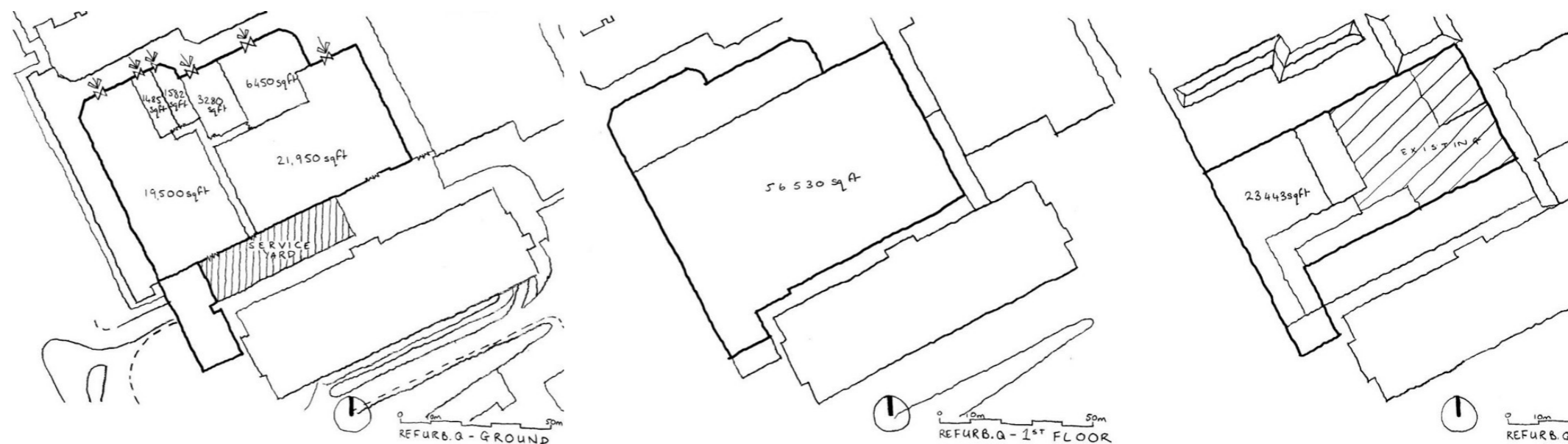
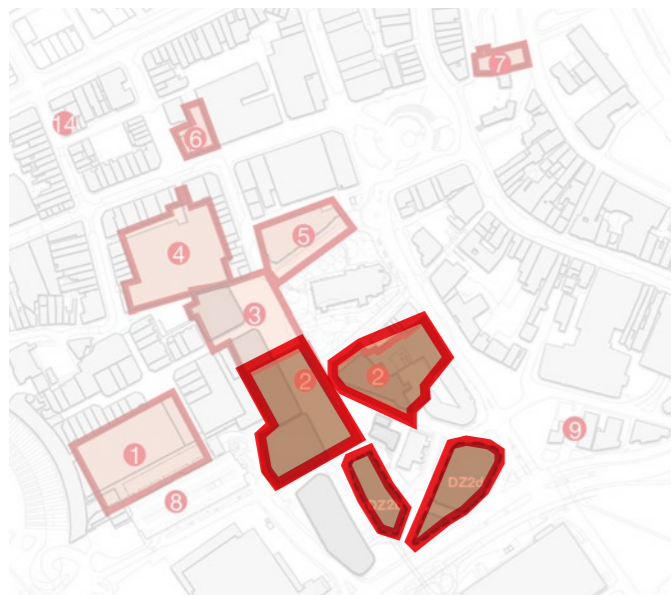


fig 5.8: Indicative Plans

5.1.4 St David's Place



Key Plan

St David's Place site which is located on the new City Spine and links Copr Bay to the heart of the city.

This site will become a major arrival point into Swansea City Centre and with the completion of the Copr Bay car park and new Arena which is part of the Shaping Swansea Partnership, it will become increasingly important in terms of its influence and impression on both local residents, visitors and tourists.

The former St David's Shopping Centre (the building to the North East in the Site Photo below) does not currently fulfill its potential in such a central location, and fails to make an attractive contribution to the city. There is significant opportunity here to repurpose the existing redundant retail property which, as with Debenhams, has succumbed to a similar declining retail trend. While the wider site extends between Oystermouth Road and the St Davids Shopping Centre, proposals for offices, civic functions and a café have already

been advanced. The opportunity we have considered in these proposals therefore relate to the St David's Shopping Centre its self and the public real area linking these related uses.

The wider development proposes new, mixed-use centre comprising new office buildings, a more diverse Food and Beverage offering, new residential uses and potential new public sector uses. The addition of new office buildings with large floorplates suitable for large public and private sector organisations would bring employment, jobs and economic activity to the area as well as adding more day time vibrancy. The addition of residential uses here would also help to bring animation to the area in the day time and to improve the mix of uses in the City Centre which currently lacks residential.

There is an opportunity to improve the Food and Beverage offering in this specific location to create a more 'grown up' offer that caters for a clientele that extends beyond the existing student population. This would also have the benefit of overlooking the new public space adjacent to St David's Church and face south to capitalise on both the views across the square towards the Arena and sunshine in to the evening.

This intervention would realistically come forward in the medium term and would be relatively high cost, but in exchange it would help to make this area more of a destination for tourists and residents and would contribute to the creation of a vibrant city core.

Context

Due to the fact that much of this area at St David's Place is undergoing major change with the current Copr Bay development, this design intervention relies on the Copr Bay redevelopment being finalised.

As is visible from the diagram opposite, a substantial car park is already being proposed as part of Phase 1 of Copr Bay junction of St Thomas Street and Wellington Street. Since there will likely be an influx of people at this point in future, this area should be both welcoming and legible for pedestrians.

To achieve this improved legibility, clear lines of sight should be maintained (as indicated by the green arrow). The importance of maintaining this key visual connection is an important factor to bear in mind for any future redevelopment here.



Observation

These observations relate to the St Davids Shopping Centre element of the site together with the part of the public realm associated.

The existing building here (the site of the former St David's Shopping Centre) is an unusual shape which does not present an ideal configuration for retail uses. Having said this, the north facade benefits from a pleasant aspect overlooking St Mary's, although this side of the building tends to be in shadow for most of the day.

A strong option for this site is refurbishment and reconfiguration as the existing buildings are fairly contemporary and offer reasonable levels of flexibility, structural loadings and internal heights.

While a new build redevelopment here might generate higher value than the current site provides and could likely support significant amounts of high quality residential and/or office space, in terms of delivering a benefit in the short to medium term, a reuse of the existing building is considered preferable from speed, cost effectiveness and sustainability perspectives.

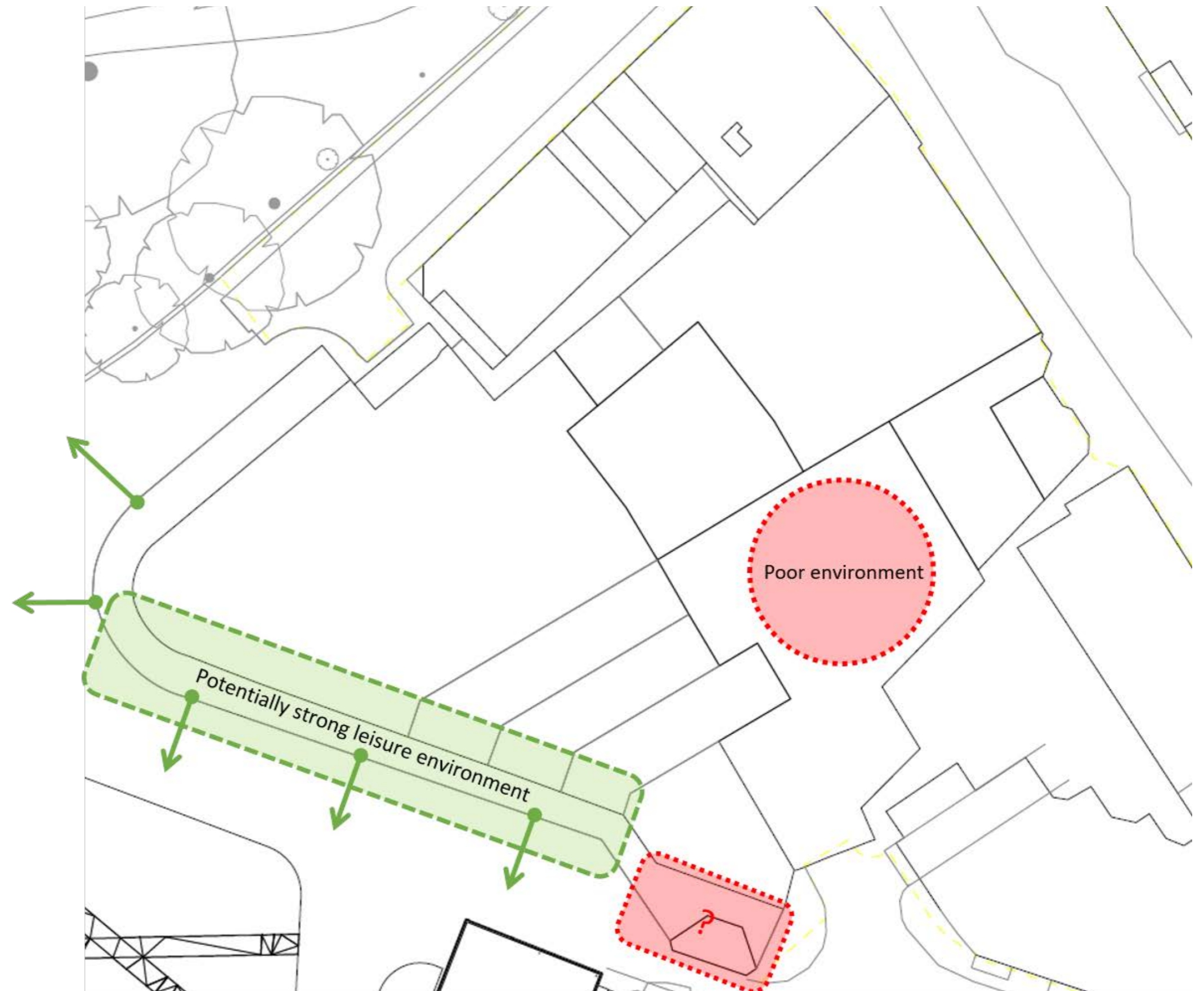


fig 5.9: Observations

Opportunities

This diagram opposite demonstrates the potential design interventions at this site.

The south west facade presents a key opportunity to diversify Food and Beverage or A3 uses as it is in an easily accessible and highly visible location with high footfall from Copr Bay. The building also boasts a colonnade which provides a naturally sheltered environment for A3 uses.

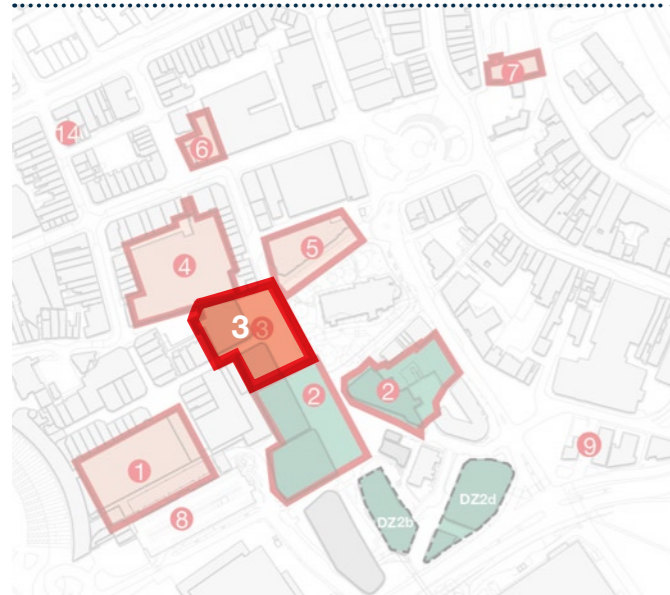
There is also the potential for residential uses on the upper levels of the building although any residential here would need to be discrete and well separated or visually and acoustically from the adjacent leisure uses.

If the above option were to be taken forward, it would be important to consider clustering the leisure uses into one area with the A3 and Food and Beverage uses. There could even be an opportunity to introduce more boutique occupants such as an independent cinema to make use of upper levels.



fig 5.10: Opportunities

5.1.5 St Mary's & Quadrant Entrance



Key Plan

The Key Plan opposite denotes the location of the St Mary's entrance to the Quadrant Shopping Centre.

The design workshops and consultations revealed a need to improve the connectivity between the existing market and the Quadrant Shopping Centre at this important location on the spine, which links Copr Bay to Oxford Street.

Traditional retail in the city core needs to be refocussed and consolidated and there is an opportunity to reduce the quantum of retail floorspace present in this location.

In terms of design, this entrance is both set back from the main route and therefore largely concealed. Historically efforts have been made to compensate for its location but it remains an uninspiring entrance on what should be a key access point to the Quadrant Centre. The site's prime location provides an opportunity to enhance the retail impact of the

centre especially on the approach from Castle Gardens and create a highly visible entrance statement coupled with adjustments to the retail uses either side.

What is proposed in response to the challenges identified is the consolidation of retail uses in this location alongside the reconfiguration of and general improvement to the Quadrant entrance including the public realm.

The design interventions seek to better integrate the market with the Quadrant and enhance its prominence, with the added potential for new residential in this location overlooking St Mary's Church and complementary commercial uses extending from the Market and Whitewalls down to the junction with Wellington St. It is considered essential that the full extent of the street is included to ensure that there is a continuation of the high quality environment and active frontages leading in to the city centre from the Copr Bay development.

Context

As can be seen from the site images above and the diagram opposite, the existing entrance to the Quadrant is largely concealed, while the current entrance to the Market is also rather hidden.



On approach, pedestrians are more likely to focus on the New Look or Primark stores rather



fig 5.11: Quadrant Entrance



LEGEND

-  Key visual connections
-  Activity node

than the Quadrant Centre as the entrance is unattractive and cluttered with bins, cycle parking and poor quality bench seating. The entrance currently appears dark, low and uninviting which is perhaps due in part that the Mall to which it links is not visible, and is cranked though 45 degrees with very small, low value retail units on arrival.

Having said this, the architectural quality of the context is generally good, but the perception of overall quality is severely limited by the maintenance of the surroundings and the largely inactive frontages to both Primark and New Look stores

Arrival

The images opposite support the visual appraisal provided and offer a pedestrian viewpoint on approach to the Quadrant.

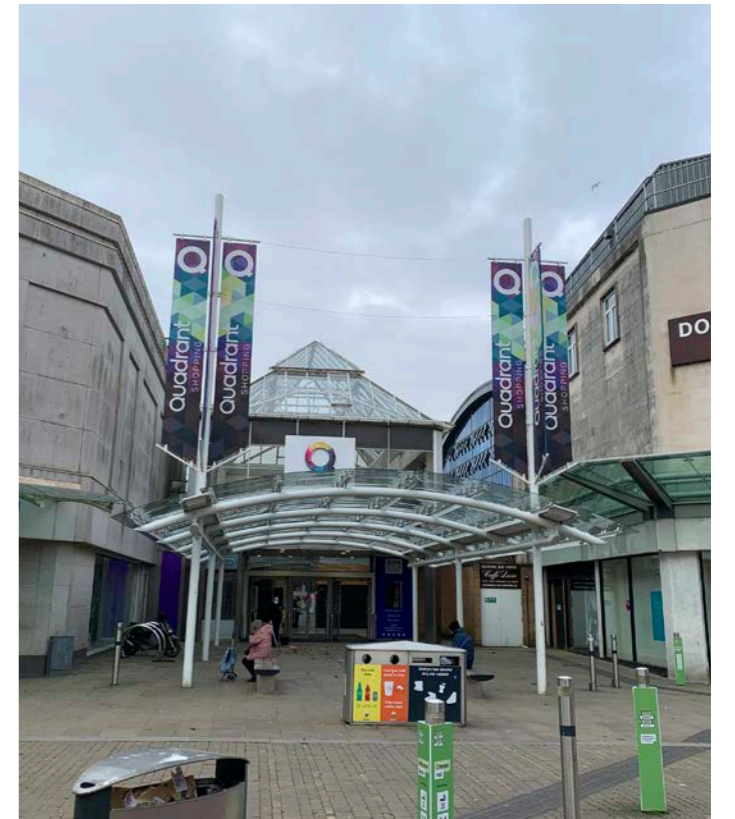


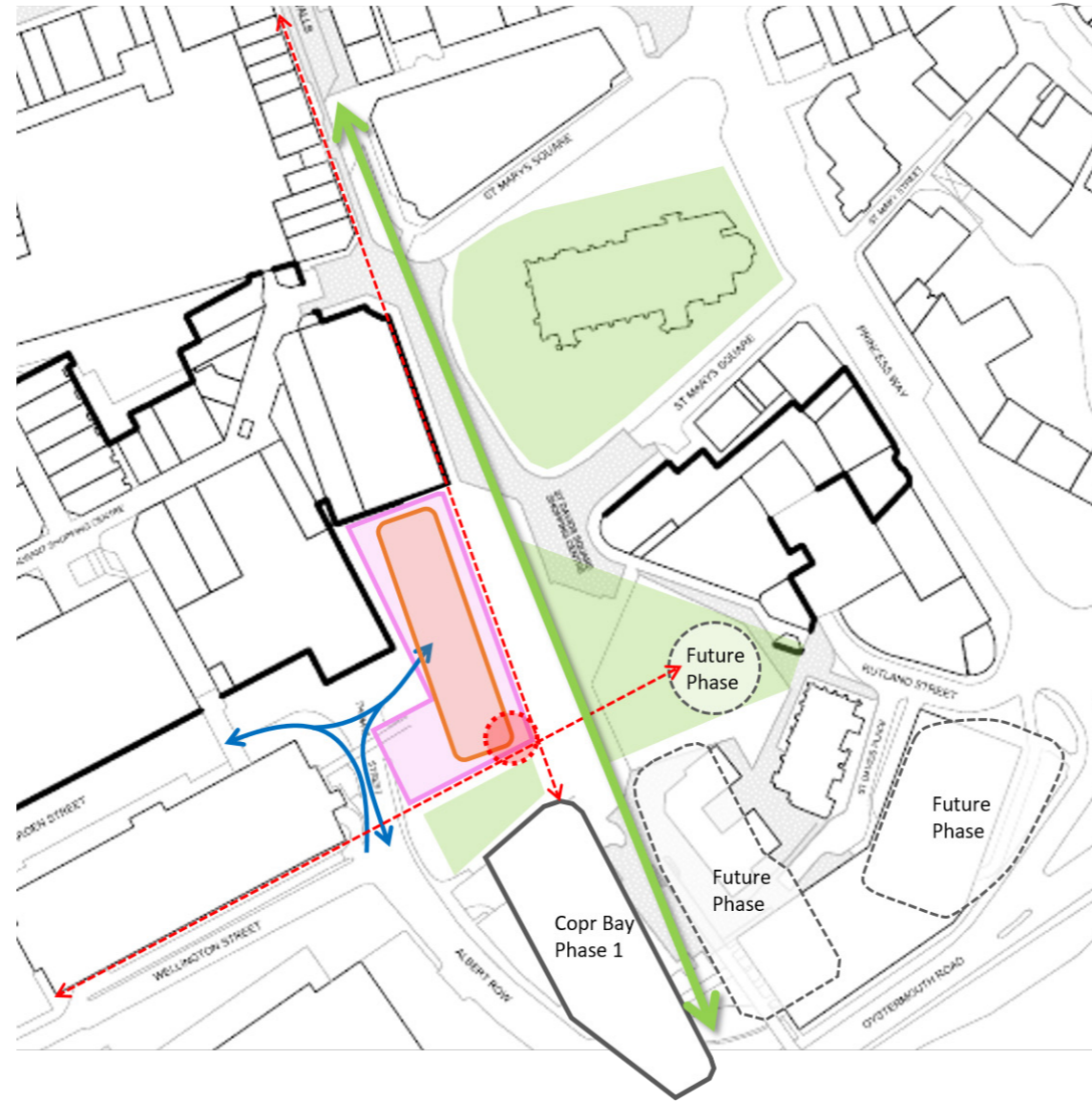
fig 5.12 : Arrivals

Observation

As is visible from these images, the existing facade of the New Look store is low rise but high quality.

The public realm entrance to this area is in need of some repair but could be drastically improved by pushing the north site of the building back to create a wider event space whilst allowing the existing shopping centre to run in a straight line to the East.

This new entrance could become a focal point in the view from Castle Gardens and would also increase the visibility from Whitewalls to Copr Bay.



LEGEND







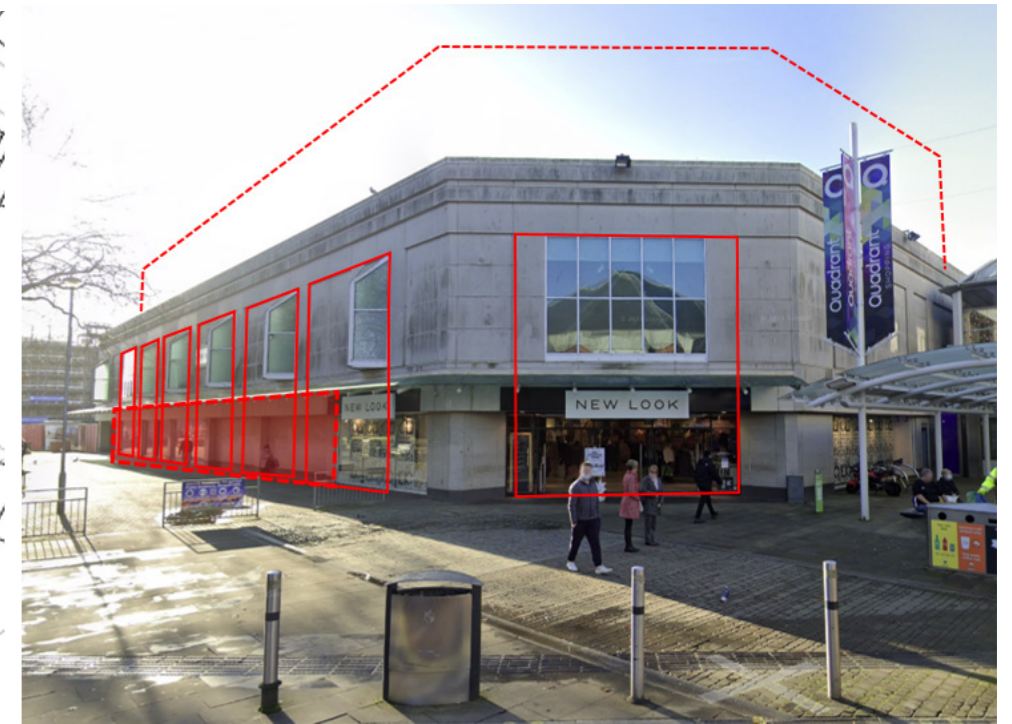
-  Visual connections
-  Inferred building line
-  Landmark potential
-  Residential
-  Commercial or Community
-  Public Space

fig 5.13: Observations



Opportunities

The diagram opposite highlights the design interventions proposed which include the opening up of the junction public realm area to create a new public space. This new space would combine the entrances of the Quadrant shopping centre and the Market and would offer up an opportunity for a Food Hall offer fronting the square and serving as a transition between the Market and the Centre which are currently separated physically and in terms of perception.

The re-alignment of the Quadrant to pull back the New Look store facade slightly would create a better defined, clear route and would make the entrance more visible in key sightlines.

Finally, the reintroduction of the historic 'Orange Street', the opening up of routes to the Market and a new Food and Beverage offering would ultimately provide a new flexible leisure/retail destination capable of hosting events and functions independent of the market and shopping centre or in conjunction with either to capitalise on both environments. Note that this intervention is subject to an accessible servicing strategy being established to accommodate the shopping centre and market traders.

There is significant opportunity to improve the street scene between St Mary's and Wellington Street.

The key visual connection from Whitewalls to Cupids Way should be maintained, and to improve the street scene along this route further some strategic tree planting and canopies could be considered.

A SuDS strategy could also be implemented in this area and could help animate the public realm. For example, design could involve the inclusion of water features or streams to provide visual interest along this route.




Outlined in the red circle is a corner location subject to high footfall and visibility. This could provide a strong location for a high quality landmark building.

There is the potential to create service yard access on Albert Row that would serve both this area and the Quadrant Centre.

In addition there is a good potential for residential uses at the upper levels over the commercial and community functions along the street running north to south. There is scope to increase both the scale and diversity of uses in this area to support a number of the specific objectives identified in the SWOT analysis.



LEGEND

-  Visual connections
-  New Square
-  Entrance Statement

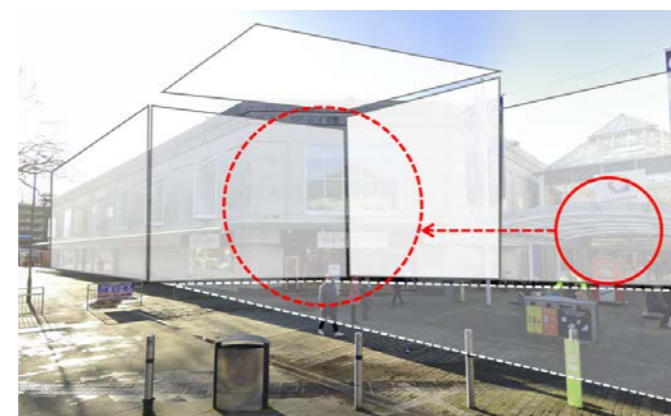


fig 5.14: Opportunities

Liverpool One, Liverpool, BDP



Westgate, Oxford, BDP



Spitalfield Market, London¹



fig 5.15: Opportunities

¹ © Aaron Hargreaves | Foster + Partners
² © Duke Street Food and Drink Market 2021



fig 5.16: Sketch Options

The Lexicon, Bracknell, BDP



fig 5.17: Precedents

Duke Street Market, Liverpool²



The Lexicon, Bracknell, BDP



The Lexicon, Bracknell, BDP



Bata Shoe Factory, Ontario, BDP

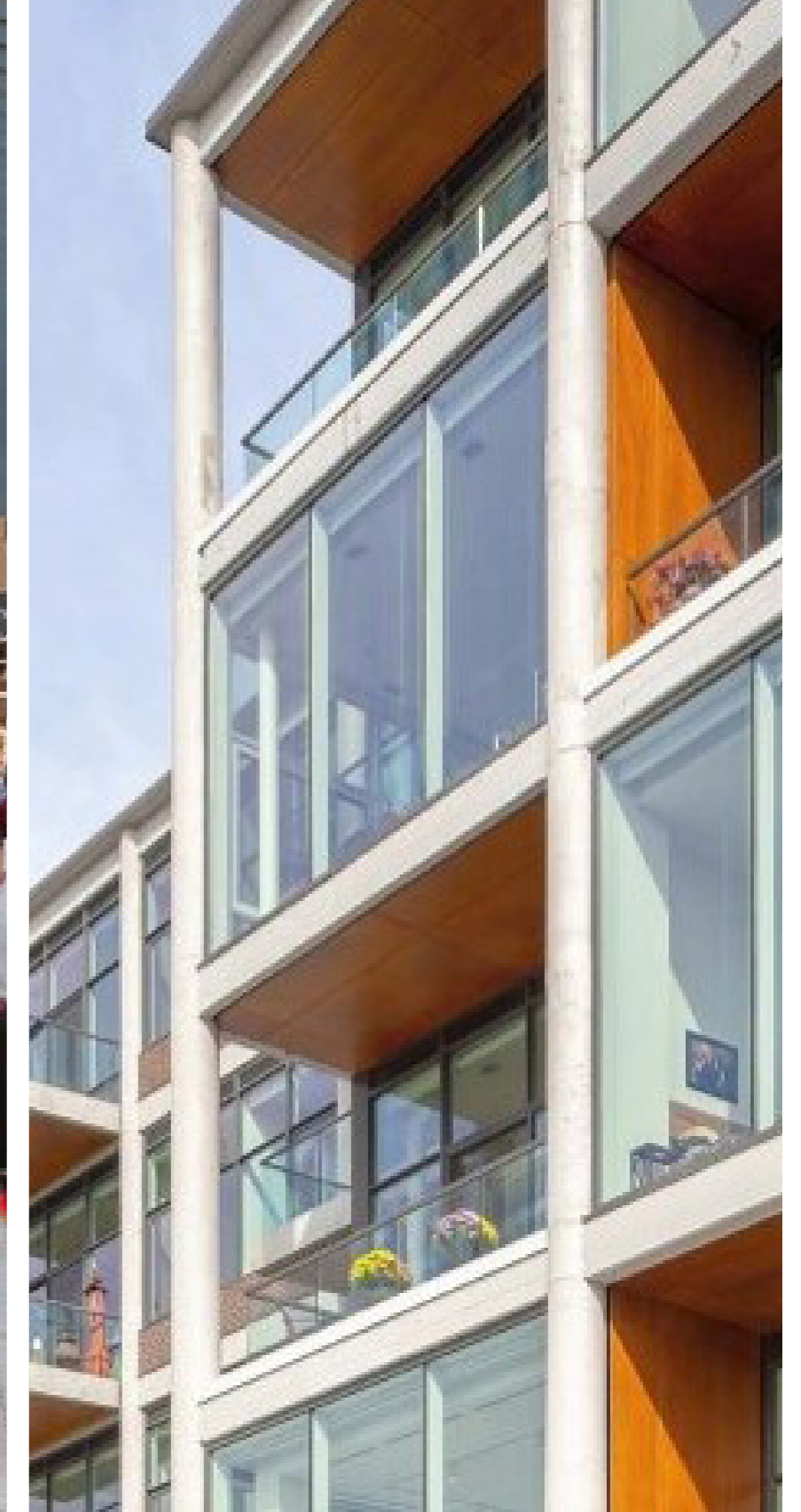


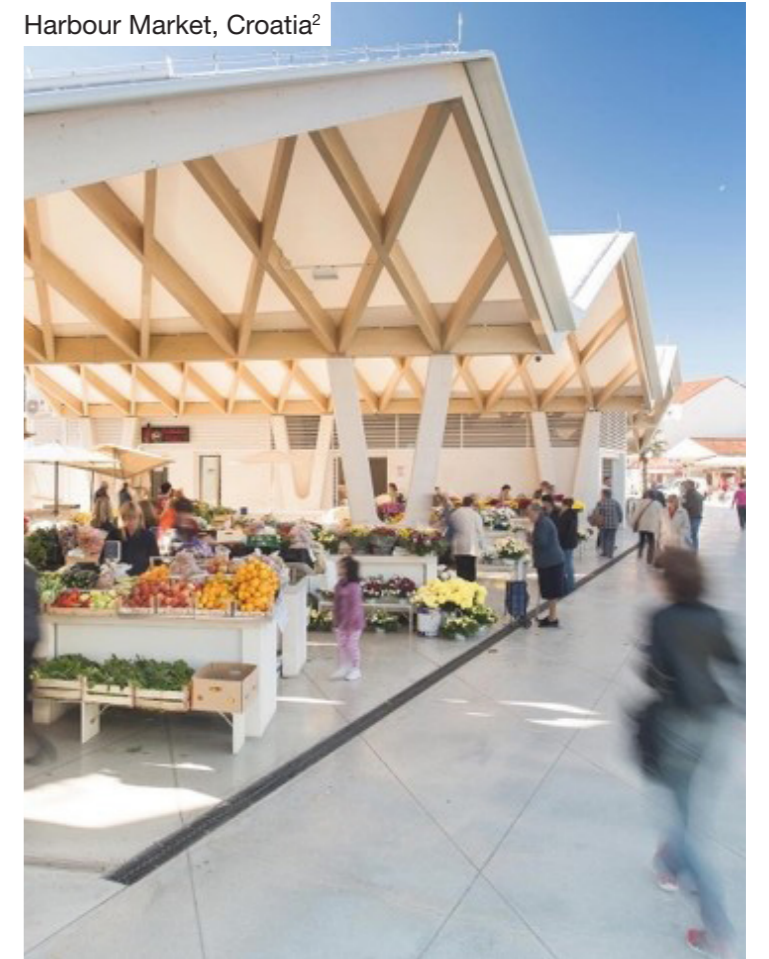
fig 5.18: Precedants



fig 5.19: Conceptual view of Entrance



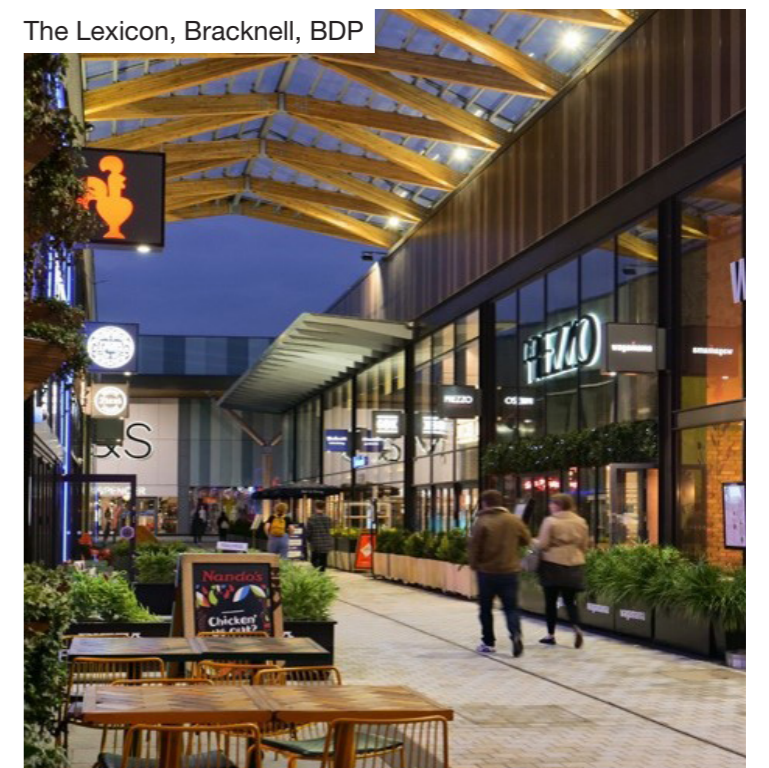
Moor Market, Sheffield¹



Harbour Market, Croatia²



University of Exeter, Exeter³



The Lexicon, Bracknell, BDP

fig 5.20: Precedents

1 © The Moor | Leslie Jones architecture
 2 © Damir Zizic, 2015
 3 © University of Exeter: Forum Project | WilkensonEyre

5.1.6 Swansea Market



Key Plan

The Swansea Market is considered to have significant unlocked potential in many areas. Although it is a much loved and well perceived asset to the City Centre, the market currently lacks prominence.

There is a clear opportunity to promote this important landmark as a key element of Swansea’s cultural identity, and to expand its offering to include more Food and Beverage uses to make the market more of a destination for tourists and residents.

This expansion of the offer could also include extending trading times, which could be reviewed with the intention of keeping the market trading for longer periods across peak hours for those traders who are interested and may wish to diversify their business or operate more flexibly.

Beyond the market itself, there is also the potential to reinstate Orange Street as a key East to West connection route for pedestrians in the City Centre. This would have the added

benefit of creating better links with the theatre. Issues of adjusting the market configuration and servicing strategies will need careful consideration and agreement but the potential to work with the Quadrant Centre to achieve these potentials to mutual benefit is both timely and significantly more achievable than at any time in the past.

Context

The diagram opposite demonstrates the key access points for the market.

The market’s current entrances are small narrow and very understated particularly from Whitewalls and Union St.

The environment internally is rather confusing to visitors and lacks any clear route or distinct focal points. The maze like configuration is even more evident when some stalls are not trading and the shutters limit visibility even further. The configuration of the market trading units are very fragmented with small single or paired stalls. The isles are generally narrow making it hard to negotiate especially when crowded.

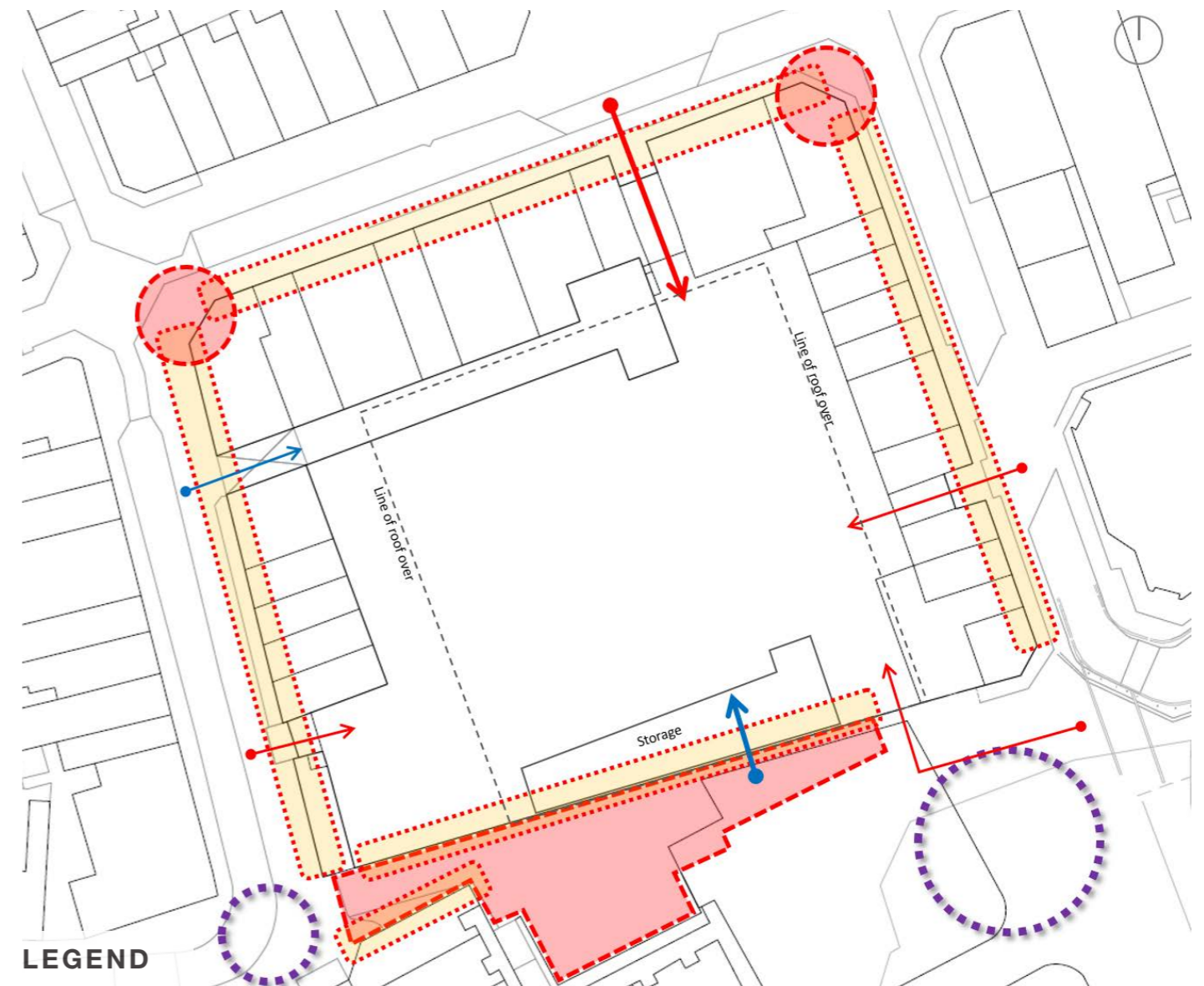
The units fronting the surrounding streets are small with low floor to ceiling heights and the architecture is very indistinct and evidently low quality with the majority of upper levels either



fig 5.21: Aerial view¹

under-used or appearing vacant. A glazed canopy extends along the majority of the street but while this is a practical measure to mitigate poor weather conditions, it limits the perceived height of the facades emphasising the diminutive retail frontages.

The majority of the servicing for the site is undertaken from the Southern elevation and the service yard itself is unattractive and negatively impacts on pedestrian first impressions of the Quadrant and the Market from Union St.



- LEGEND**
- Service access
 - Main Entrances
 - Key Arrival area
 - Poor quality or blank facades

fig 5.22: Context

1 © Google Earth

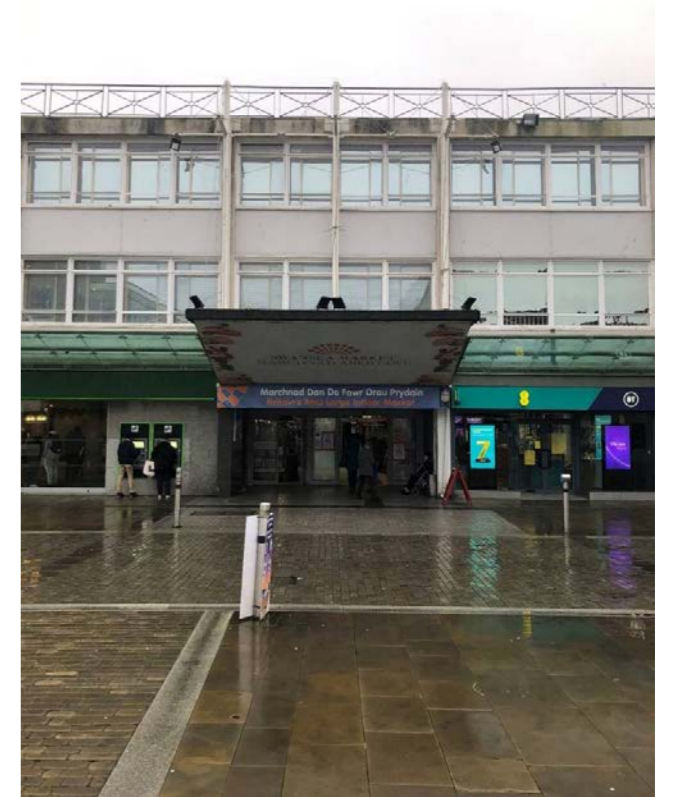


fig 5.23: Arrival and Entrances

Urbanist Study 2015

Urbanist previously studied the Swansea Market and provided a proposed masterplan and vision which not only looked at the market but also took into consideration the immediate context of the building.

The proposed masterplan was built on the success of the existing exemplar and recognised market and the interior of the market was focussed on responding to the proposed future changes surrounding it.

The masterplan framework explored a distinction between public space and private spaces both within the market and its surrounding areas. It also looks into new entrances to accommodate the future changes to the city centre.

The key principle for the masterplan was by working the existing urban context and providing a unique opportunity to make the Market a key destination of the future retail circuit of Swansea city centre.

Issues

The potential success of Swansea market is being constrained by the following factors, all of which need to be addressed by the masterplan:

- Poor legibility - no main route (too many options), not clear where access points are once inside
- Backs of units and clutter visible to the public
- Inefficient use of space - a lot of circulation space
- Don't always see positive frontage of units
- Space around perimeter of market not utilised
- Lack of uniformity on height and style of units
- No clear hierarchy of space
- Clutter due to lack of storage
- Poor quality link to Quadrant
- Highly visible service yard between market and Quadrant (diagram required)
- Poor relationship between market layout and roof volume



Rear of units or units with public facing 'clutter' present operational challenges



Lack of continuity on active stall fronts which have arisen because of the quantity of routes and stall configuration



Whilst personalisation is important there is a discordance between the variety of stall types within the market



Use of walkways for storage is eroding the shopper experience of the market and complicating operations for traders

fig 5.24: Extract from Urbanist Study 2015; Courtesy of Swansea Council

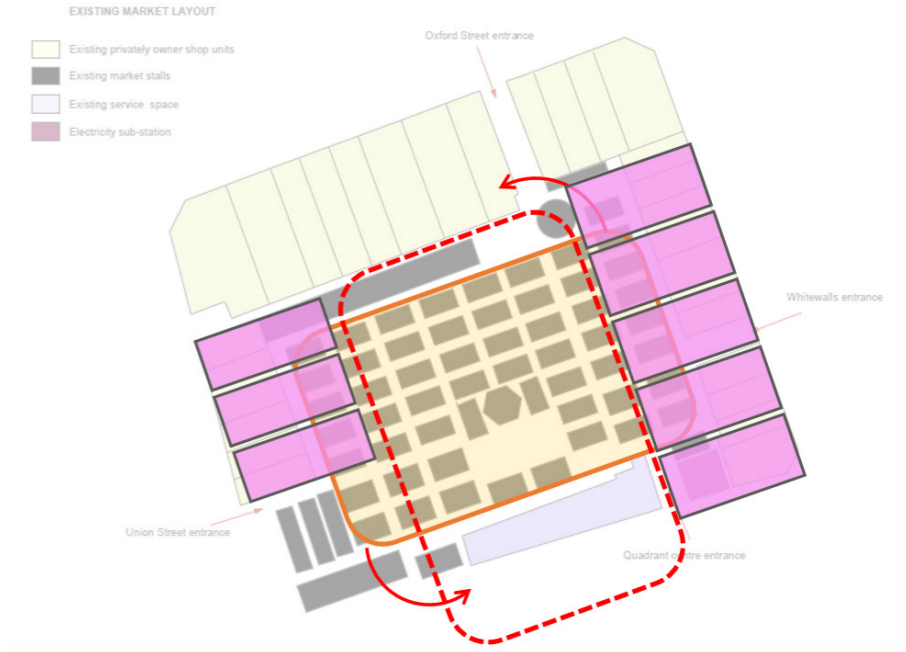
Existing Configuration



Initial Observation



Reorientation And Unit Sizes



Access And Unit Sizes



Circulation And Dead Ends



Key Connections And Spaces

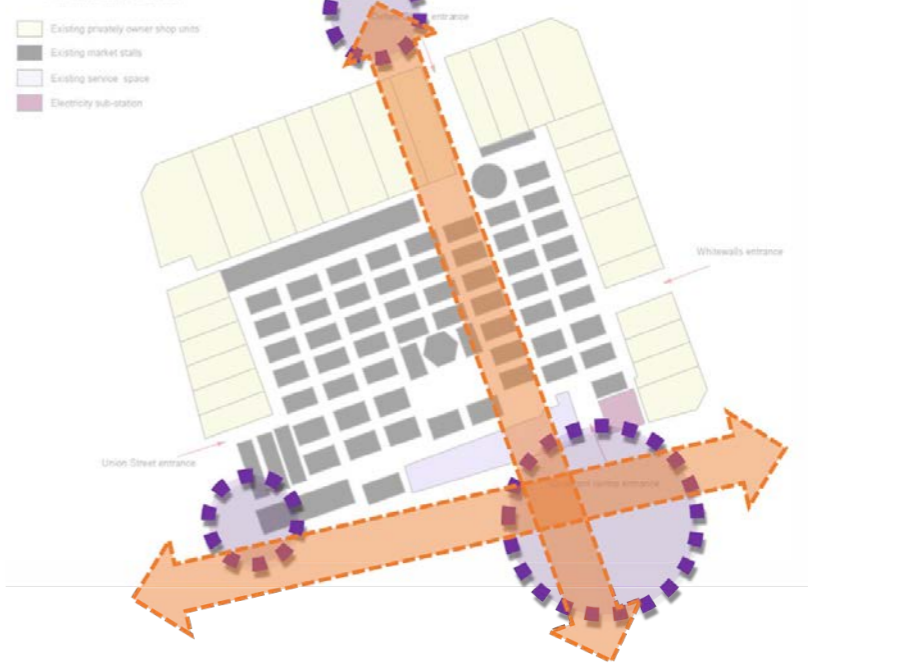


fig 5.25: Analysis and Observations

fig 5.1: Opportunities

Opportunity

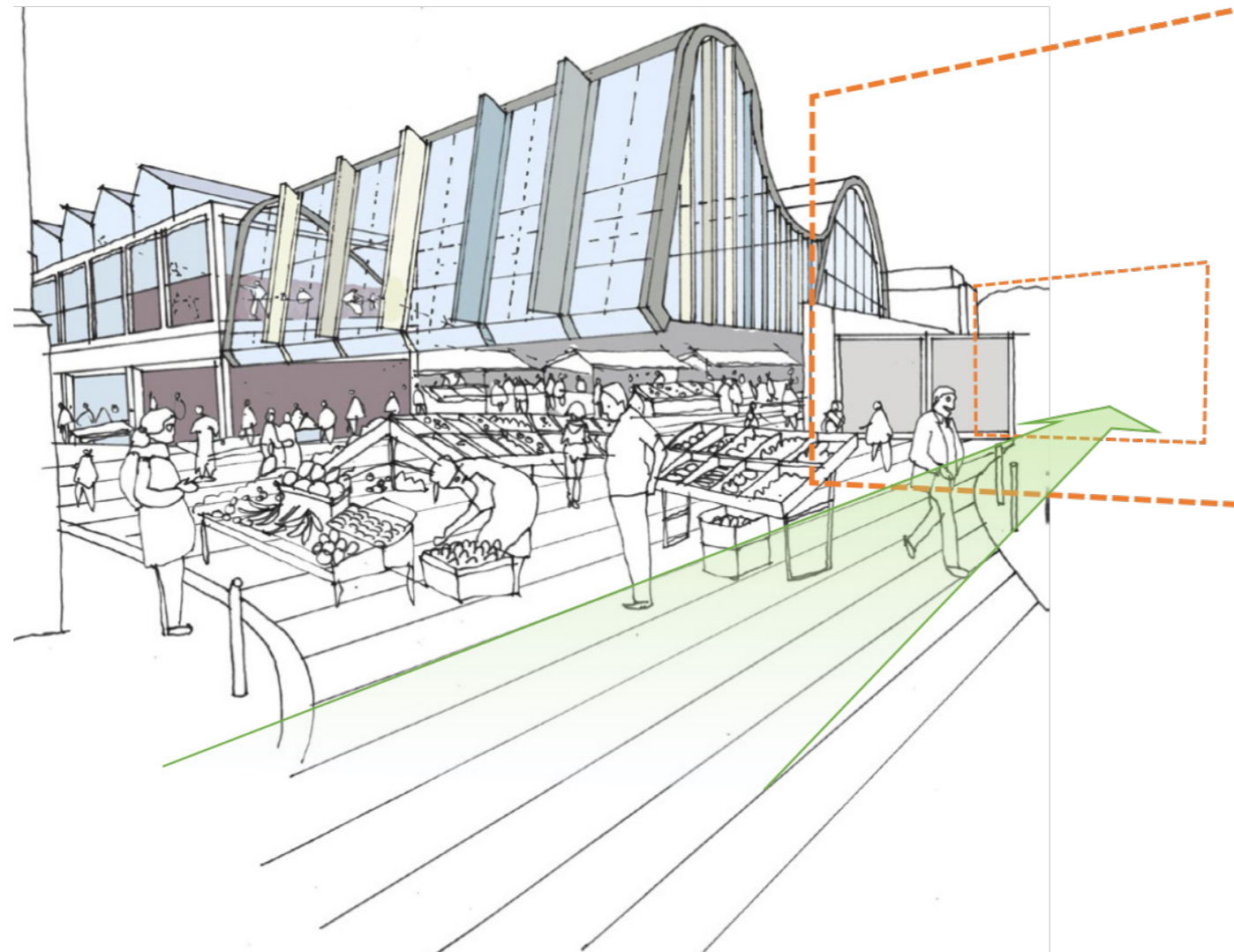
There are numerous opportunities to significantly enhance the internal and external environment at Swansea Market.

It occupies a prominent location at the centre of the retail core area defined by the Quadrant Centre and Oxford St. It is well loved by local residents and tourists featuring frequently in the top 10 of UK markets, but the building does not capitalise on its location and needs to improve its offer, its accessibility and visibility.

As outlined in the diagrams above, improved connections for pedestrians in and around the market would encourage both increased footfall and dwell time.

The reconfiguration of the units could improve legibility of the interior, improve access and reduce circulation space to offer either better and more flexible stalls and clearer route hierarchy would improve visitor and trader experience and drive better trading. and The potential to offer a greater diversity of occupiers and extended trading hours for specific areas fronting Orange St would in turn create more variety for visitors.

There is also the potential for the market to accommodate events in and around the main hall and adjacent streets would allow it to host larger numbers of tourists and visitors seasonally.



Base Image from Urbanist Study 2015; Courtesy of Swansea City Council



fig 5.26: Opportunities

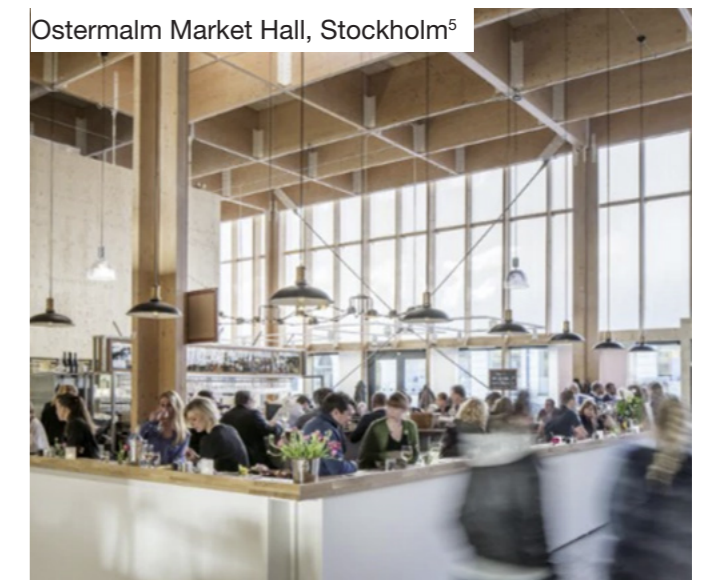
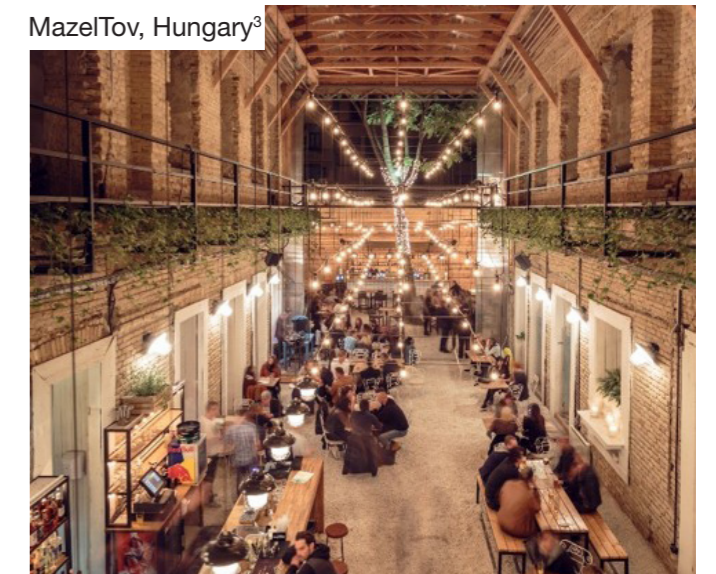
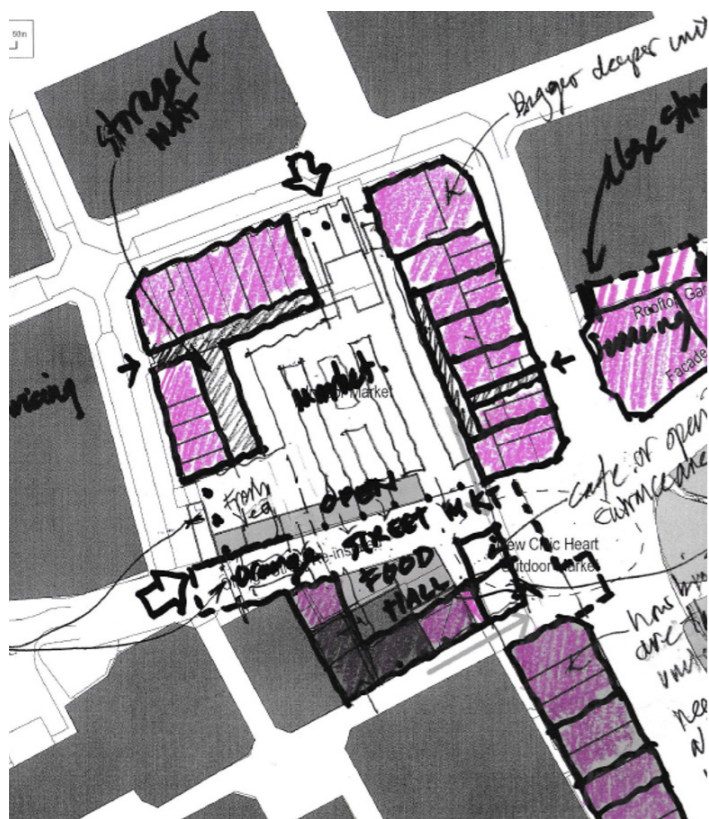


fig 5.27: Potential Design Precedents

1 © source unknown
 2 © Designed by Hans Peter Hagens
 3 © Dániel Dömölky | Studio Arkitekter
 4 © Designed by Hans Peter Hagens
 5 © Felix Gerlach | Tengbom



View of Market from Union Street

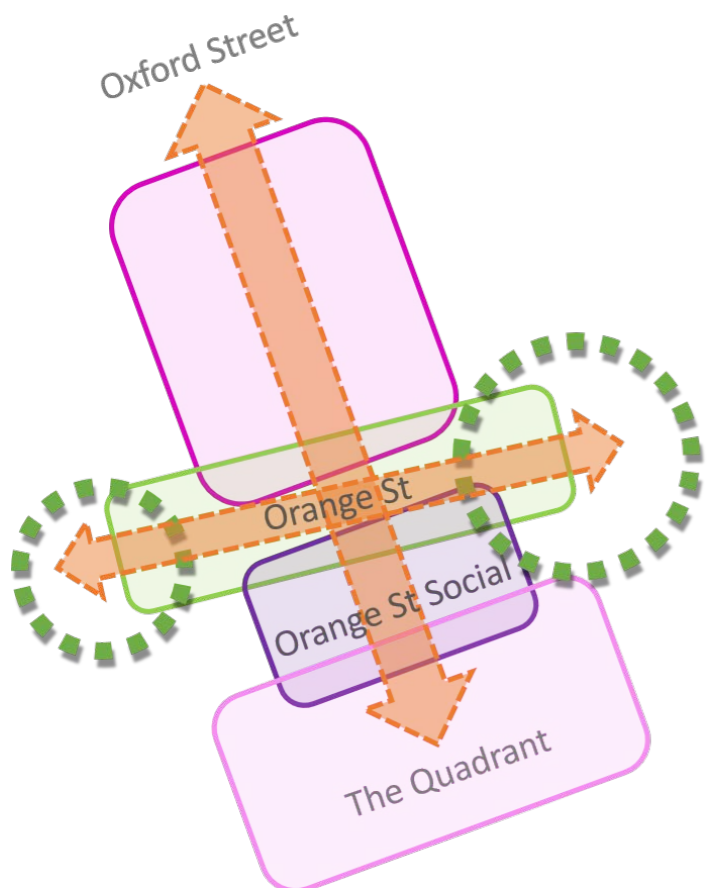


fig 5.28: Conceptual Approach

'Off-street servicing' option

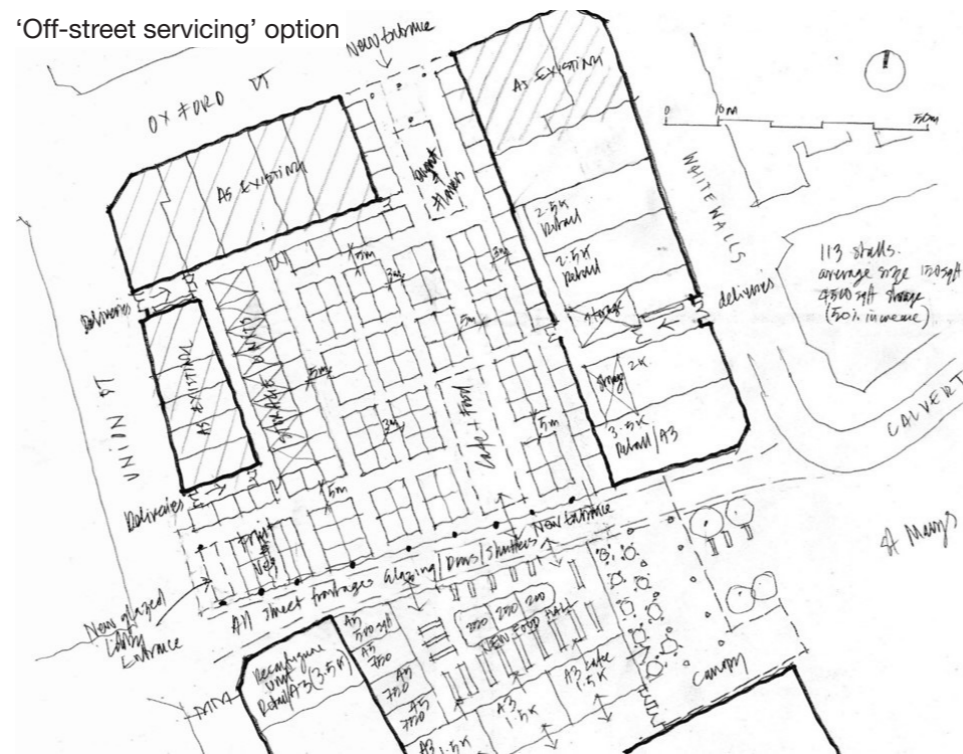
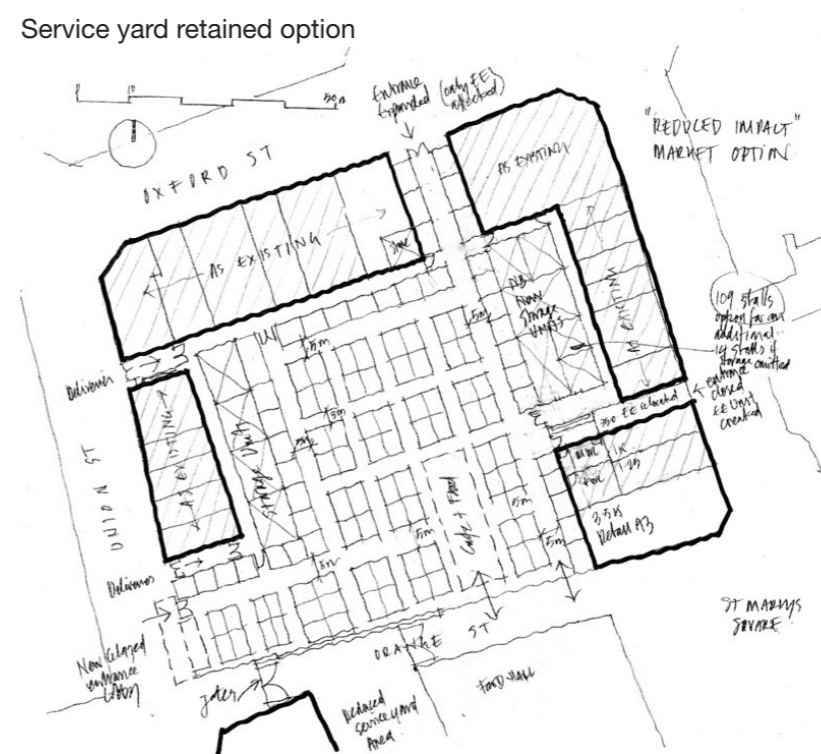


fig 5.29: Sketch Option

Service yard retained option



Practical Constraints

In order to reconfigure the existing market and surrounding street facing units it would require agreement with the Traders and SCC and with Edinburgh House and Quadrant Centre owners. The benefit would be in all parties interests delivering increased value, unit quality, foot fall between all areas and improvements to frontages with substantially increased activity and food hall entrance. There would likely some temporary disruption to service for the existing tenants and some may protest at the prospect of extended opening hours which may not suit specific traders. We would however anticipate both improved facilities and much higher visitor footfall which should offer an evident incentive.

Any changes in storage and servicing requirements triggered by these changes would need to be agreed with the Council's Market team, and traders the Highways department and the existing tenants.

Given the need to maintain the operation of the market traders themselves, we highlight the potential for a number of temporary alternative locations for market traders to continue their businesses as part of any reconfiguration and improvement works. This would naturally only be considered in conjunction with the Market Traders themselves and the city council team to establish the suitability of any such locations and occupancy duration.

We have explored the preferred option which is to deliver the food hall whilst maintaining the existing servicing arrangements.

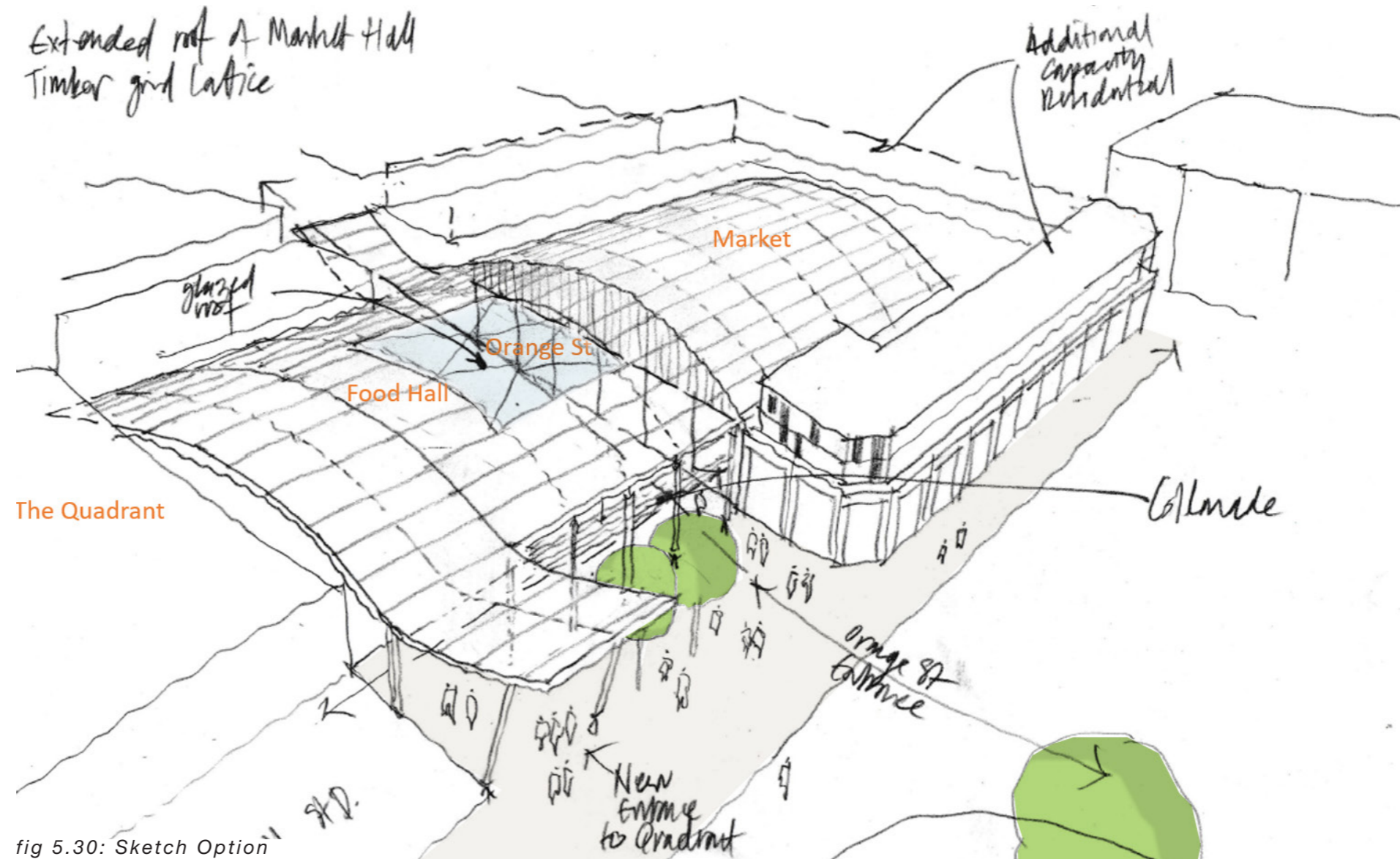


fig 5.30: Sketch Option

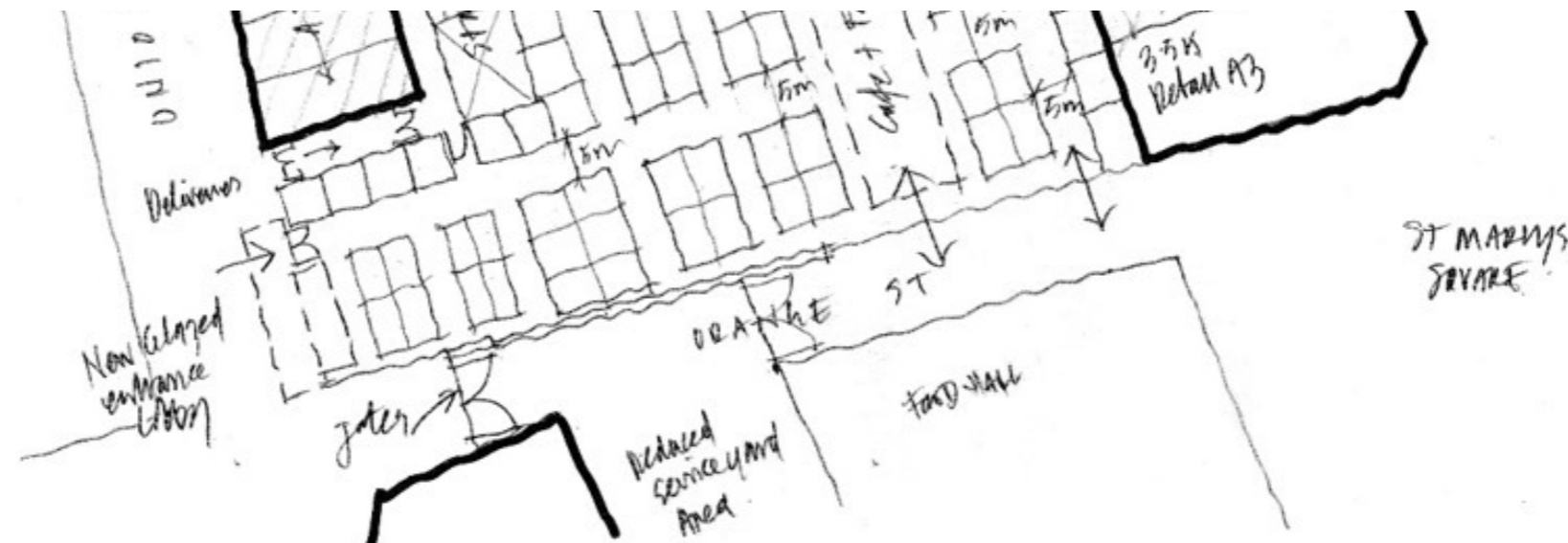


fig 5.31: Food Hall servicing option

5.1.7 Primark



Key Plan

Pictured opposite is the Primark site in the City Centre which, as with Debenhams, represents a key retail anchor in the city centre retail core. The building itself is architecturally 'low key' probably in deference to the St Marys context. Its appearance is rather uninspiring and it does not reflect the brand identity of Primark very well. There is significant potential for both practical and aesthetic improvements and a to the facade facing St Mary's, which is an important route linking to Castle Square.

Alongside these visual improvements, there is also opportunity for a revised trading layout which could attract occupier investment.

Careful and sympathetic upgrades to the building on this site would significantly improve the environment and setting of St Mary's Church whilst providing a building of more visual interest for pedestrians along this important City Centre route.



fig 5.32: Context around Primark

Context

As is visible from these site photographs, the building here is in fairly good condition but has numerous blank and unactivated facades which provide very little visual interest considering the prominence of this route in the City Centre.

Arrival

The images opposite depict the perceptions of the street being affected by the surrounding building quality and appearance with added bins, car parking, lorry drop off points and the existing taxi rank.



fig 5.33: Arrivals

Observations

In terms of the internal layout of the site, the building presents as an awkward shape that thins at its North Eastern end.

The external frontage along Calvert Street is almost completely inactive and its potential to contribute to the street and public realm is key to changing the perception of the area.

The service yard for the site presents itself visibly on approach, the service alley itself and associated bins are highly visible to pedestrians which again contribute to a rather negative perception to visitors and shoppers.

Overall the environment is traffic heavy, dominated by hardscape and pedestrians are not prioritised.

Opportunities

The site's key location in the City Centre and ample frontage provide significant opportunities for active frontages and general enhancement.

The design interventions proposed opposite include the general refurbishment of the external building facades to improve the building's contribution to the wider townscape.

In terms of the pedestrian experience, the pedestrian priority zone could be extended back to Princess Way whilst the colonnade space could be reclaimed and even extended with glazed projections and a canopy to accommodate small commercial offers which will activate the facades.

If the building were expanded into the servicing street and the back of house area were reduced, the store could benefit from a larger and more regular ground floor space and could introduce a more active frontage to the streetscape.

This site would be a critical intervention with pedestrian prioritization, traffic congestion removal and public realm enhancement in

association with the St Mary's church space and Castle Square to make this the 'heart of the city centre'.

To enable this the taxi rank - black cabs along the road opposite Primark would need relocation into Caer Street and Castle Street.

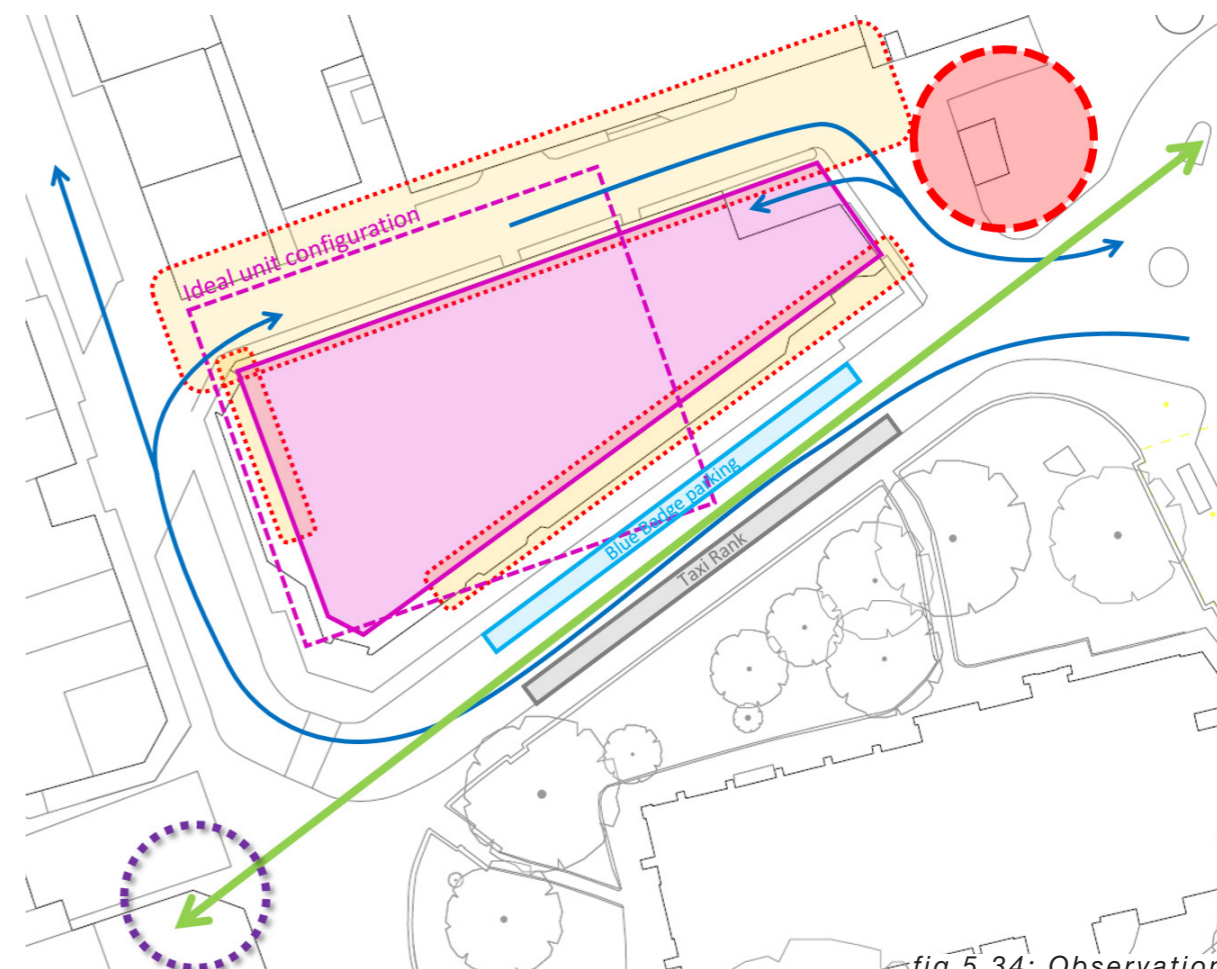


fig 5.34: Observations



fig 5.35: Opportunities



fig 5.36: Brand Aesthetics

1 © The Lexicon and Bracknell Regeneration | Chapman Taylor
2 © Primark Newcastle | 3DReid
3 © source unknown

5.1.8 'Next' block



Key Plan

The site pictured here is the site of the Next store in the city centre. The retailer Next have confirmed they will be vacating the site within the next 12-18 months.

This will leave a very prominent unit vacant at the end of the view north along Whitewalls. However there is an opportunity to combine this unit with the adjacent corner unit that has been vacant for a long period of time.

In terms of design, the corner building itself makes a rather negative contribution to the street scape which is exaggerated by the fact that it lies in a very prominent location at the junction of Oxford St and Portland St within the retail core of the city.

Given the above, the site represents a potential redevelopment opportunity and could enable the creation of a new or improved, prominent retail/leisure unit at ground floor with other uses above.

There is also a clear opportunity to create high quality low cost office space to capitalise on and repurpose the existing Next building at first floor and which would be both an attractive offering, given the rarity of this kind of office location in the heart of the city centre, transform the current poor quality frontages on Portland St and also increase footfall.

Whilst introducing residential to the core is a positive, the city analysis showed that there is a lack of quality office accommodation in the core and there are other, more attractive, locations identified for residential within this study.

Context

As is visible from the diagram opposite, the site is in a key location at the junction between Portland Street and Oxford Street. It also lies opposite the entrance to the market which guarantees high footfall for the area.

The current corner building is dated with low floor to ceiling heights and has reduced capacity at Second Floor level. However, the prominence of the site provides the potential for a future local landmark building. The Next unit is actually 2 floors with a narrow second floor element fronting Oxford St to give a the impression of a 3 storey building.

There is a blind alley off Portland Street which creates a 'gap tooth' effect, and the current means of escape via the stair to the rear of the Next unit would need to be replaced to provide greater capacity in the event of future office use.



fig 5.37: Portland Road Junction & Next block



fig 5.38: Arrivals¹

¹ © Google Earth

Opportunities

Although the site offers potential for refurbishment, a pure refurbishment of the building would offer relatively low commercial value compared to the cost of upgrade. Furthermore, the corner block and its associated retail environment would remain weak and the value would likely remain unviable.

As an alternative, a new build option for the corner plot could increase its efficiency and its capacity over 3 to 4 storeys depending on whether it is independent of or related to the existing Next unit. Improving the retail offer at ground level on the corner and retaining the existing next unit space provides an improved offer in a strong location. Then matching the floor levels so that they link to the existing floors in the Next block opens the potential for full use of the upper levels in an affordable and flexible floor plate suitable for single or multiple occupants in the heart of the city centre. A new core could simply be introduced to the rear of the corner block off Portland St to address the increased capacity as required. .

We note that the addition of a further floor, while seeming an obvious opportunity, would likely increase the costs of redevelopment substantially as even a light weight 2nd floor and roof would require some significant strengthening of the existing Next block structure.

The floorplate could also potentially be expanded into the unused alley to the North fronting Portland Street and again to the rear service area depending on the impact and retention of the existing substation in that area. This would not only increase floorspace but help improve the street scene.

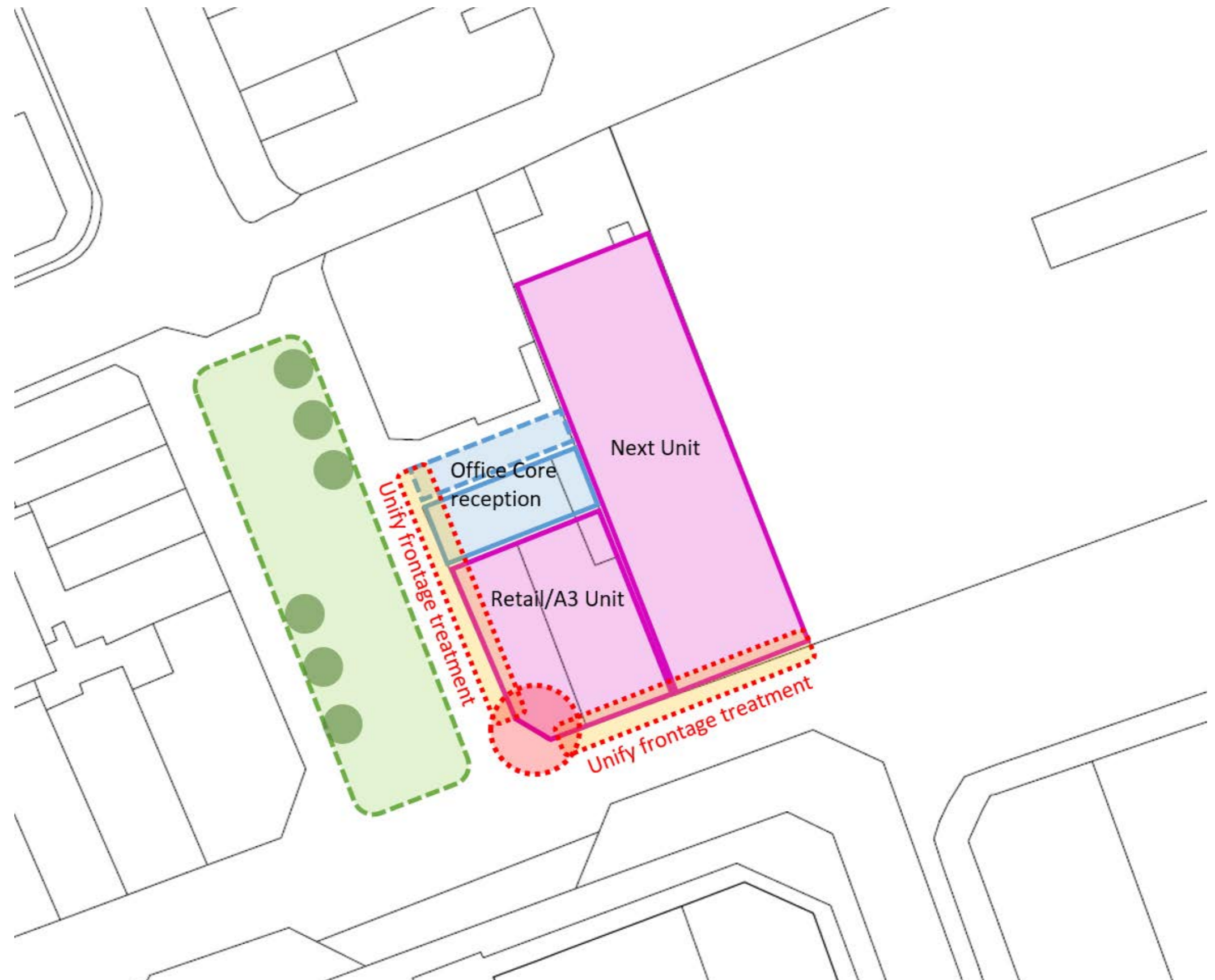


fig 5.39: Opportunities



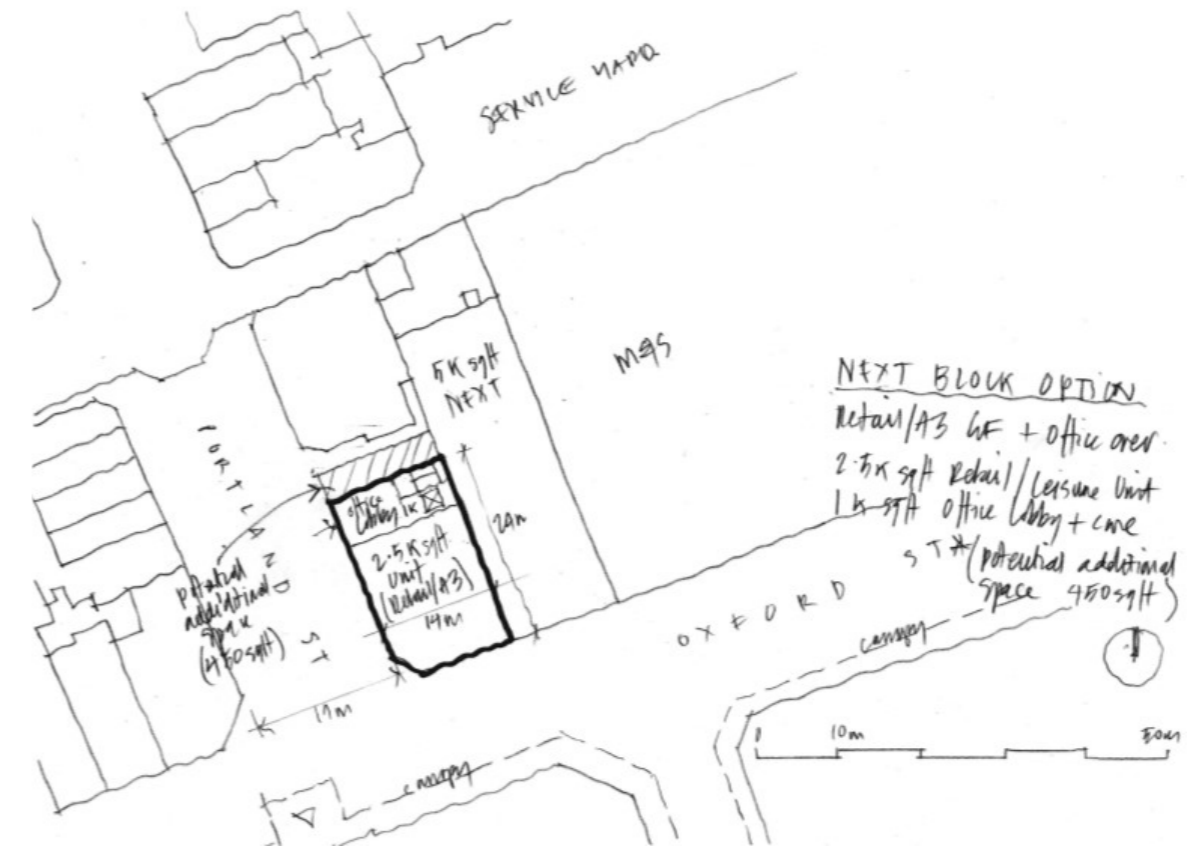
NEXT BLOCK - OPTION 1

Office / serviced office capacity
3.5K sqft GFA 3K sqft Net.
Max 4 levels over 1 storey retail.

OPTION 2 - Integration with existing Next Unit

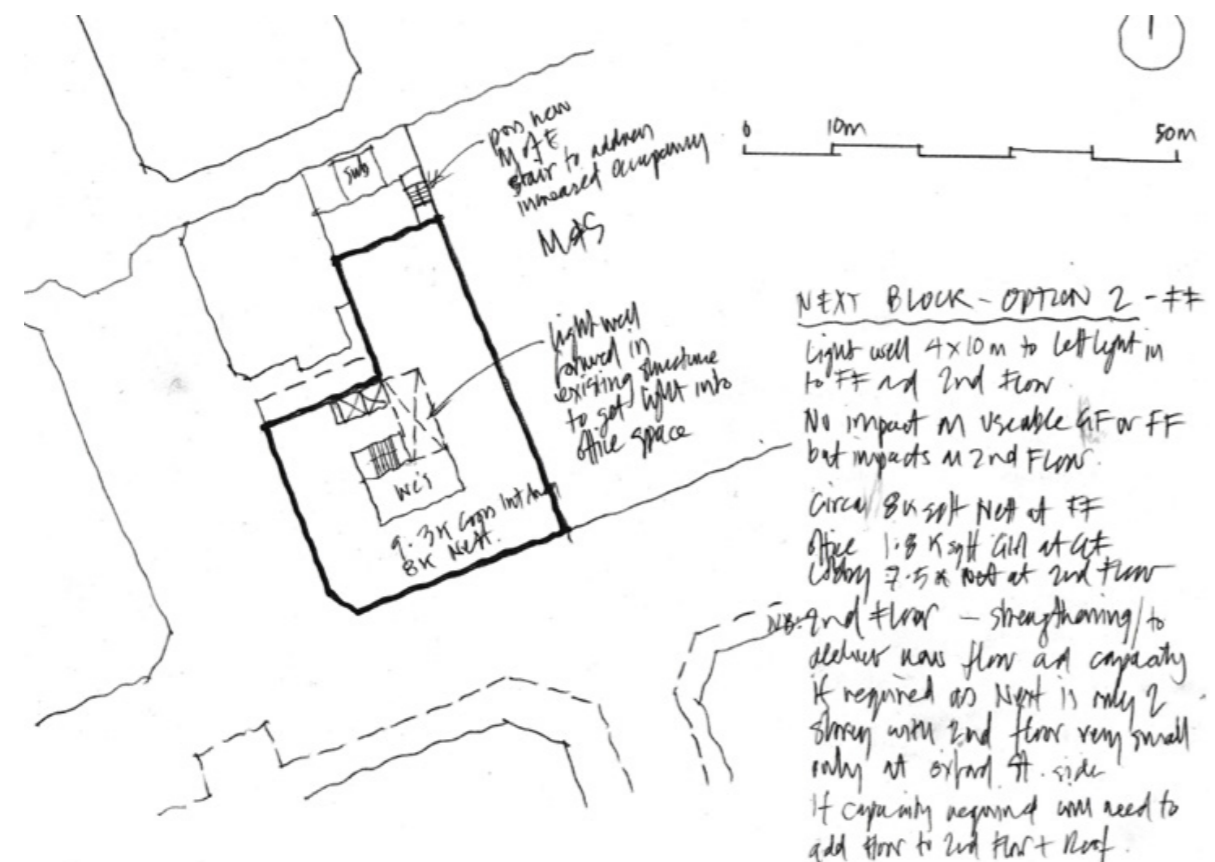
Max 3 levels office to pick up existing floor levels.

OPTION 3 - Refurbish and facelift
(Capacity as option 2)



NEXT BLOCK OPTION

Retail/AB GF + office over.
2.5K sqft Retail/Leisure Unit
1K sqft office lobby + core
ST* (potential additional space 450sqft)

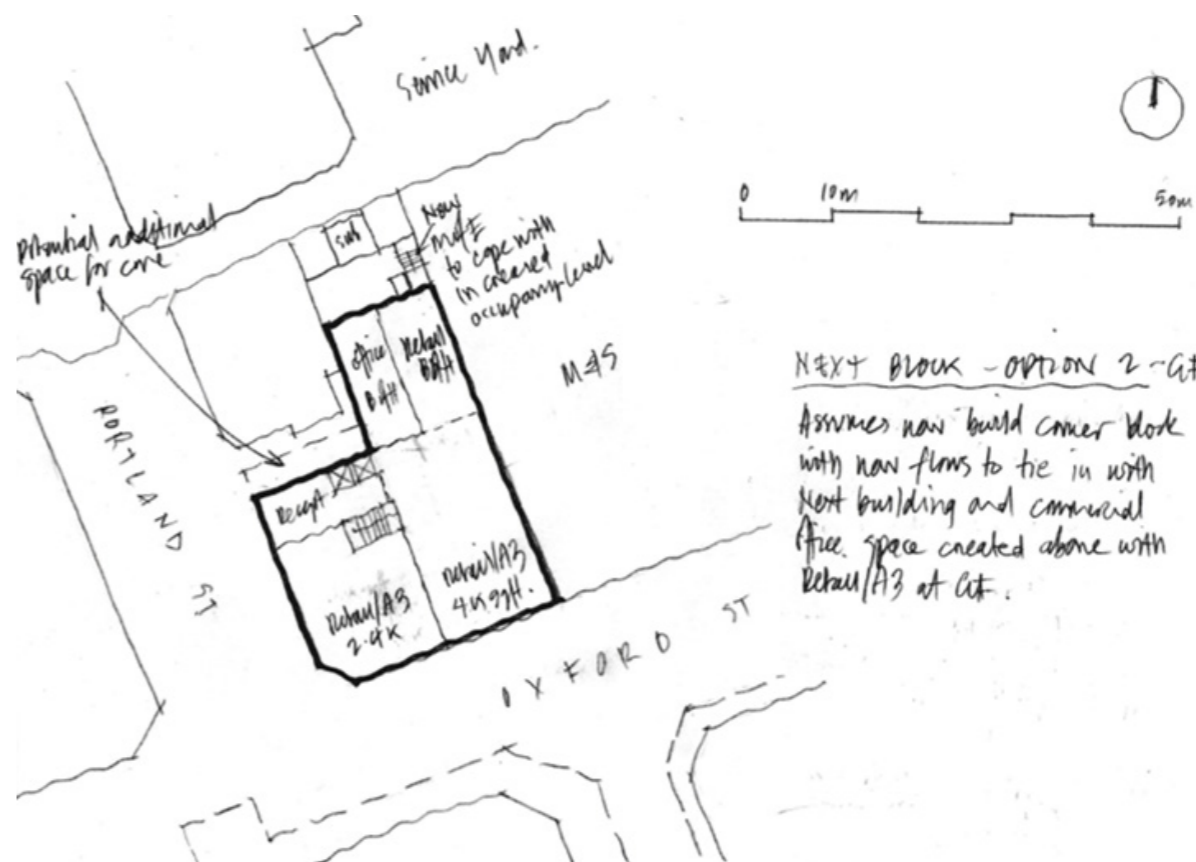


NEXT BLOCK - OPTION 2 - #

Light well 4x10m to let light in to FF and 2nd floor
No impact on useable GF or FF but impacts on 2nd floor.

Circular 8K sqft Net at FF
Office 1.8K sqft GFA at GF
Lobby 7.5K sqft at 2nd floor

2nd floor - strengthening to deliver new floor and capacity if required as Next is only 2 storey with 2nd floor very small only at Oxford St side.
If capacity required will need to add floor to 2nd floor + roof.



NEXT BLOCK - OPTION 2 - Gt

Assumes new build corner block with new floors to tie in with Next building and commercial office space created above with Retail/AB at GF.

fig 5.40: Sketch Options

5.1.9 Castle Cinema



Key Plan

The Castle Cinema building, although distinctive, is not fulfilling its current potential as a historic building in a prominent location adjacent to the historic Castle on the busy link between the City Centre core and Park Tawe. The side elevations in particular are in poor condition and in need of refacing.

The building's appearance could be drastically improved and could become a key focus for performance and events in the community. Through a combination of relatively modest extensions and refurbishment measures, the building's appearance could be transformed and its accessibility improved to help it better contribute to the surrounding environment.

Other potential interventions that could significantly improve the site are the potential opening up of the facades to reveal the active interior and promote a visual link between the Castle grounds and the Castle Gardens. This link could be further continued through the

creation of performance areas to host events either on the Castle grounds or its garden sides.

In terms of uses and occupants, there is also the potential to relocate the Theatre of Community Arts Group and to incorporate a Tourist Information service here. Combined with the potential addition of some bar areas to the North and South of the building or facing the Strand, this could not only reanimate the building but would help the site contribute to the visual amenity of this important city centre location.

Context

As can be seen from the diagram opposite, the site is located in a highly accessible and prominent location facing Swansea Castle and the Castle Square.

Pedestrians are able to access the cinema via either the Strand, Worcester Place or the pedestrian bridge provided across the Strand from the current Parc Tawe centre.

Generally the surrounding buildings are low rise however the BT building to the East of the site is significantly taller at 11-12 storeys while the building directly to the West stands at 5-6 storeys which is significantly taller than the Castle Cinema given the cinema's location on a downward sloping site.



fig 5.41: Castle Cinema



Observation

Street level images of the Castle Cinema area are provided below and illustrate the building's close physical connection with the neighbouring historic Castle Gardens.

The Castle Gardens combined with the open remains of Swansea Castle currently provide a natural amphitheatre area. However, the blank, tired southern facade of the Castle Cinema building interrupts this historic space and does little to preserve or enhance the character of the neighbouring historic ancient monument and which is otherwise a very charismatic part of the City Centre.

Directly to the North of the Castle Cinema is an attractive, stepped green space containing parts of the castle walls that leads down to the Strand (pictured bottom right below). The northern facade of the building that faces onto this space is similarly blank and does not provide any visual interest to animate this public space.



fig 5.42: Observations

Opportunity

This site is a key connection between Castle Gardens, Swansea Castle, St Mary's and the new Copr Bay area. This location should be improved and its use promoted to invite higher footfall and to reinforce the consolidated retail and leisure circuit as well as links between Parc Tawe and the city centre retail core.

A refurbishment and extension scheme would create a valuable, fully open civic space for community and event use whilst enhancing this key listed structure and its context and bringing it into greater use.



fig 5.43: Opportunities

Oldham Town Hall, Oldham ,BDP



Oldham Town Hall, Oldham ,BDP



fig 5.44: Concept and Themes

5.2 PUBLIC REALM

5.2.1 Public Realm Interventions

The public realm interventions have been developed with a view of responding both to short term requirements and opportunities and as part of a longer term strategy to establish a public realm framework for the city centre and future growth areas. The latter would also further define the 'Green Artery' from the SCARF and support the implementation of a Green Infrastructure strategy for Swansea.

The selection matrix in the opposite page shows an initial selection of 11 interventions. 4 of these (St.David's, St.Mary's, Castle Square and Castle Cinema) have been grouped as part of a wider intervention in the city centre core.

In addition to the design-based interventions, an events strategy and street maintenance programme that includes a 'spring clean' will seek to quickly improve the city centre environment and create a vibrant streetscape. During the development of the strategy it has become evident that Swansea needs to create a positive impression both to regular visitors returning to the city following the Covid19 pandemic, and to first time visitors attracted by a new leisure offer such as that provided by the future Swansea Arena. It is also important to stress the benefits of involving local communities and encouraging them to play an active part in re-imagining its future character and identity.

This section will also make reference to the use of a digital infrastructure as part of a public realm strategy, and the need to review the condition of buildings in historic streets such as Oxford Street to identify building interventions that will contribute to enhance their urban setting.

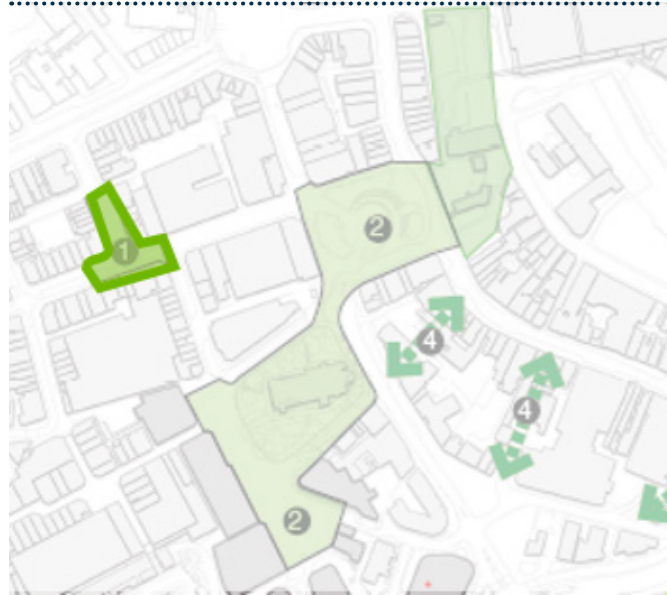
Wider framework and connection to waterfronts - key infrastructure to connect with future growth areas. link to its environmental capital.



Selection Matrix

	SO1 CREATE A VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE CITY CENTRE CORE	SO2 CHANGE PERCEPTIONS AND MAKE SWANSEA A DESTINATION	SO3 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY	SO4 PROMOTE A HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE AND CONNECTED LIVABLE CITY	SHORT/MEDIUM/ LONG TERM	IMPACT	COST	DELIVERABILITY
Oxford St. / Portland Place Junction	✓	✓			SHORT	MEDIUM	LOW	HIGH
St. Marys Place	✓	✓		✓	SHORT	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
Digital Square	✓	✓		✓	SHORT	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
Museum Green		✓		✓	SHORT	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Marina Pocket Square		✓		✓	MEDIUM	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
The 'Lanes'		✓			SHORT	LOW	LOW	HIGH
Entrance Gateway	✓	✓			SHORT	MEDIUM	LOW	HIGH
Spring Clean		✓			SHORT	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
Digital Infrastructure		✓		✓	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM

5.2.2 Oxford Street / Portland Place Junction



Key Plan

WHY

Strengthening the retail circuit by attracting crowds to Union Street and further.

WHAT

Temporary structures to enable different type of events and also to allow the servicing route.



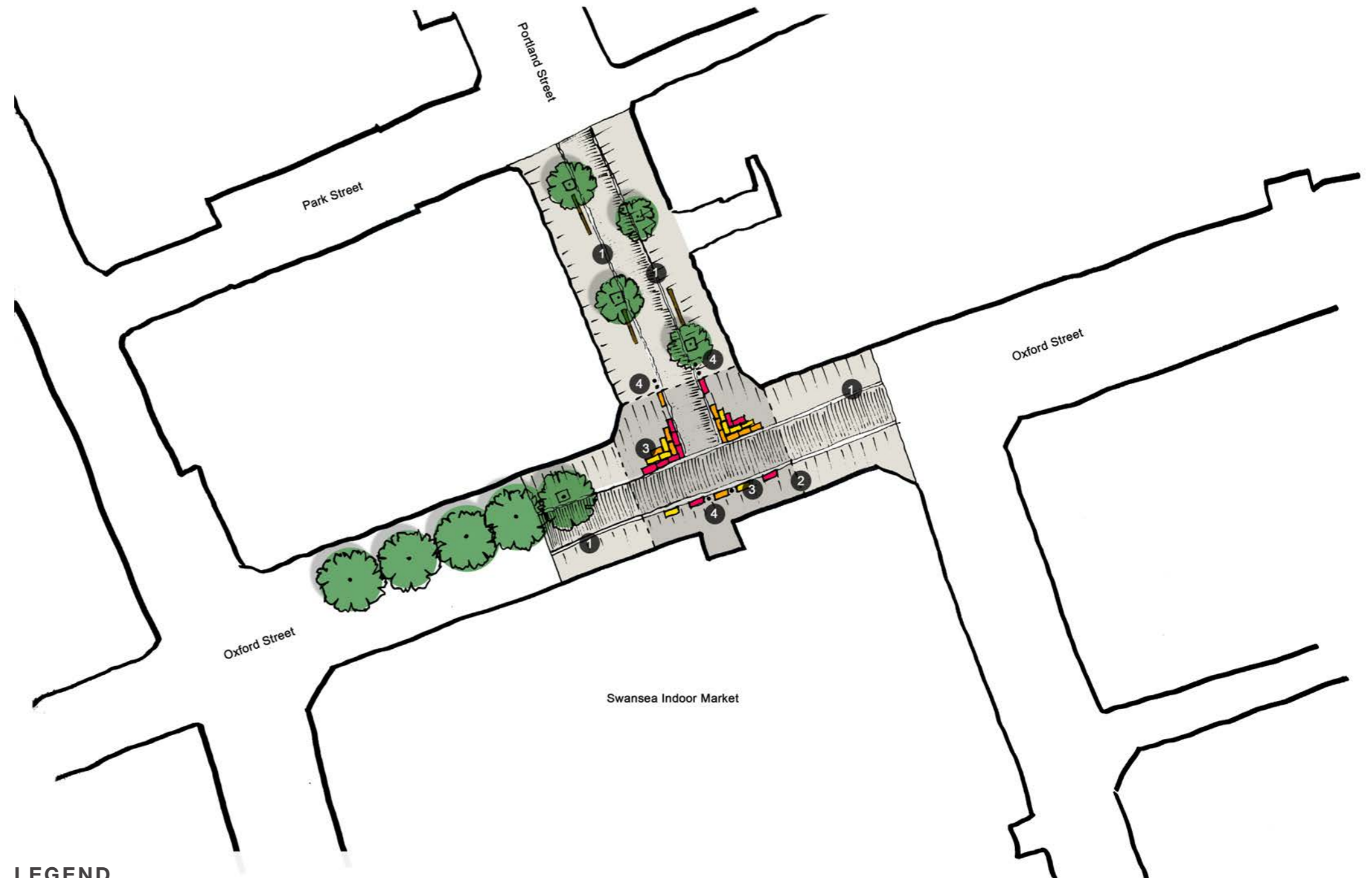
fig 5.45: Portland Street and Oxford Street



This intervention would create a valuable, flexible space to serve as an outdoor extension of the market, offering space for further food sale kiosks or pop up shops during festivals. Retractable power supply points would be incorporated into the design to accommodate this.

The existing high quality hardscape would be maintained but the event space would be marked with overhead canvas umbrellas and special lighting features.

Finally, modular and flexible play and seating features would be added to the public space. These would be colourful and move



LEGEND

- 1 Existing hardscape:**
Keep existing hardscape, street furniture and trees, spring clean
- 2 Junction Play area:**
Existing hardscape marked for creative play and creative use; bronze inlay or similar for marking
- 3 Modular furniture:**
Playful modular furniture, which could be arranged to be seating area, occasional event stage, urban message board or play equipment. Material to be lightweight but robust for use.
- 4 Power supply:**
Retractable power sockets to supply occasional food vans or performances / stage equipment

fig 5.46: Conceptual Sketch

King Street Festival, Manchester¹



Madrid Chair, 2010 Shanghai World Expo²



Intersections, Gdynia Design Days event³



fig 5.47: Precedents

1 © visitmanchester.com
 2 © Ecosistema Urbano
 3 © Izabela Boloz

5.2.3 St Marys Place



Key Plan

WHY

- Public realm intervention key new gateway to the city centre
- High quality public realm needed to draw together mix of uses in St Marys Place

WHAT

- New route as green spine
- Targeted interventions in existing open spaces



fig 5.48: St. Marys and St. Davids Square

Context and Opportunities

- Strong north-south axis has clearly differentiated frontages
- Open spaces / squares are disjointed and fail to create added value to the wider urban context
- Key transition spaces or gateways have a poor spatial quality
- Spatial framework links open spaces to the wider public realm circuit
- St Marys and Castle Square as key spaces of centrality
- Linked urban squares capitalise on the richness and variety of open spaces
- Integration with the historic urban fabric and streetscape

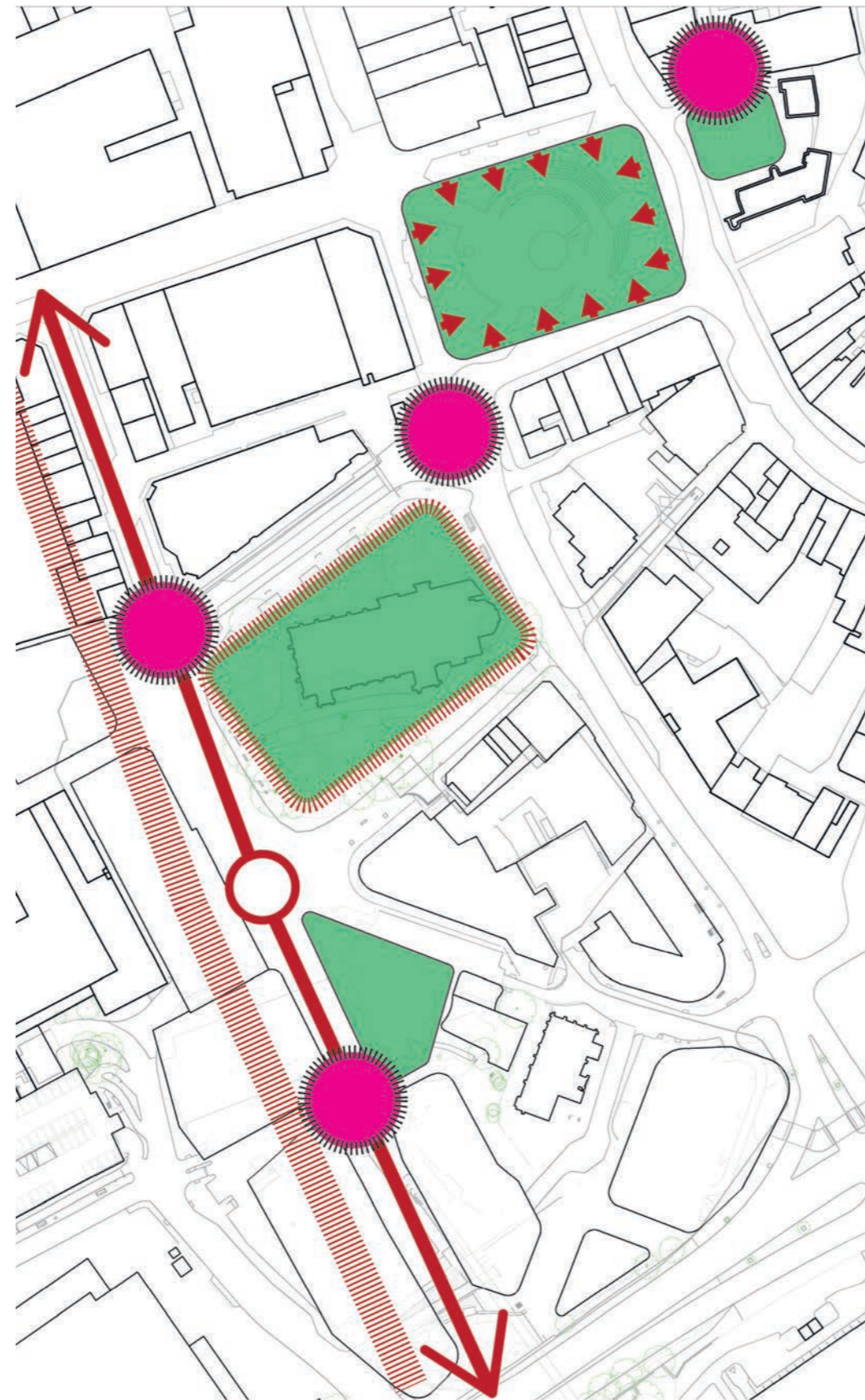


fig 5.49: Context



fig 5.50: Opportunities



- 1. **Castle Cinema** - Cultural and events hub + historic monument + western gateway
- 2. **Castle Square** - Leisure + events square
- 3. **St Mary's** - Heart of Swansea - urban salon
- 4. **St David's** - Green square + community and civic hub



LEGEND

- 1 **'The Dunes' Square:**
Hardscape, steps and ramps with SuDS features, tree planting, special lighting features and benches
- 2 **Outdoor dining or cafe:**
Outdoor seating with bespoke pergola above, planters around the terrace with climbers hanging from the pergola feature
- 3 **Market Square:**
'The Dunes' hardscape carries on under the canopy, flexible playful furniture options
- 4 **Timber seating:**
Timber seating steps along the historic church wall and near the statue
- 5 **'The Dunes' hardscape:**
'The Dunes' hardscape carries on around the city centre
- 6 **Historical church garden:**
Keep existing historical church garden and wall, update with seasonal planting scheme
- 7 **Disabled parking spaces:**
13 disabled parking spaces
- 8 **The Colonnade:**
Activate the South facing colonnade with outdoor cafe and seating area
- 9 **Taxi & Bus:**
Relocated taxi stations and bus stops
- 10 **'The Dunes' Lanes:**
'The Dunes' hardscape, art features and lighting scheme carries on along the lanes
- 11 **SuDS:**
Sustainable urban drainage features with planting

fig 5.51: Conceptual Sketch of the public realm in the city centre

Interventions

At St David's Church, the new design would create a 'Dunes' square with high quality sand and grey coloured paving in a wave pattern. The design proposes SuDS features (or raingardens) in the shape of dunes to enhance the seaside identity of the city and reinforce the connection with the beach. A series of ramps and steps would be introduced to create a level change with features such as special lighting, outdoor dining space, pergolas and tree planting creating not only visual interest but flexible options for space use.

At St Mary's Church, long timber steps are proposed which can be used as seating and a space to socialise along the historic wall of the church. The historic garden and wall would be maintained but updated with a seasonal planting scheme and new lighting features.



fig 5.52: Conceptual Sketch of St Marys Place public realm

Whiteford Burrows, Gower Peninsula, Wales¹



Dilworth Plaza, Philadelphia³



Dilworth Plaza, Philadelphia⁴



Llangenith Bay, Gower²



Leicester Square, London⁵



The City Dune, Copenhagen⁶

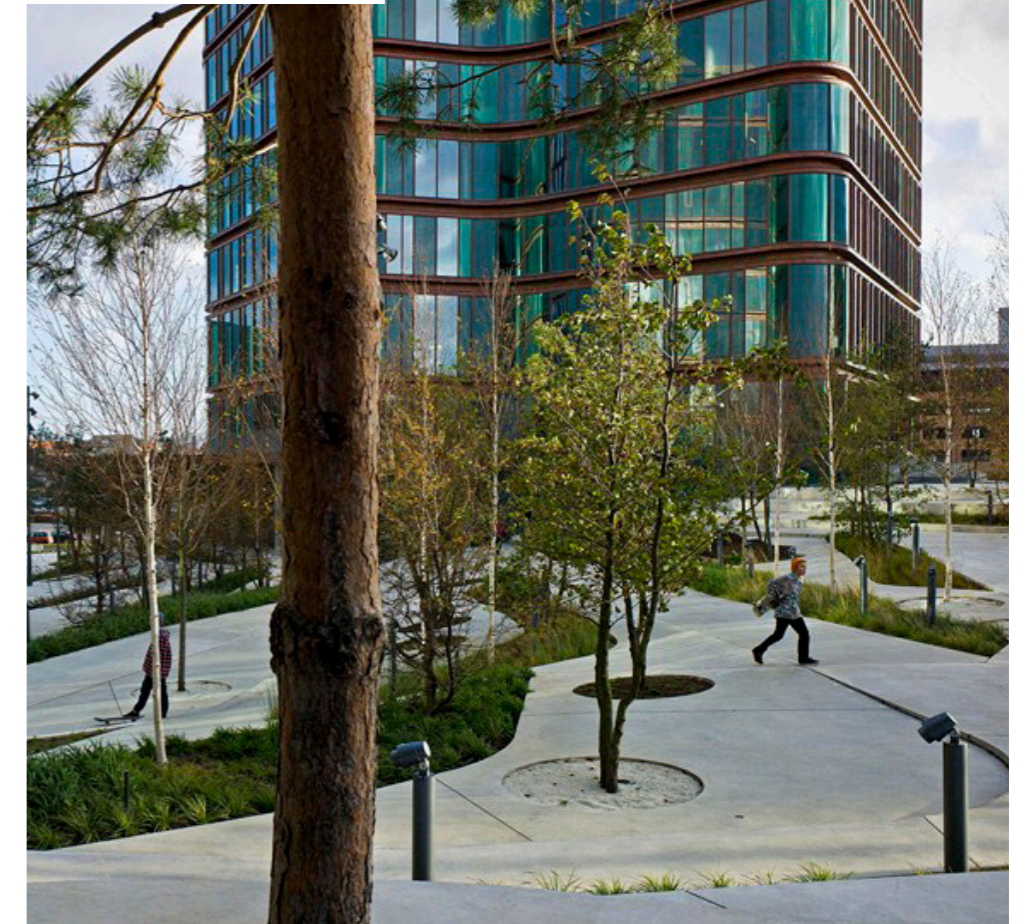


fig 5.53: Concept Inspiration

fig 5.54: Precedents

1 © National Trust Images / David Noton
 2 © National Trust Images
 3 © James Ewing / OTTO

4 © OLIN/Sahar Coston Hardy
 5 © Burns + Nice
 6 © Jens Lindhe

5.2.4 Digital Square



Key Plan

Cloud Installation, Calgary¹



Musical Swings, Montreal²



Opening Flowers, Jerusalem³



Sculpture responding to touch, Amsterdam⁴

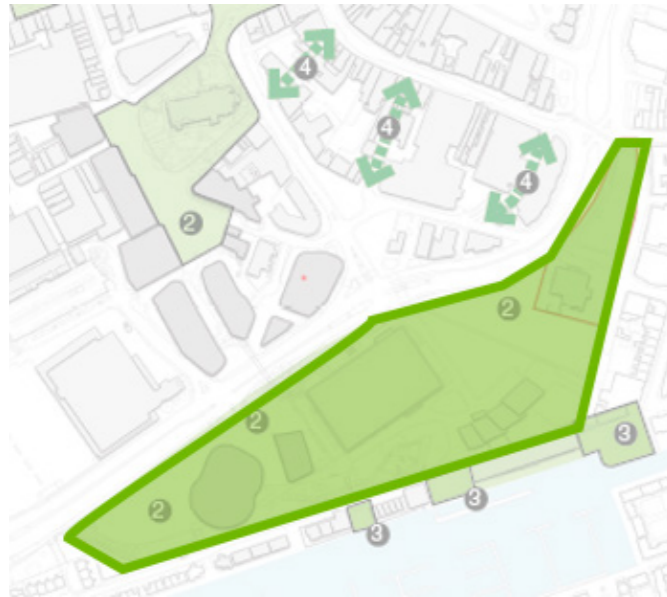


fig 5.55: Precedents

1 ©Artists: Caitlind r.c Brown & Wayne Garrett
2 © Mouna Andraos
3 © Dor Kedmi

4 © Studio Roosegaarde

5.2.5 Museum Green



Key Plan

WHY

Opportunity to create an open air cultural and leisure destination integrated with the City Centre’s system of open spaces

WHAT

Targeted landscape interventions that activate the Green

National Waterfront Museum Swansea²



Swansea Museum¹



fig 5.56: Museum Green

1 © WilkinsonEyre
2 © Swansea Council

Lemvig Skate Park, Denmark¹



Plug N Play Oerestad South, Copenhagen²



Plug N Play Oerestad South, Copenhagen³



Lemvig Skate Park, Denmark⁴



Winter Wonderland, Swansea⁵



fig 5.57: Precedents

1 © EFFEKT
2 © Kragh&Berglund
3 © Kragh&Berglund

4 © EFFEKT
5 © Anthony de Schoolmeester

5.2.6 Marina Pocket Squares



Key Plan

WHY

Celebrating the water front in the city centre and the vibrant public space - Maximise relationship with quayside.

WHAT

High quality waterfront squares and parklets
 Potential use of floating platforms to enhance use of water



fig 5.58: Marina Pocket Squares¹

¹ © Google Earth

This intervention proposes the upgrade of the three existing pocket squares located along the Marina area, illustrated on the image opposite.

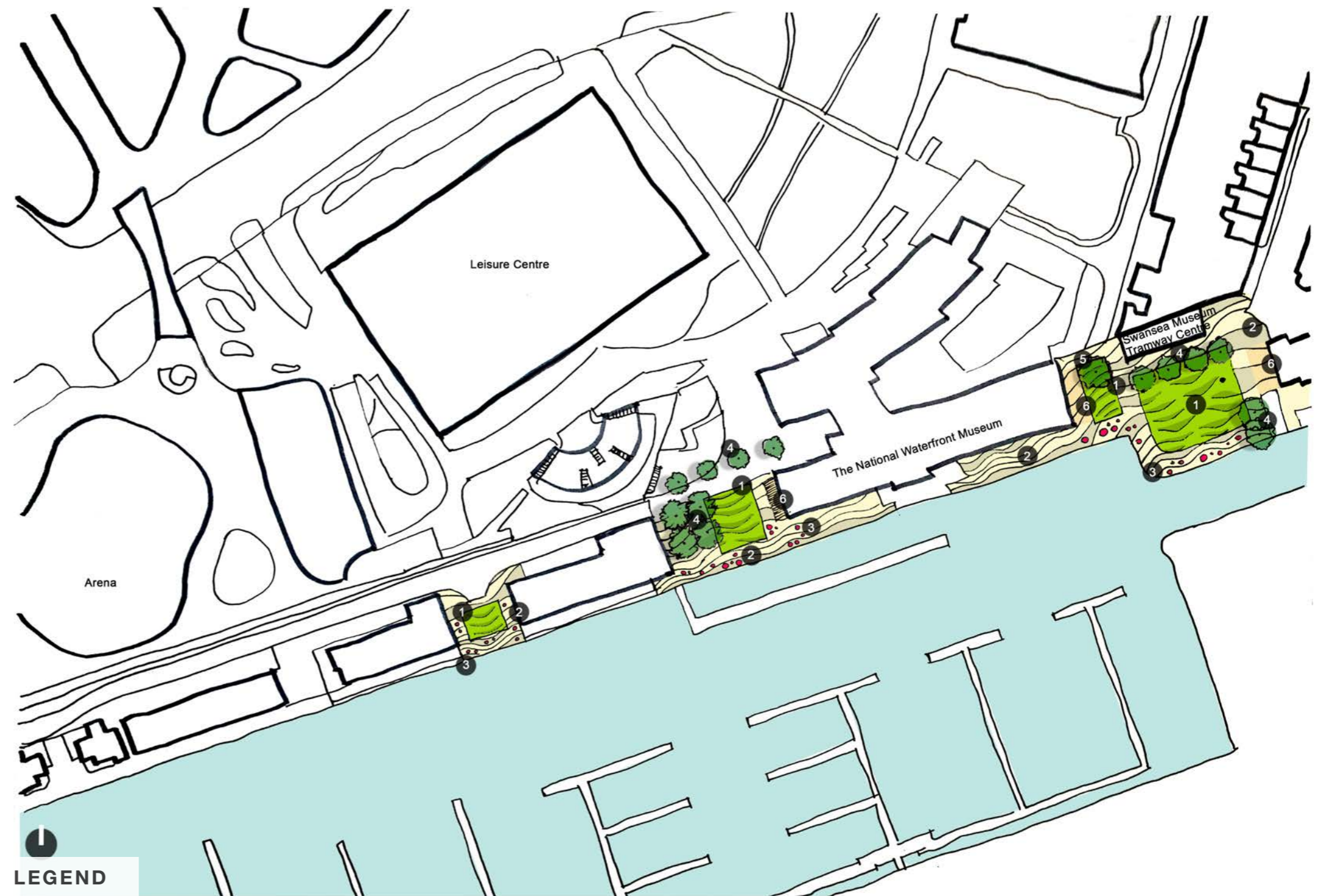
These improved pocket squares would support the city’s connection with the beach and help enhance its seaside identity, continuing the ‘Dune’ concept inspired by the patterns of sand on the nearby natural beaches. These pocket would also enable as flexible small scale events during weekends and festivals.

The proposed design would soften the pocket squares while changing the majority of the existing hard scape to lawn, creating a more comfortable place to sit and spend time. Any hardscape would be re-designed to tie in with the beach, with high quality, sand or grey coloured pavement containing a wave design, as can be seen from this image.

There would be tactical opportunities for art, such as waving grass land or mounds built from soil to provide natural seating areas.

The existing lighting scheme would be upgraded, but the outdoor terraces, cafes, bars and restaurants could remain unchanged.

The main principle of this intervention is to create flexible, high quality space that has a visual connection with the sea and nearby beach while offering a comfortable place to sit, spend time and socialise.



LEGEND

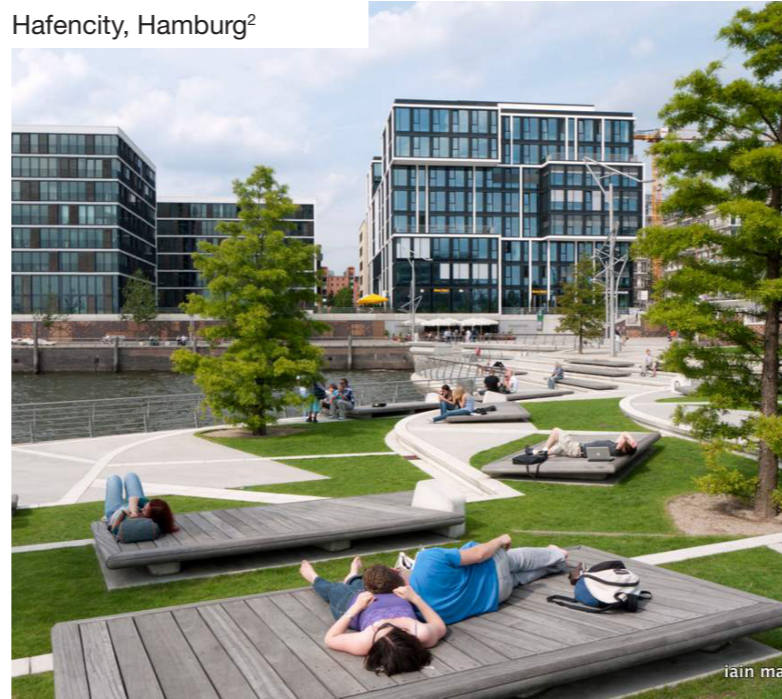
- 1 **‘The Dunes’ lawn relaxing area:**
Softscape with land art feature grass mounds as ‘Dunes’. Steel edges on one side to support the grass mounds
- 2 **‘The Dunes’ hardscape:**
‘The Dunes’ hardscape carries on around the Marina
- 3 **Flexible furniture:**
Flexible modular furniture to offer playful public spaces
- 4 **Existing trees:**
Keep existing trees
- 5 **Proposed tree:**
Feature tree at the entrance to the square
- 6 **Outdoor dining or cafe:**
Outdoor seating area

fig 5.59: Conceptual Sketch

West India Quay, London¹



Hafencity, Hamburg²



Storm King Wavefield, Hudson Highlands³



Floating Pool in the River Spree, Berlin⁴



Canada's Sugar Beach, Toronto⁵



Floating Forest, London⁶



fig 5.60: Precedents

1 © KERB
2 © Hafencity Hamburg GmbH/fotofrizz
3 © Maya Lin Studio
4 © Ana Lisa Alperovich
5 © Nicola Betts | Claude Cormier + Associates Inc
6 © Atmos Studio

5.2.7 The 'Lanes'



Key Plan

WHY

Historic links within the urban fabric often the focus of anti social behaviour

WHAT

Improve quality of these spaces with new lightning, better materials, art interventions etc.



fig 5.61: Lanes across the city centre

This intervention proposes the upgrading of the existing lanes connecting the city centre to Wind Street, Strand and Parc Tawe. This would provide more attractive and safe pedestrian connections in the area. This project also enables to broaden the integration of transport strategy thinking which could include relocation of taxi ranks, consolidation of blue badge parking and mobility hire.

The existing pavement, where it is high quality natural stone, would be retained. In other places, a 'Dune' style hardscape could be created and would flow into the lanes themselves.

Proposed lighting interventions include the upgrading of the existing lighting scheme to provide a safer night time environment and the introduction of an illuminated feature sign above the entrances to the lanes.

Public art could also play a key role in animating the area, with potential for suspended art features above the lanes.

The introduction of further visual interest in the form of green walls, murals or feature paintings on plain building facades would also enhance the pedestrian experience.

Finally, the upgrading and general refurbishment of older shop windows in the area could add to the enhanced feeling of vibrancy and would complement the new high quality public realm.



LEGEND

- 5** 'The Dunes' hardscape: 'The Dunes' hardscape carries on around the city centre
- 9** Taxi & Bus: Relocated taxi stations and bus stops
- 10** The Lanes: Historical city hardscape, art features, shop front improvements and lighting scheme carries on along the lanes
- 11** Bin store enclosure

fig 5.62: Conceptual Sketch

KINGS LANE

Contemporary mural on the side walls that will unify Kings Lane



Illuminated street sign

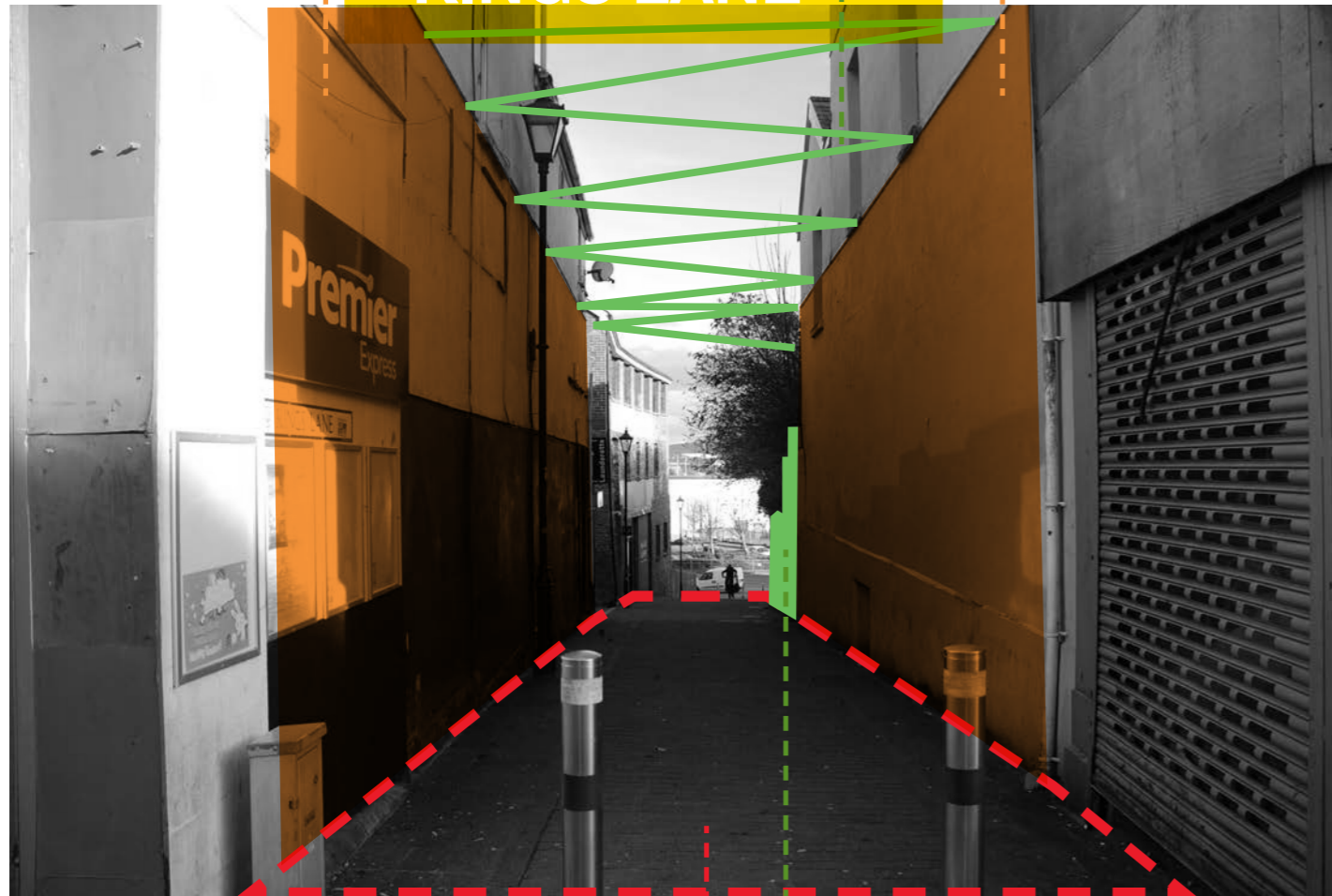
Suspended 'seaside' art and lighting features above the lanes



Illuminated street sign

KINGS LANE

KINGS LANE



Green wall for wildlife



Historical city hardscape

SALUBRIOUS PLACE

Contemporary mural on the side walls that will unify Salubrious Place



Suspended 'seaside' art and lighting features above the lanes



Illuminated street sign



Green wall for wildlife



Green pergola



Historical city hardscape

Urban Chandelier, Sydney²



Camden Market Alley, London²



In between two worlds, Sydney³



Grass Garden Inversion, Tennessee⁴

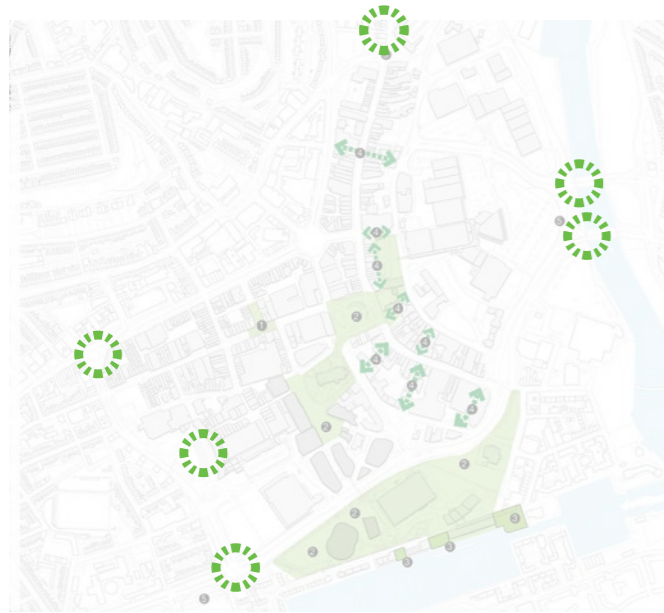


fig 5.63: Precedents

1 © Office Feuerman
 2 © aladyinlondon.com
 3 © Jason Wing, Photo city of Sydney Paul Patterson

4 © Team GFB, River City Company

5.2.8 Entrance Gateway



Key Plan

WHY

- Civic pride
- Welcome to the city centre
- Change perceptions
- Take attention away from the roads and car parks

WHAT

3 landmark sculptures which capture the spirit of Swansea

One of the recurring messages from the stakeholder engagement sessions was the unwelcoming character of Swansea's arrival spaces (in particular Oystermouth Road and the train station). The proposal is to enhance these with public art or landscape interventions that celebrate Swansea's strong historic legacy and cultural identity. It is also an opportunity to support Swansea's branding as a city by the water.

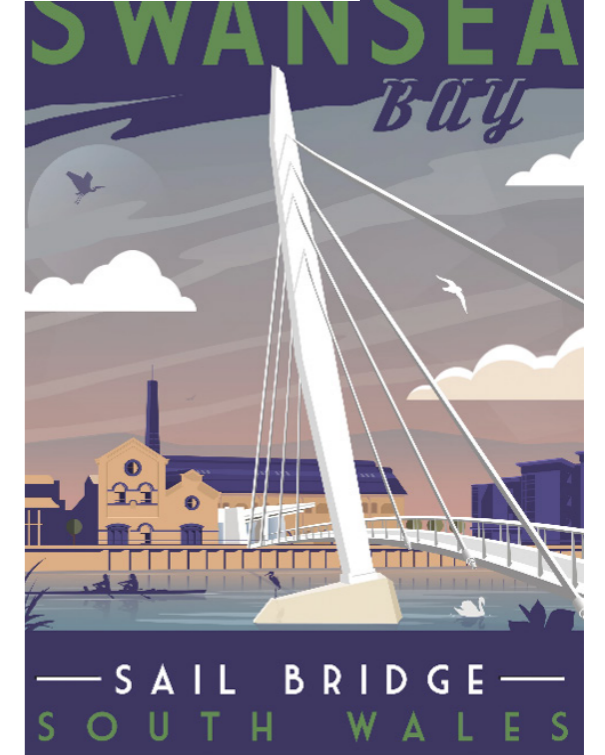


fig 5.64: Entrance Gateways to Swansea city centre

Statue of Leif Eriksson by August Werner, Trondheim, Norway¹



The Sail Bridge Poster²



Dylan Thomas theatre statue, Swansea³



Schouwburgplein, Rotterdam⁴



fig 5.65: Precedents

1 © Image by RF/Getty Images 4 © West8
2 © Gower Retro Art
3 © Dylanthomas.com

5.2.9 Spring Clean

WHY

- Civic pride
- Cleanliness post lockdown
- Encourage outdoor hospitality
- Address anti social behaviour

WHAT

- Depending on species pollard trees to reveal shop fronts and let light in
- Jetwash paving bring the high quality materials back to life
- Remove chewing gum and bird droppings
- Upgrade street furniture

Swansea has a high quality public realm. Streets in the central core have an attractive materiality, and recent interventions such as the enhancement of the Kingsway and planned transformation of Wind Street reflect the Council's commitment to improve their environmental quality. There is however a general impression that some areas look tired. A proposed solution is to bring forward a package of coordinated interventions to deal with specific issues such as the visual impact of commercial bins, cleanliness of streets around night time economy hotspots, or maintenance of trees and vegetation. A refresh of Swansea's public realm will not only create a welcoming and attractive environment, but also support wellbeing initiatives.



fig 5.66: Spring cleaning to be done in different areas around the city centre

5.2.10 Digital Infrastructure

WHY

- Don't get left behind
- Develop a reputation as a smart city
- Build on digital square success

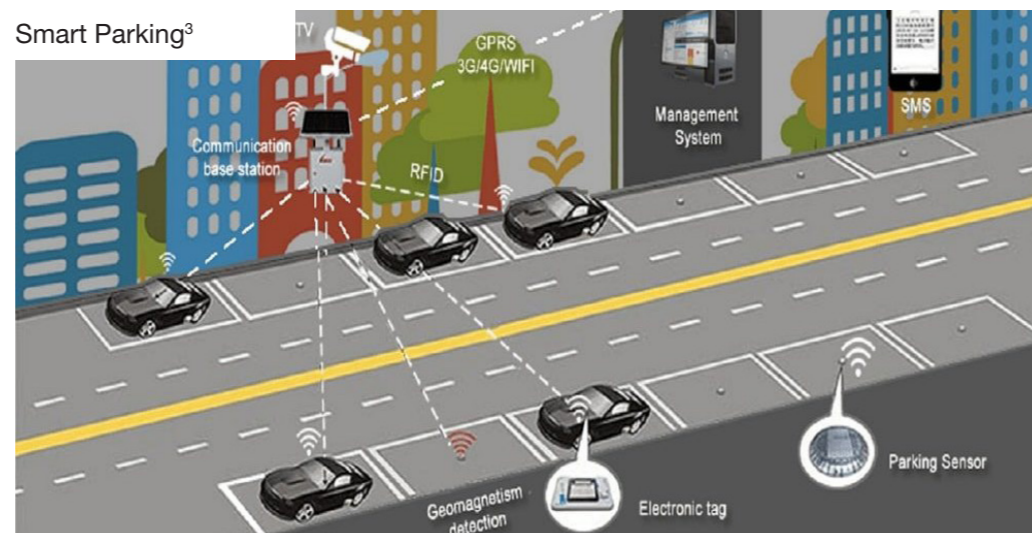
WHAT

Promote

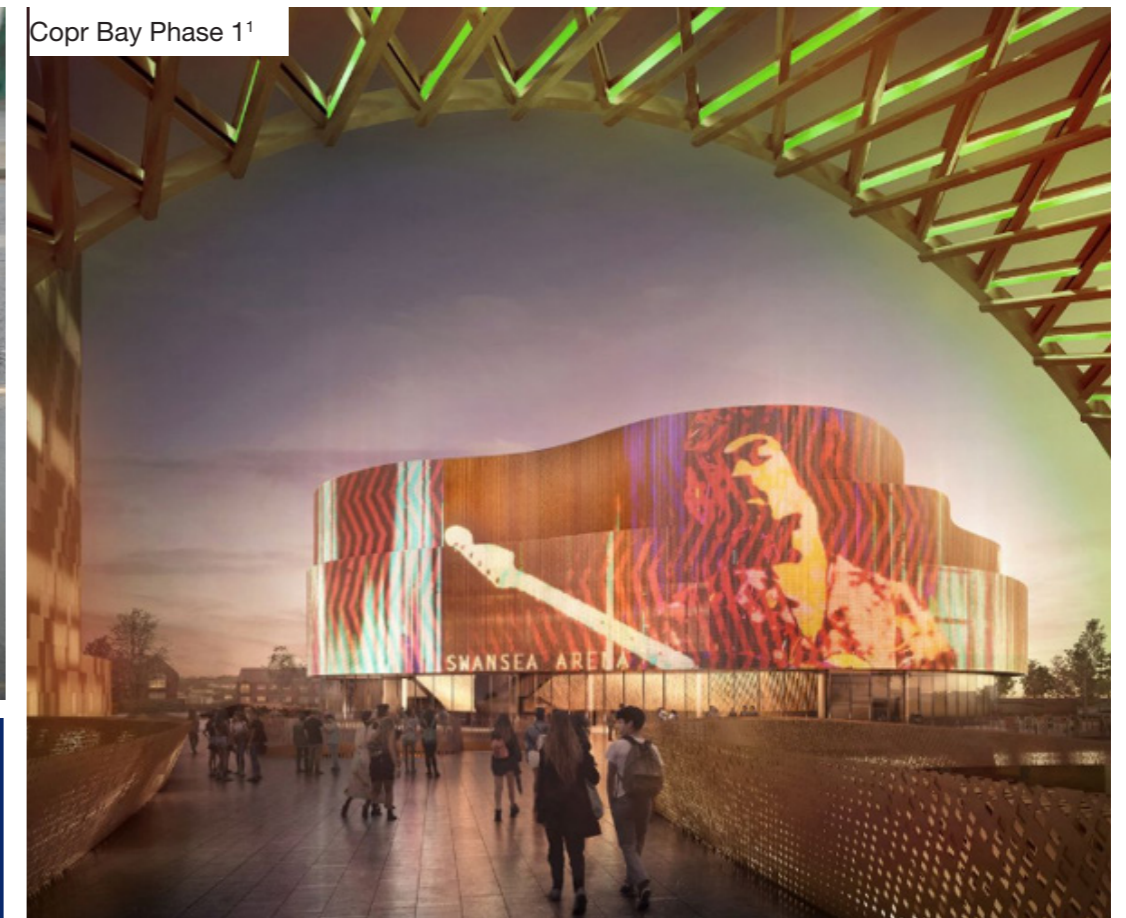
- Smart use of data
- Smart lightning
- Smart parking
- Smart public transport
- Smart interactive tourism

Harness the power of the internet of things

The development of a repurposing strategy for the city centre is an ideal opportunity to consider how digital infrastructure can be embedded within Swansea's public realm. A roadmap for a long term implementation of a digital infrastructure plan can support the city centre's shift towards a mixed-use environment that integrates new working and living arrangements, urban greening, movement and transport, and the development of a healthier and inclusive urban environment.



Copr Bay Phase 1¹



Smart Interactive Tourism⁴

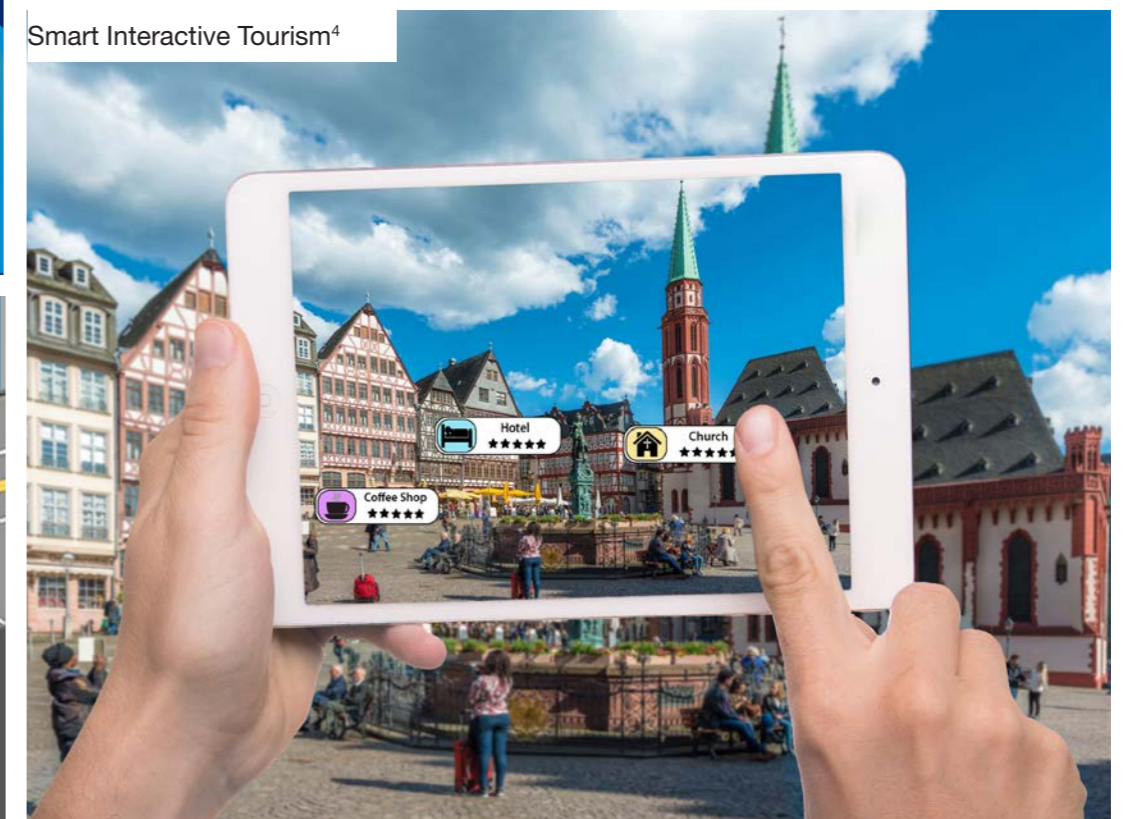


fig 5.67: Existing and Proposed digital infrastructure around the city centre

1 © Swansea Council
 2 © Coolfire Solutions
 3 © Transport advancement
 4 © Towardsdatascience.com

5.3 BUILDING ANALYSIS

WHY

- Civic pride

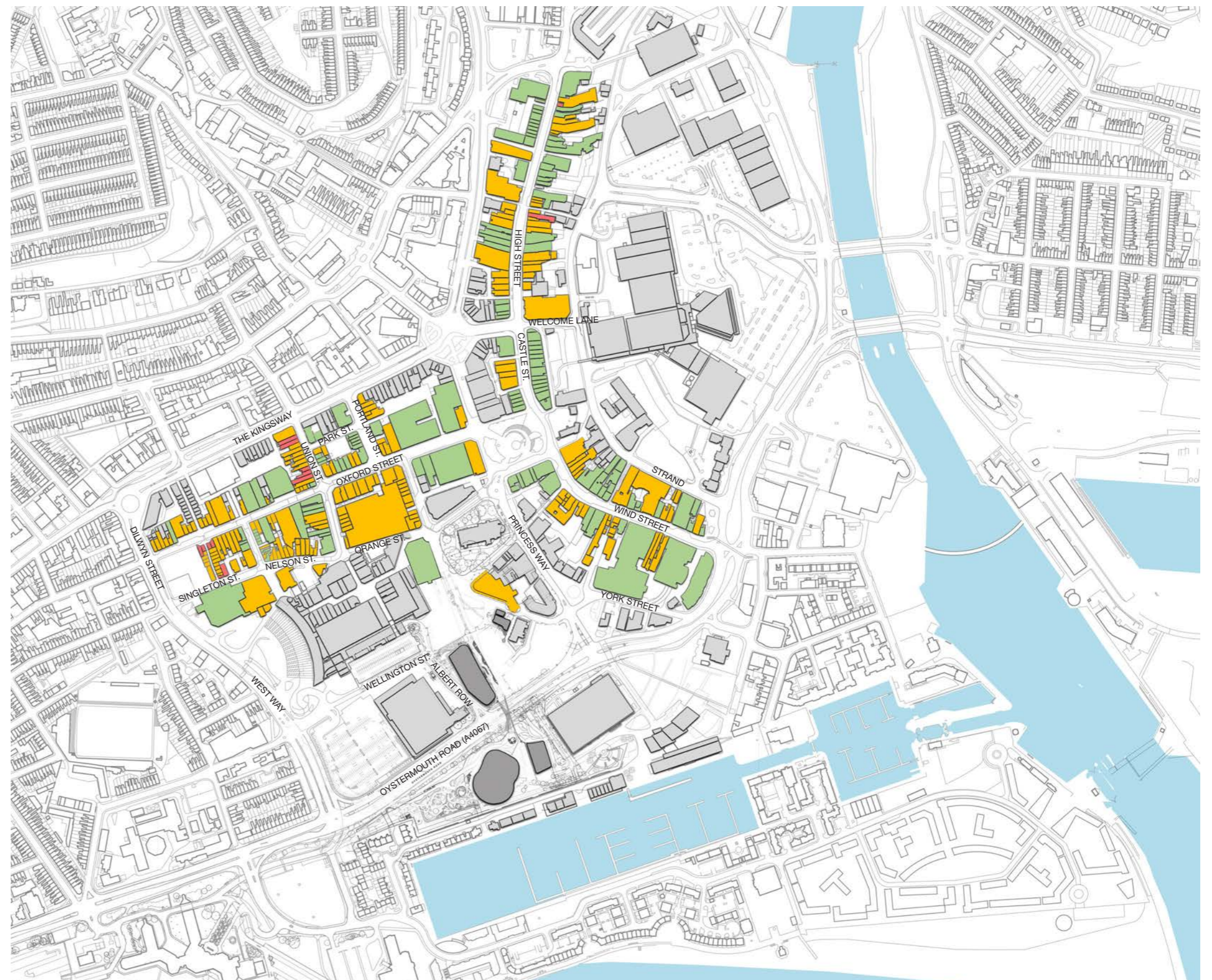
WHAT

- Minor building improvements
- New windows
- Repairs
- Rendering
- Signage

Oxford Street, High Street and Wind Street are key elements of Swansea's historic urban fabric. They are also primary locations of the city centre's retail and leisure uses, and thus an important focus for the repurposing strategy. During the development of the project it has become evident that any enhancement of the public realm and refresh of uses needs to be paired with an upgrade of the built frontages and general condition of the central core's building stock. As part of the analysis, a survey of the condition of buildings within the central core was carried out, based on first hand observations. In reference to the map opposite, it is evident that large sections of Oxford Street would benefit from an upgrade of its buildings, particularly around its western end and around the Market. Similarly, there are areas of improvement in High Street and Wind Street, including the 'Lanes'.

LEGEND

- Good Quality/Condition
- Fair Quality/Condition
- Poor Quality/Condition



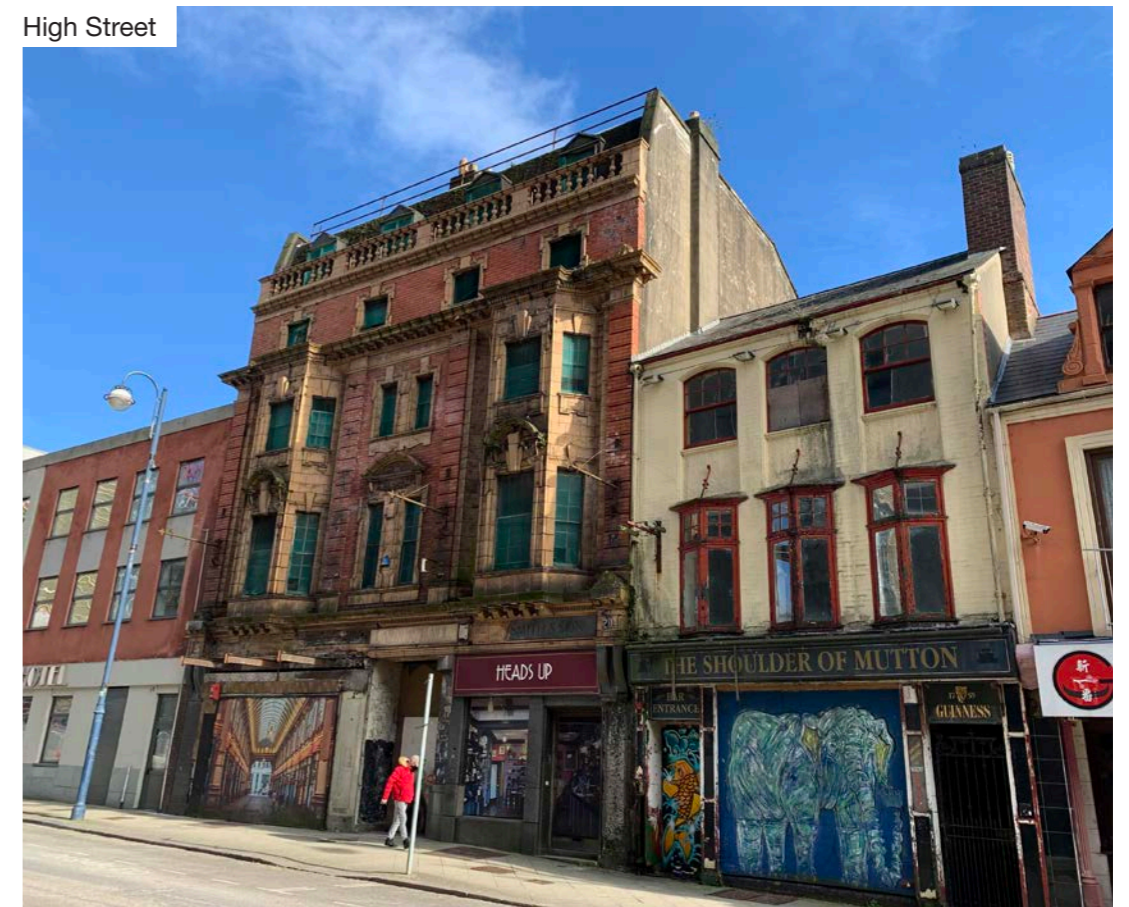


fig 5.68: 'Bad Teeth' buildings in the city centre



6

Conclusion & Recommendations

6.1 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1.1 Introduction

This section summarises the key findings from the analysis and principal recommendations for the repurposing strategy based on the proposed building and public realm interventions, policy, and transport and movement.

6.1.2 Analysis Findings

Policy Review - The 'Repurposing Strategy' for Swansea city centre should have a strong placemaking approach, capitalise on the re-use of existing assets, prioritise the implementation of green infrastructure initiatives (in particular the Green Artery), support the creation of a high quality public realm linked to the waterfront, and promote a broader mix of uses that include a wider residential offer and innovative community, social and economic activities

Movement and Transport - The key findings from a high level appraisal were:

- There is an over-provision of standard car parking spaces (more than 6,500) across the city centre, and an under-provision of blue badge spaces.
- Current multi-storey car parks are unattractive and unappealing. The new parking provision in Copr Bay will be an important step in correcting this.
- Through traffic around the city core and the severance it creates is an issue.
- Origin-destination trips will remain in place until public transport offer improves.
- Gateways to the city core are poor - this leads to challenges for pedestrian / cycle access into the core.

- There is poor pedestrian connectivity between the railway and bus station, making the interchange between transport modes difficult.

City Centre Uses - The principal conclusions from the mapping of uses in the central core were:

- Lack of residential in the core
- Lack of quality office space
- Lack of "grown up" F&B in the core
- Leisure and entertainment facilities are located outside of the central core and dispersed in the Central Area without a clear circuit linking them.
- Declining retail footfall
- Declining retail offer with several high profile retailer departures from the city
- Retail vacancy is a growing problem

Stakeholder Engagement - Feedback from various stakeholder engagement sessions included the following key messages:

- There is a need for a wider residential offer in the city centre, with a focus on intergenerational living
- Despite 2 quality universities there is a lack of educational facilities in the city centre
- Anti-social behaviour is an issue, though often the negative perception does not correspond with reality
- Poor perception of the city centre with outsiders and poor first impressions
- Generally public realm materiality high but presentation is undermined
- There should be a plan to promote better use and activation of the public realm with

cultural events, pop up leisure offer etc.

- Swansea has a strong leisure and cultural offer
- Committed initiatives are major positives
- There is a need to instil a sense of pride and a sense of ownership in the city centre.

Occupier Engagement - Following an engagement exercise with key occupiers, the outlook for the city centre can be summarised as follows:

- Occupier sentiment in Swansea is positive with the majority (75%) being either happy or indifferent with their stores performance.
- 77% are planning to stay for a longer term future.
- 50% are of the view that their rent is stable and sustainable.

6.2 INTERVENTIONS

6.2.1 Intervention Selection

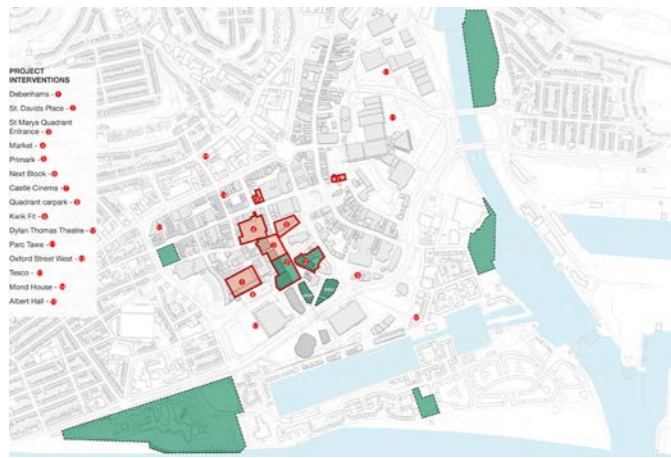
A total of 15 building interventions are identified in Section 5 together with a separate package of public realm works covering 6 separate themes.

Only building interventions 1-10 have been evaluated at this stage due to interventions 11, 12 and 13 being relatively long term projects and ambitions that will not deliver the required change within the necessary time horizon. The last 2 interventions Mond House and Albert House are worthy of exploration but were identified through stakeholder engagement late in the process and there was insufficient time to include for more detailed analysis.

The original brief was to focus on 5 or 6 initiatives and using the evaluation set out below the remaining 10 initiatives have been whittled down to 5 separate interventions plus a package of public realm improvements. The interventions were evaluated and prioritised based upon the following criteria:

1. Satisfaction of the objectives
2. Timing – short / medium / long term (with a weighting towards more immediate)
3. Level of impact
4. Net Cost - being the cost after any value generated
5. Deliverability

The evaluation matrix can be found under 5.1. The interventions selected for more detailed analysis needed to deliver against the objectives, preferably within the short or medium term, have a high level of impact,



relatively low cost, and a high capability of being delivered.

Analysis in the evaluation matrix showed interventions 1 to 6 outperforming the rest on the assessment of all 10 building interventions and therefore interventions 7 to 10 missed the cut of projects for more detailed analysis.

Intervention 2 forms part of the Shaping Swansea initiative for which detailed proposals are due imminently and for that reason this initiative has not been analysed in any detail.

The rationale to support these initiatives, including their scope and objectives, financial analysis, delivery strategy and risk of each is explored in more detail in Appendix B (which is Business and Commercially Sensitive).

6.2.2 Action Plan

There are 6 physical interventions, set out in the table below, that have been analysed in more detail, covering their impact, timetable, capital investment and net cost, quantum of retail contraction and jobs created in Appendix B.

These interventions have been identified in the knowledge of the proposed impacts and influences of the ‘Completed and Planned’ projects set out in section 2.2 and the Shaping Swansea initiative delivering Intervention 2. These selected interventions work with and complement these schemes and will help maintain the momentum being generated by Copr Bay.

Intervention	Brief Description	Main Impact	Timetable
Public Realm Package	Implement a package of works incorporating: 1. Marina pocket squares – 3no – new landscaping scheme 2. The Lanes – tactical urbanism scheme for 4 or 5 of the historic lanes 3. Sculptural “welcome” signs at 4 strategic gateway locations 4. Spring clean and landscape maintenance within the core 5. Set up a building façade improvement fund 6. Animation of Portland Place / Oxford Street junction	Immediate visual impact and improvements across the city.	Short term & immediate
Debenhams (Intervention 1)	Facilitate new lettings of the former Debenhams	Re occupies a significant empty building, creates new employment opportunities, and provides new retail attraction.	Short term
Primark (Intervention 4)	Facilitate the remodelling of the existing Primark to create a more attractive landmark building.	Low-cost intervention that could have disproportionate aesthetic improvement on the vicinity.	Short term
263-265 Oxford Street & ‘NEXT Block’ (Intervention 6)	Facilitate the transformation of this unattractive vacant prominent corner plot into modern retail premises with new high-quality offices above.	Low-cost intervention that could have disproportionate aesthetic improvement on the vicinity.	Short term
St Mary’s, Quadrant & Market Entrance (Intervention 3)	Remodel the entrance to the Quadrant Shopping Centre and integrate the retail environment with the adjoining market by creating a destination food hall linking both.	Transforms the new heart of the city into a major destination. Repurposes significant retail space and introduces new quality living accommodation.	Medium term
Swansea Market Entrances (Intervention 5)	Deliver significant entrance enhancements that transform the prominence of the market from the wider city.	Helps support and promote the market as a major destination and attraction in the city centre.	Medium Term

6.2.1 Wider Research & Policy Recommendations

In addition to the 6 physical interventions there are other potential work streams emanating from the report that relate to strategy, policy and longer-term delivery that recommendation is given to exploring further work.

1. SCARF 2016 - Update the SCARF 2016 using base data and findings generated from this study. Since 2016 we have experienced BREXIT and a global pandemic therefore it is important to update these informative policy documents to create an up-to-date policy context for any new proposals. More detail on this is set out below in 6.3.
2. Public Realm Hierarchy and Events Strategy - Undertake a bespoke piece of work considering the public realm strategy, hierarchy of spaces and an events and curation programme throughout the year to help to support a vibrant economy and attract new visitors.
3. Movement & Transport – As an addendum to the ongoing Transport Strategy Review it is recommended that a city wide Parking Strategy is included to consider consolidation of spaces, improved provision of “Blue Badge” facilities and an electric charging point strategy. In addition, the study should consider the location and distribution of taxi facilities given the ongoing transformation of the city centre. More detail on this is set out below in 6.4.
4. City Centre Education Facilities – To help promote a true liveable city in the future it is recommended that a study be commissioned around the potential provision of early years, primary and

secondary school provision within the city centre to help encourage families to move closer to the core.

5. Public Sector Grant and Support Strategy – Recommendation is given to consider a coordinated and strategic city wide master plan against which any future grant applications and Council support can be evaluated to ensure a well managed, considered and consistent approach to the short, medium and long term transformation of the city centre.

6.3 UPDATED SCARF

6.3.1 Current Status

- The current adopted SCARF (2016) is out of date and in need of renewal so that Decision Makers can have a stronger policy basis and planning framework to respond to current and future development proposals in the designated Swansea Central Area
- Since 2016 there has been a huge amount of change which, as well as societal and economic, include the new local and national policy and priorities that place great emphasis on sustainable place making, green infrastructure, biodiversity and delivering improved health and wellbeing outcomes
- BDP was commissioned to undertake a study of the current and potential city centre offering, focusing on interventions for ‘core’ parts of the city centre only, but in the context of the wider Swansea Central Area
- The study does not make long-term policy recommendations nor drill down into further detail e.g. design codes
- A comparative table has been set out on the next page to demonstrate the structure of the existing SCARF and how the outputs of the BDP study can be taken forward for a new SCARF
- The resulting policy gaps and key actions are then set out in the final pages
- The work on comparative analysis and key actions has been undertaken in discussion and collaboration with Swansea City Council Planning and Regeneration officers

6.3.2 Future SCARF Framework

	Adopted SCARF	BDP Study
Vision and Objectives	Sets out a clear vision for the city centre with key objectives	Summarises outcomes of Visioning workshops including 12 ingredients for a vibrant city centre
Design principles and coding	Sets out the broad qualities that constitute 'high quality design'	Provides suggested design interventions which align with these broad design standards
Policy context and landscape	Provides a full policy context as of 2016	Provides a full update on adopted and emerging policy
Land use and spatial mapping	Provides area appraisals and 'land use considerations' but not land use mapping	Includes detailed, up to date land use mapping in and outside of the city centre
Partnerships and stakeholders	Summarises the key partnerships crucial to delivering the framework	Does not review or challenge the 2016 partnerships or stakeholder strategy
Cumulative development	Identifies future development opportunities and key sites	Undertaken top line review of completed projects and future developments
Consultation	Summarises the consultation process undertaken	Undertook detailed local stakeholder/occupant consultation and summaries the Visioning workshop
Timeline and next steps	Identifies funding opportunities, partners and delivery mechanism	Makes a clear intervention recommendation and reviews the potential impact, cost and timeframe for these

6.3.3 Opportunities & Issues

- The adopted SCARF sets out a positive vision for Swansea city centre, and its content did inform the preparation of the Swansea LDP, including SDA J. However, national and local policy references are not up to date in the document and the local and national planning framework has profoundly changed. Most significantly, the new Swansea LDP was adopted in 2019, the new national development plan Future Wales has been adopted and a wide range of national policy and legislation has come forward.
- No assessment of cumulative development has been undertaken to provide a combined picture of major proposals being determined, granted and constructed in the city centre.
- The current SCARF provides broad guidance on what constitutes 'high quality design' but it lacks up to date, specific place making requirements and design codes for key areas, meaning neither the Council nor developers have clear design parameters when shaping and determining planning proposals in the city centre.
- New environmental priorities have evolved in more recent years in response to the climate crisis with requirements for green infrastructure, biodiversity enhancement and aspirations for net zero carbon becoming a key national priority.
- There is no future land use plan or spatial mapping of the town centre, and none of the maps or plans are digitalised.

6.3.4 Key Actions

- Agree at a corporate level the ‘12 ingredients for vibrant city centre’ that have arisen from the BDP workshops and are set out in this report
- Agree to use the outputs of the study to help formulate a new SCARF document (the ‘Swansea Central Area Regeneration Framework – Repurposing the City’) which should become an SPG
- The new SCARF should retain the same boundary as the existing document and the Swansea LDP, but not all areas within the overarching Central Area boundary will need the same level of detailed analysis and guidance in the revised document
- Prepare specific place making requirements/design codes for the Central Area to be integrated into the new SCARF. These should be area specific and provide clear parameters for future development proposals
- Prepare a new public realm strategy and movement for appropriate areas within the Central Area to be integrated into the new SCARF. This should reflect new social and environmental priorities, to align with a corresponding new development strategy
- Undertake full re-consultation and stakeholder engagement on the new SCARF. This should involve the public as well as building on engagement with businesses and other groups to foster stewardship principles
- Review strategic issues and agree actions necessary to bring forward the next phases of regeneration (Transport strategy, Flood Risk strategy, Community Infrastructure and others)
- Agree the key milestones and programme of works to ensure rapid progress is made to produce and seek adoption of the new SCARF as an SPG

6.4 TRANSPORT STRATEGY

6.4.1 Movement and Transport Considerations

The following considerations inform future next steps from a transport strategy point of view:

Current Highway Policy - The City and County of Swansea Council is currently conducting a review of the transport strategy for the city centre. The current local development plan and therefore the current regeneration proposals in the city centre have been shown to be capable of being accommodated in highway terms, however, the changing nature of city centres, in particular the retail offer, and the fast-moving transport agenda indicates that a detailed analysis is timely.

Car Parking - The city centre transport review has just concluded its initial phase of evidence gathering and review. This has allowed PJA to provide a commentary on parking capacity and the issues that pre-covid, faced the car parking offer. In the longer term the level of parking can be reduced with the smaller less effective car parks being open to redevelopment or re-designation as ‘blue-badge’ priority parking facilities. The proposed masterplan changes including re-thinking of the Parc Tawe retail park away from a city centre fringe car-based retail offer will aid this reshaping of car parking provision as will the re-development of the Quadrant car park.

South West Wales Metro - In conjunction with the Welsh Government, the Council is developing the concept of the South West Wales Metro to provide an integrated public transport system across the region. Key to the network concept is the principle of effective interchange between modes. The use of park and ride for city centre access through the newly envisaged gateways will become a norm. ‘Llwybr Newydd: The Wales Transport Strategy

2021’ provides wider policy support for this and identifies potential funding streams. The masterplanning work has identified a number of areas where access and permeability through the city core can be improved which in turn will improve the connectivity between the bus and rail stations. The masterplan also seeks improvement to the bus station access routes.

Future Vision - At the heart of the masterplan is the reconfiguring of the city core gateways to reduce the dominance of the car at these locations; this seen as the start of the transition to less car dependent city centre. Longer term policy changes, in particular to the LDP, will seek to secure a sustainable transition to a low car city centre. Gateways improving non-car access will enhance the attractiveness of active travel; rethinking the “Tesco” city centre gateway will provide an anchor for the Mumbles seafront path and cycleway for examples. The consolidation of the parking offer will provide economies of scale in the provision of EV charging facilities and allow resources to be focussed in fewer but more strategic locations.

The rebalancing of the city centre to a more mixed economy, and the vision is to create a united and legible city centre which is welcoming, enduring and engaging will empower a move towards greater use of active and mass movement modes transport, through careful selection of land uses.

Having greater employment and residential opportunities within the city core alongside the current retail and education provision as set out in the masterplan provide an opportunity to internalise many trips, encourage active travel and provide a critical mass of movements that are amenable to public transport use. The rethinking of the bus and taxi arrangements in the Princess Street/Caer Street area is an example of this; moving taxis closer the centre of the night-time economy in Wind Street

and making better use of the bus stops in Princess Street is a clear move to encourage a better environment for taxi and bus users and also reduces traffic flows around the “Next Building” freeing up space to allow rethinking of the street scene. Focussing on improving the public realm and movement, particularly at key arrival points and gateways identified in the masterplan.

6.5 RECOMMENDATION

It is the recommendation of the professional team behind this study and report that Swansea Council seek to pursue the 6 interventions set out in the Action Plan along with further work on the Wider Research & Policy Recommendations. In combination with the Completed and Planned Projects and the Shaping Swansea initiative these actions will prove to be a strong antidote to the current issues facing the city centre as a retail destination and help its recovery. They will deliver a controlled contraction of retail accommodation, improve the retail and F&B offer, introduce new office and residential accommodation and generally provide a comprehensive response to the findings of the SWOT analysis.

BDP.