

CHESTER ONE CITY PLAN 2012 » 2027



VIBRANT HISTORY, DYNAMIC FUTURE » VIBRANT HISTORY, DYNAMIC FUTURE

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1 Foreword

Our One City Plan is an exciting opportunity to help drive Chester to a bright successful future. A future which will see Chester make its mark in the world as a City that people want to be part of – to live, work, learn, relax, invest in and visit.

Chester is synonymous with a rich heritage and culture. Its development can be traced from the Roman era to the present day and it still retains some of the best Roman archaeology in the world. The unique recognisable Rows galleries are the envy of the world, the valuable assets of the River Dee and Shropshire Union Canal run right through the heart of the city, and it retains an internationally significant circuit of City Walls. Chester's surviving layers of built history makes it fascinating. Its compact nature means that it is a 'walkable' city.

We are a city faced with a key challenge - how to make the best from the abundance and wealth of our very special assets that create our historical and unique place. We have the building blocks of a high value knowledge economy but we need to make much more of them than we do currently. We possess the distinctive architecture and environment that means we should better capitalise on opportunities for

inward investment and sustainable economic growth. We have the highly valuable resources of a passionate, enthusiastic and skilled society, who care about Chester and want to fulfil our collective potential.

The One City Plan is about celebrating the city's strengths and shaping the type of city Chester aspires to become. We have a mosaic of opportunities, which when brought together should deliver so much more as a coherent whole than individual interventions will ever achieve independently. How it will achieve this will be through determined growth and focused action. A single strategic plan for Chester and its people underpinned by a strong position as a vibrant historic city, with a dynamic future. The overarching goal is to ensure Chester is open and accessible to all communities. We all have a role to play in its evolution and implementation.

The One City Plan is the culmination of an appraisal of the current development proposals, project briefs and strategy documents that focus on individual aspects of the city's areas and policies. This document sets the overarching vision and direction of travel for the city, under which all projects must sit. Importantly, it is driven by prioritisation,

implementation and delivery – led by Chester Renaissance and Cheshire West and Chester Council - working closely with our partners in the private, public and voluntary sectors.

We have sought to create an ongoing open dialogue of discussion and opportunity for sharing views through all stages in creating the One City Plan. Extensive and wide consultation on the draft document involved dialogue with over 1000 individuals over a 14 week period, with 1200 written comments received by the close. We will continue to engage with communities and the wider public, private sector and stakeholder community at large. The One City Plan that you have been involved in creating will be engrained in the 21st century culture of Chester. It will grow and evolve with us - just as our city did in the past and will in the future.

Professor Steven Broomhead
Chairman, Chester Renaissance

Councillor Mike Jones
Leader, Cheshire West & Chester Council

1 Foreword



'Chester is now more diverse than it has ever been and new ideas are being conceived and implemented every day. Students contribute to this greatly. The student perspective is one which is vitally important for the economy and transition of Chester from a historical and 'I want to live there when I'm older' city to an innovative historic city where students 'want to stay here now after studies'.

The students of Chester look forward to discussing and helping to implement these positive changes in Chester.'

Declan Jarrett
President,
Chester Students' Union



Must have a positive 'can do' attitude.

Chester must raise its game – achieve economic growth and prioritise investment – or none of the achievements we seek will be achievable.

OK projects won't work – need to be 'the best'.

'Big Picture' Workshop – July 2011

'World class' is something everyone wants to go and see.

Need to establish the City as 'distinctive' and attractive based around its heritage and original assets.

We need to create today's unique buildings for future generations.

Manifesto for Contemporary Design Workshop – August 2011

It is crucial to decide what you want the centre to be before tackling traffic issues.

Accessibility and movement should be part of what makes Chester distinctive.

We should be a sustainable city, using our river and canal.

Transport & Movement Workshop – August 2011

Need accessible and attractive green spaces in urban and suburban areas.

Importance of links with wider health and well being agenda – encouraging the enjoyment of being active in the City.

'Sustainable City' Workshop – July 2011

2 Why a One City Plan?



The One City Plan is a single co-ordinated strategy that sets out the direction we want the city to move in. It is action orientated and delivery focused and will drive a programme of public and private investment and development activity into Chester city centre over the next 15 years.

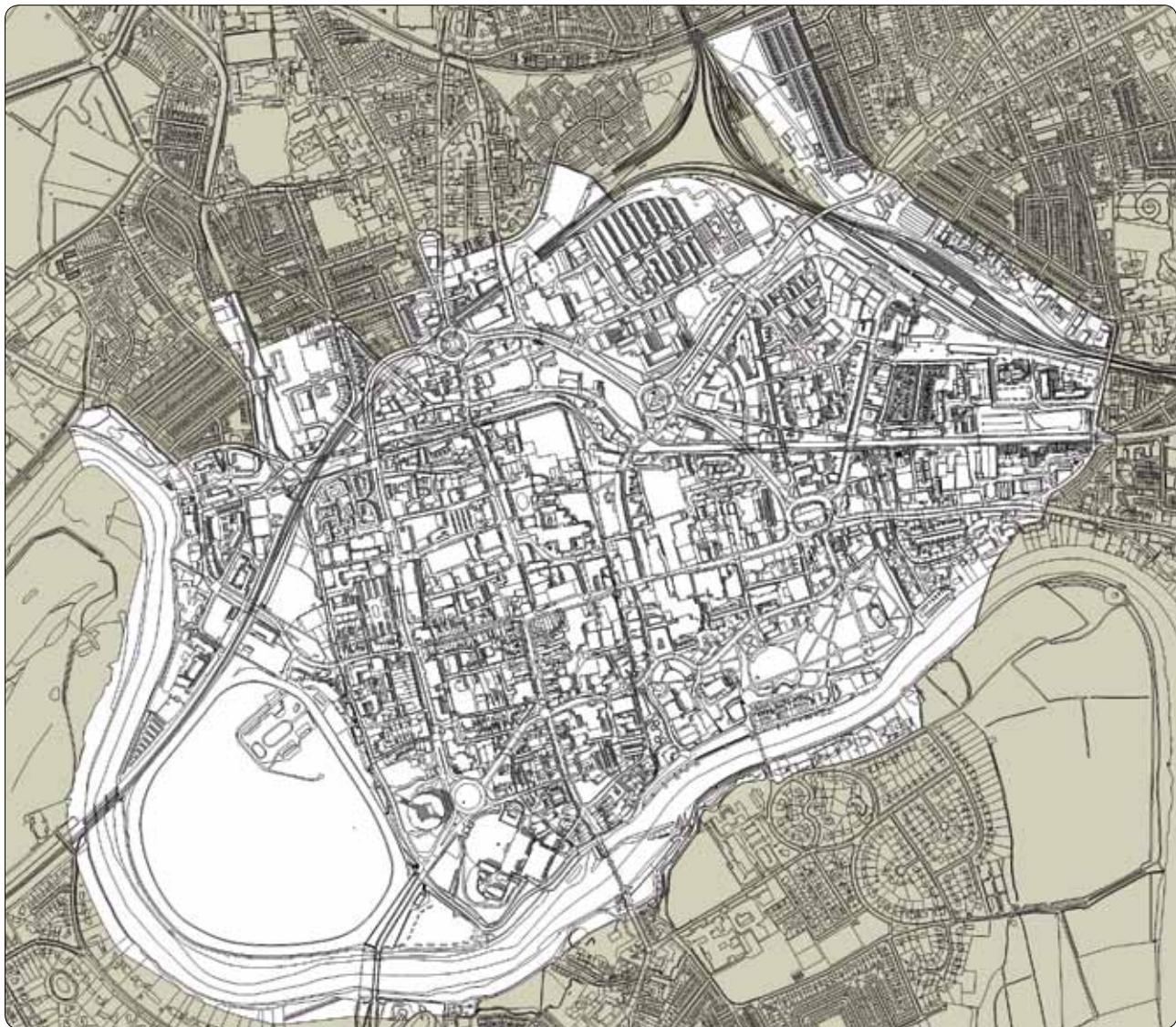


The One City Plan considers and draws on the critical analysis and extensive consultation undertaken by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) in Chester in early 2011.



The aims and objectives of the One City Plan will form an evidence document within the emerging Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC) Local Plan. The Local Plan is the statutory planning document, which will guide future growth across the borough. The purpose of the One City Plan is not to preclude development or constrain new opportunities that may emerge, it welcomes new ideas and opportunities but sets a framework at the current point in time.

2 Why a One City Plan?



2.1 Introduction



Why?

Chester has a strong foundation and many strengths and opportunities but it cannot afford to be a city standing still. The world has changed and new challenges have emerged for the city. Economic boom was replaced by recession and now a prolonged recovery, with significant levels of public spending reduced and private sector investment limited. To focus on the city's past alone risks ignoring the unrealised potential within what is a truly unique and special place.

Chester is a city at a cross roads.



Many plans and strategies have been produced for constituent parts of Chester stretching back over time, but these have generally been done in isolation, or overlap, by numerous organisations with varying

priorities. This has caused confusion and a real lack of direction and prioritisation. The challenge now is how to set Chester city centre on a path to be competitive in a 'new world' of economic, social and environmental demands.



How?

Critically, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) in their March 2011 assessment of Chester concluded:

"Chester (should) develop a longer term vision and clear, comprehensive strategy for the success of the city".

The One City Plan rises to this challenge by creating a vision of a distinctive city that makes its mark in the world. It is somewhere that people want to live, visit, work and study because they know it is a city with a unique historic environment.

It cares about its heritage, offers a contemporary lifestyle and has a dynamic perspective of its own future.

Any plan for the city's future must be 'owned' by the people of Chester and they must play their part.

The starting point for the One City Plan has been to understand where Chester is now (The City of Now), setting the basis for the stitching and weaving of a mosaic of new and existing ideas, plans, strategies and projects into a single coherent framework. All of the existing active documents will continue to play a key role in delivering specific actions or projects within the City – these have not been replaced by the One City Plan, but rather joined together into this one overarching strategy.

Key to this process has been the engagement of the local community, organisations, businesses and wider stakeholders across the city centre and its suburbs in providing their perspective on the city's issues, their priorities for the future, and their continued role is critical to developing and delivering the One City Plan.

2 Why a One City Plan?



It is about what type of city Chester aspires to become as well as how Chester gets things done. By setting the framework for the continued transformation of Chester city centre, the One City Plan provides an ambitious platform for the prioritisation of investment. It is about vision, growth and intelligent implementation; establishing a focused and achievable set of projects and a basis for a new public-private partnership to co-ordinate and deliver through the statutory planning process.



When?

The One City Plan will form an endorsed framework that sets a vision for the future of Chester's city centre over the next 15 years. The key principles, although non-statutory, have been informed by, and will in turn inform, the Council's Local Plan. Upon adoption, the Local Plan will be the Council's statutory planning document to guide planning, development and investment decisions across Cheshire West and Chester to 2027.

The One City Plan is not the end of the process, but represents a new beginning.

Shaping Chester city centre to create a new chapter of its history will not benefit from a 'rush to arms', but will require careful and sensitive planning. Key interventions and projects must be delivered in a transparent, phased programme over the 15 year lifetime of Chester's first One City Plan and beyond.

By forming a clear guide, which is measurable, engaging and well managed, the One City Plan will become engrained in the 21st

Century culture of the city and its people – a 'living document' to grow and evolve with Chester.

Addressing the city centre's issues and creating a quality of place that Chester's residents, businesses and visitors can be truly proud of requires a long-term approach.

What?

The One City Plan means a reinvigorated city centre for Chester. It will no longer be a city seen to be 'resting on its laurels'. We have defined the vision for Chester and how we want it to be seen. It will be 'Britain's most vibrant historic city that is driving a dynamic legacy for future generations.' This reflects how as a city we care about our heritage yet offer a contemporary lifestyle with a dynamic perspective of the future. In short, we must raise our national and international profile to compete effectively with other similar historic cities as an increasingly desirable and distinctive place for people to live, invest in, visit and study. To do this the city centre must focus on quality and maximise fully the opportunity of its assets. It will invest in better

2.2 Where?



maintaining and enhancing its existing offer to residents, tourists and businesses and it will welcome new, appropriate, high quality facilities that increase usage and spending in the city centre. Chester is a vibrant historic city with a dynamic future.

Where?

The One City Plan has considered Chester in a series of scales; national, North West, Chester's suburbs, and the city centre. The themes that are presented have been analysed in differing scales to build a picture for the city centre, for example the sub regional and national context for movement and accessibility has been considered.



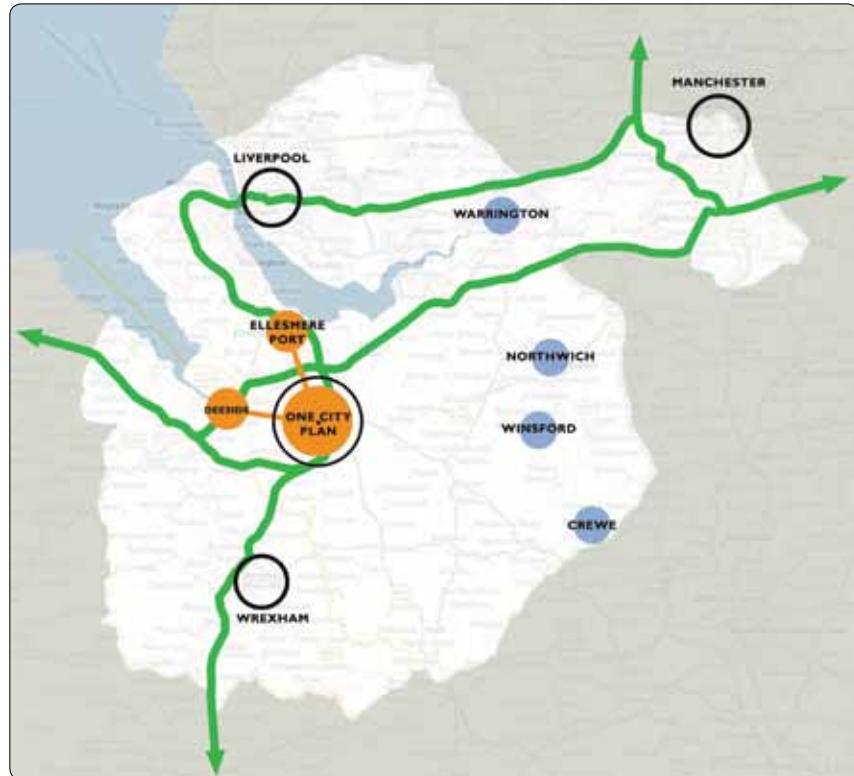
2 Why a One City Plan?



Chester in the North West

As part of the development of the One City Plan, it has been important to recognise Chester's geographic location and economic role within its sub region. A key change has been the recent establishment of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This is the private (led) and public sector partnership that will drive the economy of the sub region with a key focus on job creation and boosting the prosperity of the region. It is therefore important for the One City Plan because Chester has a role as a key economic player in the LEP.

The One City Plan will also support the emerging economic priorities of the Liverpool/Merseyside and Greater Manchester LEPs. It will also seek to link opportunities to the 'Enterprise Zones' that are being established at Daresbury, Airport City (Manchester) and Wirral Waters.

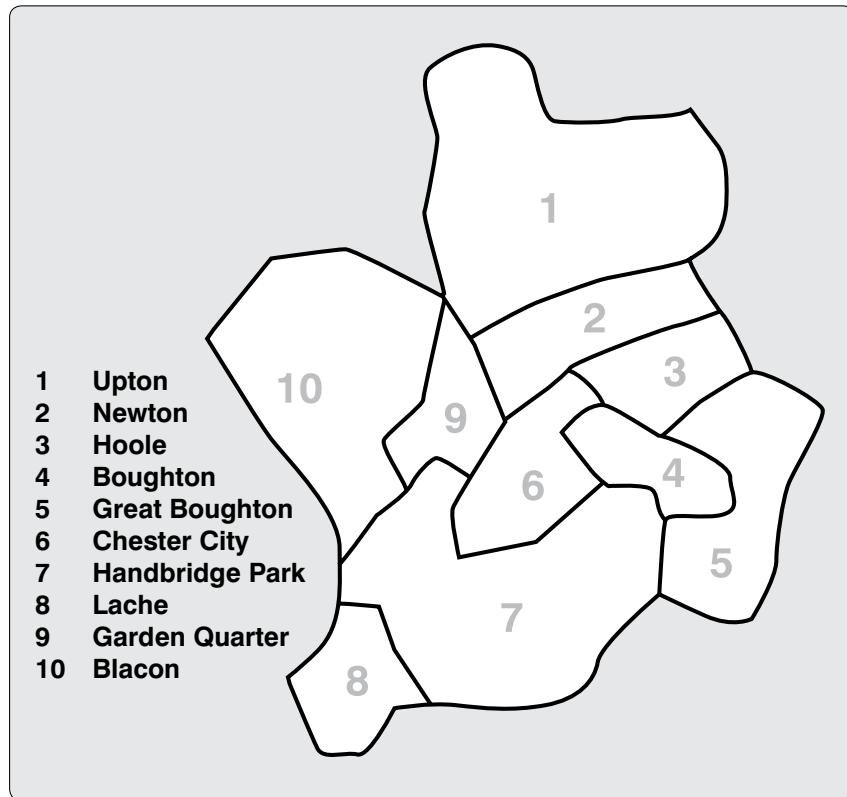


2.2 Where?



Chester

The physical projects and programme for change proposed within the One City Plan focuses on Chester city centre. The city centre serves a wider area across its surrounding suburbs – providing important services for these communities. To ensure that it does this effectively, the One City Plan process has engaged the wider communities across Chester's suburbs to understand their views and requirements for the city centre. There will be further opportunities for local communities to engage in the One City Plan as it is implemented. The One City Plan does not preclude any neighbourhood planning processes in these urban wards.



2 Why a One City Plan?



The City Centre

The city centre is the physical focus of the One City Plan. This diagram highlights the key infrastructure including the waterways, railway, road network, City Walls, the Cross and Greenway.



3 City of Now

3.1 Introduction

The City of Chester is successful, vibrant and beautiful – located within the authority of CWaC in North West England and on the border with North Wales. A desirable place to live, the city is presently home to over 77,000 people, and has a long and celebrated history and heritage. The city was founded in 79AD as the ‘Deva Vitrix’ Roman fort. Preserved, at its heart, are examples of some of the best Roman architecture across the country and throughout Europe, which draw in visitors on an international scale.

Chester continues to grow and prosper – with a rich heritage, growing education institutions, passionate residents and unique historic centre. Yet, despite being a strong economy within the Cheshire-Warrington sub-region and an attractive and desirable place to live and visit, there are challenges to overcome.

- Some communities surrounding the city centre have social issues of poor health, vulnerability and low qualifications with economic problems of rising

unemployment and benefit claiming.

- The city centre has attracted shoppers and tourists to visit its unique attractions including the galleried Rows, Amphitheatre and the most complete City Walls in Britain. Yet today, Chester is struggling to compete for visitors and shoppers.
- Business investment into the city centre is low and Chester is failing to compete with other economic centres as a place for business and economic activity.

Chester must ‘raise its game’ and a number of questions must be asked;

- *What makes the city exceptional?*
- *What are the root causes of decline in the city?*
- *What challenges is the city facing, and what will it face in the future?*

By considering these key questions, the City of Now draws together Chester’s influencing factors and characteristics to identify and assess the issues affecting the city. The One City

Plan must deliver solutions to tackle these issues.

What follows is an overview of the findings with the full analysis, including details of relevant existing strategies, plans and policies, available in the technical document Appendix 1: The City of Now.

Chester contains many enviable assets including its;

- Cathedral, Roman Walls, Amphitheatre, medieval Castle and a unique retail environment of the Rows – all within its historic centre
- Highly successful visitor attractions including Chester Racecourse and Chester Zoo
- Higher and Further Education (HE/FE) institutions of the University of Chester and West Cheshire College
- Waterfronts and waterways of the River Dee and historic Shropshire Union Canal

The city should be seen as a ‘mosaic’ of opportunity – each asset with positive effect in isolation, but when considered comprehensively as a whole, with the potential to become a locally distinctive, unique and cohesive success on a much greater scale.

3 City of Now

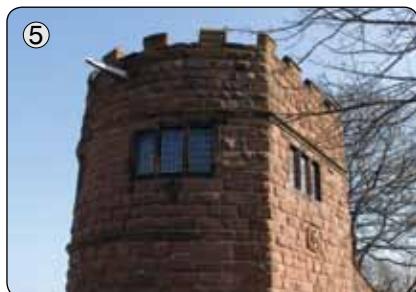


The factors that have emerged and been considered are summarised within the following themes;

- People and Communities
- Business and Investment
- Living City
- Access and Movement

KEY

- ① Chester Railway Station
- ② Shropshire Union Canal
- ③ Chester Cathedral
- ④ River Dee
- ⑤ King Charles' Tower
- ⑥ Eastgate Street
- ⑦ Town Criers



3.2 People and Communities



Chester is a city with a prosperous centre and a series of prestigious neighbourhoods. However, the contrast with some of Chester's outlying suburban communities can be stark. These communities demonstrate concentrations of;

- Low skills levels
- Limited qualifications
- High incidences of child poverty
- Rising household unemployment
- High benefit claiming
- Low incomes

Unlocking the economic potential of the resident population and tackling these issues is therefore critical. This has been recognised through a number of initiatives and projects. Blacon Community Trust and its partnerships are working towards achieving their shared community vision and objectives, set out in the Blacon Action Plan. Substantial progress has been made by Sustainable Blacon, working in close partnership with local residents and volunteers, in particular focusing on low carbon living and

green space initiatives. Blacon's Asset Management Company will work as a social enterprise harnessing public investment into Blacon communities. Lache Neighbourhood Management and Lache Park Ltd continue work to mobilise the community to find ways to meet their needs and aspirations in practical action.

Health inequalities are widespread across the city and there are a number of health challenges at the neighbourhood scale. Ensuring the city's residents have active lifestyles, access to high quality healthcare services and live healthy lives on



a day to day basis is essential to raise aspirations and boost economic activity.

Chester has benefited over the past decade from new business investment and employment opportunities leading people to seek to move into the area to access jobs. However, this has been slowed by recent economic

circumstances. Unemployment has risen and opportunities for creating and accessing new jobs locally are difficult.

Chester has higher than average house prices and, compared to the wider borough, prices have continued to increase within and in close proximity to the city centre. There remains a strong desire for people to live in the heart of Chester, but limited opportunity. As a result there is little affordability for first-time buyers, families, and low income households wishing to reside in the city centre. The limited number of households living in the centre results in there being little local 'life' in the city outside of business and retail hours.

Chester is also expected to experience a significant growth in elderly households over the next 15 years. This will require additional social, healthcare and housing support services to be planned for and provided, as well as a range of housing that meets household growth – and in particular the needs of an ageing population.

3 City of Now



Chester's communities are active, passionate and committed and this is a huge asset for the city, which it must embrace at every opportunity. The ULI Panel commented on how impressed they were "by the many exceptionally committed local citizens and community groups".

The Government's Localism Act (2011) introduces new mechanisms to empower communities to take charge of growth and development in their own neighbourhoods – Chester city centre will be no exception and it must grow first and foremost with and for its residents.

KEY

- ① Chester Zoo
- ② Chester Music Festival
- ③ Social Healthcare
- ④ Roman Soldier
- ⑤ University Graduation
- ⑥ Blacon Community Activities
- ⑦ Fountains Roundabout
- ⑧ Heritage Skills Day



3.3 Business & Investment



Chester remains the principal economic centre in CWaC, providing 44% of the borough's total business stock and 46% of employment. Chester is highly service sector focused, with a clustering of banking, financial service and insurance sector businesses and employment. Employment in this sector has expanded rapidly since the early 1990's predominantly driven by strong growth at the Chester Business Park on the outskirts of the city centre, which has remained resilient during the recession.

Chester, however, is not fully capitalising on its many resources especially its residents, education and business institutions and clusters.

Commuting trends suggest high connectivity with Deeside, North East Wales and parts of the Wirral but limited connectivity with employees in the east of the borough. Here competition from Manchester, Warrington and Cheshire East results in higher skilled, higher income and senior professionals commuting outside CWaC for higher wages. Simultaneously, Chester has had limited success in encouraging

and nurturing the growth of future new business. In particular, as a University City, the retention of graduates in the Chester economy is low. Chester has also experienced strong public sector employment growth over the past decade, which is likely to reverse reflecting Government spending policy.



Little emphasis within recent 'branding' has been placed on its skilled labour markets, professional business service clustering, reputable existing institutions and growing business networks. As highlighted by the ULI, Chester's experience is "less of a problem of shortage of (investment) demand than a poor response". Existing commercial office premises within the city are limited in floor plate size, quality, accessibility and prime location. Chester currently lacks a city centre commercial offer to complement and support its existing retail and service economy.

The city centre should be the 'beating heart' of innovation, business and networking across CWaC.

Chester city centre is well known for providing a unique shopping experience centred on the historic two-tier Rows. Its current offer consists of large multi-national and national scale 'high street brands' as well as a number of specialist and independent traders.

However, there are concerns Chester has experienced a decline in the quality and depth of its retail offer. The ULI point to a city "resting on its historic laurels" and left behind whilst retail locations across the region have secured substantial levels of investment into flagship shopping facilities. These locations have risen to prominence as premier North West shopping destinations and have provided strong competition for visitor spend. At the same time, the city has fallen fast in the Experian UK Retail Rankings from a high of 5th in 2002 to 35th in 2009.

3 City of Now



Opportunities exist to reverse Chester's fortunes and re-establish the city centre as a strong and unique retail destination. Existing retail traders, business leaders, and CWaC have established a successful Chester City Management partnership (CCM) with a primary objective to increase numbers of shoppers in the city centre.

Chester also has proposals for a substantial new retail led development; the 'Northgate' scheme, within the historic core. If the new Northgate scheme

seamlessly integrates with the existing city centre and provides a complementary retail offer it has the potential to act as a catalyst to drive shoppers back into Chester – putting the city 'back on the map'. This will need to sit alongside a successful retail strategy for the historic area and current retail streets.

The visitor economy is a key contributor to the economic performance of Chester and wider Cheshire area. It currently contributes £1.8 billion to the Cheshire and Warrington

economy annually and employs over 27,000 people. It therefore has a strong foundation but the ambition is to build on this, raise performance and focus on quality – in particular valuing and utilising the assets of Chester and driving the vision on a national and international scale. The visitor framework is about investing, focusing and maximising opportunities. This includes enhancing and fully using the attractive and distinctive network of waterways, which are central to the city's development.



KEY

- ① Grosvenor Shopping Centre
- ② Chester Stamp
- ③ Retail offer at Rows
- ④ Steam Mill including Business Centre
- ⑤ Independent Retailer

3.4 Living City



Cities are first and foremost the meeting places of people, of cultures and of life.

Culture is not about buildings, but about the life and happenings between them and the opportunities such places and spaces create for activity and social interaction. A successful city establishes a sense of place – determined by the surrounding physical environment, its history and the people acting out their lives in it today. By effectively defining, encouraging and investing in such a sense of place, culture and history people are drawn to live, work, study and visit.

Chester already has such a strong sense of place – defined by its rich architectural, archeological and historical environment, which creates a unique identity. As a result the city has become a rich mixture of citizens and visitors – each wanting to share in the culture of the city.

Unfortunately, this success has brought with it the potential for conflicting and competing views

over the city's priorities and future development. The city has to be first and foremost for its residents and deliver the highest quality of life for the people who live here. Consultations have highlighted the feeling from a majority of residents that insufficient regard is had to their needs. Clear leadership is needed to co-ordinate both the public and private sectors so that Chester can regain its sense of purpose.



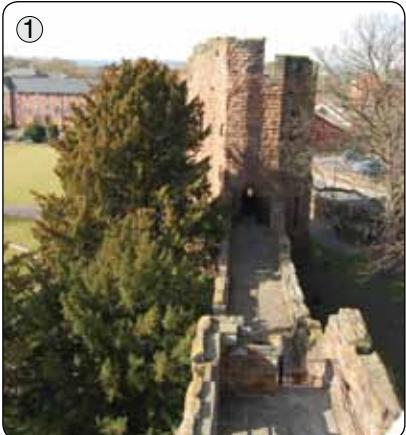
As the ULI highlight; Chester is standing still. However, by doing so the city is simultaneously neglecting the very assets it so fiercely seeks to protect. Chester's cultural and heritage infrastructure is in decline – with historic areas including the City Walls and Towers, Cathedral,

and Castle in a state of poor repair and suffering from years of underinvestment.

These assets are invaluable to Chester - symbolising its historic and cultural evolution and providing a substantial contribution to the city's income and reputation. The importance of the visitor economy to Chester's future cannot be understated. In 2007 tourism brought 8.4 million visitors to Chester who spent approximately £500 million in the city and as such, the assets underpinning Chester's unique appeal should be maintained in the interest of all.

However, preservation alone risks ignoring the potential for creating truly world class experiences within the city's historic areas. At present visitors often leave disappointed and residents note the decline, with the reality of Chester failing to match people's expectations. Also, the delivery of high quality contemporary development has been slow, with vacant sites and low quality environments in the city resulting in fragmentation and decline. Chester needs its development initiatives to talk to each other and be part of the city as a whole.

3 City of Now



KEY

- ① Roman Walls
- ② ‘Living Room’ Bar, Chester
- ③ Godstall Lane
- ④ St John’s ruins
- ⑤ Ferris Wheel
- ⑥ Canal-side living
- ⑦ Chester Rhinomania
- ⑧ Bars approach
- ⑨ Pedalo on River Dee
- ⑩ Cheese Rolling Event



3.4 Living City



The River Dee - the reason Chester came into existence at all – is a valuable natural amenity and its waterside at the Groves offers a beautiful recreational environment for socialising and relaxation. However, the city has developed to turn its back on the Dee, making it difficult for visitors to find their way there and for residents and visitors alike to make the most of this leisure asset. The city's rich and beautiful green spaces such as Grosvenor Park and the Shropshire Union Canal waterside suffer similar issues of under use, lack of integration and feel 'hidden' from the city experience. The masterplan for Grosvenor Park and the major project to invest in it, together with a water based activity strategy are very important to address some of these issues.

Chester has the UK's oldest operational racecourse and is hugely successful with a programme offering race meetings and other events and shows throughout the year as well as its own commercial activities. A full calendar of events and festivals across the city has developed into 'Chestival' with a growing offer including Theatre in the Park, Music Festival, Food and Drink, historic re-enactments

and well established Parades including the Romans and Giants.

However Chester city centre offers limited continual and permanent cultural amenity and activity for both local residents and visitors, particularly in the early evening - lacking a significant performing arts venue, such as a mainstream cinema, theatre or concert hall. As a result there is little vibrancy, few people and a limited diversity of activities and events after dark. This can present a perception that the city is unsafe at night, and can discourage many from entering the city during the evening. Actual police intelligence indicates that Chester is a very safe city, with official crime figures showing a marked reduction over the last year. This, in part is due to a very active and nationally acclaimed 'Business Crime Reduction Partnership'. Nevertheless, it is recognised that a wider variety of offer is necessary to encourage a greater mix of people and activity into the city centre during twilight and evening hours.

We want to encourage the city to 'live' rather than simply exist, to be of the highest quality, repositioned as a contemporary

city that lives up to its residents and visitors expectations.

Chester's residents should be able to take pride in their city and be active in its evolution.



KEY

- ① River Dee Water Sports
- ② Chester Racecourse Rhinos

3 City of Now



Chester city centre reflects a transport network that has evolved over the centuries. Importantly, the construction of the Inner Ring Road (IRR) during the 1960's enabled significant sections of the historic city centre to be pedestrianised. However, the IRR has itself now become a barrier, especially to walking and cycling. When considered alongside other barriers to movement such as the railway lines, canal and river, the key challenge for Chester's road network is better managing its limited capacity.

The constraints on the road network do to some degree 'protect' the historic centre from an influx of vehicles with the IRR diverting traffic around the city. However, at the southern section, along the 'Pepper Street' corridor, the volume of traffic inhibits people moving between the city centre and the Amphitheatre, Grosvenor Park, St John's Church and River Dee. In areas such as this the car remains dominant - working against safe and easy pedestrian and cycle access.

Car parks are 'scattered' across the city centre and, while there

are electronic car park capacity signs assisting in the choice of destination, more traffic than is necessary is generated simply from drivers trying to find car parking spaces. Overall, the quality of parking is poor and is not well located at the main entrance 'gateways' to enable efficient access for users into the city centre on foot. Most are surface level, an inefficient use of land, or multi storey that are dated in design and functionality. The location of disabled car parking and the Shopmobility service is also a key consideration for ensuring Chester city centre is accessible to all. The limited non-retail offer of the city centre and the lack of a vibrant and diverse night time economy, means that activity is low and the car parks are often quiet outside of shopping hours.

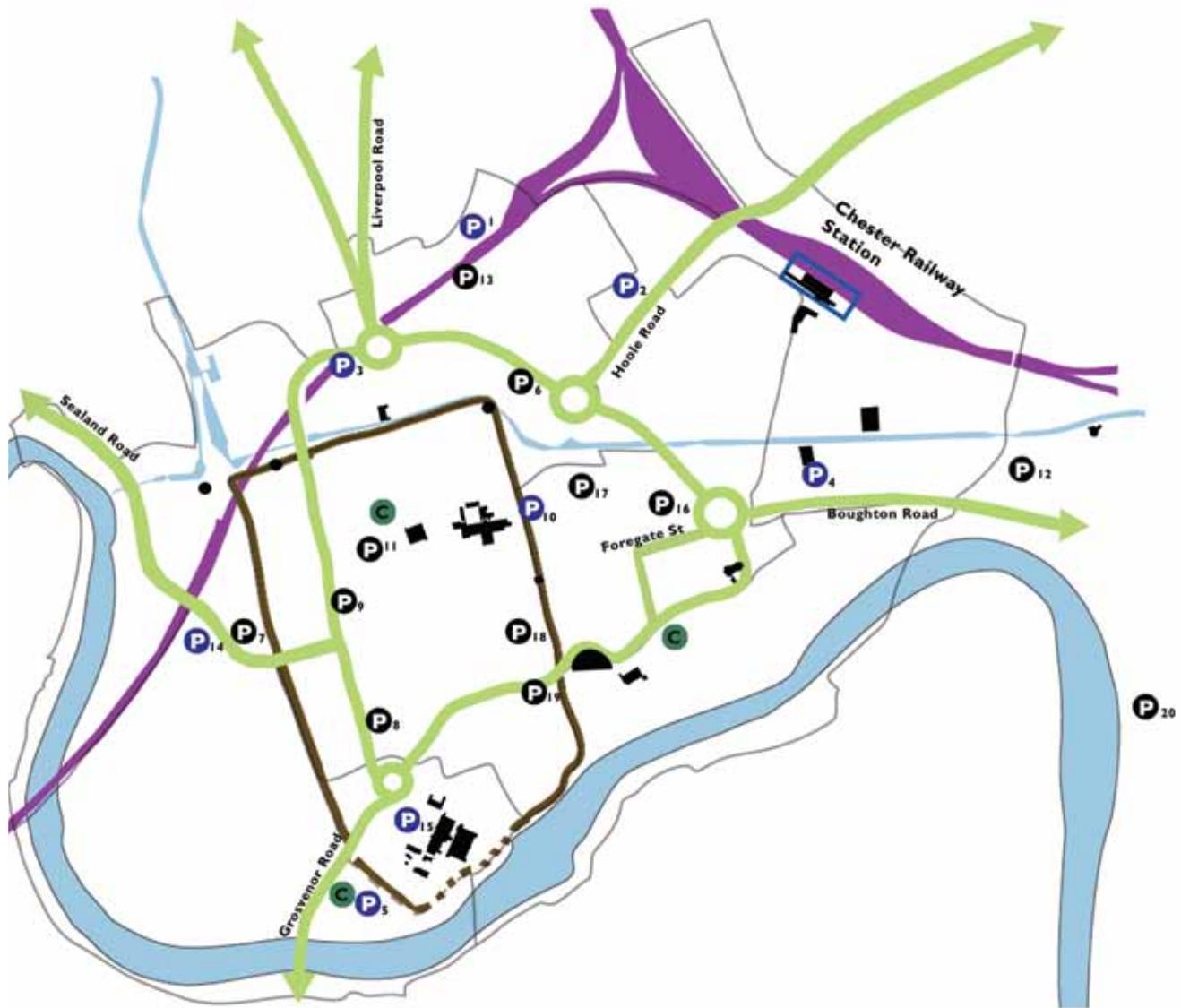
The Park and Ride system is very well used on some approaches and reduces car-borne traffic flows into the city centre. However, it has the potential to be enhanced to further reduce city centre car-borne traffic and promote low carbon transport, whilst facilitating better management of the limited road capacity of the city.

Existing Car Parking

- 1 Northgate
- 2 Car Park for Brook Street
- 3 Garden Lane
- 4 Steam Mill Street
- 5 Little Roodee
- 6 Gorse Stacks
- 7 New Crane Street
- 8 Cuppin Street
- 9 Trinity Street
- 10 Frodsham Street
- 11 Market
- 12 Christleton Road
- 13 Northgate Arena
- 14 Racecourse
- 15 Castle Car Park
- 16 Browns Yard
- 17 Tesco Supermarket
- 18 Grosvenor Shopping Centre
- 19 Pepper Street
- 20 Sandy Lane (*Seasonal*)

- Long Stay Car Parking
- Short Stay Car Parking
- Coach Parking
- City Landmarks
- City Ring Roads
- Water (River Dee & Union Canal)
- Railway Line
- Historic City Walls

3.5 Access and Movement



3 City of Now



For those that travel into Chester by rail, the experience at the station has been greatly improved; however this key transport gateway still feels disconnected from the city centre. In particular, the relatively short journey into the city centre by foot is not well or clearly signed, the crossing points over the IRR are prioritised for the car forming a considerable barrier to pedestrian movement, and the underpasses are unwelcoming, confusing and perceived as unsafe. Taxi ranks at the Railway Station operate well, but elsewhere in the city there is a need to carefully consider designated ranks based on their accessibility and use. The station is very well served by rail services along each of the major routes, providing a very valuable destination. It provides excellent connectivity with each of the main commuter destinations including Liverpool, Manchester, the Wirral and London as well as the North Wales Coast for both commuters and visitors.

In general, the bus system in Chester is comprehensive with a large number of routes and destinations (both local and

regional) covered. The formation of two distinct bus hubs at Northgate and on Frodsham/Foregate Street has however led to a polarised bus network with little cross-city connectivity. There is little integration with the rail station and the requirement for large numbers of services to use (and in some cases layover on) Frodsham Street, which means competing for space with pedestrians and cyclists. There is clearly the potential for more efficient routing in the future and a more joined up strategy with services connecting across the city centre and better integration with rail. The redevelopment at Northgate alongside other regeneration proposals mean that it is an appropriate time to review the bus strategy for the City.

The Cycle Demonstration Town status has delivered a number of improvements and programmes to promote cycling in Chester. Despite these interventions, there is still significant opportunity for the provision of accessible, prominent and high quality walking and cycling routes into and through the city centre. The difficulties with crossing key

points of the IRR, River Dee and railway are key deterrents to their use as main entries to the city by cyclists and pedestrians.

The City also has excellent waterways in the River Dee and Shropshire Union Canal but there is a need for a comprehensive Waterways Strategy to identify and join up all of the opportunities they present. The city should be a ‘must see’ destination for waterways users.

The historic city core has a number of pedestrianised streets, although cycling is still allowed. There are still some significant areas of conflict relating to access for servicing and the current level of bus activity on routes along Northgate Street, Frodsham Street and Foregate Street in particular.

Whilst recognising the constraints of intervention in a historic city such as Chester, key assets such as the Rows and Roman Walls have limited and poorly signed access points for less mobile people.

3.5 Access and Movement



4 City of the Future



The One City Plan sets out a shared vision – a sense of purpose and direction for the revival and growth of Chester city centre during the next 15 years.

The shared vision sets both our ambition for Chester and also defines our brand – the way we wish the world to see us.

Our ambition is simple:

“Chester will be a truly exceptional city using its unique and authentic qualities to provide for all its communities.”



4.1 Vision and Strategic Objectives



This includes the following strategic objectives:

- 1 Creating a leading regional economic driver** – supporting local creativity, learning and entrepreneurs, encouraging inward investment and stimulating business growth.
- 2 Providing for modern living** – a vibrant, distinctive and dynamic place to live for its residents.
- 3 Developing and supporting a cultural, retail and visitor offer of the highest quality.**
- 4 Celebrating its long and varied history and heritage** – protecting, promoting and utilising its assets, to enhance their settings and maximise their full potential.
- 5 Maximising the opportunities to use the network of green spaces and waterways** – improving residents' quality of life, providing ecological services, and reducing the impact of climate change.

What did the ULI conclude?

"Chester should focus on being a distinctive regional city with its own brand that exploits its unique heritage but is not afraid to look forward. Local entrepreneurs, the student community and existing local businesses should all be engaged around creative innovation so Chester can remain a city with a strong business hub, regardless of the continued resurgence of Liverpool and Manchester." (ULI, 2011)

The brand of Chester has been defined following considerable stakeholder engagement and testing amongst our target audiences. We have defined our brand vision as;

"Britain's most vibrant historic city driving a dynamic legacy for future generations."

It is a position that is underpinned by a set of brand values:

- **Heritage Alive:** We bring our history to life and develop assets that will stand the test of time.
- **Drive:** We inspire action to drive economic, social, cultural and environmental progress that demonstrates our respect for the past and our responsibility for future generations.
- **Open:** We encourage inclusiveness and collaboration in a way that generates dynamic ideas that add to Chester's economic success, cultural vibrancy and overall quality of life.
- **Special:** We celebrate quality and originality in business, retail, environmental and cultural development.
- **Beyond Walls:** We maximise the benefits of our unique location, making it easy for businesses to locate and trade, residents to live and work, students to learn and visitors to enjoy our unique attractions.

4 City of the Future



A series of aims have been established to guide Chester city centre to achieving this shared vision. Chester must aim to:

1. **Generate opportunities for all local communities within Chester to prosper** by promoting well-being, active lifestyles and learning and reducing inequalities.
2. **Develop Chester's demand driven, competitive and supportive business environment**, targeting new business and investment.
3. Ensure a broad range of activities take place simultaneously, creating a **rich mix of culture, arts, and creativity** during the day, twilight and evening hours.
4. Place **education at the heart of the city's values**, supporting its Colleges and University and ensuring that students, graduates and adults have the skills to develop personally and meet business needs.
5. Be **safe, clean, vibrant, healthy and pleasurable** as a place to live, work and visit – bringing life to Chester's streets, green parks and outdoor spaces.
6. Be **accessible, easy to travel around and welcoming** – encouraging and promoting sustainable travel and meeting the access needs of less mobile people.
7. Strive to be a sustainable city by promoting **environmental best practice** to embrace a low carbon economy, exploring **innovative approaches** to tackling climate change, using **renewable energy** and ensuring development is of the highest quality.
8. Respect, reveal and **celebrate the city's rich historical heritage and architecture** -improving public realm and open spaces and encouraging developments of the highest standards.

Adopting and implementing the following approaches will help to deliver these aims;

- **A dedicated Public-Private collaboration** delivering high quality services, programmes and development for and with Chester's communities.
- **Build local capacity** in Chester's residents to empower them with the skills for localism, support civic pride and inform decision-making and management.

4.2 People and Communities



By comprehensively addressing the issues identified in the City of Now, and producing a considered and effective response to the opportunities to drive Chester forward, the City of the Future has the potential to deliver the next successful chapter in Chester's history. Within each theme, a series of key actions are highlighted.

ACTION 1: Chester will focus on enhancing the health and wellbeing of residents

Encouraging healthy lifestyles and education as a gateway to reducing health inequalities, improving mental health and raising economic activity will be a priority.

Equally important will be the delivery of the right health facilities and services to meet the needs of Chester's residents, support earlier intervention and promote education on good health. Agencies will work together to provide primary and community care, and develop the model of Integrated 'one-stop shop' Resource Centres.

A Health and Wellbeing Board, bringing together health and social care commissioners, elected members and representatives of users, will work to plan the right services for West Cheshire and enable everyone to lead a healthy life.

ACTION 2: Residents will be encouraged to use improved and new natural, green and recreational spaces for exercise and enjoyment



These will include a much improved Grosvenor Park and enhanced River Dee and canal watersides. Residents and visitors will also benefit from a more comprehensive, safer and higher quality network of pedestrian and cycle corridors into, and throughout, the city centre from surrounding neighbourhoods.

The availability of sport and recreation facilities within the city centre and utilising the city's assets for leisure and sporting events, working closely with commissioning partners, will be important.

ACTION 3: Effective planning for the growth in the number of older people

The city will provide the right facilities and services to meet their needs. It values its older residents and will promote their involvement and activity locally to make use of their skills, knowledge, experience and passion for the city.

CWaC, through its Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), is developing the joint commissioning of services across the borough to bring together local partners to tackle these problems collectively at the local level and target help to where it is most needed.



4 City of the Future

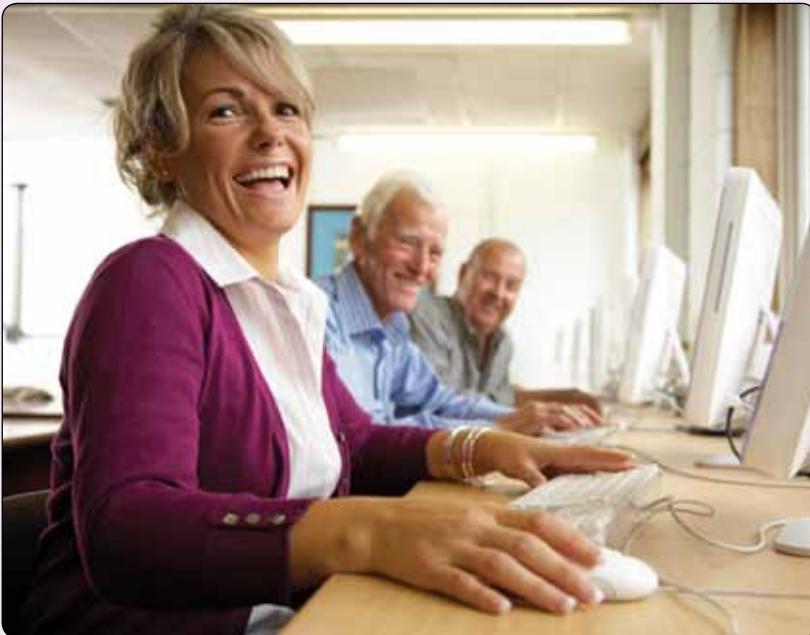


ACTION 4: Greater targeting of skills, learning and social support towards neighbourhoods

This will enable communities in these suburbs to benefit from the educational and economic potential of the city centre.

Future development and regeneration schemes across the city will include provisions for employment, training and apprenticeships for unemployed local residents both during their construction and operational lifetimes.

The city will work with the University of Chester, West Cheshire College, partner agencies, service providers and local businesses to engage with workless residents to help them move into or overcome the barriers to work. Raising aspirations and participation in training to lift skills levels and reduce inequalities in priority areas will be important.



ACTION 5: Support the city's development as a low carbon economy

In particular, training and education of individuals in low carbon manufacturing and services such as energy efficient and climate resilient buildings, installation of renewables, waste reduction and recycling.

The city is committed to supporting, and in cases taking the lead example from, community regeneration programmes within Chester's suburbs. Local organisations such as Sustainable Blacon provide a strong example of how the Coalition Government's Localism agenda is already well advanced.

A sustainability commission, made up of the Council and its partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors, provides leadership and direction within Cheshire West and Chester on how best to meet the challenges to become a low carbon borough.

4.2 People and Communities



ACTION 6: Genuine engagement and involvement of the city's communities and neighbourhoods

Chester's agencies and organisations will co-ordinate more effectively in the future by creating and working with a 'One City Forum', focusing on the issues and activities specific to the One City Plan. This will also involve increasing the role of the third sector (community and voluntary organisations).

Supporting the city's local culture will be important, with

investment made to develop local events and festivals across Chester for all to take part in and enjoy. Cheshire West and Chester has secured its bid to be a pilot for the Government's Whole Place Community Budget programme (Altogether Better), transforming how local services are delivered and managed by the public sector. This pilot will give Cheshire West and Chester the platform to demonstrate how

it can tackle shared challenges with partners and between services, bringing together the resources and expertise to better support the borough's communities. The programme will be developed over 2012 setting a new approach to policy making, relationships between national and local agencies and implementation of actions.



4 City of the Future



ACTION 7: Deliver a supply of new homes to meet the needs and demands of existing and future residents and families

The focus will be high quality, higher density, low carbon and well designed living environments. The volume of new homes will reflect the level of growth set within the Local Plan and in consultation with the community.

The city centre offers an exciting and sustainable location for new homes, in close proximity to employment opportunities, shops and services, which reduce the need for residents to travel. Increasing the population of the city centre will make the city more vibrant and alive and, in turn, support Chester's local economic growth.



ACTION 8: Attract a greater diversity of residents

The City will aim to provide a mix of market and affordable housing and will work with developers and Registered Providers to deliver a range of products. In this way the city will look to encourage families and young households to reside in and around the centre.

Providing homes for students in close proximity to the city centre will also be critical to embed the University of Chester and its students into the city. Therefore maximising the cultural diversity, innovation and economic benefits the institution brings, and encouraging graduates to live and work in the city after their studies.

Specific opportunities for new homes will be explored and supported, including city living within the underutilised upper storeys of the Rows, waterside living at Tower Wharf and Crane Wharf, as well as mixed density housing within a newly created Artisan's Quarter in the heart of the historic centre. Where possible this needs to reflect the city wide shortage of family homes.

ACTION 9: Improve resident and visitor safety and perceptions at all times of day and evening

The Police and partners will continue to work closely with resident and business communities and CWaC to address local issues particularly around crime and disorder and the perceptions of crime, as well as providing a strong, visible city centre presence.

To prevent future crime and safety issues, new development and infrastructure within Chester will address public safety as a key requirement, with 'safer by design' initiatives for example lighting, and open visual accessibility. The removal of the city centre underpasses below the ring-road and replacement with at-grade crossings will improve resident and visitor safety and perceptions when entering or leaving the city. Chester will be a safe place to live, visit and work, with people feeling comfortable in the environment at all times of the day or evening.

We will build positive relationships and links with the new Police and Crime Commissioner when elected in late 2012.

4.3 Business and Investment



Chester will improve and enhance its role as a knowledge-based, high value business hub, driving economic prosperity – growing enterprise within the city centre and establishing the reputation of Chester as a place ‘open to business’.

ACTION 1: Support professional networks to help influence decisions

The city has a strong business base in the sectors of finance, insurance and professional services, as well as considerable expertise in the legal and judiciary professions and veterinary science. It is important that these sectors are supported to increase investment and employment into the city. Developing a set of professional networks in the city and surrounding areas will empower the existing business community to facilitate this support.

A dynamic network can help influence decisions and policy, and working together will provide a ‘professional identity’ to the outside world, giving more effective exposure to regional, national and international markets. It will provide a platform to promote and generate local supply chain networks, enabling the city’s businesses to benefit and grow from procurement opportunities produced locally.

ACTION 2: Target inward investment by focusing on the city’s opportunities for growth

As well as enhancing the prospects within Chester’s existing economy, it is vital to identify emerging high value sectors and specialisms as catalysts for growth. The city must create itself a distinctive role within the North West regional economy by engaging effectively with the Cheshire & Warrington LEP, as well as continuing to build on cross border working relationships with North East Wales.

It should target inward investment centred on its strengths in finance, professional services and research and development and lever in funding in order to unlock the potential for private sector investment. The importance of the visitor economy must also be fully recognised and opportunities for increasing the dwell time of the visitor should be maximised, this includes Chester Zoo as a key economic asset.

ACTION 3: Create a new leadership and governance structure

A structure that is fully coordinated across both the public and private sectors will increase investor and business confidence (for further details see Delivery chapter).

The City will need to market itself effectively to businesses realising its strengths. Key to this will be a central joined up marketing and inward investment approach.



4 City of the Future



ACTION 4: Identify growth sectors that require support and investment to create high value local employment

Innovation will be a central factor in Chester's economic growth. Opportunities exist within the energy and environmental technologies sectors, linked to developments such as the Capenhurst Energy Innovation Centre. In addition, a focus should be on life, biosciences and food technology sectors linked to the University of Chester and Chester Zoo, and to medical and health sciences linked to the Countess of Chester Hospital.

The emergence of new digital and ICT sectors and sustaining growth in the next generation of financial and professional services businesses at Chester Business Park and within the city centre are also strong opportunities.

The city should also provide the environment and support infrastructure for locally grown businesses to establish themselves, develop and grow.

ACTION 5: Become a city of educational excellence - linking courses and skills to local business demand and growth

To plan for and support growth, the city must work better with its educational institutions to fully understand their impacts – in particular the University of Chester and West Cheshire College. The city must work with both the college and university to encourage local residents to take up the opportunities offered by these institutions.

The city will support the University of Chester to place itself at the heart of a 'University City' – building relationships with local businesses and communities, and encouraging entrepreneurship.

Stimulating exciting enterprise will be vital to inspire Chester's students, graduates and young people. Chester's new leadership will collaborate to create enterprise support and business demand locally to enable and encourage ambitious qualified students to stay – feeling 'at home' in the city. These people have the potential to be the city's future residents – retaining their skills, spending power and relationship with the city is good for everyone.



4.3 Business and Investment



ACTION 6: Invest in the city's business infrastructure

The city will adopt a strategy that provides the necessary flexible commercial space, high quality IT infrastructure and Broadband to match growing and changing demand. It will provide premises and support services for investors ranging from international businesses to small and medium sized enterprises (SME) and 'incubation space' for start-up businesses.

A state-of-the-art conference and convention centre will bring further valuable spend in the leisure and retail sectors - raising the profile of Chester as a premier business destination.

Alongside new homes and shops, the new Artisan's Quarter will provide affordable commercial space for artist studios, start-up businesses and small to medium sized enterprises, with a 'village in the city' feel.

ACTION 7: Re-establish itself as a competitive city centre shopping environment

Its strengths do not lie in replicating the format in other regional cities, but in enhancing and celebrating the unique and distinctive retail environments that it has developed. Its distinctive Rows sit at the heart of this as a unique retail attraction – combining heritage and tradition with a contemporary new offer. When considered as such, Chester city centre has the potential to provide a shopping experience like no other across the globe.

Investment in the Rows will be private-sector driven, underpinned by the ambition to create a new Business Improvement District (BID) to the benefit of the existing business community and shoppers. The BID and CCM, working in close partnership with CWaC, will fund improvements to the management, public realm, interpretation and marketing. The existing retail offer will become further specialised with mechanisms explored to support niche, high value, local and independent retailers including Chester Market. Over the next 10 years, the city will also maximise the potential of the Rows as an asset by working to implement the ULI's recommendations to bring back into use the underutilised upper floors.

Simultaneously, the development of the Northgate scheme will provide a complementary offer for shoppers – drawing inward investment from large, currently unrepresented national retailers within a contemporary shopping environment linked directly to the Rows. Chester will become a nationally competitive, comprehensive shopping 'experience' providing for its residents and enticing visitors.



4 City of the Future



Chester must stand apart from its regional and closest comparable competitors. The city has its own unique identity, culture and assets, which it must grow to flourish and realise its potential as a home, an international visitor destination and a regional business hub.

ACTION 1: Play a leading role in achieving sustainable development

Key to this will be setting in place measures for Chester's future growth as a low carbon economy and using resources effectively and efficiently, as a 'Smart City'. There will be coordinated resource management across the city between a number of providers and operators – reducing home and business waste disposal, encouraging recycling and re-use, and lowering water and energy consumption.

In providing new buildings, there will be a requirement

for high quality in the design, materials and sustainable construction and for existing buildings through conversion to energy generation and improved efficiency.

Building on a re-energised creativity and knowledge in the city from a dynamic relationship between the University of Chester, West Cheshire College, Chester Zoo and network of professionals, Chester will become a commercial 'hotbed' for emerging green industries. It will be a city that

embraces renewable energies and technological innovation in future development. Chester must diversify its energy sources, remaining open and flexible to emerging opportunities to integrate renewable power. Energy efficient technologies providing low carbon solutions to residential and commercial heating, cooling and energy generation will be promoted. A particularly significant opportunity is to re-introduce a hydroelectric station on the Weir on the River Dee.



4.4 Living City



ACTION 2: High quality contemporary development

The city will implement a set of building design principles alongside using a design review panel to critically reflect on proposals, provide design advice and support the planning and delivery process for development including the public realm (in accordance with the city's Public Realm Design Guide).

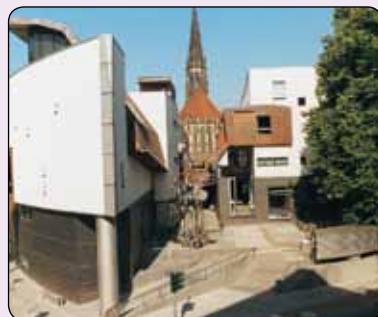
New developments must be of a quality standard to sit proudly and comfortably within the city's

sensitive archeological and architectural environment. The Historic Characterisation Study will be a key tool to inform the historic importance of areas of the city.

A key part of the One City Plan preparation has been to consider the issue surrounding contemporary architecture and its place and promotion in the historic city of Chester. In particular, to understand how the historic aspects of the physical

environment are currently perceived to affect design outcomes and to consider to what extent they can be seen as reference points, if not springboards, for design excellence.

The outcomes of this have been set out in a 'Manifesto for Contemporary Design' (appendix 3).



4 City of the Future



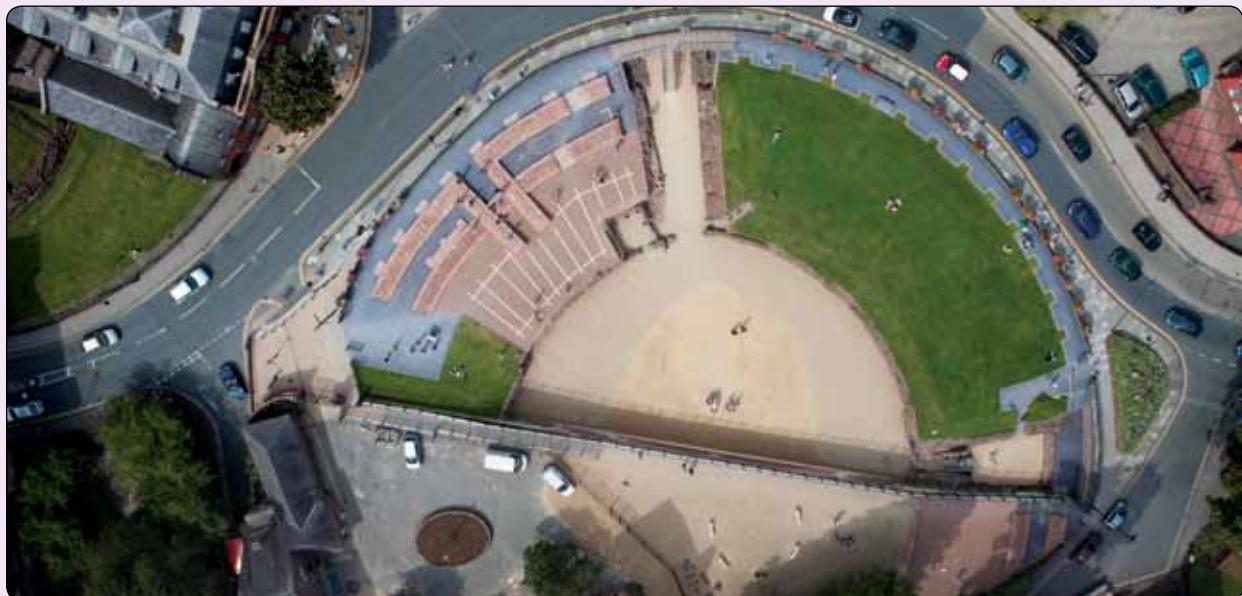
ACTION 3: Safeguard and invest in Chester's rich history

A wealth of irreplaceable archaeology and architecture survives within Chester including extensive buried remains as well as its City Walls, Rows, Amphitheatre, Roman Gardens, and Castle. These historic environments and assets underpin the city's character, individuality and unique identity and must play a driving role in Chester's future success and growth. This should include showing newly discovered archaeology as part of development schemes.

The city will ensure the upkeep and maximise the potential of its heritage assets, underpinned by a thorough analysis of their current condition and opportunities for their use. It will lever in public and private finance to create a well maintained and well utilised network (or 'trail') of historic places and spaces of international recognition. This network will provide a sustainable and exciting 'historic experience' (told in ways as

directed in the Interpretation Masterplan) for the enjoyment and education of Chester's residents and visitors now and a legacy for generations to come.

A maintenance and local capacity building programme ('We Love Chester') will be introduced to clean up the city working in partnership with local community and voluntary groups and apprenticeship schemes.



4.4 Living City



ACTION 4: Effectively use and fully integrate the green and blue infrastructure

Grosvenor Park will be greatly improved for residents and visitors – further expanding its use to cultural activities and events, as well as providing better access across the city between the Roman Amphitheatre, St Johns Church, the River Dee and the city centre.

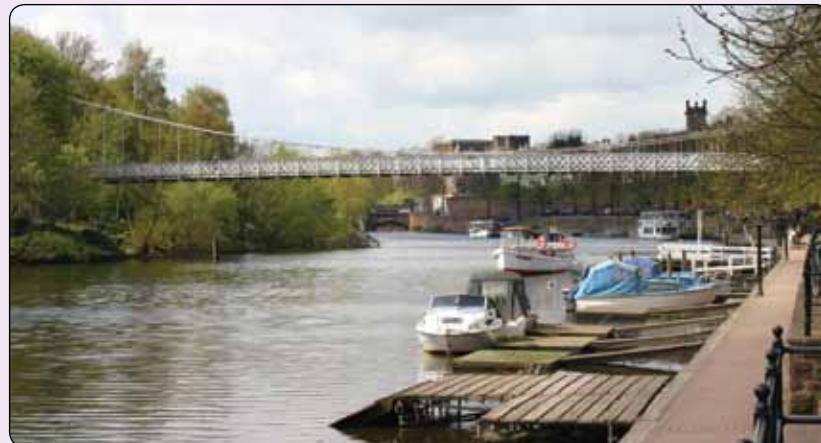
As well as improving the quality of and connectivity to existing green infrastructure, it will be important to enhance biodiversity in the city centre. This will be achieved through the use of green and brown roofs and walls in new and refurbished buildings (where

this is appropriate), the delivery of new shared green spaces, and an increase in tree planting - providing valuable wildlife habitats, natural shade and reducing water run-off.

The River Dee corridor – a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – will be better integrated into the city for the enjoyment of all by making access to it across the inner ring road much more pedestrian friendly. Whilst mindful of the delicate habitat, recreational uses along the River Dee and its waterfront will be encouraged and supported. Rowing will be promoted, including holding events and

galas, by working jointly with the University of Chester and private sporting clubs.

The Shropshire Union Canal is a multi functional asset for the city – providing a corridor of open space, water infrastructure and a sustainable transport route. The opportunities to promote the canal and its integration with canalside developments and surrounding areas are extensive and should be fully realised. This also includes exploring opportunities to maximise the linkages of the water spaces between the River Dee and the Shropshire Union Canal, in the Ports and Wharfs area.



4 City of the Future



ACTION 5: Enhance the contemporary cultural and civic offer

Chester's 'civic heart' is focused on the Town Hall, Chester Cathedral, the Grosvenor Museum and St Mary's Centre. These impressive and historically important buildings represent key components of the city's cultural and civic infrastructure. Investment must be made to transform these functions so, when considered together, they provide a distinctive and contemporary civic offer.

A cultural masterplan and heritage asset review for Chester with a view to upgrading existing cultural facilities and investigating additional facilities will be undertaken. This will also cover integration of these cultural assets and opportunities into the social and economic life of the

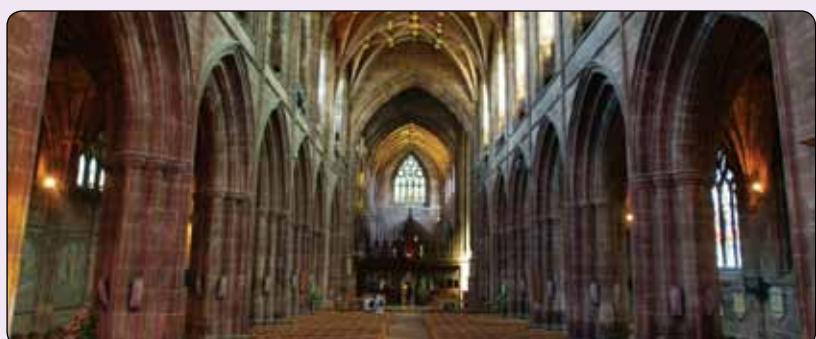
city and the wider borough.

The Cathedral has a goal of transforming its property estate to one of vibrancy and activity. Through increased engagement with the community it is examining options for the areas future within the wider ambitions of the city and hence taking a comprehensive approach to the regeneration of the area. As the plans for the Cathedral Quarter develop, these will need to be reflected in the One City Plan review.

A new theatre and visual and performing arts venues will greatly enhance and complement the existing civic and cultural offer – attracting people of all ages

into the city during twilight and evening hours.

The city's cultural experience will extend to its streets, squares and open spaces. The One City Plan supports the strategy for public art and the growing programme and success of regular events and festivals. These should take place in dedicated locations throughout the city centre throughout each year with participating venues linking up where possible. They will create bustling, lively and diverse spaces in amongst the city's shopping, civic and historic destinations during the day and into the night. These will be coordinated through the new Events and Festivals Board.



4.4 Living City



ACTION 6: A 'visitor package'

Chester needs a balance between day and overnight visitors. Increasing dwell time in the city is a key priority to generate greater spend in the local economy. Building a stronger relationship between visitor attractions is needed to embed Chester's appeal as a complete visitor package.

Of key importance will be building a stronger relationship between the identity of Chester Zoo (and its significant

development proposals) and the city centre to encourage visitors to perceive both as equal components of a 'package'. This will work to promote an extended length of stay in Chester and the added value from it. Alignment of marketing, ticket sales and hotel packages will be improved, as well as testing the feasibility of introducing a physical presence of a 'zoo in the city' as a retail shop, 'mini-Biodome' or through animal education at festivals and city events.

Building on successes to date there will be a single, enhanced programme of events and festivals with effective early publicity, new technologies and joined-up communication. Moreover, the opportunity will be investigated to introduce a 'One City Welcome' at key locations with community and voluntary sector groups.



4 City of the Future



The City of the Future is based on there being a significant increase in the density of development in the city centre with more shops, offices, tourism and overall activity. This will result in the need to cater for more people wanting to both access and move around the city centre in a sustainable way with a real choice of mode being offered (e.g. walk, cycle, public transport, Park & Ride, car). This approach is supported by the Integrated Transport Strategy for the Borough (Local Transport Plan 3).

The choice of mode will be reflected by the type of journey being made (e.g. commuter, shopping, local or visitor). The strategy should be to reduce the actual volume of private cars entering the city centre while ensuring that the number of people coming increases by making alternative modes more accessible and attractive. The following actions have been identified to help achieve this aim. They must all be tested and developed as part of a cohesive Transport Implementation Plan as an immediate priority.

ACTION 1: Improve the public transport network to reduce the need for some journeys to be made by car. Enhance pedestrian and cycle links between the city centre and the rail station.

ACTION 2: Improve the Park and Ride offer by testing and implementing mechanisms to increase its efficiency and use.

ACTION 3: Locate car parks on strategic corridors or at gateways and sign them effectively so that drivers do not have to unnecessarily travel round the inner ring road (IRR) looking for spaces.

ACTION 4: Provide appropriate car parking in accessible locations for blue badge holders in close proximity to supporting services (ie. shopmobility).

ACTION 5: Within the city centre the key pedestrian footfall streets and corridors must have priority, be well signed, accessible and exemplar in nature

- From the station, via City Road and the Bars, along Foregate Street and Eastgate Street to Watergate Street, with links towards the Castle area.
- From the station, via Brook Street to Frodsham Street, St Johns Street, Amphitheatre and to the river.
- Through Northgate Street via the Cross to Bridge Street and the river.

These routes must be the core links of a pedestrian ‘super-highway’ network where, although in places vehicular access is required, the quality of environment for pedestrians must be of the highest standard (and informed by European exemplars). From these streets attractive and accessible routes must flow into the adjacent areas. Circuits, for example along the river corridor, must link to uses and activities and encourage exploration.

4.5 Movement and Accessibility



ACTION 6: Continue to encourage cycling throughout the city and use 'green' corridors

Promoting better cross-city linkage and reducing restrictions on cycling will ensure that Chester makes full use of its legacy as a Cycle Demonstration Town. Options for funding the delivery of the Cycle Masterplan will continue to be explored.

There are great opportunities to use existing 'green' transport corridors such as the Sustrans Mickle Trafford - Shotton 'Greenway' and the Shropshire Union Canal to link the suburbs and proposed regeneration areas such as the business quarter with the city centre. Enhancement of the canal route has the potential to create an accessible, high quality and safe cross-city green route (described as a 'high street') for the people of Chester to use and enjoy.



ACTION 7: Address parts of the inner ring road at key pedestrian and public transport crossing points

While the need for traffic access and movement around the city centre using the IRR will remain, it must be altered at the key pedestrian and public transport crossing points. The aim will be to make crossing of the IRR by pedestrians and cyclists more direct, quicker and safer. One of the priorities to be tested should be to reduce and in time potentially remove the Pepper Street route past the Amphitheatre for vehicles (except for residential, emergency access and servicing). This road corridor currently acts as a severe restriction on the linkage of some of the key riverside and historic assets with the city centre, and constrains the Amphitheatre's potential to be a truly world class heritage attraction. Similarly the area of 'the Bars' – extending from Foregate Street to the Station - is one of extreme importance to future Chester, and improvements to it for pedestrians and cyclists must be considered over a series of phases.

ACTION 8: Use the Chester Transport Implementation Plan to examine development and transport proposals



Land use and planning decisions made across the wider city area have to be seized to contribute towards the objectives for the city centre. Any significant change in traffic volume in the city centre must be managed carefully and opportunities for interventions to encourage low carbon and sustainable modes promoted.

The increase in development will entail the need for the servicing requirements and options to be reviewed in the light of the desire for reduced vehicular traffic, especially through areas of pedestrianisation.

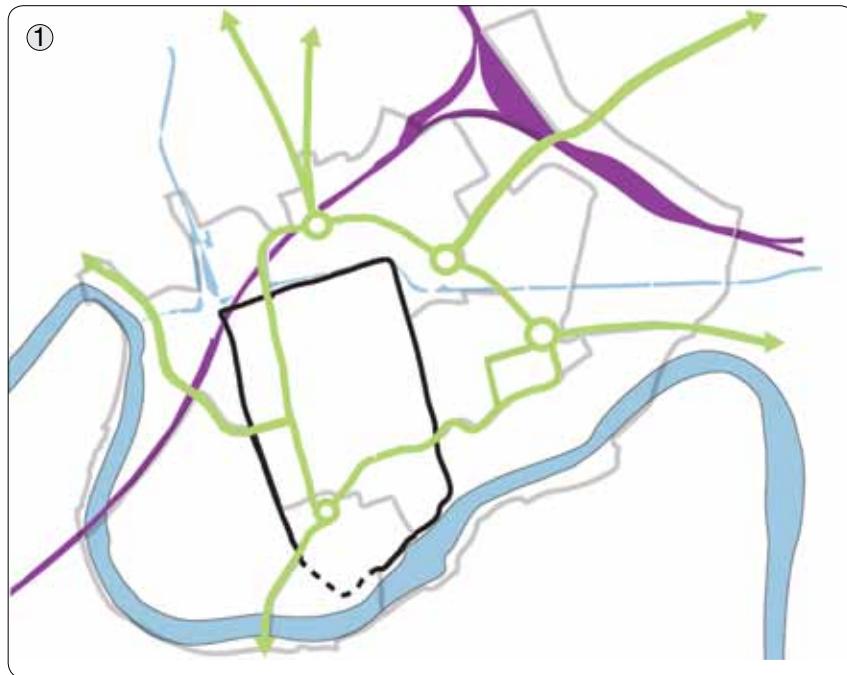
4 City of the Future



1. Current Ring Road

The current Ring Road acts as a barrier to pedestrians. It is critical to improve the ability for non-car users to cross this car dominated corridor at appropriate points on the radial network. At present these are second place in the hierarchy. In future pedestrian and cycle movement must be equal in status – a delicate balance to achieve.

Some sections of the current ring road can be tempered to make them more attractive and a positive feature of the city. In particular, the large roundabouts at Hoole Way, and Northgate Street (Fountains) can be targeted to improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity. Both of these junctions are currently high capacity and car dominated with large over ground distances for pedestrians to negotiate, or unattractive and underused subways as an alternative. Simplifying these junctions would not only free up valuable development land, it would also greatly improve crossing opportunities and safety.



This reduction in capacity on the IRR will, however, only be achievable with a corresponding decrease in demand, brought about in part by the parking and public transport strategies. If a funding opportunity arises for alternative relief roads, which could divert through-traffic away from the centre, these options should be fully explored.

KEY

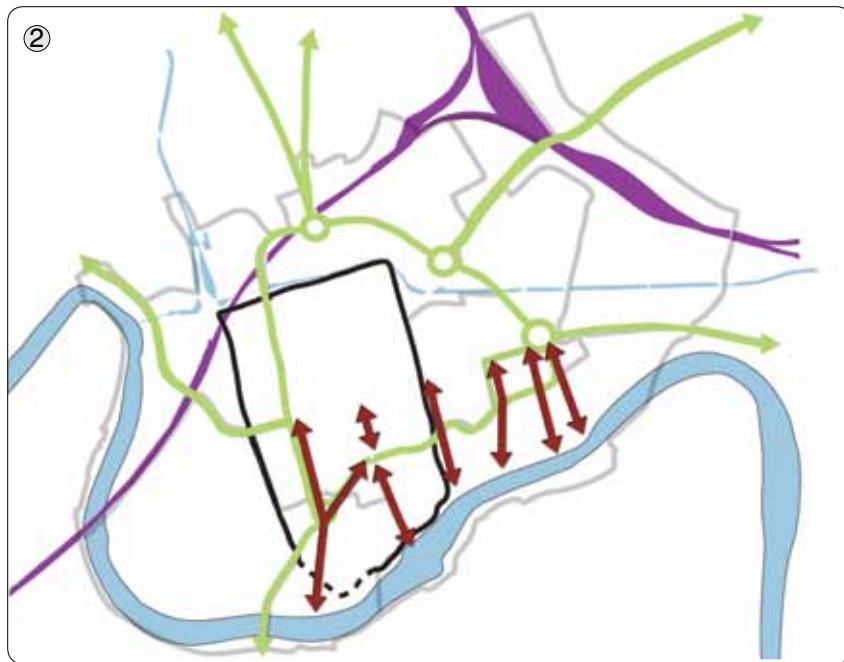
- City Areas
- Canal
- River Dee
- Railway
- Main Ring Road
- Dotted line: Downgrading of vehicular route
- Dashed line: Pedestrian Routes
- Dotted line: Traffic Calming Measures
- Red line: Pedestrian Connectivity- places in the city
- Green line: Green places

4.5 Movement and Accessibility



2. Traffic reduced at the southern section of the Ring Road

The high traffic volumes and current priority given to road vehicles on Pepper Street cuts this area of the city in two. It inhibits an easily navigable and attractive connection between the city centre and the River Dee and Amphitheatre and makes for a noisy and busy environment. If traffic is slowed and volumes reduced, surfaces are shared, and private vehicles are discouraged from using this route (along the section outside the Amphitheatre and Walls) this will create an enhanced environment for residents and visitors to move through the city centre. By doing this, the River Dee waterfront, Amphitheatre and Roman Gardens will be easier to find, navigate between and enjoy. The One City Plan also supports testing the full closure of this route for events during the summer months to enhance the environment of the Amphitheatre. Importantly, access for emergency vehicles, necessary servicing and resident parking will remain in this area.



KEY

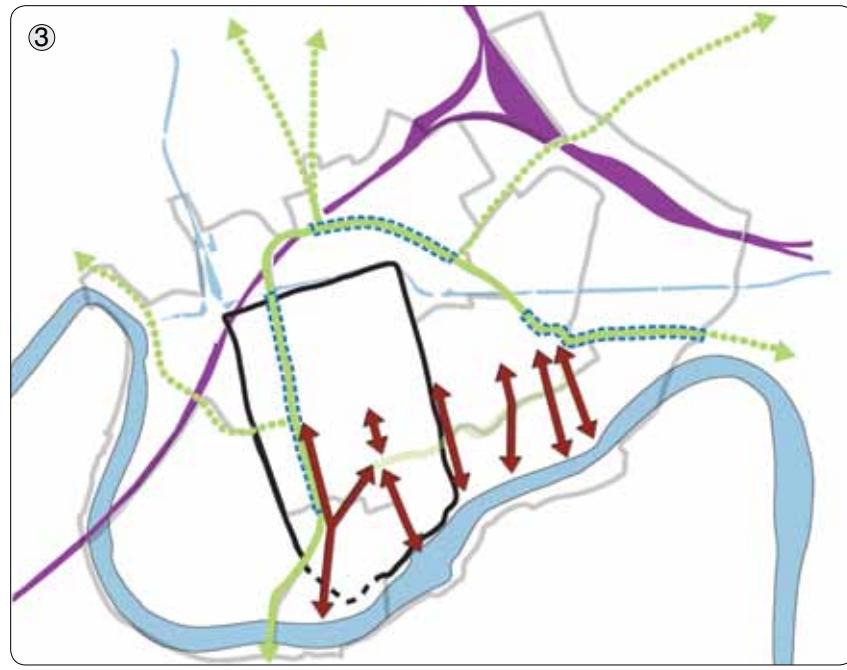
- City Areas
- Canal
- River Dee
- Railway
- Main Ring Road
- Pedestrian Connectivity- places in the city

4 City of the Future



3. Pepper Street and Bridge Street

It is not just around the Amphitheatre where the negative environment of the southern section of the ring road has an impact. Pepper Street's junction with Bridge Street is a strong example of where current traffic volumes lead to the pedestrian priority being low. Significant wider benefit to the public realm and 'experience' of the city would occur by redesigning the junction with an extension to the pedestrianised area of Bridge Street and introducing high quality materials. However, the reduction in traffic volumes to accommodate this would impact the northern dualed sections of the IRR and this needs to be fully understood.



KEY

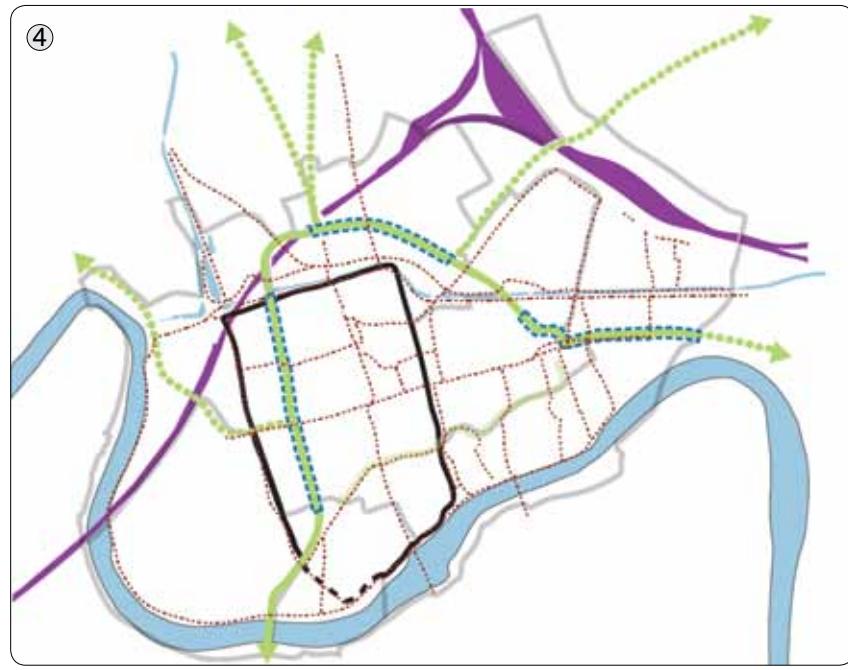
- City Areas
- Canal
- River Dee
- Railway
- Main Ring Road
- Downgrading of vehicular route
- Traffic Calming Measures
- Pedestrian Connectivity-places in the city

4.5 Movement and Accessibility



4. Improving ring road movement

This will help pedestrian and cycle connectivity city wide – working to reduce the amount of traffic in the historic city centre. Importantly, simplifying crossing points does not always result in significant reduced capacity. Finding ways of helping to keep traffic flowing on this route is critical.



KEY

- City Areas
- Canal
- River Dee
- Railway
- Main Ring Road
- Downgrading of vehicular route
- Pedestrian Routes
- Traffic Calming Measures
- Pedestrian Connectivity- places in the city

4 City of the Future

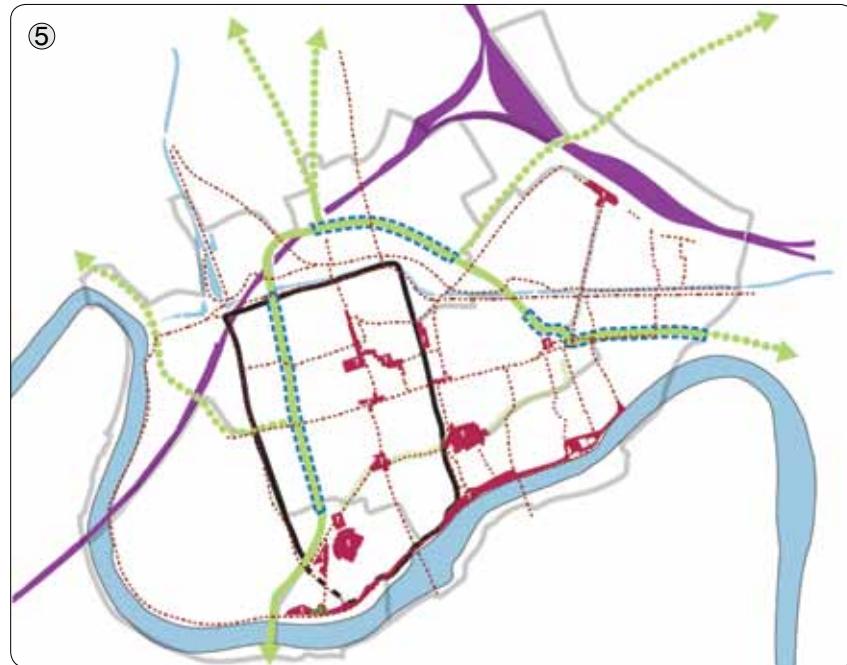


5. Pedestrian Connectivity – places in the city

The different assets of the city centre need to be connected – different spaces and squares must be linked by quality public realm enhancements along with clear mapping and signage.

A trip to Chester must be one where the visitor wants to explore – whether they be a resident who comes daily or a once in a lifetime tourist. Providing a high quality and accessible pedestrian and cycle environment is critical to supporting the ‘experience’ of Chester as people navigate their way into, and around, the city.

The Public Realm Design Guide is a key tool.



KEY

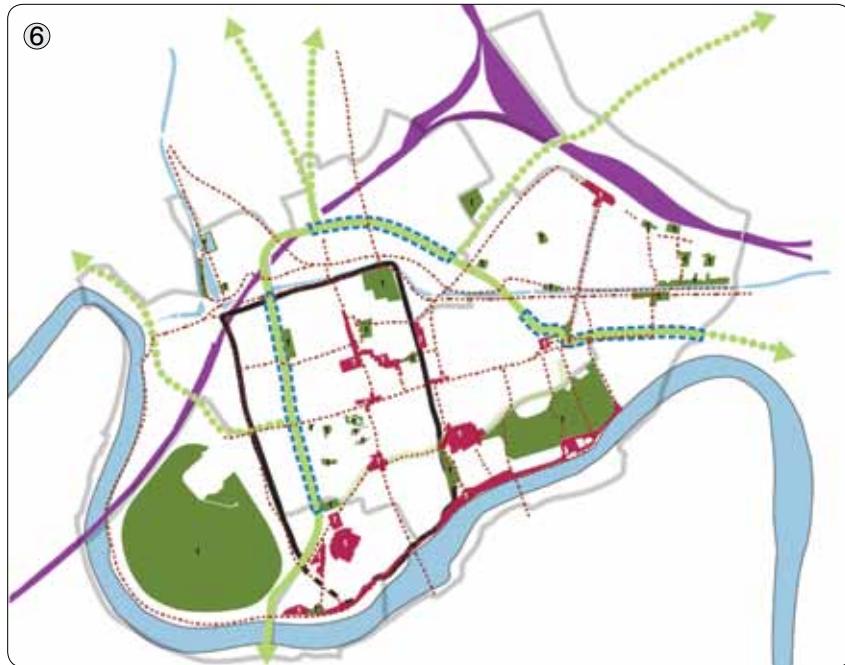
- City Areas
- Canal
- River Dee
- Railway
- Main Ring Road
- Dotted line with arrows: Downgrading of vehicular route
- Dashed line with arrows: Pedestrian Routes
- Dotted line with dots: Traffic Calming Measures
- Red line: Pedestrian Connectivity- places in the city

4.5 Movement and Accessibility



6. Pedestrian activity in green spaces and along waterways

A successful city centre is not just about business – it is about providing a setting that encourages healthy lifestyles, wellbeing and instills a sense of pride. Connecting the city to its considerable green and natural environments of the River Dee, Shropshire Union Canal and Grosvenor Park in particular, can contribute significantly to these ambitions.



KEY

- City Areas
- Canal
- River Dee
- Railway
- Main Ring Road
- Dotted arrow: Downgrading of vehicular route
- Dashed line: Pedestrian Routes
- Dotted line: Traffic Calming Measures
- Red line: Pedestrian Connectivity- places in the city
- Green line: Green places

4 City of the Future



Car Parking Strategy

The car parking strategy for Chester of the future is currently being developed and will be one of interception, choice, quality and convenience. Emerging conclusions propose three levels of car parking along each of the main corridors designed to ‘capture’ drivers into the city at various points along the radial routes. It is vital to offer a choice of how far into the city drivers wish to go depending upon their needs, but also to have taken a significant amount of Chester-bound traffic off the network prior to its arrival at the Inner Ring Road (IRR).

The outer level (occurring at the A55 Ring Road distance from the centre) will be provided by Park and Ride with an additional site proposed for the A56 Hoole Road corridor.

The second level will occur on the edge of the city centre at sites such as the Rail Station, on the Liverpool Road and Boughton Road corridors, at the Race Course and at Little Roodee.

Finally, the closest to centre ring of parking will be located at the IRR itself. Here, car parks will be conveniently located to ensure they can be accessed easily by inbound cars but also exited on foot directly into the city core. There should be minimal requirement for vehicles to drive around the ring road searching for parking space thereby reducing flows and removing a key barrier to movement. This principle can also be reinforced with a comprehensive signage strategy building on existing electronic signs and directing vehicles to the most convenient car park on their particular inbound corridor.

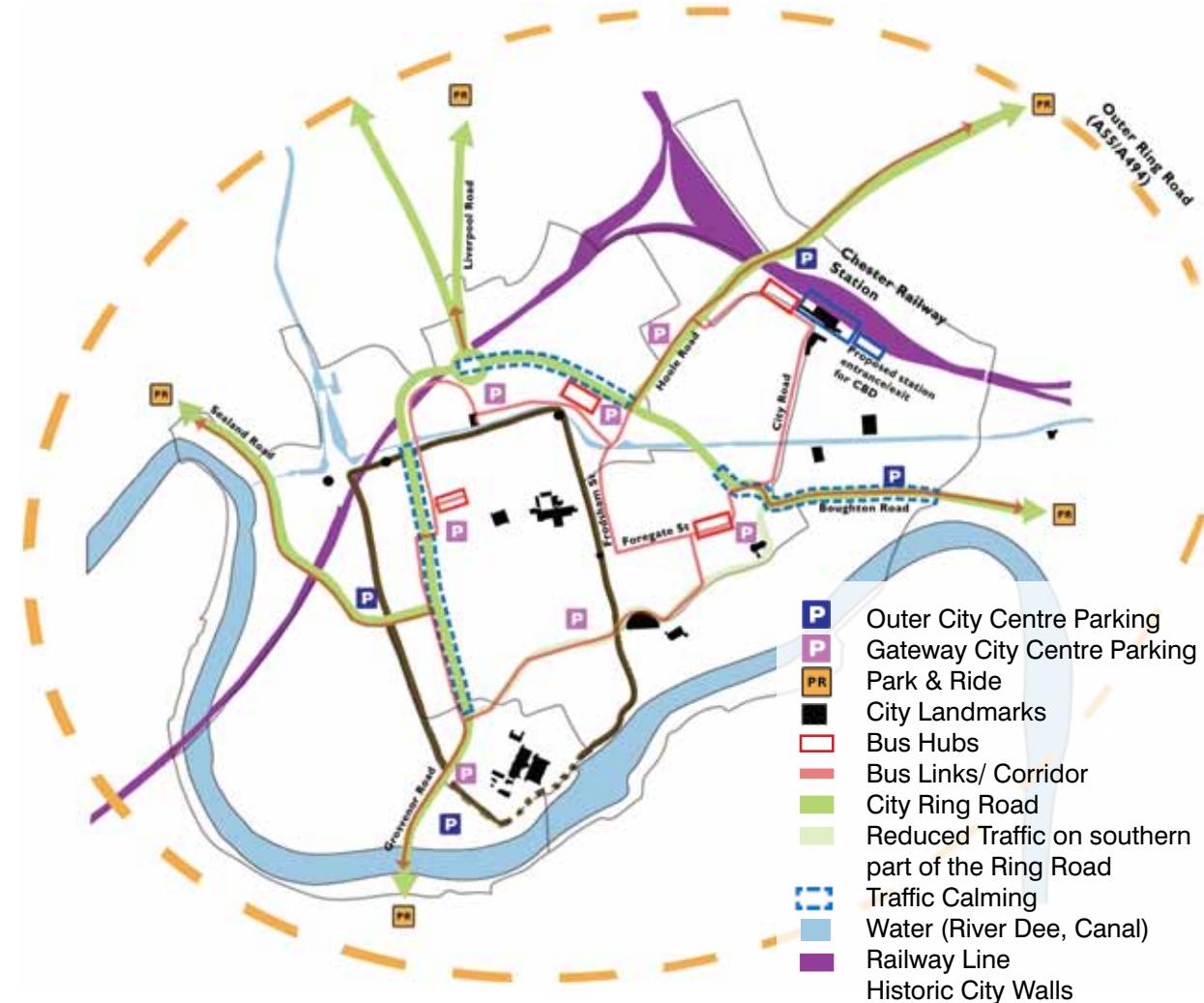
Bus Strategy

The bus strategy for Chester should focus on solutions for local residents who use the public transport network every day. A network that works for the people of Chester should also work for those who visit it. Network benefits will be realised through improvements to cross-city connectivity and a multi-hub

solution may provide a good opportunity for change. This could see ‘hubs’ created in key locations such as lower Foregate Street and within the Northgate development area. These would be supported by a more central interchange facility at a location such as Gorse Stacks, and better integration with the Rail Station.

Stops must be convenient for local amenities and attractions in order to encourage and maximise their use. Routing too provides an opportunity for change with a key objective being the desire to reduce traffic on some of the key shopping streets within the city centre. This is important in order to improve the experience for pedestrians and cyclists as well as lifting the quality of the retail environment and public realm. It is also key to separate out the various bus uses in the city; to have a strategy which provides a central facility for inter-urban and long distance services, and good cross-city connectivity at hubs in Foregate Street, Northgate and at the Railway Station.

4.6 Possible City Car Parking and Bus Strategies



4 City of the Future



Historic Core

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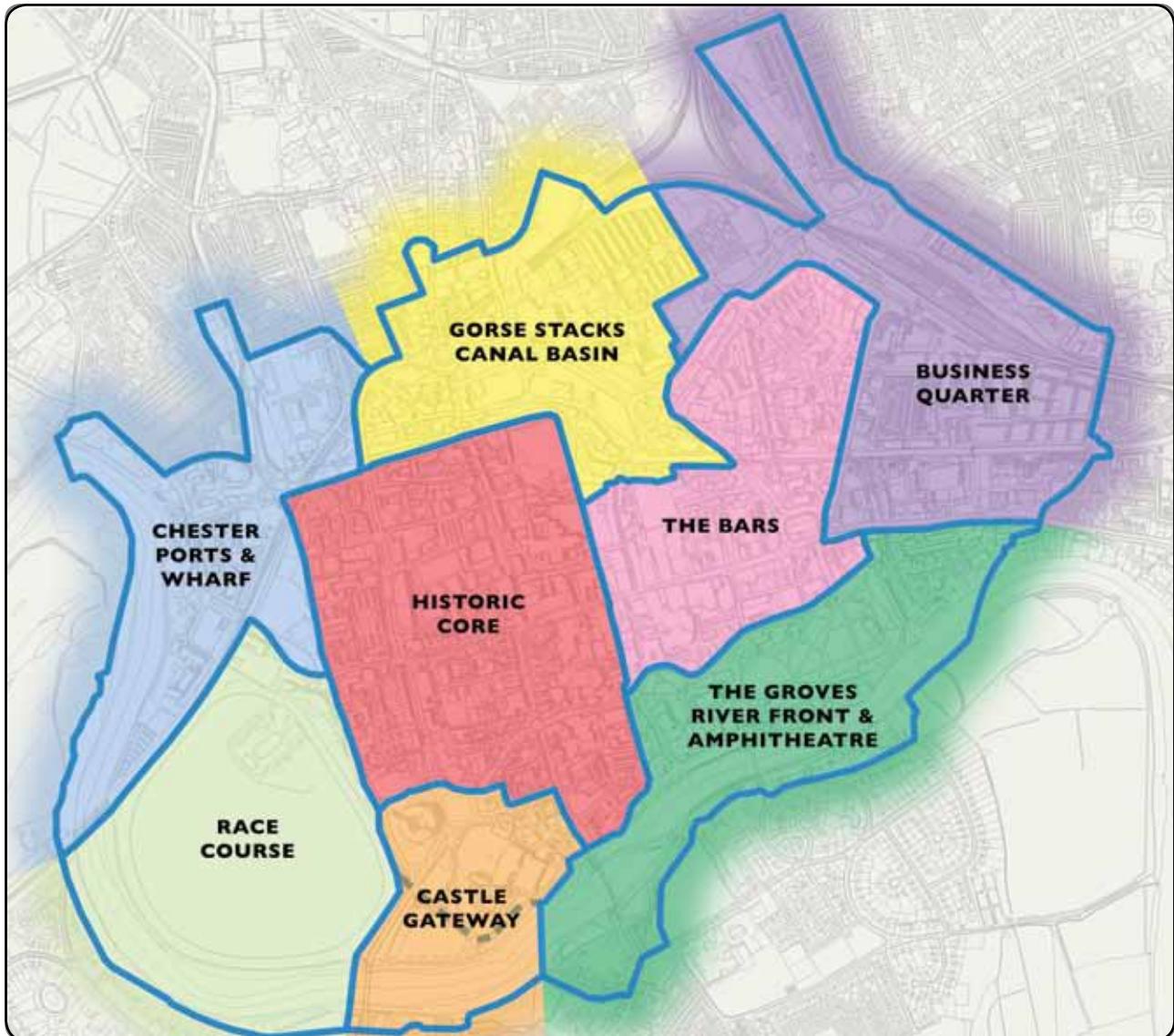
Racecourse

Ref	Description	Page
RC1	Potential Conference Facility	80

4.7 Development Opportunities



The Big Picture



4 City of the Future

Historic Core

Chester was once a fortress that became a town that became a city. As one would expect, the future development of the historic city centre is possibly the most complex, yet potentially most rewarding, in the next chapter of Chester's history. The city centre has a strong historical heritage and vibrant culture recognisable through the galleried Rows in Watergate Street, Bridge Street and Eastgate Street; the ancient City Walls; a Roman Amphitheatre and an impressive Cathedral. However some of these incredible assets and parts of the historic city centre are in need of attention and, just like in the past, pockets of decline can be seen as opportunities.

Inside the City Walls there are a range of different types of buildings and the potential range of activities is already plentiful, but the ambition is to build on this.

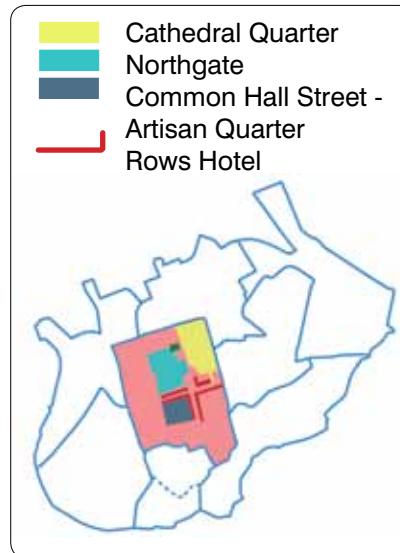
In particular, there is a lull in the city centre activity in the twilight period with the night time economy based mainly around bars. There are opportunities to connect with attractions and other businesses and organisations that work in or close to Chester city centre. The city will benefit significantly if service providers such as Chester Zoo and the University of Chester have a stronger presence in, and clearer transport links with the city centre.

To improve movement and access in the historic core, the pedestrian zone should be extended to reflect the new circuits created from culture and retail projects, and restrictions on cycling lifted to improve connectivity.

The following potential projects and improvements are considered to be priorities.

Key

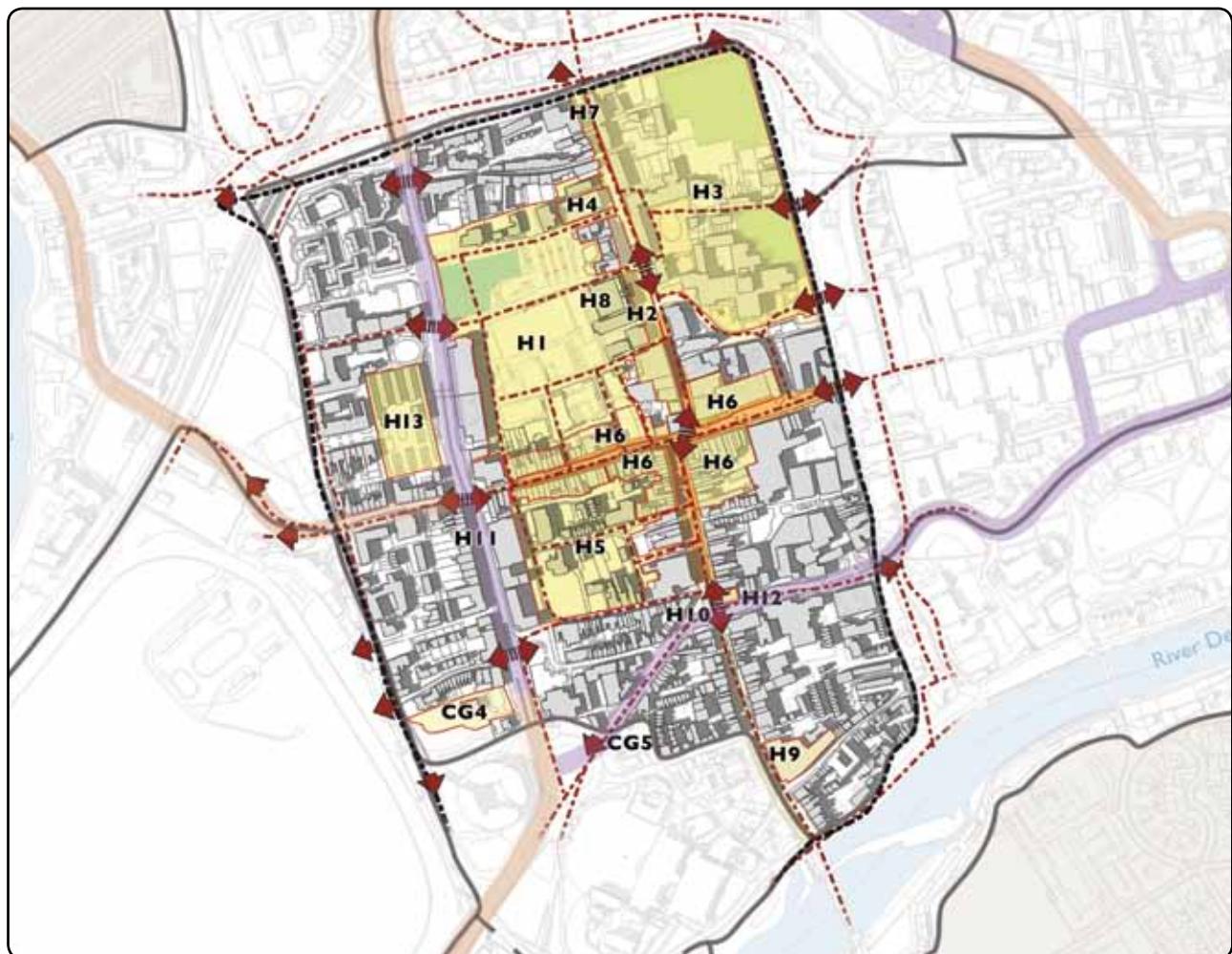
- ① The Town Hall in 1829
- ② Northgate Street



4.7 Development Opportunities / Historic Core

KEY

- ← Long Views
- Main Ring Road
- Existing Buildings
- Green Spaces
-  Potential Development Areas & Building Opportunities
-  Pedestrian Links
-  Pedestrian Routes
-  Historic City Walls
-  Central Shopping streets



4 City of the Future



H1: Proposed Northgate Scheme

Redevelopment of the Northgate area intends to strengthen the position of Chester as a retail and visitor destination and reverse the trend in its decline in the retail rankings. The design of the proposed new retail led quarter must integrate with and compliment the existing built form and established retail offer in the city centre whilst adding variety and choice to this offer.

Alongside the Northgate scheme, a review of the bus strategy is being undertaken and this will identify the most suitable locations for bus facilities.

The location for a new market in a central location is also currently under review.

H2: Town Hall Square and adjoining public realm

The re-design of Town Hall Square and surrounding areas of public realm to create an improved place for people to meet, use and enjoy. It should be a venue for regular events, festivals and markets in the civic heart of the city centre. This will require the removal of unnecessary existing street

furniture and a reconfiguration of the space.

H3: Cathedral Quarter

The Cathedral with its extensive property portfolio of buildings, surrounding grounds and gardens is of major importance to the success and revitalisation of the city centre. The Cathedral Quarter provides an opportunity to provide a much enhanced ‘sense of place’ building on its special character, heritage and the Cathedral’s Christian foundation and ongoing Mission. Through the Cathedral’s vision and plans for the future of the quarter, proposals will take a comprehensive approach to regeneration and ensure co-ordination with all other proposed developments in this part of the city centre. It will be inclusive of the needs of the widest possible range of residents and visitors and provide a robust framework to enable the highest quality of architectural and landscape design. At present the quarter requires investment and improvement and its regeneration needs must therefore be agreed and supported.

H4: Theatre

The location for Chester’s new theatre will be the Art Deco

building located on the corner of Hunter Street, an impressive structure that fronts onto Northgate Street, one of the main approaches into the city centre. The scheme will also take in adjacent buildings and will deliver an 800 seat theatre managed by a new business entity under the guidance of Cheshire West and Chester Council. There are a number of key interfaces that will be considered and plans for them developed as part of the theatre scheme. These include; Northgate Street, the proposed Northgate Scheme and Town Hall Square.

H5: Commonhall Street Area

The area to the rear of Watergate Street and Bridge Street is known as Commonhall Street, and here there are many under utilised buildings and spaces. This area has the potential to become a lively Artisan Quarter with a mix of high quality housing, contemporary small intimate spaces that can be used for artisans to sell their goods and small pocket parks. The Quarter should also provide for the rejuvenation of traditional, skilled and heritage-based trades linked to the Guild crafts and supporting the requirements to maintain Chester’s heritage architecture.

4.7 Development Opportunities / Historic Core

H6: The Rows

Ownership, maintenance and management issues need to be overcome to realise a great opportunity to establish uses in the upper floors. In addition, the current retail offer at street and Rows level should be enhanced. Positive marketing should be undertaken to encourage a strong and distinctive retail offer.

Building on the Rows Conservation Management Plan, this project should seek to establish unknown ownerships, undertake feasibility studies (as appropriate) and market test to establish a private sector delivery partner and occupier / management.

Rows environment improvements including lighting, access and signage should also be progressed.

H7: Northgate Street

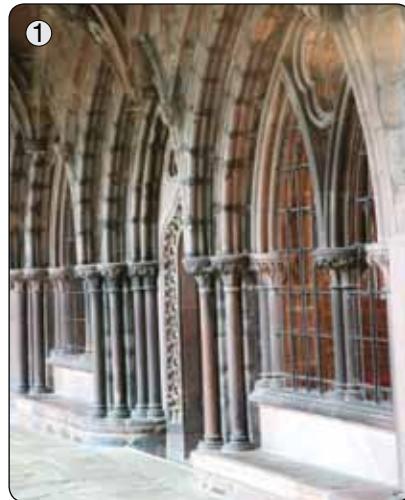
Northgate Street contributes an important independent mixed offer and further enhancements and animation should be encouraged and supported – working with traders and occupiers. As set out in the Locum Report “Ideas for Place Shaping” the aim will be to create

a ‘bohemian’ feel with a strong sense of place. Ideas include encouraging and promoting the area as the Arts and Food Quarter. Animation of the area utilising the street, alleyways and courtyards will further help to build character. Better connectivity to Town Hall Square and adjoining public realm will be promoted. Improved wayfinding and opportunities for removing traffic and giving priority to the pedestrian should be fully explored as part of the Transport Implementation Plan for the city.

H8: Town Hall

The civic uses of the Town Hall have much greater potential. The OCP is supportive of the refurbishment of the Town Hall to provide an enhanced cultural and civic /community offer with a commercial proposition (weddings, banquets, small concert venue etc) that provides a revenue stream.

Relocation of the police from the Town Hall could be considered in order to provide more commercial space, however any new location must be to more suitable accommodation in an accessible location within the city centre.



Key

- ① Chester Cathedral
- ② The Rows

4 City of the Future



H9: Former Quicks Garage, Lower Bridge Street

Located on Bridge Street, this former car showroom site has the potential for mixed use redevelopment which could include both new retail units and opportunities for residential use.

H10: Bridge Street / Pepper Street junction

Redesign of the junction to give greater priority to pedestrians, an extension to the pedestrianised area of Bridge Street and the introduction of high quality materials.

H11: St Martin's Way

Explore ways to improve pedestrian and cycle crossing and use.

H12: St Michael's Church

The One City Plan recognises the need for renewal and development in St Michael's Church alongside other cultural facilities including a Heritage Centre and Grosvenor Museum.

H13: Former Linenhall Stables

Residential uses on this site are supported.

Business Quarter

This area was the location of major urban changes during the industrial revolution and will deliver a mixed use scheme that will bring employment and activity through small, medium and large enterprises into the heart of the city centre.

BQ1: Chester Central

A major initiative for Chester is the business quarter in the east of the city. Using the Railway Station as a gateway to the city, some 500,000 sq.ft of high quality new office space and new public realm will drive Chester's commercial offer and economic growth. The published development framework for this initiative pays careful attention to the grain, scale, massing and character of Chester and is poised to bring 21st century sustainable development into the region.

There are the opportunities for engaging local labour with this project.

It is essential that potential employees can access the opportunities within the area and can do so sustainably. For this purpose it is ideally located close to the Rail Station and the strategy calls for greater integration between modes at

this point. The newly privatised City Rail link service and a stop for Park and Ride buses will also be important.

The Shropshire Union Canal that runs east – west through the business quarter is a movement corridor used by pedestrians and cyclists. The development of this space and improvements to the towpath can go a step further to making this a vital alternative link through the city and maximising the opportunity of the canalside.

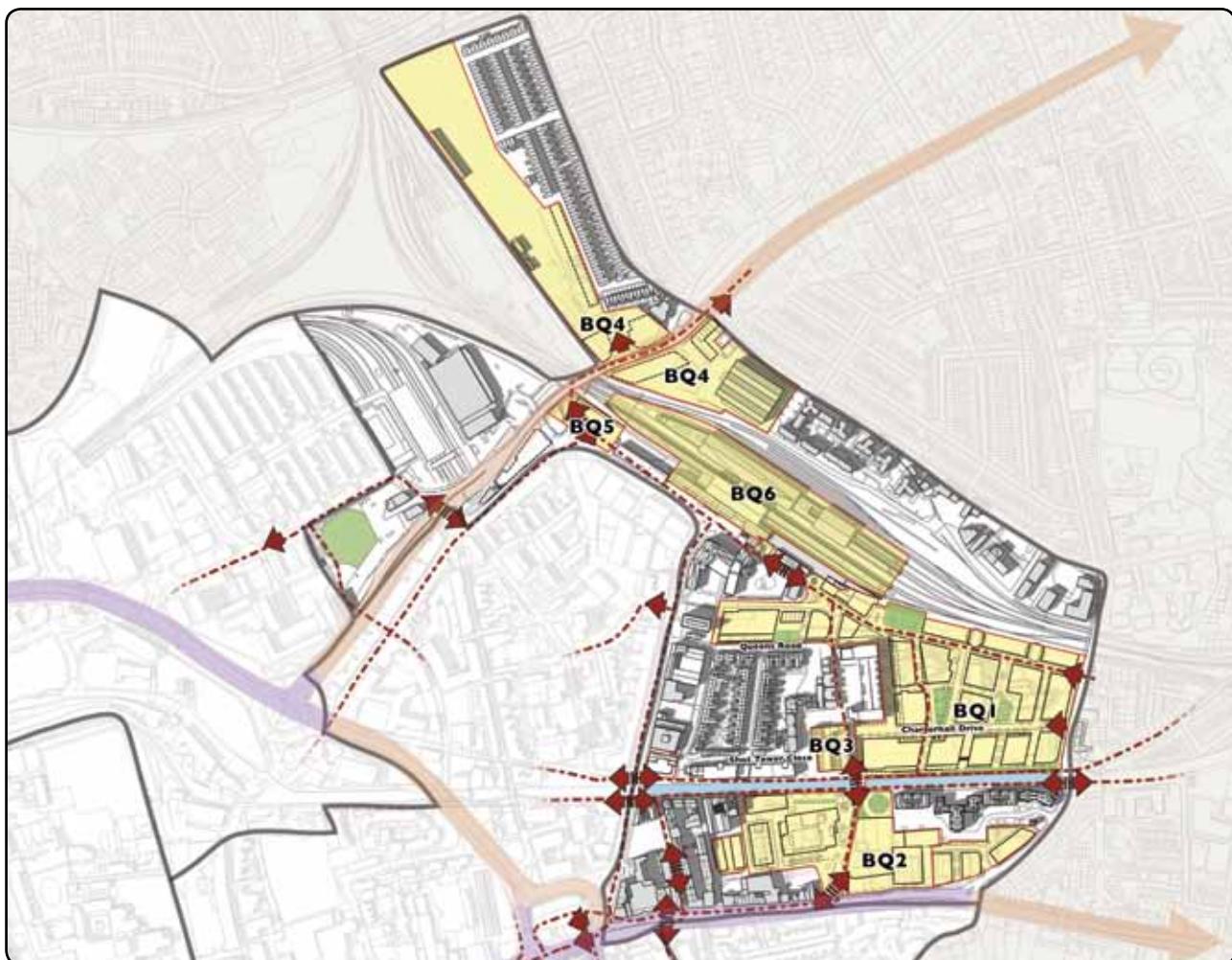
BQ2: Boughton Retail Park Redevelopment

South of Chester Central (BQ1) and the Shropshire Union Canal is the private sector retail-led mixed development of the former Boughton Retail Park. Proposals for a new pedestrian bridge over the canal will provide enhanced access to the new business district and to the Railway Station.

4.7 Development Opportunities / Business Quarter

KEY

- ← Long Views
- Yellow Main Ring Road
- Existing Buildings
- Green Spaces
-  Potential Development Areas & Building Opportunities
- ↔ Pedestrian Links
- - - Pedestrian Routes
- - - Historic City Walls



4 City of the Future



BQ3: Lead Shot Tower Redevelopment

Fronting on to the canal, adjacent to Chester Central (BQ1) is the Grade II* listed Shot Tower and former Leadworks. This tower is the oldest of three remaining shot towers in the UK, and probably the oldest structure of its kind standing in the world. Its current state is very forlorn but a residential scheme is currently in design with the ambition being to revitalise this key canal side historic structure.

BQ4: City Centre North Gateway

On both sides of the railway tracks at the top end of Brook Street there is the potential to develop a commercial offer that compliments Chester Central (BQ1) with more incubator or start up community businesses. This is a key gateway point into the city and it is under utilised at present. The vehicular bridge is very heavily trafficked and not an attractive crossing for pedestrians or cyclists. A separate foot bridge along the line of old Brook Street would much improve this experience in the long term. In the shorter term, options will be considered to reduce the conflict between vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

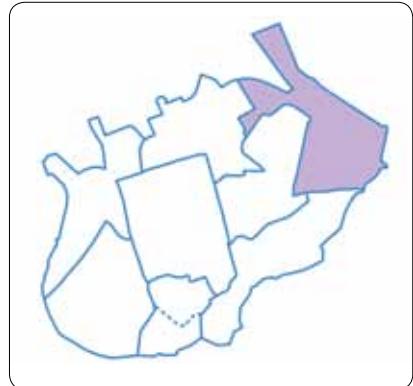


Key

- ① Chester Central Masterplan
- ② St Paul's Square Liverpool, Facade Detail
- ③ Jahn Court, Regent's Quarter, London
- ④ Münster's Port, Germany
- ⑤ Canalside, Copenhagen
- ⑥ St Paul's Square, Liverpool



4.7 Development Opportunities / Business Quarter



4 City of the Future



BQ5: Chester Railway Station Transport Hub

This site is likely to remain as rail car parking in the future and will be considered as part of the current parking strategy. Any opportunities for an interchange and links to bus services should be explored within the wider area of the Railway Station.

BQ6: Chester Rail Gateway Ongoing Improvements

There is a need to continue to improve the station as the major gateway into Chester and to continue to invest in improving rail services, connectivity (national and international via regional airports), the key pedestrian routes into the city centre and the visitor welcome. Opportunities for Chester to benefit from national and local programmes of investment in the rail infrastructure and buildings should be fully understood and maximised.



Castle Gateway

At the southern edge of the city centre, adjacent to the River Dee sits Chester Castle and a major gateway into the city. The Castle Gateway stretches along the River Dee taking in the Little Roodee and the buildings either side of Grosvenor Park Road. Iconic buildings within this part of Chester include the Castle and Inner Bailey with its impressive Parade Ground. The newly built HQ building is located on the site of the old police station in this area.

The most important aspects are to maintain and invest in the Castle complex, which is of renowned historical and architectural significance. In addition, the view from the river to the Castle and beyond to major landmarks cannot be ignored, neither can the view south from the Castle across the river and to the Welsh hills.

The ambition for the Castle Gateway site is to strengthen this distinctive part of the city by making far more use and promotion of the Castle complex and its surroundings. This should include attracting commercial opportunities within the associated buildings, creating formal public spaces and improving attractions and facilities for a greater resident and visitor experience.

CG1: The Little Roodee

The Little Roodee's location is significant in making a major contribution to the emerging Castle Gateway area. It benefits from the southerly aspect of the river, neighbouring the racecourse to the west and linking to the river promenade to the east, leading to The Groves and Grosvenor Park, and on

to St. John's Church and the Amphitheatre. The triangular site of the Little Roodee demands three strong responses all of a different nature, namely the river view, Castle Drive and Grosvenor Bridge.

Pedestrian routes along the river will link the gateway to the east (including the Amphitheatre

4.7 Development Opportunities / Castle Gateway

KEY

- Long Views
- Main Ring Road
- Existing Buildings
- Green Spaces



Potential Development Areas & Building Opportunities



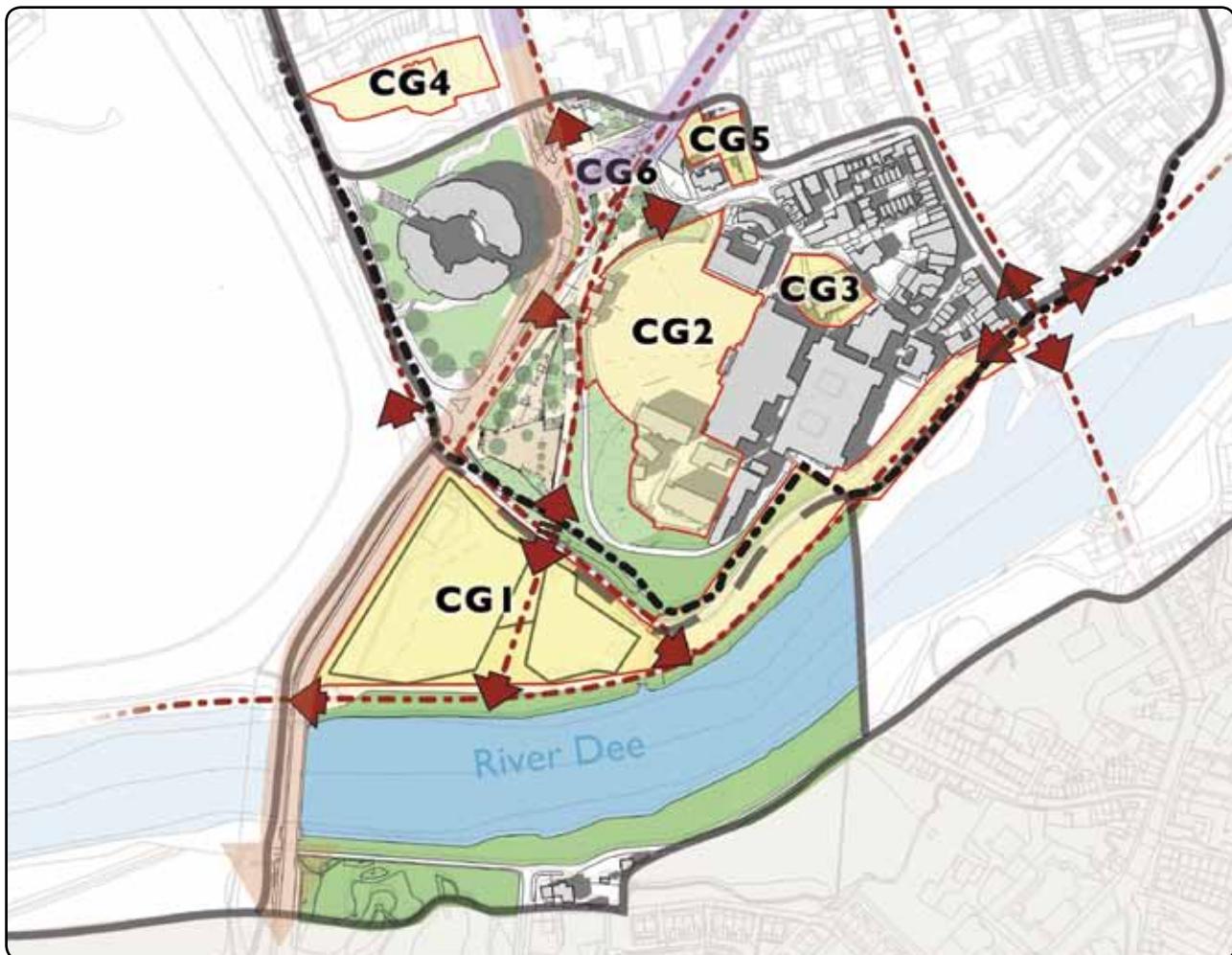
Pedestrian Links



Pedestrian Routes



Historic City Walls



4 City of the Future



and Roman Gardens) and an improved pedestrian corridor will be created to improve connectivity to the Castle itself. Lighting this route will significantly enhance the experience.

The unique water front site could be used for cultural use (considered in the overall context of a cultural strategy) but could for example be a centre for visual arts or an events space. Continuing to build on the existing cultural offer will enhance Chester's brand. The potential to link with other arts venues and programmes including Chester Festivals, community arts organisations, the Town Hall, Grosvenor Museum and the Cathedral are apparent. The geographical location of the Castle Gateway means that the area needs to be reconnected to the rest of the city so that residents and visitors alike get maximum benefit from all activities.

In order to achieve the full potential of the development opportunities in the Castle Gateway area an interlinked transport and parking strategy is

essential. The quantity of surface parking on the Little Roodee site (CG1) and similarly on the Castle grounds (CG2) is significant. The planning of the area must offer some parking (including facilities for coaches) and the massing of this must be considered carefully.

CG2: Chester Castle

The Castle complex is integral to strengthening this distinctive part of the city. The complex is recognised as one of great historic and architectural value and includes both remaining parts of the medieval castle (dating back to 1070) and later internationally renowned buildings and structures designed by Thomas Harrison. The significant historic and heritage assets include the Inner Bailey, Napier and Colvin House, Agricola Tower, great entrance gateway (Propylaeum), former Shire Hall (now the Crown Courts) and military museum.

Considered as a whole, opportunities for an exciting heritage visitor attraction and complementary commercial activities will be supported. This will maximise the full potential of this unique, historic setting.

CG3: St Mary's Centre

Proposals to use the St Mary's Centre facility to provide a small-scale community performing arts venue are supported.

CG4: Former St Martin's Lodge, Nuns Road

The building fronting Nicholas Street is to be retained and returned to use.

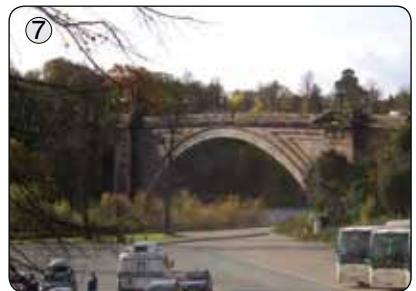
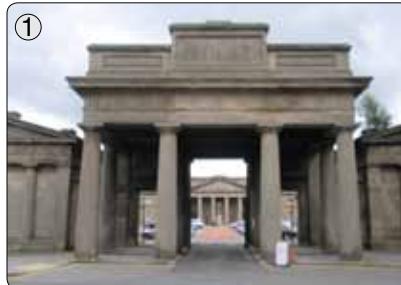
CG5: Grosvenor Museum

Investment in Grosvenor Museum in the short-medium term will secure its position as the flagship museum for telling the story of Chester's history. This will form part of the cultural masterplan and heritage asset review.

CG6: Grosvenor Roundabout

The Grosvenor Bridge and route to and from North Wales contributes to almost a quarter of Chester's daily trips into the city. The Castle Gateway has the potential to become a network hub. A large obstacle affecting linkages with the historic core is the barrier created by Grosvenor Street and Nicholas Street and the connecting roundabout. In the future down-grading this road system and reordering the roundabout into a four way

4.7 Development Opportunities / Castle Gateway



Key

- ① Propylaeum, Chester Castle
- ② Toledo Castle, Spain
- ③ St Mary's Hill
- ④ Chester Castle Complex
- ⑤ Custom House Square Fountains, Belfast
- ⑥ Grosvenor Road Roundabout
- ⑦ Grosvenor Bridge
- ⑧ Riverside Building, University

4 City of the Future



junction could connect the Castle Gateway to the Commonhall Street area and Rows in a more significant way. This major infrastructural change will improve the connectivity for the castle area and plays an important role in the sequencing of potential interventions to the inner ring road. It will be considered as part of the Transport Implementation Plan.

The Groves, Riverfront and Amphitheatre

Without the River Dee Chester would not have come in to existence. The people's relationship with the river has shaped the Chester we see today. Along its edge there are kiosks, cafes and bars, landing stages and a bandstand. People enjoy the river, hiring boats and going on cruises. Concerts and regattas take place in the summer months and local artisans sell their work along the base of the historic wall. Yet despite its attractiveness, at times the River Dee is anonymous from view.

The desire to reconnect the city back to the river and vice versa is a corner stone to the One City Plan. In order to make this transformation a series of interventions along the river will begin to strengthen this relationship and improve the environs of this superb natural asset.

G1: Water Station on the River Dee

A potential scheme exists at the Weir on the River Dee to re-install a hydro electric generating system. An initial feasibility study concluded that reusing the existing pumping station with the construction of an Archimedean screw system can deliver renewable energy of a considerable quantity. A further study is currently commissioned to take the project to a construction point with all appropriate licences and planning applications completed. In addition to producing energy, the building itself can once more become a place to visit both for education

and tourism. The energy produced could be targeted towards specific uses and projects e.g. public realm lighting scheme along The Groves or the City Walls.

G2: Amphitheatre, Dee House and Roman Gardens

Despite its historical significance the Amphitheatre is somewhat of an anti climax. Adjacent to this structure today stand Dee House and the Chester Visitor Centre, and along Souters Lane to the western edge are the Roman Gardens. This collection of buildings and spaces can become a must see historical, cultural and educational attraction.

4.7 Development Opportunities / The Groves, Riverfront and Amphitheatre

KEY

- Long Views
- Main Ring Road
- Existing Buildings
- Green Spaces



Potential Development Areas & Building Opportunities



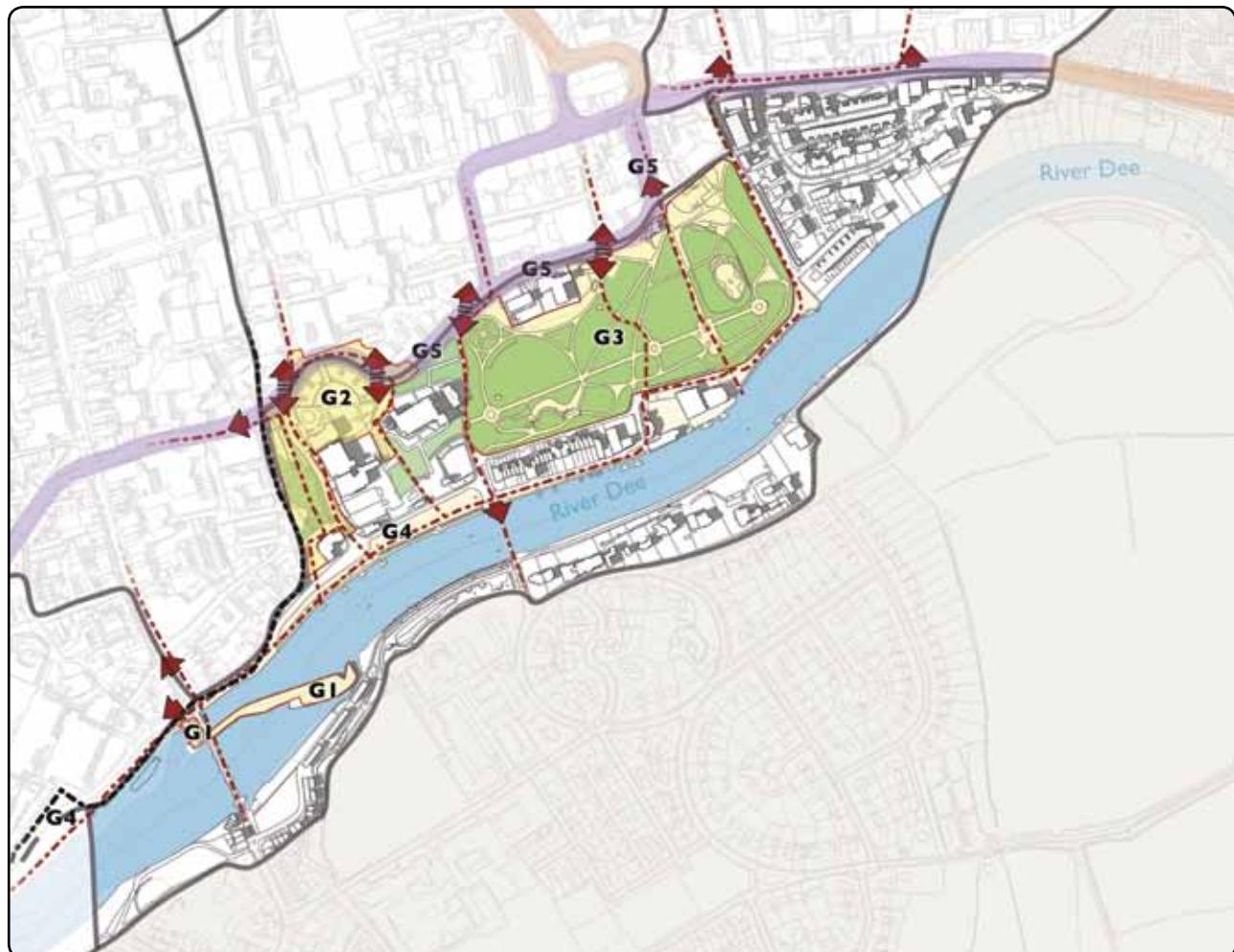
Pedestrian Links



Pedestrian Routes



Historic City Walls



4 City of the Future



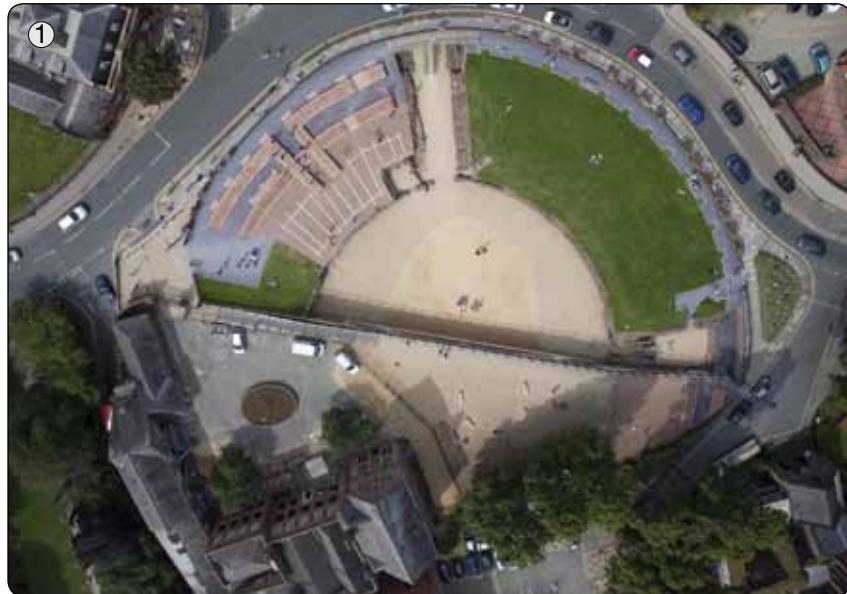
The already established Chester Festivals provides a regular summer events schedule based in and around the Amphitheatre. Building on this seasonal event a more appropriate and permanent solution can be established with arena seating expressing the grandeur of the lost Amphitheatre.

Dee House is a listed structure sitting over an ancient monument. This situation happens in many parts of the city. Consideration will need to take place to make the best use of Dee House to add to the potential vibrancy and appeal of the Amphitheatre project.

Souters Lane and the Roman Gardens need to work better together. Enhancing permeability through the Roman Gardens provides the missing link to the river that the city requires.

Key

- ① The Amphitheatre
- ② Roman Event in the Amphitheatre
- ③ Monument at Grosvenor Park
- ④ The Groves
- ⑤ Queen's Park Suspension Bridge



4.7 Development Opportunities / The Groves, Riverfront and Amphitheatre



4 City of the Future



①



Key

- ① River Dee
- ② Grosvenor Park
- ③ River cruise on the Dee
- ④ Monument at Grosvenor Park
- ⑤ River Dee and Weir

②



③



④



⑤



4.7 Development Opportunities / The Groves, Riverfront and Amphitheatre

G3: Grosvenor Park

Grosvenor Park is a valuable green leisure and recreational asset within the city. The open air theatre in the park should remain as a key event in Chester's cultural programme. Proposals for a major project to improve the park have secured HLF grant and permissions. The contribution that this will make to accessibility and permeability to the river and the city centre is encouraged. The project includes enhancing pedestrian linkages through the Park to The Groves and River Dee. This will also provide better connectivity to the city centre, St John's Church and the Amphitheatre.

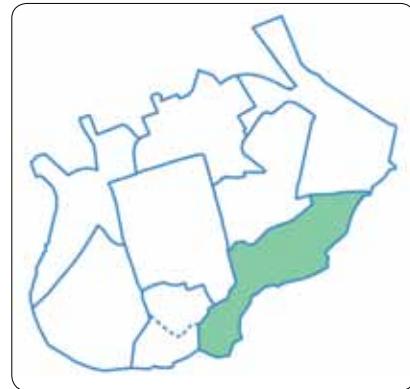
G4: River Dee Waterfront

The enhancements of the River Dee Waterfront will improve the quality of the public realm from Lower Bridge Street and along Castle Drive. This could include enhanced lighting of the Walls walkway (utilising energy generated from the weir proposal), alteration of the roadway to a

shared surface and improvement of the green spaces and signage to the Little Roodee and Chester Castle. Animation and use of the riverside for independent quality markets and events is also a key part of encouraging people to use the waterfront space.

G5: Vicars Lane, Union Street and Grosvenor Park Road

The greater use of the Amphitheatre will eventually spill into the street where temporary closure of Pepper Street to traffic will be required. The management of this street culture will offer ideas as to how Vicars Lane, Little St John Street and Pepper Street can be down-graded and become more shared surface spaces over time. Servicing and access requirements will need to be considered carefully. However, it is desirable to reduce the dominance of the vehicle here as much as possible, to promote pedestrian activity around the Amphitheatre and Grosvenor Park and also importantly to reconnect the river with the city centre.



4 City of the Future



The Bars

The Bars may not be recognisable as a distinct area in its own right at present, but historically and in urban design terms, this pocket of Chester is very important. It is bounded by Gorse Stacks, the historic core, The Groves, and the business quarter. The western edge is defined by Brook Street which has been a major thoroughfare from the city centre to the north, and significantly Flookers Brook; the meandering stream now lost under the railway. Other major movement corridors through The Bars area are Boughton Road and its continuation into Foregate Street, and also the Shropshire Union Canal.

TB1: The Bars Gyratory

The Bars roundabout is a problematic gyratory system that needs attention. The One City Plan suggests a multi phased approach to reduce the impact and severance of The Bars gyratory on pedestrians and cyclists, and to improve the public realm and open spaces in the area. This should ultimately see a step-change in the quality of the environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

The first phase of the scheme will be to fill in the existing subway system and replace it with quality surface crossings on the arms of the junction at convenient locations. Traffic capacity will be reduced by removing a traffic lane

and widening footways in these locations. In addition, the southern arm of Grosvenor Park Road / Union Street will be made a two-way link and fully integrated into the gyratory. This will then allow Foregate Street to be made into a two-way bus only link between Love Street and The Bars.

The second phase will be to close the southern carriageway around the gyratory. The junction will then be reduced to a four arm signal junction at the south east corner incorporating Boughton Road, Grosvenor Park Road, City Road and St Oswald's Way. The development site created from these changes will then be converted to a public square.



Key

- ① Foregate Street
- ② Chester Railway Station

4.7 Development Opportunities / The Bars

KEY

- Long Views
- Main Ring Road
- Existing Buildings
- Green Spaces



Potential Development Areas & Building Opportunities



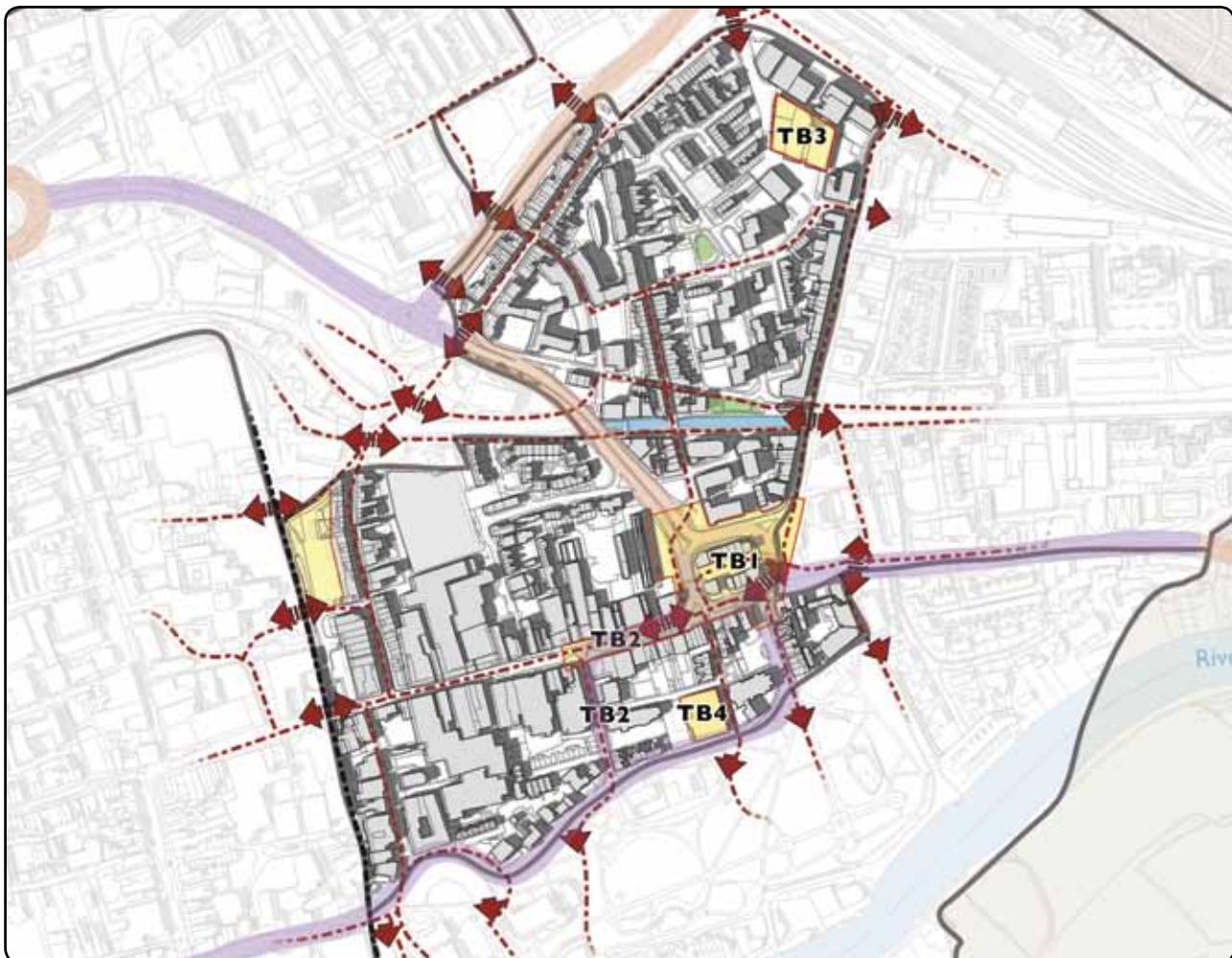
Pedestrian Links



Pedestrian Routes



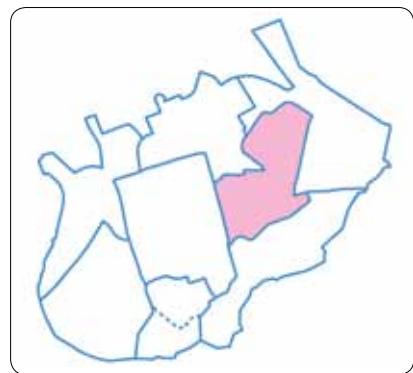
Historic City Walls



4 City of the Future



Key
① City Road
② The Bars



4.7 Development Opportunities / Gorse Stacks

TB2: Foregate Street Transport Links

Transport links along Foregate Street are integral to the potential redevelopment of The Bars gyratory (TB1). This would consist of the creation of a two-way bus only link on Foregate Street and Love Street between The Bars roundabout and Vicars Lane, and locating 'super stops' in both directions.

Both TB1 and TB2 will be tested as part of the Transport Implementation Plan.

TB3: Former Bus Depot, Station Road

This site is in private ownership and has a current planning permission for a residential development.

TB4: City Baths

Redevelopment of Chester City Baths should happen in the short - medium term, and must take account of the heritage of the site.

Gorse Stacks

Gorse Stacks plays a major significance in Chester both geographically and historically. Being just outside the City Walls, this strategic location has always, and remains today, vital to the city. Despite its current condition and perceived disconnection with the historic core, Gorse Stacks is a major gateway into the city centre. Access is mainly by car, with the pedestrian experience being less friendly and difficult having to navigate the ring road and using underpasses. Currently the buildings in this area are dominated by food retail stores and a bingo hall which may fair better in other suitable locations, leaving the leisure and residential opportunities that the canal can offer.

Gorse Stacks must return back to a major entry point into the city and as a prime desire line from the city centre along Brook Street to the Railway Station. Several major development opportunities could be located in this area to begin the process. It will take several elements working together to give momentum and bring critical mass to the area in order for it to work effectively and the One City Plan recommends the comprehensive masterplanning and redevelopment of this location.



4 City of the Future



KEY

- Long Views
- Main Ring Road
- Existing Buildings
- Green Spaces



Potential Development Areas & Building Opportunities



Pedestrian Links



Pedestrian Routes



Historic City Walls



4.7 Development Opportunities / Gorse Stacks

GS1: Lower Gorse Stacks and Cow Lane

Part of lower Gorse Stacks is currently being considered as an option for the location of a future bus facility. This should be implemented as part of a wider scheme in this area and tested as part of a masterplanning process.

The site should incorporate an element of gateway car parking to serve the traffic entering the city centre from the A56 Hoole Way corridor.

To support the bus facility and retail offer already established in this part of Chester, the wider scheme on Lower Gorse Stacks could also incorporate a new retail opportunity.

The canal side amenity must be maximised to its full potential in this location by introducing signage and developing a mixed use scheme that includes residential with active ground floor retail / leisure uses fronting onto the canal.

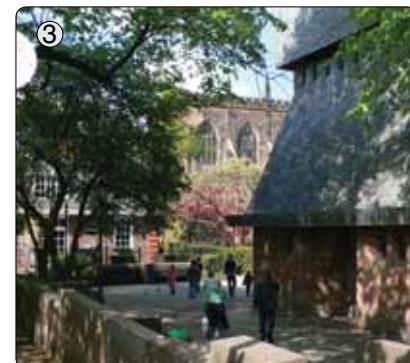
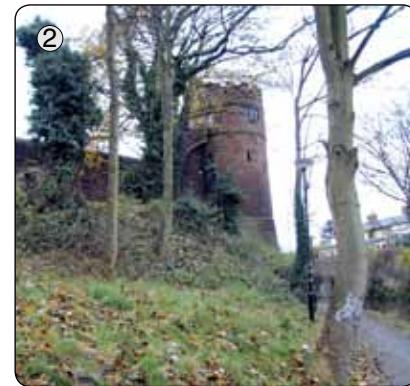
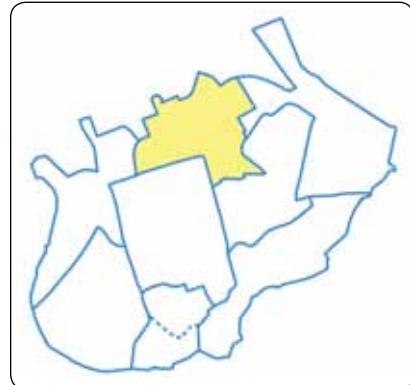
Key

- ① Gorse Stacks aerial view
- ② King Charles Tower
- ③ Chester Cathedral Quarter

GS2: Kaleyards and land adjacent

The One City Plan supports exploring options for development of this area, linked to Frodsham Street. However, it must first be noted that the current provision of disabled car parking and shopmobility are very important and would need to be considered as part of the development process. If its present use or the constraints of the site mean that development is not practical then it is still considered important that the Kaleyards must have some other function than a car park alone.

The connection through the City Walls into the Cathedral Quarter is very attractive and should be enhanced by creating a small public square to the north of the Kaleyards.



4 City of the Future



This would also enable an attractive environment to be created linking with the canal side and to the new development on Lower Gorse Stacks and Cow Lane.

GS3: Northgate Arena and car park

Northgate Arena sits at the northern tip of the Gorse Stacks area and CWaC aims to relocate this leisure facility to better suited locations in the city. This will free up this area of land and could help with the relocation of some of the facilities that will need to be replaced from other project areas within Gorse Stacks.

GS4: St Oswald's Way and Brook Street

The reorganisation of the roundabout at lower Gorse Stacks and the removal of the underpasses would ease the impact of Hoole Way roundabout as a barrier to pedestrians and cyclists. In particular the connection with the north of the city, Brook Street and the Railway Station and the links between Brook Street and Frodsham Street would be improved.

Ports and Wharfs

Chester Ports and Wharfs are located in the west of the city and share frontages with both the Shropshire Union Canal and the River Dee. This area has been the subject of much redevelopment in the past, regenerating brownfield land around the canal and the river for mixed uses including a high level of new residential schemes.

The Ports and Wharfs are connected by the Shropshire Union Canal to Chester Zoo and Ellesmere Port. These links should be greatly promoted and improved to increase the links between Chester city centre and neighbouring attractions.

Given the significance of the Canal and River Dee as a network of waterways from a leisure, visual, urban form and heritage perspective it is vital that a comprehensive Waterways Strategy is developed for the city. Chester Renaissance will work with the Canal and Rivers Trust and the Chester Canal Heritage Trust to deliver this and to maximise the potential of the waterways as an economic and social asset.

CP1: Tower Wharf

Tower Wharf is the most recent and ongoing development, with planning permission granted for a mixed use canal side development. This comprises of residential town houses and apartments and three office buildings. Included within this development is the conversion of a Grade II listed structure into further office accommodation and ground floor retail space.

The One City Plan supports the existing residential proposals on the site but recommends that the council works with the landowner to attempt to revise the commercial scheme proposals to better reflect

the potential of this suburban canal side frontage environment. Delivery of further appropriate residential development on this site is supported given the sustainability of the site in relation to proximity to the city centre. Smaller scale premises for SME occupiers and retail / leisure uses to support the residential element of a revised scheme should also be considered i.e. café and small food retail offer.

CP2: Former Bluebird Garage Site

The One City Plan supports the residential redevelopment of this site for low density family housing.

4.7 Development Opportunities / Ports and Wharfs

KEY

- Long Views
- Main Ring Road
- Existing Buildings
- Green Spaces



Potential Development Areas & Building Opportunities



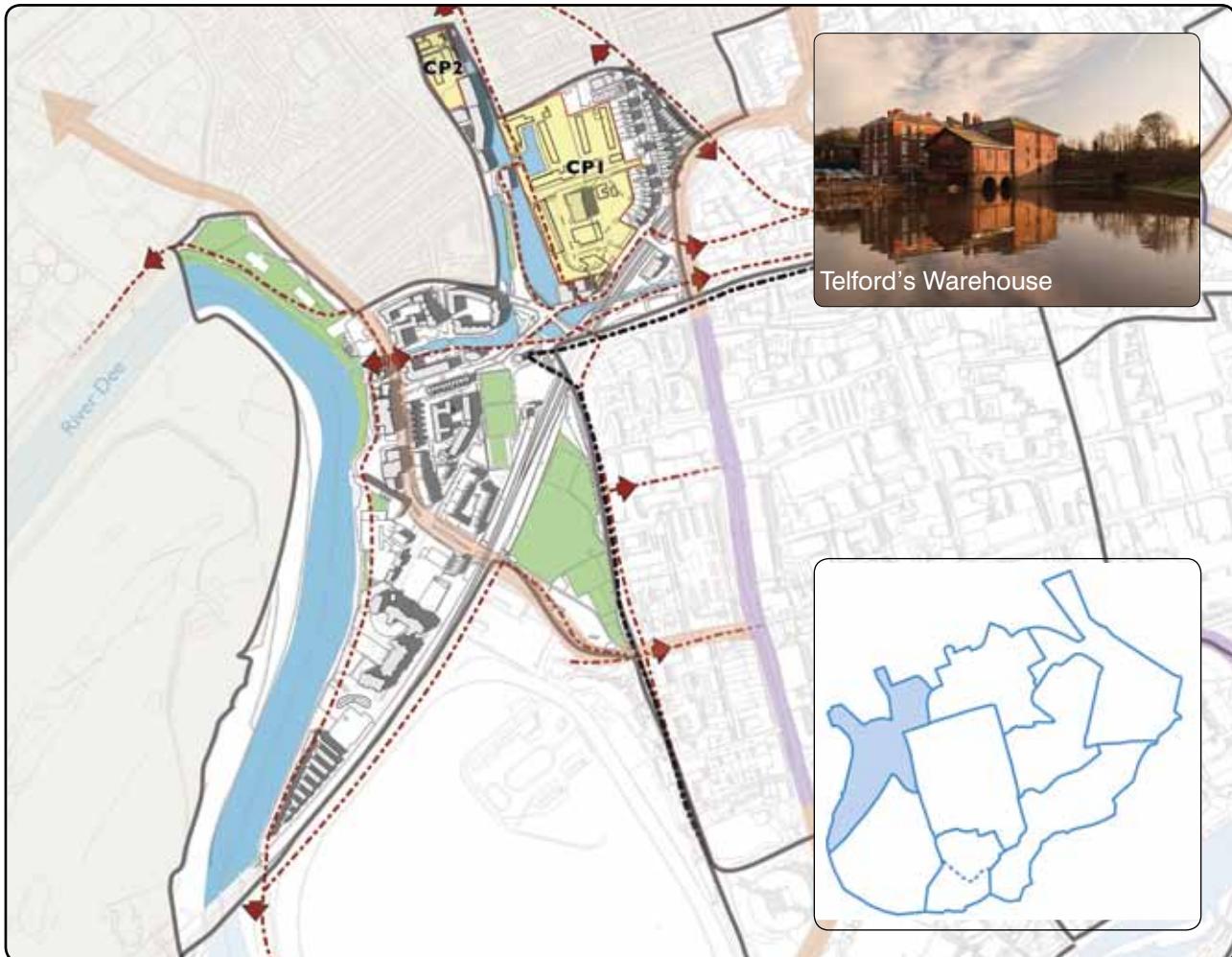
Pedestrian Links



Pedestrian Routes



Historic City Walls



4 City of the Future



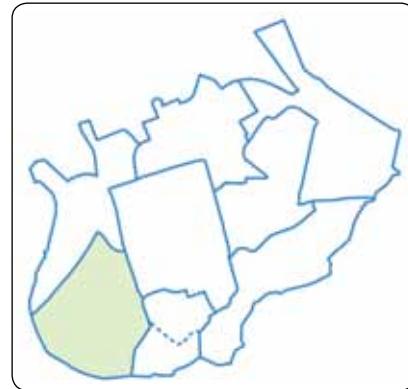
Racecourse

Chester Racecourse is nestled within a meander of the River Dee; sitting to the north west of Grosvenor Bridge with the Roman Walls running along the north eastern boundary. Chester Castle and the HQ building are visible from the Racecourse.

RC1: Potential Conference Facility

The One City Plan is supportive of the development of a conference / convention events centre within the grounds of Chester Racecourse, in line with the Feasibility Testing and Options Appraisal undertaken by Locum Consulting. These studies found that an appropriate scale of venue could provide for 1,200 delegates, exhibitions and popular music. It is recommended that the council works closely with Chester Race Company to achieve this project.

Existing gateway car parking provision on New Crane Street intercepts traffic prior to reaching the ring road, thus reducing the need for cars to travel along Watergate Street and to enter the city centre core.



Key

- ① Show Jumping
- ② Chester Racecourse
- ③ Chester Races



4.7 Development Opportunities / Racecourse

KEY

- Long Views
- Main Ring Road
- Existing Buildings
- Green Spaces



Potential Development Areas & Building Opportunities



Pedestrian Links



Pedestrian Routes



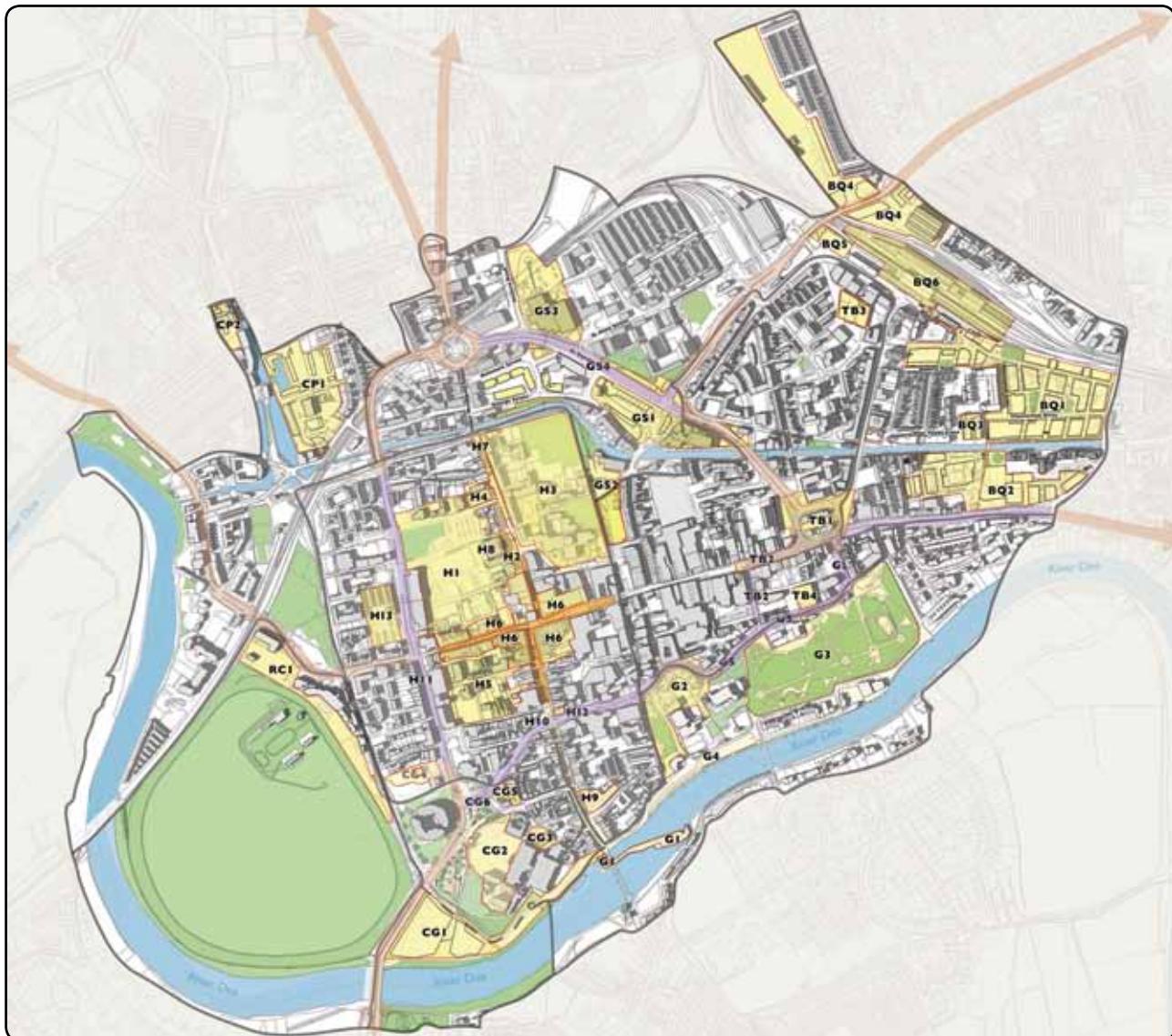
Historic City Walls



5 Delivery



The Big Picture after 15 years



5.1 Timeline

A key part of the One City Plan is ‘how’ the programme of development opportunities will be achieved and delivered. This section is intended to explain the anticipated programme and then the roles, structures and mechanisms to support and ensure delivery.

The One City Plan is a 15 year framework, it is broken down here into phase 1 (0 to 3 years), phase 2 (4 to 6 years) and phase 3 (7 to 15 years). Each of the development opportunities are illustrated on the timeline within the phase that they are anticipated to be delivered. Those projects where concept/feasibility is a key part of their delivery are included at this stage.

The key to the right defines the colour coding for the phases and categories of projects, including development projects, infrastructure (including public realm) and business / investment. Some projects are referenced as ‘city wide’ due to their impact across the city centre.

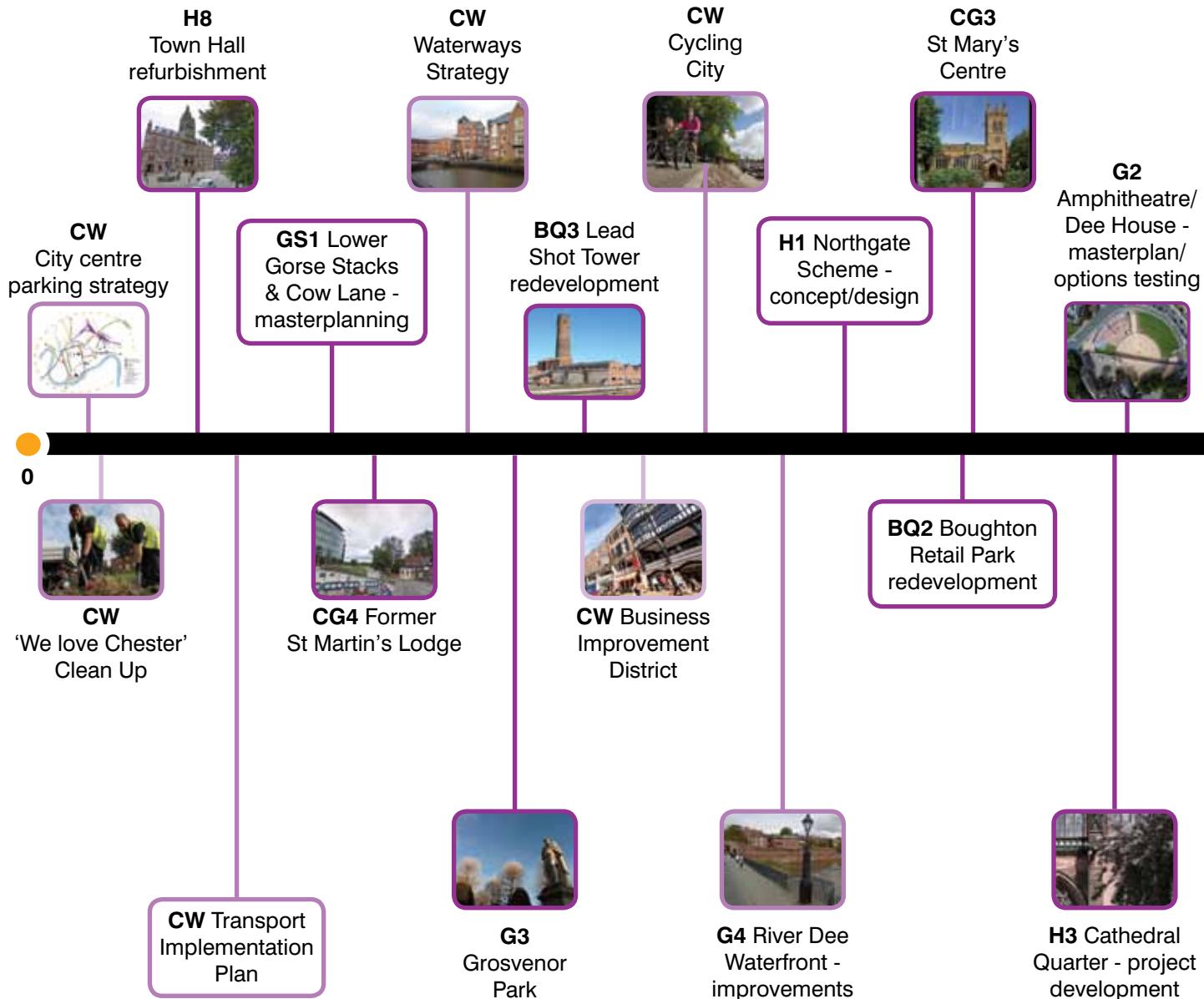
TIMELINE KEY

-  0-3 YEARS (2012 - 2015) – Development Project
-  0-3 YEARS (2012 - 2015) – Infrastructure
-  0-3 YEARS (2012 - 2015) – Business/Investment

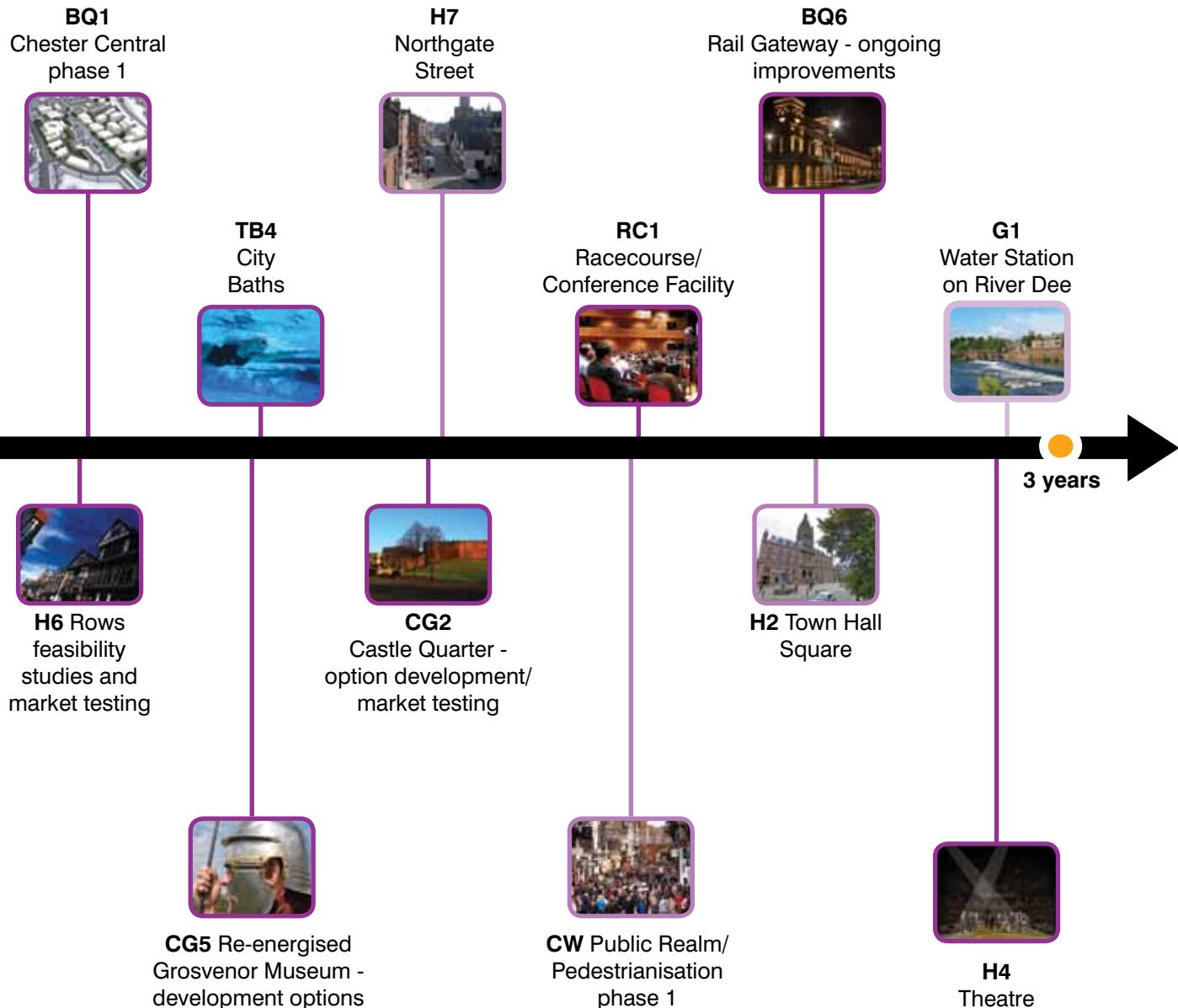
-  4-6 YEARS (2016 - 2018) – Development Project
-  4-6 YEARS (2016 - 2018) – Infrastructure
-  4-6 YEARS (2016 - 2018) – Business/Investment

-  7-15 YEARS (2019 - 2027) – Development Project
-  7-15 YEARS (2019 - 2027) – Infrastructure
-  7-15 YEARS (2019 - 2027) – Business/Investment

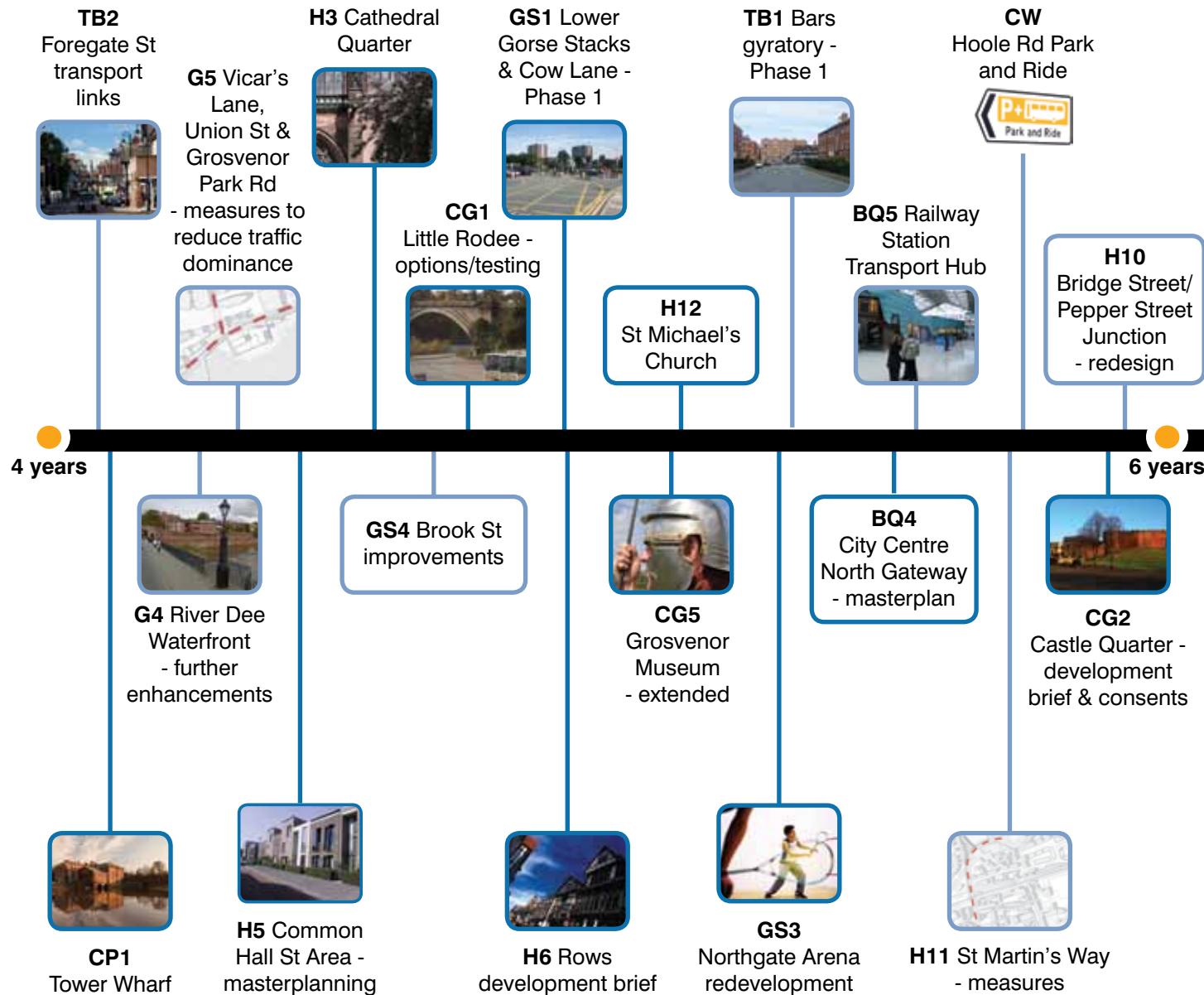
5 Delivery



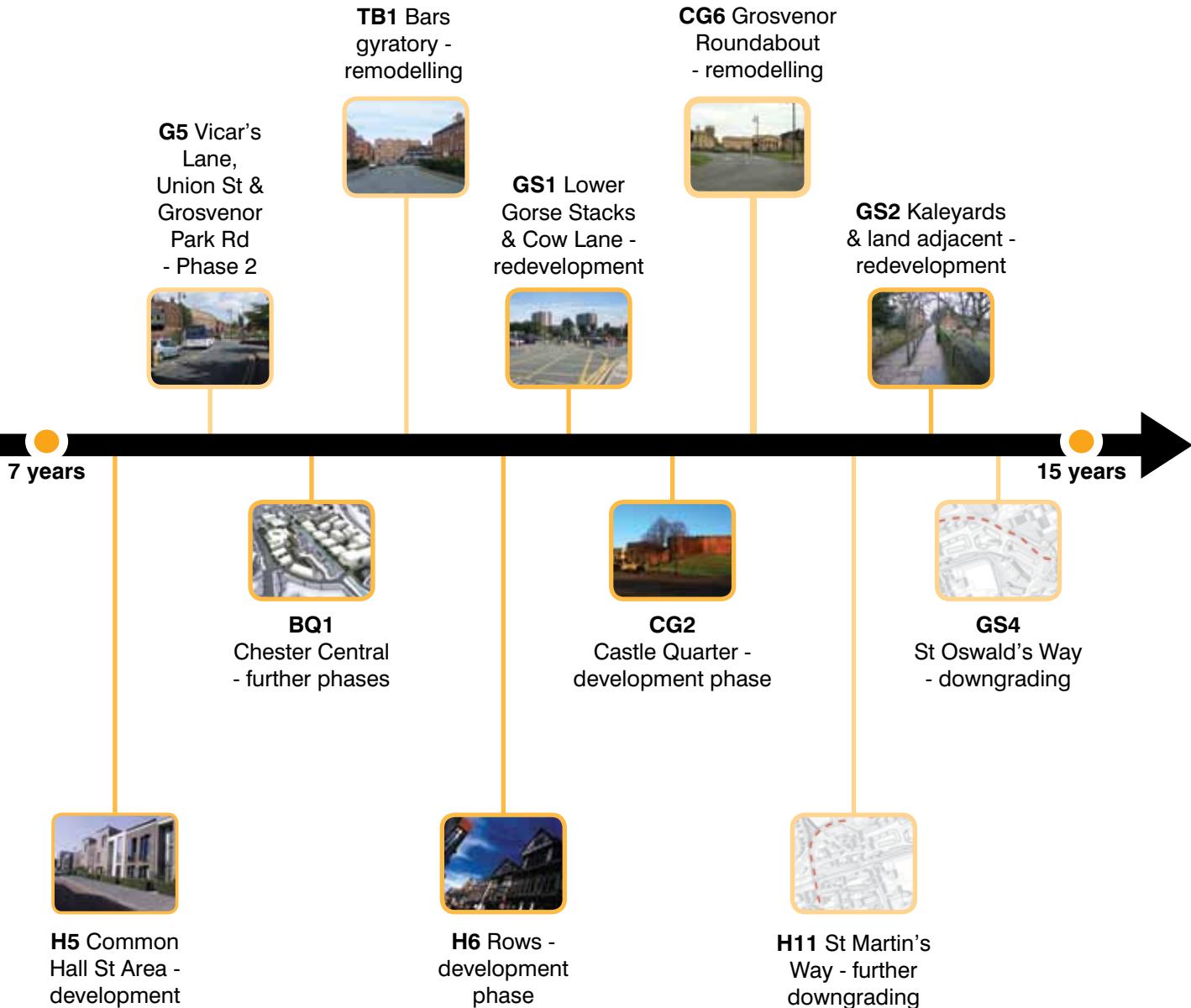
5.1 Timeline



5 Delivery



5.1 Timeline



5 Delivery

3 Year Delivery Plan

The priorities for years 0 to 3 (2012 to 2015) are (by category);



Major Development Projects

Chester Central –
Phase 1 (BQ1)

Northgate Scheme –
concept/design
development (H1)

Theatre (H4)

Rows Project –
feasibility (H6)

Major visitor attraction/
Re-energised Museum –
feasibility and option
development: (G2/CG5)

Racecourse/Conference
Facility (RC1)

Cathedral Quarter (H3)

Castle Quarter –
option development/market
testing (CG2)

Transport Implementation Plan

City Centre

Business Improvement District –
implementation

'We Love Chester' Clean Up
Campaign (pilot 2012)

Movement/Access

(Including Public Realm)

Revitalise River Dee
Waterfront (G4)

Public Realm and
Pedestrianisation phase 1
(including historic core streets
and key linkages to gateways)

Waterways Strategy for the city

Business/Investment

Business Hub –
support/infrastructure
for SMEs/entrepreneurs

Graduate Retention/Support

Inward Investment/employer
relationships

Water Station on the
River Dee (G1)

5.2 Programme Delivery



Leadership and organisation

The One City Plan has examined the ‘fitness for purpose’ in which projects have been delivered in Chester. A number of features were apparent – a number of masterplans, development briefs and strategies that did not appreciate or consider the city as a whole; very few ‘ready to go’ projects; and an approach largely dependent on external public sector funding.

The ULI findings further highlighted confusion in the landscape of leadership and governance. Responsibilities for delivering and coordinating a major programme of investment across both the public and private sectors were unclear.

Cheshire West and Chester Council, Chester Renaissance, and partner organisations in the city have since moved to rectify this situation and set in place a renewed leadership and governance structure to manage and deliver the programme of investment identified within the One City Plan.

This new way of working builds upon the positive progress that has been made by the Chester Renaissance programme and the formation of the new unitary Council. The components of this structure are outlined below.

Sub regional strategy, influencing and promotion

The Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) will provide a high-level strategic role across the sub-region to co-ordinate economic development activity, set the strategy for private sector-led economic growth and liaise with partners to identify and agree key economic priorities.

Strategic leadership and accountability

The Chester Renaissance Strategic Board is the ‘guardian’ of the One City Plan – defining the overall strategic direction of it, recommending key investment and funding priorities, influencing partners to secure resources from the private sector, and championing Chester as a business location to existing

and potential inward investors. It will play a key role in ensuring Chester is effectively positioned to take advantage of new and emerging funding and delivery initiatives.

It will act as the interface between Cheshire West and Chester Council, Chester Renaissance, partner agencies and wider stakeholders (the latter through a series of local Advisory Panels). In doing so, the Board will be held accountable to local stakeholders for the strategic decisions made in the following areas:

- Managing the City through City Centre Management (including commissioning the delivery of a new Business Improvement District in the city centre)
- Business in the City (working with the newly formed Cheshire West and Chester Business Hub, new partnerships and a particular focus on new inward investments)
- Developing the City (commissioning the delivery of the One City Plan capital and revenue programme)

5 Delivery

- Animating the City (working with the Events and Festivals Board)
- Marketing the City (working with a reconstituted Marketing Cheshire)

Legitimacy

The One City Plan is a ‘live’ and evolving document. Its vision, objectives and projects have been widely consulted upon to ensure its legitimacy. Continuing to engage to obtain the support and ownership of the local communities, businesses and other stakeholders will be critical to ensuring the One City Plan remains accountable to the people of Chester.

The city finds itself in a new era of ‘Localism’, where the responsibility for setting priorities rests jointly with the local authorities, local stakeholders and local communities in partnership. The powers and resources for delivery now rest firmly at this level.

In order to maintain a participatory relationship a ‘One City Forum’ and specific topic related Advisory Panels (businesses, local residents, etc) are proposed to engage with the Renaissance Board to review progress, develop new ideas and refine existing ones. It is anticipated that these groups will formally assemble bi-annually for progress meetings.

Project delivery

The diagram below summarises this renewed governance structure. It provides clearer coordination and leadership and a renewed focus for directing investment and resources in delivering the One City Plan ambition. Within this structure significant activity has taken place to identify and prioritise the actions and potential mechanisms through which the One City Plan and its programme of component projects will be managed from concept to design and into operational delivery.

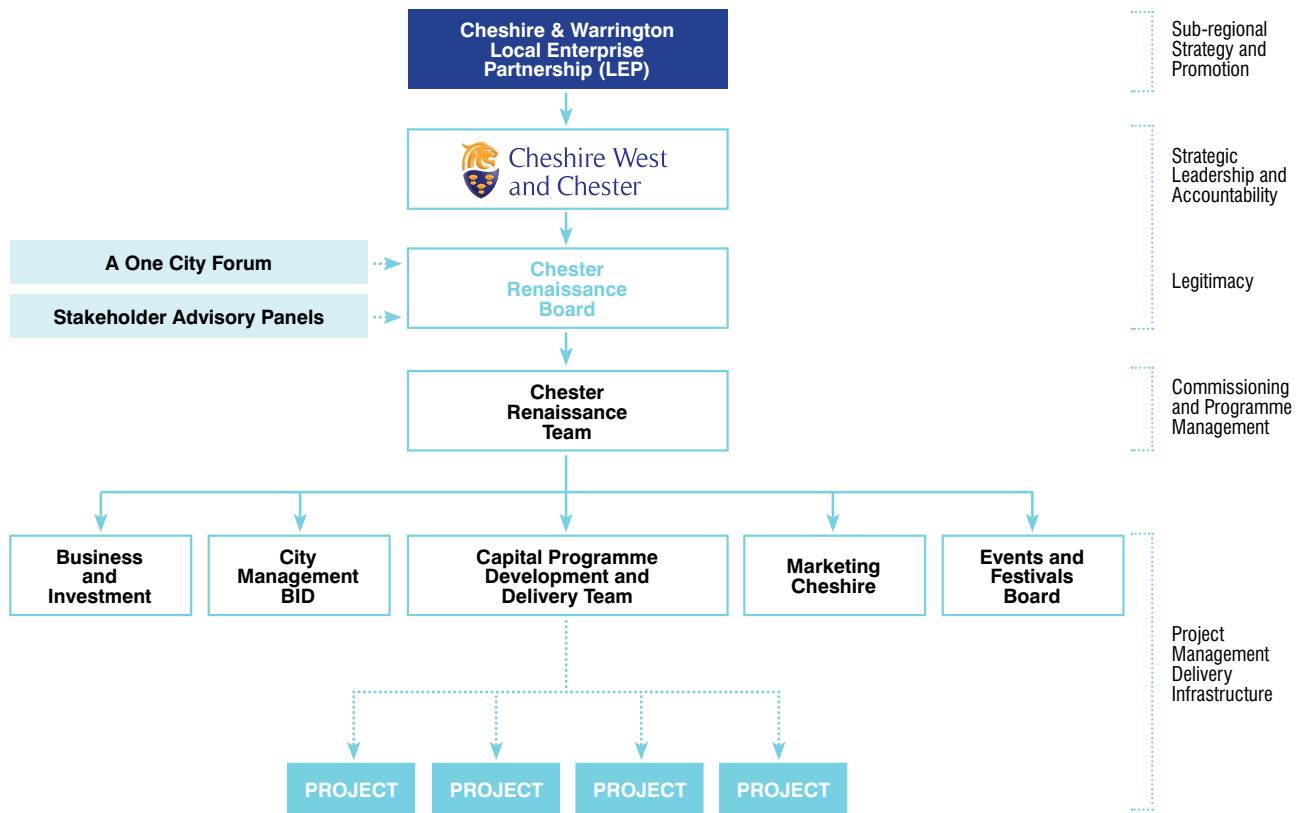
Commissioning and programme management

The Chester Renaissance team will support the Board in overseeing and co-ordinating the delivery of the One City Plan programme of projects. Drawing on the strategic advice of the Renaissance Board and its partners, Chester Renaissance will act as a commissioning body to monitor progress on projects across the programme. It will not be directly responsible for the day-to-day delivery of individual projects. Chester Renaissance will provide a leading role in monitoring the overall progress of the One City Plan against its vision, aims and objectives by drawing on key local indicators and wider comparables.

5.2 Programme Delivery



Chester One City Plan Governance Structure



5 Delivery

Funding and finance structures

The present era of public sector funding cuts and pressures on reduced budgets is challenging the ability of the public sector to invest in regeneration projects. Local authorities are, however, gaining greater financial independence from Central Government, which provides renewed scope for the use of more innovative delivery mechanisms and financing structures in order to facilitate regeneration.

It is necessary to understand what sources of funding and options for finance mechanisms/structures could be applied to achieve, and accelerate, the delivery of regeneration and development projects, in line with the overall vision and objectives set within the One City Plan.

Analysis of these options and their appropriate fit and opportunity for projects within the Chester One City Plan Programme is ongoing. This will require continuous future monitoring as funding criteria or external circumstances change.

A summary of the potential different sources and mechanisms currently under consideration by the Council is provided in the tables below. They are categorised into three types as follows:

Mainstream Sources – these cover ‘traditional’ sources of funding, which will play a role in the delivery of the programme. New initiatives from Central Government and grant programmes are part of this category. However it should be noted that the decline in the level of public grants available and the current challenging financial environment have significantly reduced the potential for funding complete projects from these sources. As a result, unless they are used innovatively in combination, or alongside other mechanisms, they are unlikely to make a significant contribution to funding the programme of projects within the One City Plan in the future.

New Funding Initiatives – new initiatives that could contribute additional funding support for key infrastructure projects.

Structured Funding Mechanisms – highlighting other potential innovative structures / mechanisms that could be explored by Cheshire West and Chester Council, the Renaissance Board and partners.

5.2 Programme Delivery



Type	Source/Fund
Mainstream	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capital Programme• Capital Receipts (from the sale of land/buildings) and development contributions• Prudential Borrowing• Government and European Grant Funding• New Homes Bonus• Enterprise Zones• Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)• Growth Funds (Regional Growth Fund and Growing Places Fund)
New Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tax Increment Financing (TIF)• Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)• Infrastructure Funds (Private Sector/Pension Funds)
Structured Funding Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas (JESSICA)• Joint Venture Development Agreements

Further details of these funding sources are available upon request from Cheshire West and Chester Council.

5 Delivery

Monitoring and Review

The One City Plan is a ‘live document’ – with an active management, monitoring and review process in place to effectively align the programme to the wider economic climate. This programme is flexible – over time and with changing economic circumstances – timescales and projects are likely to change as the city evolves.

The One City Plan does not resist alternative development from coming forward, but does provide a clear steer towards the type of action, intervention and development that would be most suited to different areas in the city, after considering Chester as a whole.

It is intended that the One City Plan will be reviewed and where necessary amended to reflect any major changes that impact on the feasibility and deliverability of any of the projects supported within it. The timeframe for reviewing the Plan will be annual, with a full review of the delivery plan after the first three years. Reviews will be completed by Chester Renaissance and the

Council in consultation with the wider community. The review process will also take account of the annual monitoring duties and assessment of performance against strategic growth targets – undertaken by the Council’s Spatial Planning team.

The information gathered and analysed during the development of the One City Plan, and presented within the Appendix – ‘The City of Now’ (March 2011), provides a comprehensive foundation from which to build a performance monitoring framework. This framework will be developed and put in place in time for the first review of the One City Plan and will then be revisited on an annual basis. The implications arising from the emerging trends in the data will be highlighted for consideration by the partners in order to make informed decisions regarding performance and the future priorities for the programme. It will be the responsibility of the Chester Renaissance team to manage inputs into this process and provide a regular progress report to the Chester Renaissance Board.



6 Acknowledgements

In producing the One City Plan a number of individuals, groups and organisations have provided invaluable assistance and inputs. Gratitude is extended to all residents and stakeholders of Chester, and in particular those who contributed to the debate and discussion through the workshops and drop in sessions and provided consultation responses.

Cheshire West and Chester Council and Chester Renaissance would also like to thank the following members of the team for helping to produce this document:

Aecom

Donald Insall Associates

Fraser Blair Associates

GVA

RHWL Architects

PPS

Appendices

The One City Plan should be read in conjunction with the following appendices:

Appendix 1:

'City of Now' document – includes explanation and reference to the informing strategies, reviews and policies in Chester and technical data

Appendix 2:

Summary of consultation

Appendix 3:

Manifesto for Contemporary Design

Appendix 4:

Delivery Framework

Accessing Cheshire West and Chester Council information and services

Council information is also available in Audio, Braille, Large Print or other formats. If you would like a copy in a different format, in another language or require a BSL interpreter, please email us at
equalitys@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Tel: 0300 123 8 123 **Textphone:** 18001 01606 867 670

email: equalitys@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

web: www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk



VIBRANT HISTORY, DYNAMIC FUTURE ➤ VIBRANT HISTORY, DYNAMIC FUTURE