THE PLAN

VOLUME 1 WIGAN TOWN CENTRE
Wigan Town Centre has a thriving high street, but suffers from empty voids linked with the Galleries shopping centre and declining market, and there are growing pressures on town centres to condense, diversify, and remodel themselves to ensure future vitality.

Wigan is by far the largest town centre in the borough for shopping, services and employment, with over 120,000 square metres of retail floorspace, over 300,000 visitors per week and supporting about 10,000 jobs. The town hosts many significant events, such as the 10k run, food and drink festival, Christmas lights switch on, international markets, armed forces day parades, and a whole host of summer street entertainment; all of which bring tens of thousands into the centre at any one time.

However, the town also has a role to play within the wider area, as one of the sub-regional town centres within Greater Manchester: over the last few challenging years (since 2008) the town centre has supported a healthy and thriving high street, unlike other areas. If the town is to remain a competitor with similar centres in neighbouring areas, it needs to reinforce its core functions of shopping and employment, and in addition, it needs to diversify and broaden its appeal to become a more attractive destination for the local and wider communities.

There is limited capacity for additional retail floorspace within the town centre, an inherent need for family leisure and entertainment provision, and there is a growing interest in increasing town centre residential opportunities to support young professionals and new smaller homes, including one / two bedroom apartments. These competing demands need reviewing, planning and co-ordinating to minimise the impact on the town centre and to maximise opportunities for regeneration and development. This document sets out a strategic master plan for the town centre, clear ambitions and opportunities and uncovers real potential for the future of Wigan Town Centre.

Cllr David Molyneux
Deputy Leader of Wigan Borough Council
Portfolio Holder for Regeneration
By 2035, Greater Manchester aims to be one of the world’s leading sub-regions, driving sustainable growth across a thriving north of England. We intend to use Wigan’s unique position located between the main conurbations of Manchester and Liverpool to drive economic growth and prosperity within the borough.

We will also ensure that all who live here are able to take maximum advantage of the employment opportunities both within the borough and the wider region and enjoy an excellent quality of life.

Over the next 10 years we will deliver 10,000 jobs, 12,000 apprenticeships, 10,000 homes and population growth of 20,000 people; boosting the economy of the borough to £5.255 million.

Wigan has accomplished much in recent years, transforming the traditional Town Centre with a new Civic and Cultural Centre, Education Quarter incorporating a University Technology College. But we will not stop there... we have the desire and confidence to go further.

THIS DOCUMENT

Wigan Town Centre Investment Framework outlines our aspirations for future development in Wigan Town Centre. It seeks to capitalise on the momentum already in place, outlining our ambitious next steps for investment and regeneration.

The creation of a prosperous, attractive and exciting Town Centre will be fundamental to achieving sustainable growth. This document sets out a number of strategically identified priorities that seek to enhance Wigan’s competitive strengths.
The Borough of Wigan has a population of 322,000 people, of which 90,000 people reside in the town of Wigan itself. Our population has grown by over 5% in the last 10 years and this growth is expected to continue.

Today, Wigan’s economy is worth £4.2bn. There are over 9,000 businesses in the borough, supporting 120,000 jobs. We are a borough expected to grow – forecasts set this at £5.25bn by 2024 but we believe this could be more given our strategic position within the Northern Powerhouse - there are over 645,000 people within 20-minutes travel by road from the Town Centre.

With over 500 retail and leisure units and 300,000 visitors per week, the current Town Centre offer is strong – but we want to do more.

A BALANCED PLACE

Wigan scores highly in terms of ‘liveability’, with high quality housing to buy or rent, friendly communities, good schools and colleges, lots of green space and canal-side walks to enjoy and excellent connections to the rest of the North West.

The quality of the borough’s housing, environment and connectivity are catalysts for our economic prosperity and will support the future growth of the borough as a place to live, work, invest, visit and do business.

Traditional logistics and manufacturing continue to be a pillar of the local economy, with the food and drink sectors being particularly strong. The borough also excels in education, with Winstanley College being named in the top ten Further Education colleges in the country.
A PIVOTAL LOCATION

Wigan is located at the heart of the Northern Powerhouse. Situated between Manchester and Liverpool City Regions - we enjoy the best of both worlds.

1. Wigan already has the rail connectivity to rival many major UK cities. Five railway lines, including the West Coast Mainline, converge in Wigan.
2. We’re going to be a HS2 hub for the North. Our strategic position on the network means that we’re increasingly going to become a Hub for the hinterlands of Liverpool and Manchester too.
3. Direct services to London with a travel time of approximately two hours.
4. Direct routes to Manchester and Liverpool in around 30-minutes.
5. Merseytravel has a published aim to extend the line from Liverpool to Kirkby to Wigan.
6. Wigan now lies directly on the Manchester to Scotland rail route, allowing better access for businesses to places such as Cumbria’s Energy Coast and for leisure to great places like the Lake District National Park.
7. The Port of Liverpool is 30-minutes away; its new ‘Post Panamax’ berths can handle some of the largest ships in the world and will change the UK logistics industry.
8. 30 minutes to both Manchester Airport (the busiest airport in the UK outside London) and Liverpool John Lennon Airport.
9. Quick and easy access to the rest of the UK via the M62 and East Lancashire road in the south, the M6 and M58 in the west and the M61 in the east.

WE'RE WORLD FAMOUS

Wigan enjoys international fame in many areas from history and heritage to sport, food, music and more.

• Wigan has a proud history of sporting achievement. Wigan Warriors Rugby League and Wigan Athletic FC share a modern stadium just to the west of the Town Centre.
• Our famous Wigan food products including Heinz, Patak’s Indian foods, Potters herbal remedies and Uncle Joe’s Mint Balls. Food production continues to be a core growth sector for us.
• Wigan Casino, the spiritual home of ‘Northern Soul’ music, attracted thousands to its famous all-nighters. Wigan has now gained a reputation as a centre for jazz and hosts an international jazz festival every summer.

WE'RE HIGH ACHIEVERS IN BUSINESS TOO

Wigan has the largest level of employment in the manufacturing sector in Greater Manchester outside of Manchester.

• Wigan has the largest GVA in the Science, Research & Development Sector in Greater Manchester outside of Manchester.
• Wigan hosts the biggest one-day business Expo in the North West. Now in its seventh year, attracting over 1,000 visitors from across the UK.
• Wigan 10k is an annual road race around the town. This year over 3,500 runners took to the tarmac, cheered on by more than 8,000 supporters.
• From 2026, Wigan will be a key hub on the HS2 network. We’re already a key gateway between The North, Scotland and The South.
The Investment Framework boundary looks beyond the traditional definition of the Town Centre, an indication of the ambition and aspiration of the borough.

The majority of notable development in recent times has taken place north of the railway stations. The Civic Quarter, including the £127 million Life Centre, Library and Leisure Centre, has been part of a successful regeneration strategy for Wigan - putting the Town Hall at the heart of the community. Wigan's retail core is also located in this northern area including a wide range of independent shops right through to large national brands.

The southern part of the Investment Framework area is largely defined by the Leeds and Liverpool Canal and majestic mill buildings at the Pier Quarter – an area with significant potential for new mixed-use development.

Wigan has a number of distinctive assets, which if used to their full potential, have the ability to differentiate the town from its counterparts and move Wigan up the settlement hierarchy.

A RICH PATCHWORK

Wigan Town Centre is packed with numerous neighbourhoods that each have their own distinctive feel and offering:

Wigan Town Centre is a rich patchwork of distinct neighbourhoods. Some quarters date back as far as the 13th Century, others are defined by Wigan’s rapid growth during the Industrial Revolution.

-Wigan Town Centre can be broken down into a number of distinct character areas, according to the role, function, land use and potential of each distinct area.

01 Station Gateway
02 Retail & Leisure District
03 Innovation & Learning District
04 Central Park Gateway
05 River Douglas Quarter
06 Westwood Gateway
07 Pier Quarter
08 Wigan Central

Wigan’s distinct neighbourhoods provide a multitude of investment opportunities from leisure and waterside development at the Pier Quarter to office, retail and hotel in the town’s core.

-Town Centre Investment Framework Boundary
GATEWAYS AND APPROACHES

Wigan Town Centre benefits from almost 360° road connectivity.

Wigan Town Centre has prominent links to the M6, M61, M62 and M58. This is a telling indication of the geography of Wigan Town Centre, sandwiched between Merseyside, Greater Manchester & Lancashire. These key gateways and approaches form an important part of the function and user experience of Wigan Town Centre.

Continuing investment in the primary road network supports a healthy Town Centre, able to compete for trade with the rest of the region.
A PLACE DELIVERING

RECENT ‘BIG TICKET’ INVESTMENTS

Wigan has an excellent track of driving forward and delivering transformational projects.

1 Youth Zone
Opening in 2013 the Wigan Youth Zone is a purpose built youth facility designed to make positive impact on the young people of Wigan and surrounding area. The Zone encourages participation in sports, music, gym, skate facility, dance and climbing wall.

2 University Technical College
Wigan UTC opened its doors in 2013 and specialises in a technical curriculum of manufacturing engineering (food production), the green economy and environmental technology.

3 Believe Square Public Realm
The Wiend / Believe Square has been dramatically transformed as part of the Life Centres development. Public art, open space and landscaping have dramatically improved the public realm in this crucial Town Centre area.

4 Life Centres
The Life Centres incorporate a gym, swimming pool, library and council (and other public facing) services all located within two buildings located in close proximity.

5 Station Car Parking
A new multi-storey car park opened next to Wigan North Western Train station in 2010 with capacity for 400 cars.

6 Electrified to Manchester & Liverpool
The recent electrification of the railway between Liverpool, Manchester and Wigan has resulted in improved journey times and reliability; both cities are now accessible in around 30 minutes.

7 Wallgate Townscape
We’ve recently invested over £2m in bringing some of our best historic buildings back into use.
CURRENT PLANNED INVESTMENTS

We’ve achieved a lot over the past few years – but we’re not standing still. We’ve a number of schemes in the pipeline that will support our development agenda and continue to build upon the successes of recent years.

A   The Bus Station (2018)
A fully redeveloped, modern bus station which will be fit for purpose and improve travel options to the Town Centre will replace the existing bus station.

B   Market Place Public Realm (2017)
A £1.3m high quality, flexible event space will be completed at Market Place.

C   HS2 & Integration of Wigan Rail Stations (2026 - )
As well as the arrival of HS2 in 2026, this area designated for the future creation of a combined rail station. This will bring together Wigan North Western and Wigan Wallgate stations as a single rail interchange ‘hub’ on land to the South of Wallgate.

D   Central Boulevard
This key corridor is designated for enhancement including streetscape, landscaping and improved signage, particularly for pedestrians between the Town Centre and DW Stadium.

E   The Eastern Gateway (2017)
This area is designated for mixed use development and rationalisation of the highway layout.

F   A49 to M6-M58 Strategic Link Road
A new Link Road from will create a new route towards the Town Centre from two key routes on the strategic highway network; the M6 and M58. This will reduce journey times on approaches to the town, opening the retail offer to a much wider potential market.
Our vision for Wigan Town Centre is based upon four core principles – known as Strategic Themes.

Encapsulating these four overlapping themes in all that we do will ensure decisions are investment-led and outcomes are positive:

- Enhancing our place
- Strengthening our enterprise
- Empowering our people
- Providing supporting infrastructure

**ENHANCING OUR PLACE**

Quality of place is paramount to thriving Town Centres. The Investment Framework therefore sets out a number of major interventions and seeks to create a series of distinctive, high-quality neighbourhoods and strong gateways that enhance our sense of arrival.

Wigan Town Centre will be the focus of new demand for entertainment, culture, leisure, retail space and workspace. Wigan’s evening economy offer will expand and diversify, becoming more inclusive to meet the needs of a wide variety of interests and age groups. The Town Centre will become a place where people feel they belong, an exciting place where people can live, work and spend time. Quality design and attention to the public realm will be critical to this success.
STRENGTHENING OUR ENTERPRISE
We recognise that both new and existing businesses require support. We will continue to nurture our strong independent offer, whilst simultaneously complementing and enhancing our distinctiveness with new development.

We already know there is strong demand for high quality employment space in Wigan at the heart of the Town Centre. The Investment Framework will create the right conditions for growth to encourage investors. Creating new modern Grade A office space and enhancing some of the Wigan’s more distinctive and historic building stock will support the growth of new and existing businesses.

EMPOWERING OUR PEOPLE
At the core of the Investment Framework is a desire to help our people realise their ambitions. Promoting investments in the ‘human capital’ of the town through education, job growth and access to employment will ensure that the success of our people is evident throughout the Town Centre.

Right now some of the building blocks to achieve this are in place: the Innovation & Learning Quarter, Civic Centre and growing business opportunities. We want our young people to get the best start in life, empowering them to have an active role in Wigan’s future.

Our aspiration is for our working population to be healthy and fulfilled. Our people will have the chance to take full advantage the opportunities Wigan offers. We want to retain our best minds and inspire belief that people can fulfil their ambitions in Wigan.

Providing Supporting Infrastructure
We recognise that infrastructure is the network that connects people, places and enterprise together. Smart investment in a series of strategic infrastructure packages will boost our economy and provide the right conditions for our town to thrive. We want better connections for employers so they can grow and succeed. We want the people of Wigan to have better connections to schools, employment, services and leisure facilities.

Movement
It is essential that we create a Town Centre which is walkable and cycle friendly for both residents and visitors. The Town Centre should also be more easily accessible from the strategic road network than currently. Planned works are programmed to provide a new southern link road which will provide better links into the Town Centre from the motorway network.

The integration of Wigan’s railway stations and the new bus station will help to ensure that public transport is an attractive option for residents. Transport investment will be focused in the following areas to ensure that the major projects achieve their full economic potential for job creation and economic growth: bus services and stations, car parking, strategic highway network, railways and walking & cycling corridors.

Digital
We recognise the value of reliable and powerful digital infrastructure, connecting people and businesses to global markets. That’s why Wigan Council has been crowned the leading council in the country for delivering services digitally and promoting the huge opportunities that digital can bring to residents and businesses. #DigitalWigan is driving forward the reimagining of the borough’s business community; creating a future that embraces the digital powerhouse, bringing technology and creative businesses into Wigan borough’s economic portfolio.

Public Realm & Green Infrastructure
Whilst Wigan is blessed with a rich industrial heritage this has not come at the expense of vibrant, distinctive local places. Market Place, Believe Square, Wigan Parish Church Gardens all represent popular local places with high quality public realm. New development should seek to improve the urban environment and whilst existing areas should benefit from upgrades to the public realm. We will also encourage greater rates of tree planting and the deployment of green spaces in areas which are currently too ‘grey’.

Attractive Public spaces and green infrastructure will help stimulate investment and contribute to an attractive living and working environment.

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THE CENTRAL BOULEVARD

STRUCTURAL INTERVENTIONS

As each of the Character Areas within the Town Centre grow and develop, the spine that knits them together will become of increasing importance.

The Central Boulevard links some of Wigan’s most identifiable points together; Saddle Junction, Wallgate, Market Place, Robin Park and Standishgate. Going forward, it will be important to ensure that whilst each area is distinctive, the same quality environment is evident throughout.

Going forward, it will be important to ensure that whilst each area is distinctive, the same quality environment is evident throughout the Central Boulevard.

[Diagram of the Central Boulevard with labels and maps]
01 STATION GATEWAY

THE AREA

We know that Wigan has the rail connectivity to rival many major cities, but we also know that we need to better invest in the stations and their environs. We’ve seen a number of modest improvements over recent years, but we want to take this much further.

OUR OBJECTIVES

Develop One Cohesive Rail Hub
We have been working with the industry on a series of studies and plans over a number of years to develop the stations into one cohesive hub. We want to make the stations one cohesive place – central to our green corridor through the town and within 15 minute-walk of all our Town Centre activity. Removing severances formed by the railway and using land more effectively in this vicinity is our priority.

Provide a First Class Gateway
This is Wigan’s front door to the world. First impressions count and we have great plans for change.

Supporting New Commercial Development
Wigan Station Gateway is the perfect place for modern flexible businesses – it has frequent trains to a variety of major cities and towns within and beyond the Northern Powerhouse. High quality central office space is largely non-existent in Wigan. High-quality new commercial or mixed use development would complement the development of the HS2 Hub. There is significant underdeveloped land immediately adjacent to the stations but with high profile from the rail lines.

AMBIITIONS

High-Quality Commercial Development
High-quality central office space is largely non-existent in Wigan. Medium-rise commercial development would complement the development of our HS2 Hub.

Eye-Catching Urban Realm
We want to make the station gateway attractive and memorable. We’ll be exploring innovative ways we can do this to add real value to this important area.

Modernised Railway Offer
The current station building at Wigan North Western was built in 1972. Despite modest improvements of the years, we think we could do better. That’s why we want to undertake some really visionary work to complement the arrival of HS2.
THE RETAIL & LEISURE DISTRICT

THE AREA

The Retail & Leisure District is already home to national retailers as well as a buoyant independent offer. Wigan’s Grand Arcade, positioned in the heart of the retail district, offers high-quality retail including Debenhams, Marks and Spencer, Next, Topshop and Waterstones. The Galleries provides an alternative indoor shopping offer as well as space for market traders and Makinson Arcade continues to be a popular collection of independents. All of these key assets have the room and potential for expansion.

OUR OBJECTIVES

Support the Development of Opportunity Areas

There are a number of opportunities areas where we would support new development, especially those with the potential for a multi-screen cinema and a strong restaurant selection and a family-oriented offer.

A Welcoming & Diverse Daytime / Evening Economy

We want to better activate key streets and shopping districts; increasing both footfall and dwell time. The biggest opportunity in this district is to build on the traditional ‘shoulder periods’ of retail – the evening economy. King Street provides the focus for this at the moment; however its appeal is limited. We want to offer something for residents of all ages and to better retain visitors too. We will also support later opening hours for retailers, so that people can continue to enjoy the Town Centre offer after work or school. We would also welcome civic uses, residential or sport; the latter building upon the success of the Life Centre.

AMBITIONS

Strengthening Our Existing Assets

All of the key retail assets provide major opportunities to invest in and broaden the offer of Wigan Town Centre, in the heart of the Retail and Leisure District.

High-Quality Mixed-Use Leisure & Retail

Our aim is to continue to increase our current footfall year-on-year, particularly during shoulder periods such as weekday evenings. We know that to do this we need to diversify our offer of our evening economy, particularly introducing restaurant and cinema uses.
THE AREA
The Innovation and Learning District features five key anchor developments: Deanery High School, Wigan & Leigh College, Wigan University Technical College (UTC), Wigan Youth Zone and The Venue. Together, these assets form one of the most impressive 11-18 education clusters in the North of England. The ‘education chain’ that exists between the 4 adjacent institutions, as well as industry links and higher education pathways, gives us a competitive strength that rivals some of the biggest towns in the country.

OUR OBJECTIVES
Our Workforce Powerhouse
Our core aim is that the education chain that exists between these institutions (and industry/higher education) nurtures our young minds – producing skilled, confident and ambitious young people and becoming our workforce powerhouse.

A Knowledge Campus
There is also space available to build on these achievements with further high quality development and to improve the feel of this area as a ‘campus’, through investment in public realm, changes to the highway layout and safer routes towards the retail core.

Support Investment in Opportunity Areas
There are a number of assets in the area which we believe could be made better use of. A key opportunity area at Mona Street Car Park would lend itself to a number of potential uses, whilst the improvement and/or conversion of high-quality buildings to residential or smaller niche food and drink offers would complement surrounding land uses.
AMBITIONS
Creating a ‘Campus’
We realise that whilst we have an agglomeration of educational uses, we could improve the physical links that exist between each of the sites — creating a more of a ‘campus’ feel. This would allow more outdoor space for students and staff to dwell, reduce conflicts between young people and vehicles, and help improve the ‘front door’ of each site.

Making the Most of Existing Assets
There are a number of unique historic buildings in this area, which we think we could improve either the looks or use of. For instance, up-lighting could help show off our best assets come the evening, whilst conversion to high quality residential could be considered for others.

Much has been accomplished here but there is space available to build on these achievements, particularly through improving the feel of this area as a ‘campus’ and making better use of under-utilised assets.
04 CENTRAL PARK GATEWAY

THE AREA

We recognise retail has changed – and this area has changed with it. The Central Park Gateway is presently dominated by low cost retail units and car parking. Whilst retail will undoubtedly continue to be a land use of this area, we recognise that there is room for consolidation of this. As such, this part of the town has real potential for alternative land-uses.

OUR OBJECTIVES

Support the Development of Major Opportunity Areas

What makes this area interesting is the scale of transformation that could be achieved. We have substantial land ownerships and car parking in this area which could allow for significant redevelopment opportunities at this important gateway to the town. We’re therefore open to views on change of use and change of image.

Create a Distinctive New Neighbourhood

We want to create a distinctive area that grabs the attention of those looking to buy or rent, and we know that for this to be attractive we need to offer something completely different to existing stock in and close to the town. That’s why we’re keen to explore more radical concepts such as sustainable or modular housing here – concepts much more commonly seen in Sweden or Norway – there’s no reason why Wigan couldn’t be a UK leader in this. Of most importance to us is that any redevelopment of this site is about creating a new product. This could include high-density, quality housing that simply doesn’t exist in Wigan at the moment, largely apartment and town house focussed. We also foresee ‘neighbourhood-scale’ retail and restaurants as a complimentary use of this area.

AMBICTIONS

A Different Offer

Located on a key gateway, we want any development to be visually interesting but also offer something truly different. We want innovative architecture, but moreover we want to create a place of a high standard that attracts people to live in the Town Centre.

Sustainable Housing with Ground Floor Uses

This is a perfect location for walkable, low or no car development, on the doorstep of the Retail District and short walk from the Station Gateway. We would also explore how development could incorporate a number of sustainable design elements, such as solar panels and rainwater harvesting. Clearly this location would also lend itself to ground floor uses, such as ‘neighbourhood restaurants’.

Sustainable or modular housing – concepts much more commonly seen in Sweden or Norway – there’s no reason why Wigan couldn’t be a UK leader in this.
05 RIVER DOUGLAS QUARTER

THE AREA

The River Douglas Quarter carries substantial potential for new development two key reasons; (1) sites are highly visible with significant passing trade on this major town centre artery and; (2) we have significant land holdings in the area.

The River Douglas Quarter will naturally become the ‘front door’ to both the Retail District and Station Gateway as new links from the A49 to the M6 are forged to the south of the town.

OUR OBJECTIVES

Support the Development of Major Opportunity Areas

Early interventions such as a new Premier Inn have occurred, and the area has great potential for new complementary frontages close to the carriageway. We think there is great opportunity to create larger high-profile development in this vicinity too; whether that be commercial, residential or a mix of uses.

We know that this is an area with car parking that is particularly well used. We don’t want to lose this amenity, particularly as demand is likely to increase in line with redevelopment elsewhere. Subsequently, as part of any new development, opportunities for consolidating car parking supply would be welcome.

Improve the Pedestrian Environment

The A49 serves opportunity areas from the core of the town. We want to provide much stronger and safer pedestrian links across this important desire line. This strategically important collection of sites also provides the opportunity to create a boulevard-type streetscene on the A49.

AMBITIONS

A Strong Boulevard

Improvements to the street scene along this strategically important gateway should be based upon the boulevard model, more commonly adopted in mainland Europe.

High-Profile Development with Active Frontages

Located on the main artery that feeds the Town Centre, development should be good quality and of a scale and nature that captures passing trade, possibly with small ground-floor retail units.

Consolidated Car Parking

We know that with the ease of access from the A49, car parking in this area is popular. We think there is room to consolidate surface car parking into an improved facility that makes better use of the land available.
Westwood Gateway benefits from a good balance of close proximity to the Station Gateway and strong linkages to the strategic highway network. Located on the A49, this area has real profile and will be within minutes of the M6 / M62 on completion of the southern link road. This area is going to be one of the most connected places in the North of England.

**OUR OBJECTIVES**

- **Support the Development of Major Opportunity Areas**
  Opportunity areas will clearly appeal to businesses that want profile and accessibility, with excellent access to a wide labour market. This location also allows the ability to retain car parking of scale, and is also highly visible from the railway. As such, this area would lend itself to a number of uses, including business park-style commercial development.

- **Improve Frontages onto the River Douglas and Leeds-Liverpool Canal**
  This area benefits from frontage to some incredible natural assets. There is clearly real potential to add significant value to any new development by improving how the site interacts with the River Douglas and Leeds-Liverpool Canal.

**With the arrival of both HS2 and the M6 link, this area is going to be one of the most connected places in the North of England.**

**AMBITIONS**

- **Making the Most of Our Natural Assets**
  Green and blue infrastructure not only add value to places, but they make us happier. Research shows that access to natural assets can improve employee well-being and even job satisfaction!

- **Visible Development of a Good Scale**
  We recognise that different businesses have different needs, and some will need more space or car parking than others. This area offers a great balance between access to HS2 or regional trains (less than 10-min walk) and direct road access to the M6. The footprint of the identified opportunity areas would allow for development of a significant scale.
07 PIER QUARTER

THE AREA

The unique Pier Quarter is within a short walk of the Station Gateway. ‘Wigan Pier’ is known worldwide and is central to the future of the town. The historic mills, buildings and canal provide an inviting setting with great potential for a lively mix of uses.

OUR OBJECTIVES

We are developing a masterplan of the area that we want to further evolve. This area should be a lively mix of residential, waterside leisure and high-quality conservation-led commercial development. We also foresee the potential to introduce a cultural offer. A 1,000 seat performance venue is under construction at The Pier Centre and this will act as a catalyst to ignite waterside leisure opportunities and potentially the evening economy.

Ease of access and movement is key in an area of this type. There are opportunities to create better linkages to Station Gateway, the town centre towards Westwood Gateway and across the water itself.

We know that water naturally adds value to any place, both as amenity and to developers – and there’s over 2km of waterside land in the Pier Quarter.

AMBITIONS

Attractive Living Spaces

A number of popular residential developments already exist in the Pier Quarter, but we think there is the space and market for many more.

Mixed-Use Waterfront

Increasing both the resident population and visitor draw of the Pier Quarter will facilitate new waterside uses; including cafés, bars and restaurants. This area has the potential to offer something different to any other in Wigan.

Creating a Place for People

We want to create a place that people want to live in and to visit. We have made some good progress in this area but recognise that we can create something really special in a historic and waterside environment.
Wigan Central is a thriving mix of industrial, retail and leisure units. There are already some great businesses here and a number of hidden gems. Unit vacancy rates are low, it’s populated, well connected and thriving. But we want to take it up a level. We want to help existing businesses expand and enhance. We want to attract new businesses – particularly high end industries and appropriate retailers that fit along the Wallgate frontage.

**OUR VISION**

**Improve Frontages onto Wallgate**

Wallgate is the shop window to Wigan Central. In conjunction with development in the Pier Quarter, we want to form a new boulevard from the Saddle Junction into the Retail District and Station Gateway.

**Encourage New, Innovative and Interesting Uses**

We also want to help businesses diversify, allowing complementary uses of sites outside of their usual 9am-5pm. There are a number of examples across the country where industrial units successfully operate with alternative uses on the weekend.

**Improve the Look and Feel of the Area**

Beyond busy day times, this area can feel isolated. Encouraging new uses outside of the traditional busy periods will naturally improve this, but we think this area is also likely to substantially benefit from public realm improvements too. Improved footways, lighting, on-street pay & display parking and street trees can make a tangible difference to the image of an area. We’ll also be exploring options for simplifying the road network in this area.

**AMBITIONS**

**Improving the Area’s Image**

Liverpool’s Baltic Triangle was once a no-go zone after dark. Substantial investments in public realm have enhanced the image of the area, supporting existing businesses and encouraging new investment.

**Enabling Businesses to Diversify**

Industrial areas tend to be busy throughout the week and turn empty come weekend, especially in the evenings. We want to encourage businesses to consider other uses during these ‘shoulder periods’. From weddings in warehouses to real-ale festivals on factory yards.
The very best towns and cities around the world have one thing in common – they are both people and quality focussed.

Our Vision set out in this Investment Framework aspires to make the very best of our existing assets – whether they be built, natural or human.

To take Wigan Town Centre forwards we want good design, smart investments and initiatives that place people at the heart of our Town Centre.
We’ve identified three key mechanisms that will help us deliver our ambitious vision for Wigan: partnership, innovating funding streams and our town centre programme.

**PARTNERS**

Working Together

The wide and varied nature of the opportunities identified in this Investment Framework will require strong liaison with a number of external organisations. We will continue to work in close communication with partner bodies including GM Combined Authority, GM Local Enterprise Partnership, Transport for Greater Manchester, GM Police, Network Rail, Merseytravel, Canal & River Trust and Central Government Bodies.

Creating the right conditions to encourage enterprise across all of the Character Areas will also require us to work pro-actively with existing businesses, prospective businesses, land owners and developers. We want to help foster new ideas, support business planning and help identify funding streams.

**GREATER MANCHESTER SPATIAL FRAMEWORK**

Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) identifies Wigan as one of eight major town centres in Greater Manchester. The framework is a joint plan to manage the supply of land for jobs and new homes across Greater Manchester.

The GMSF will ensure that we have the right land in the right places to deliver the homes and jobs we need up to 2035, along with identifying the new infrastructure (such as roads, rail, Metrolink and utility networks) required to achieve this. As such, it will provide a critical overarching strategy for how Wigan fits into the wider picture of a fast growing Manchester City Region.

**FUNDING**

The funding landscape is continuously changing and our Invest in Wigan Team are well briefed on new and emerging opportunities. Collaborating with a number of independent organisations we aim to boost Wigan’s economy through business support. Businesses of all sizes have benefited from our guidance, from sole traders to national companies with 1,000+ employees. Whatever your interest, whatever your size and whatever your opportunity, contact us so we can work with you to help unlock access to funding.

**DEVOLUTION**

Devolution is the transfer of certain powers and responsibilities from national government to a particular region. Decisions made locally can better meet the needs and aspirations of the people who live and work in the area. Wigan is a key player in Greater Manchester devolution. Wigan will receive significant new powers over its economic development and control over billions of pounds of public funding with the pioneering Greater Manchester devolution deal. We want to put people at the centre of devolution. Allowing us more control over how we govern and spend locally will allow us to take great strides in developing our people and the places they live in.

The Wigan Deal - *‘Our part: your part’*

With such ambitions for new development and regeneration, we are looking for support from the private sector to help accelerate transformational change in the Town Centre. The public sector has invested heavily in Wigan Town Centre, however we are keen to work in partnership to support the various opportunities outlined in this Investment Framework. We can boost our impact by working in partnership, recognising that both public and private funding can only go so far on their own. If we want to deliver the aspirations set out in this document and we want to invest in local facilities and spaces that communities deserve, we need to work together to make it happen.

**CROWDFUNDING**

Crowdfunding is a way of raising finance by asking a large number of people each for a small amount of money. Until recently, financing a business, project or venture involved asking a few people for large sums of money. Crowdfunding switches this idea around, using the internet to talk to thousands – if not millions – of potential funders. Sites such as Spacehive allow a wide variety of civic projects to be funded in this way; events, playgrounds, urban parks and even new public realm schemes. We want to work with communities to come up with fresh ideas, and create and improve spaces for everyone to enjoy.

**OUR TOWN CENTRE PROGRAMME**

We already have a strong portfolio of Town Centre activities and events that support the economy, foster local pride and strengthen the positive image of the town. Highly successful events such as Wigan 10k, Wigan Pride, the Giant Waterslide and Armed Forces Day promote distinctiveness and create a bustling urban vibrancy. We will encourage an enhanced programme of popular and innovative events in the Town Centre, to build on the successes we’re currently delivering.

We will encourage an enhanced programme of popular and innovative events in the Town Centre, to build on the successes we’re currently delivering.
[Zoltar] ‘You are destined to be part of the plan!’

EMAIL NOW
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WWW.WIGANWORKS.COM

[The People] Where is the plan?

[Zoltar] Wigan has the plan!