



A Framework for Central Portishead

Wyndham Way Opportunity Area
Framework - draft for endorsement

November 2022



Portishead
Town
Council



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Allies and Morrison
Urban Practitioners

**AVISON
YOUNG**

PJA

 **Distinctive**



INTRODUCTION

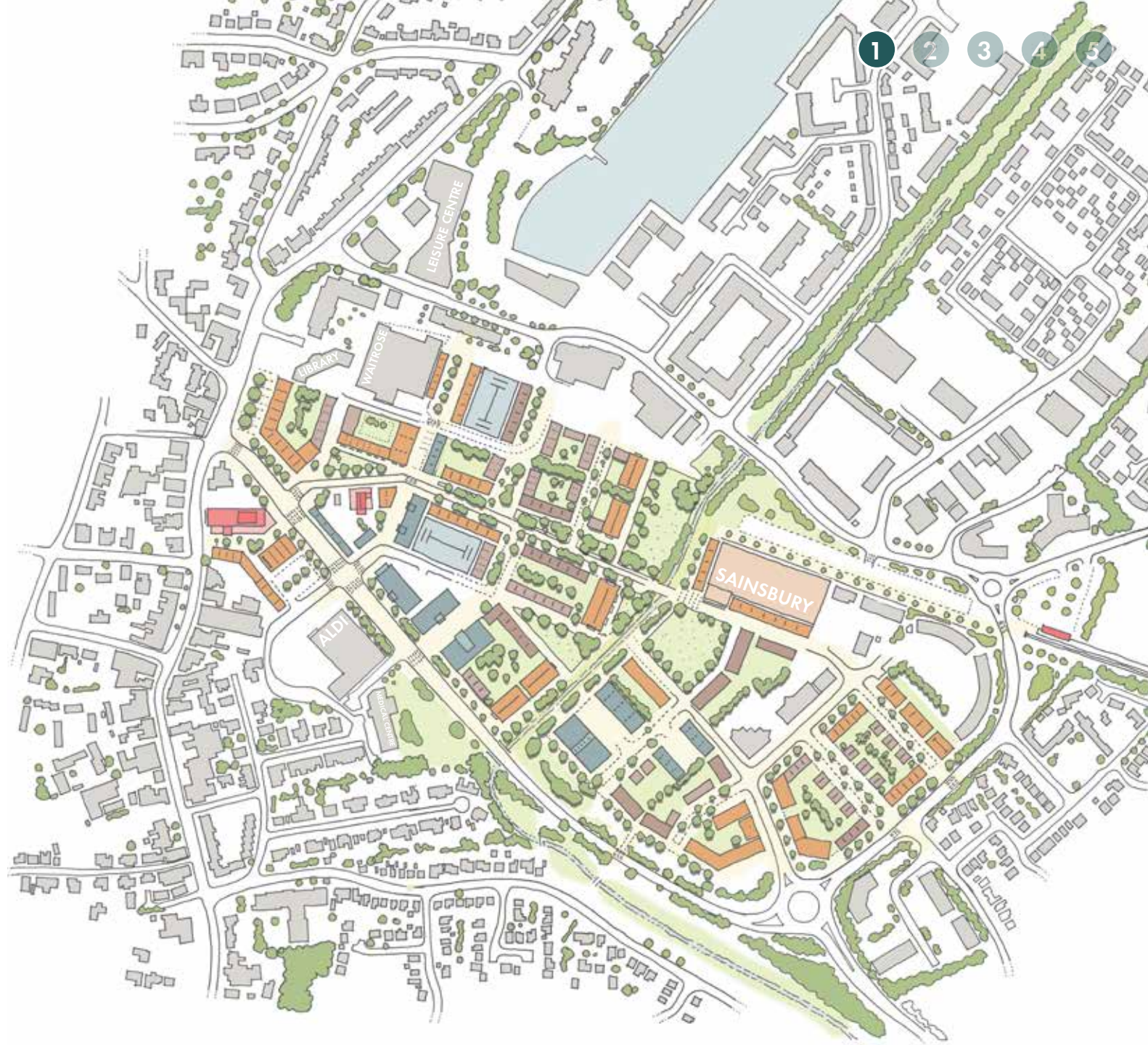
Introduction

This development framework has been prepared to help guide potential future development of the central area of Portishead, between the High Street, the Marina and the planned new railway station. It has been led by North Somerset Council working with Portishead Town Council and key land owners and with extensive local consultation.

The project started with the 2021 publication of the Vision and Scoping Study which set out the key principles for the area and identified how change could benefit Portishead as a whole. The town has grown substantially over recent decades, and this is an important opportunity to make better connections between the new and old areas.

This is also an important chance to help make Portishead more sustainable through supporting the local economy, helping to reduce car-dependency and creating a greener place.

Change is expected to be gradual - there are many different land owners in the area, so this is a framework for change rather than a big planning application. This approach helps to set a clear direction of travel and coordinate designs so that they add up to deliver the vision we want to see.





INTRODUCTION

Fragmented land ownership

The land ownership in the area is a really important factor for how the area could change over time. This plan shows the many different parcels of land, and illustrates just how many different land owners have an interest.

A framework for an area like this is different to a planning application. It can't dictate a single design, or require that things are developed at a specific time. Even public projects like changes to roads are subject to funding being available. Any change will be gradual, piecemeal and could take many different forms.

This approach creates a framework for change. It sets out how the different area can be developed in coordinated ways which contribute to a wider picture. This includes planning the network of streets and spaces and considering different uses. It has to take account of existing uses which may not change for a long time, as well as be flexible enough to allow land owners to develop a range of different options.

What it can do is show what good change should look like, and provide clear rules for the things which are fundamental.





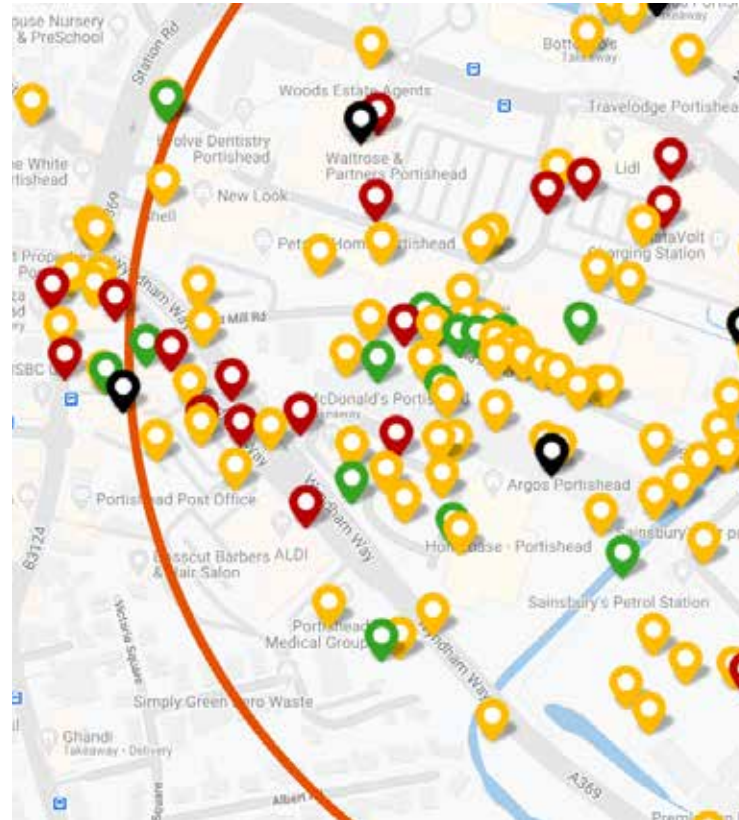
INTRODUCTION

A collaborative process

The framework has been developed through a series of stages of public consultation and engagement, starting with the original engagement in 2020 as part of the Vision and Scoping study and through two rounds of engagement on the emerging ideas and then the draft Framework document.

This engagement was undertaken primarily online through COVID with the aid of the project website, but also supplemented with drop-in consultations in Portishead Library and a stakeholder site walkabout and workshop in 2022 once conditions allowed.

The inputs received through all of these engagements have informed the understanding of the area and then helped to shape the draft framework. Section three of this report provides more detail of the engagement process and findings.



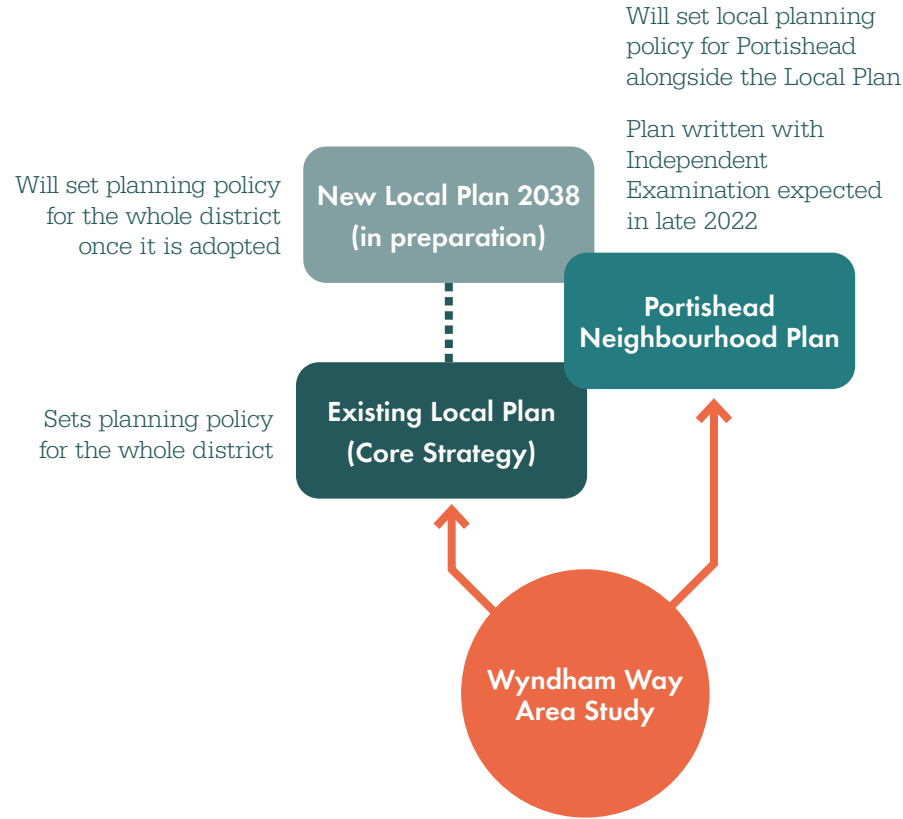


INTRODUCTION

Understanding the area

This framework is based on extensive research across many different topics. The team has studied the history of the area and how the town has grown responding to the landscape and the historic industry. The team has looked at the environmental and ecological constraints, including wildlife and water. This has informed ideas for how the area can work better for the environment and help reduce the risk of flooding through good design.

The baseline work also looks at the social and economic context, identifying the issues and opportunities for new and existing uses. This work has also taken place in the context of the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan and could help to inform future planning policy development.



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- Victorian
- 1930s
- 1970s
- 1980s
- 2020s



INTRODUCTION

Origins and growth

Before making recommendations about the future of Portishead, it is important to understand the existing town and the factors that have shaped it. By listening to local people and looking through historic maps, aerial photographs and records, it is possible to tell how the town has grown and to start to understand its story.

This approach reveals important things which any future plans can help to protect and build upon, such as the historic role of the High Street as well as the more recent significance of the Marina as a place where people live work and play rather than a place of industry.

It also helps to understand the former industrial life of the core of the study area, subdivided by numerous railway lines, factories and yards.

This has left a legacy of disconnected places. This has become particularly important as Portishead has grown to the east within the new development at Port Marine. Here, a new neighbourhood has been created but doesn't yet have a good safe network of streets connecting it back to the town centre.



Victorian

Looking back at maps from the Victorian Period shows the historic High Street and the streets immediately around it as clearly established. The maps also show industrial activity at the wharf and newer housing being developed on West Hill.

1930s

The inter-war period saw the growth of industrial activity around the wharf and residential consolidation around Woodhill, to the north of the High Street. Redcliffe Bay was also being developed as a new neighbourhood to the west.

1970s

The post-war period shows substantial infill along the ridge of West Hill and Woodhill as well as urban expansion to the south, creating the North Weston area and Gordano School.

1980s

The later years of the Twentieth Century shows development in and around the town centre, including Brampton Way to the south as well as steeper sites off Avon Way.

2020

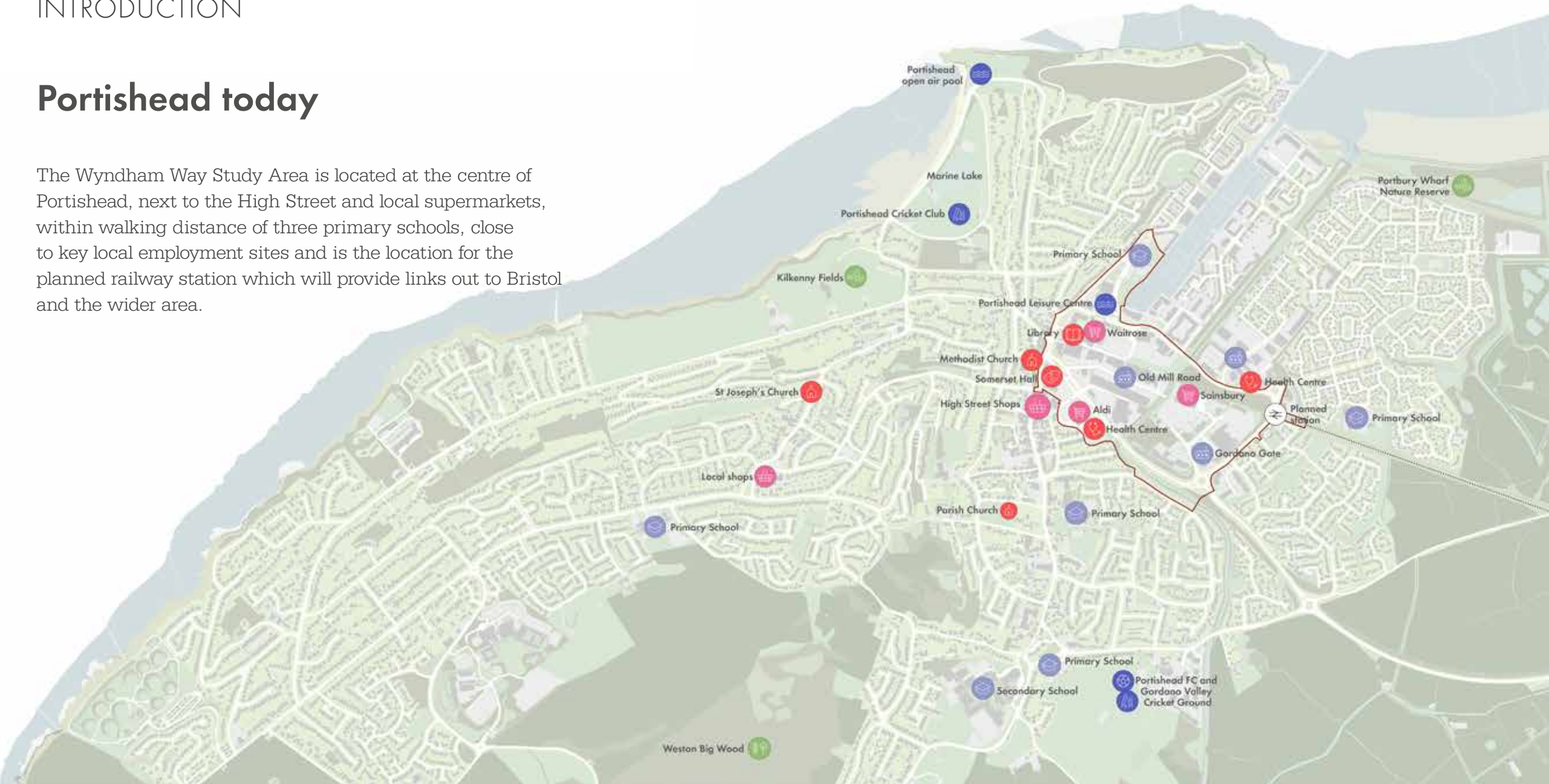
Development up to the present day has included the significant eastward expansion of Portishead in the form of the Port Marine area as well as the transformation of the Wharf itself to create today's modern marina.



INTRODUCTION

Portishead today

The Wyndham Way Study Area is located at the centre of Portishead, next to the High Street and local supermarkets, within walking distance of three primary schools, close to key local employment sites and is the location for the planned railway station which will provide links out to Bristol and the wider area.





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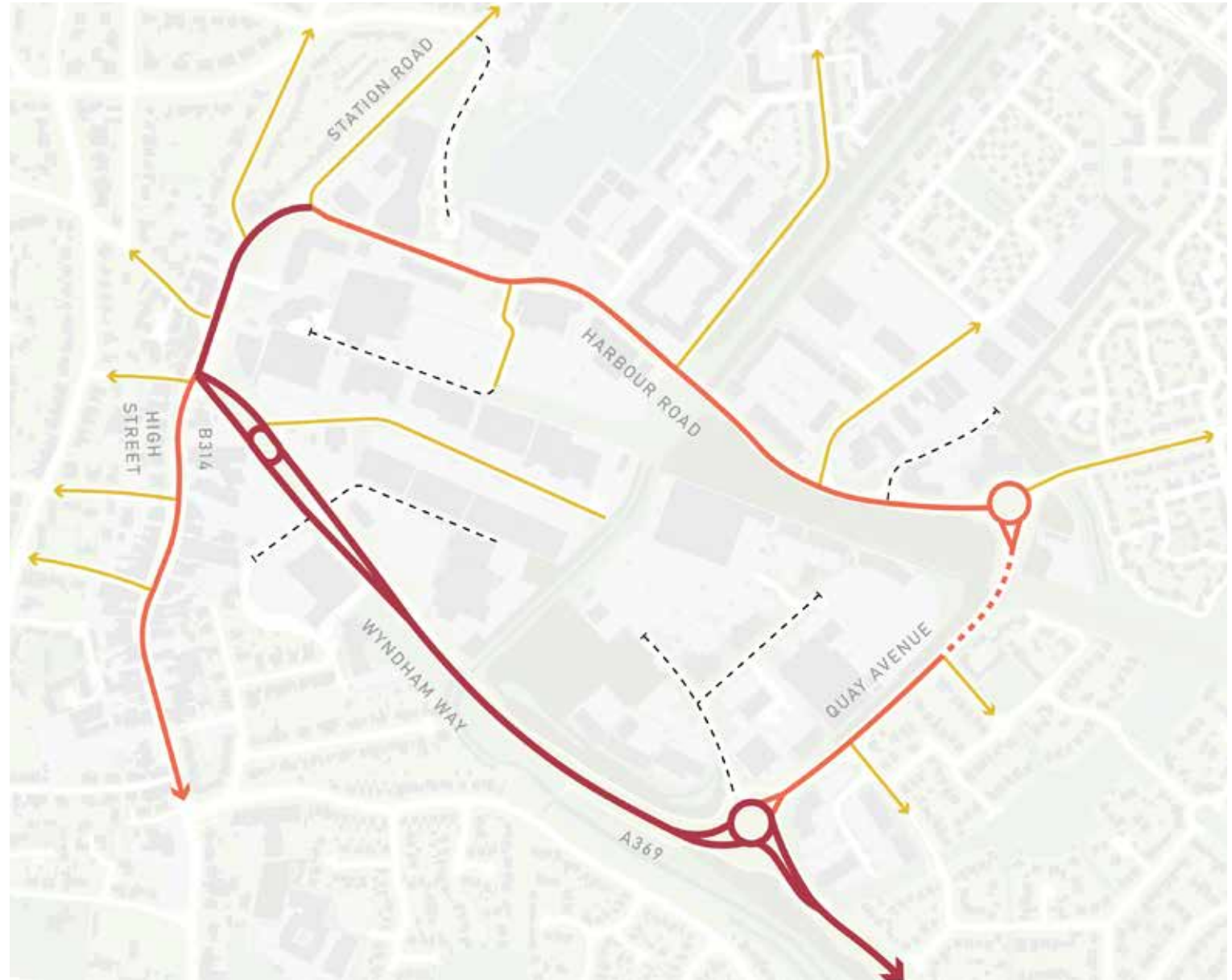
Movement

Road Network - Portishead Town Centre is served by a road network with a mix of road types, the most significant being Wyndham Way (A369) which links the town with Bristol and the M5, via The Portbury Hundred. The town has an attractive and busy local High Street. Quay Avenue and Harbour Road act as a town centre ring road and provide access to local neighbourhoods and the harbour area.

Pedestrian Movement - this is critical to the future success of Portishead town centre and the whole central area is identified as a Core Walking Zone by NSC, meaning walking improvement projects should be planned and prioritised. A walking audit has revealed the following issues.

Generally, the town centre roads have footways, but these are narrow in places.

- Within the study area there are many barriers to movement between land uses and this particularly affects the relationship between the Town Car park and Harbour area.



Existing road hierarchy

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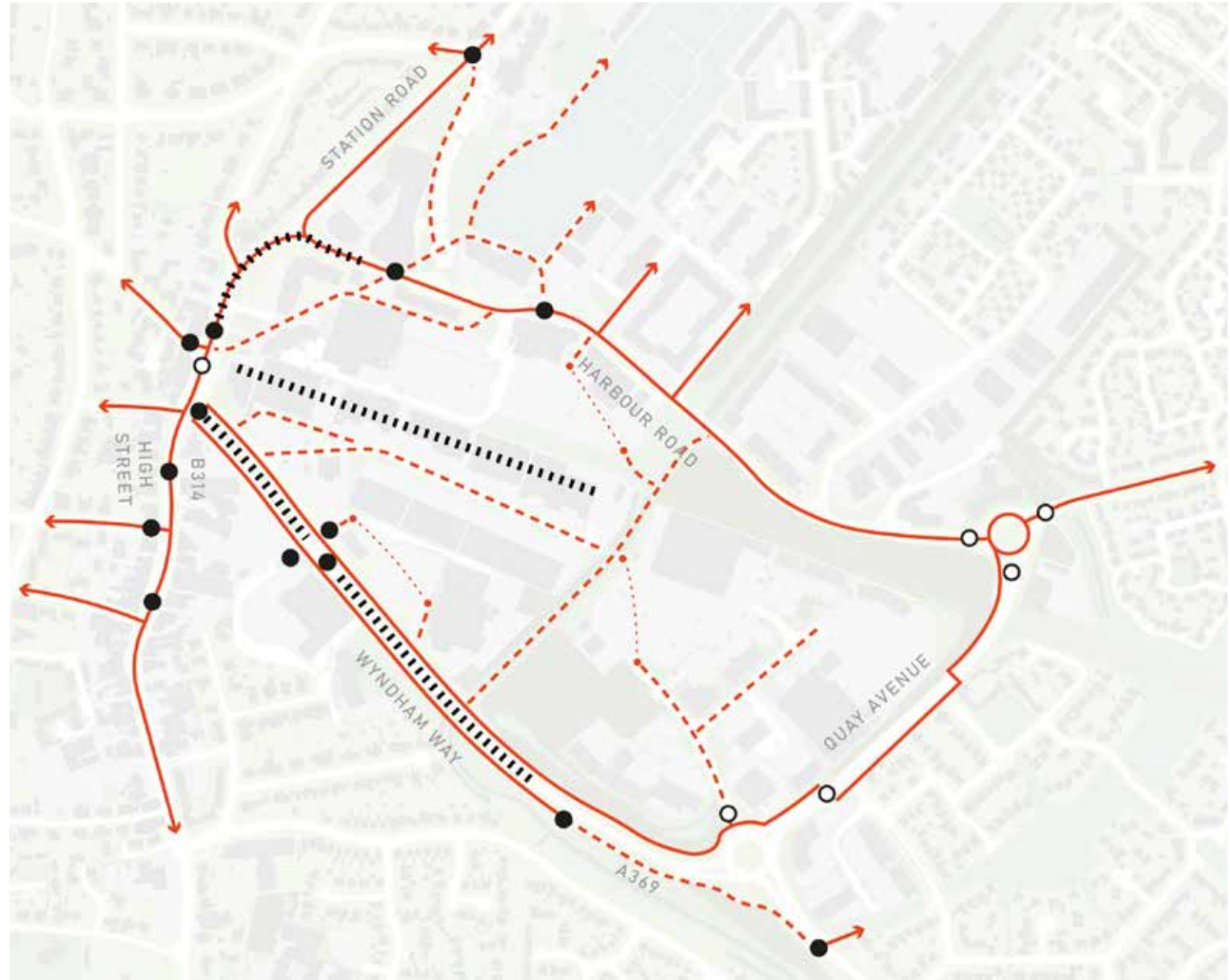
- Wyndham Way acts a barrier to north-south movement and is a hostile street to walk along or cross.
- The Cabstand junction can be confusing for pedestrians but is located on an important route from the High Street to the Harbour.

Concerns about pedestrian movement form a large proportion of responses from the recent community engagement.

Cycling Movement - there are some dedicated cycle facilities within the town however the Council, through its ongoing plans, wants to make further improvements and will be seeking central government funding.

Road Safety – there have been several recent accidents on Wyndham Way and the High Street, some involving pedestrians.

Local Buses – buses serve the town operating on the High Street, Quay Avenue, Harbour Road and Station Road with several frequent services to nearby places, including Bristol, Weston-super-Mare, Clevedon and Nailsea.



Existing pedestrian movement



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Rail Station Proposal – the Council, in partnership with WECA, is at an advanced stage in the planning of the new MetroWest rail line which will connect Bristol with Portishead town centre. The station will be located near the Harbour Road / Quay Ave roundabout. The new rail line is the subject of a Development Consent Order (DCO) - a form of planning permission - and will include a small transport interchange, taxi waiting and on-street bus stopping, together with a long-stay car park and new walking and cycling routes linking to the town centre.

Car Parking – there are many car parks and parking spaces within the town centre area. However only a small proportion of these are managed Council owned public car parks. Most parking spaces are free and associated with retail or employment land uses.

In summary the Scoping Study has highlighted the following issues and opportunities.

- the WWSA is a major barrier to local movement;
- the routes that exist around the WWSA are mainly designed for cars and other motor vehicles;
- pedestrian and cycle movement has emerged as an afterthought, probably encouraging more local journeys to be made by car; and,
- there is a real opportunity for the WWSA to better connect to existing neighbourhoods around it, and to encourage walking and cycling within the area, including to and from the new station when it opens.

Movement and Access Recommendations

The Development Framework for Portishead town centre will be informed by transport and movement considerations, drawing on best practice and recognising the needs of all residents / town centre users, whilst embracing new technology. As part of the next stage of work consideration should be given to developing new transport and movement initiatives aimed at improving movement within and around the area and creating new environments that encourage walking and cycling.





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Such new interventions could include the following.

20-Minute Town

A 20-minute town is a place where neighbourhoods can access a range of town centre functions within a 20-minute walk from their home. Portishead is suited to this approach as the town centre is fairly central and a new station is planned. This would include improved walking and cycling connections to the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Embrace the Big Street

Like the High Street, Wyndham Way would benefit from new development frontage. The current highway engineering creates a hostile feel and would benefit from a 'street like' environment better suited to a town centre location, whilst providing for improved footpaths and cycleways.

Go Dutch with Junctions

Many of the junctions on Wyndham Way do not fulfil the latest guidelines on walking and cycling. There are several ways of improving local junctions, including a Dutch style roundabout which is one way of achieving better walking and cycling, whilst still retaining reasonable road capacity.

Slow Streets for Walking and Cycling

To improve movement through the WWSA, a series of new connections aimed at walking and slow cycling would improve permeability and connection of the town centre and help people navigate through the area. These would need to cater for several key routes including; station to High Street and High Street to harbour.

Optimise the High Street and Cabstand Junction

Parts of the High Street and Cabstand junction would benefit from public realm improvement to help manage traffic speed, improve walkability and better cater for buses and HGV servicing needs.





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Ecology and Biodiversity

The study area is located within a predominantly urban environment, but there are a number of important ecological sites in the surrounding area, including areas of ancient woodland located to the north and south-west of the study area.

The Severn Estuary is protected by a number of ecological designations to reflect the importance of the habitats and species and has been identified as having national and international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering and migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds.

The mudflats and sandflats, saltmarsh, shingle and rocky shore habitats support the protected bird species. Future development within the Study Area would not directly impact these designated sites, and due consideration would be given to them as plans emerge.

Improving the natural environment within Portishead is a key aspect of the overall vision, which includes aspirations for biodiversity net gain, and wider environmental net





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gain. This could be achieved by increasing the amount of green spaces and thinking carefully about how rainwater is managed, including features such as green roofs.

Noise

There are a number of noise sources within and surrounding the study area, particularly the main road network (A369, Quays Avenue, Harbour Road, Station Road).

Air Quality

The site is not located within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) but improving the area for walking and cycling, and thinking carefully about the type of development will aspire to improve local air quality.

Climate Change Resilience

Any future plans will need to consider the resilience of new development in the study area and explore how development in this location can make Portishead more resilient.

Sustainable Construction

Sustainable design initiatives will need to be incorporated into any future design. For example, any construction materials can be selected following the Building Research Establishment (BRE) 'Green Guide to Specification' to reduce the environmental impacts of these materials, and the carbon emissions associated with construction would need to be key drivers in the design process.

Heritage

The site contains one Grade II listed building – the Old Mill Public House (formerly the White Lion) and Former Sea Wall. Other surrounding sensitive buildings include a number of Grade II and II* listed buildings, with the Grade I listed Parish Church of St Peter approximately 300m south-west of the site.





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Water

The main flood risk is associated with tidal flooding from the coast to the north and northeast. However, there are tidal flood defences which are managed by the Environment Agency (EA) and which appropriately protect Portishead from tidal flooding.

The site and surrounding area is located within Flood Zone 3 - land assessed as having 1 in 200 or greater annual probability of flooding from the sea in any year - but this designation does not take account of the coastal flood defences and therefore the actual (tidal) flood risk may be considered to be lower than that typically associated with Flood Zone 3. The Portbury Ditch flows past the Portishead Business Park, flowing from the Clevedon hills before discharging into the Severn Estuary at Portishead Docks. The Portishead Ditch does not contribute to the Flood Zone 3 designation.

There have been incidents of surface water flooding and ponding in areas of Portishead, as well as some instances of flooding from the Portbury Ditch affecting land when

an intense storm occurs at the same time as high tide conditions. This is different from the coastal flood risk which is managed by flood defences.

As development plans emerge, a full and detailed Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) would be undertaken, in line with relevant planning requirements. This would determine the risks of flooding at the site from sources including rivers, the sea, sewers and groundwater. The vulnerability of different development uses would be a key consideration in this process, as well as appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) will form an important part of the development proposals. It is recognised that surface water arising from a developed site should, as far as is practicable, be managed to mimic the surface water flows arising from the site prior to the proposed development while reducing flood risks to the site itself and elsewhere. Proposed drainage measures would also take climate change into account and would have benefits for both drainage and biodiversity.



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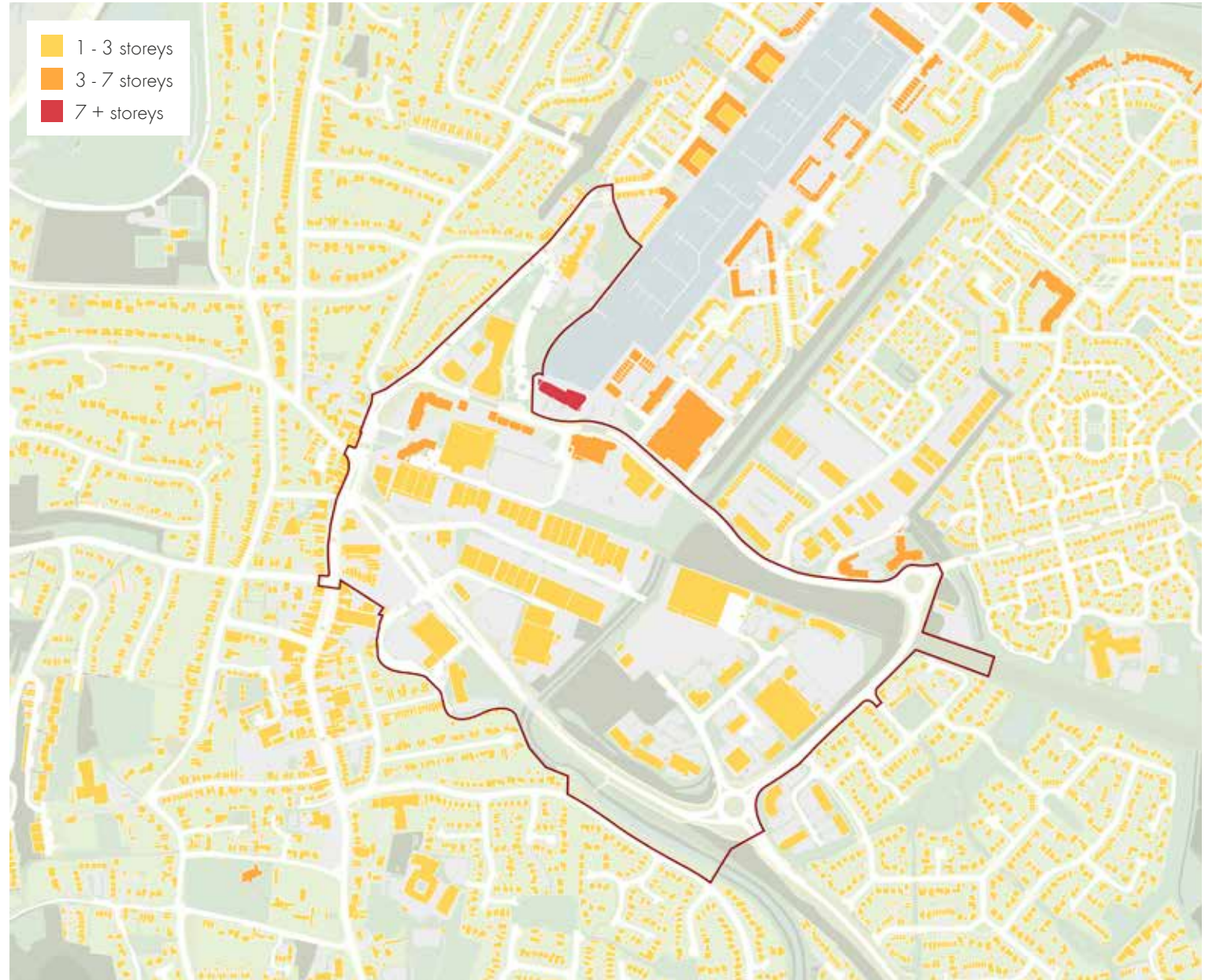
Existing building heights


Building heights in Portishead can be categorised broadly into three distinct types.

The historic town which extends north west and south from the High Street, rising up the hillsides is predominantly low-rise, with most of the buildings being two or three stories and some single storey bungalow developments in residential areas.

The modern suburban development to the east is also generally modest in scale, with most homes being two and three stories.

The development around the Marina provides a stronger scale, including buildings of five to seven stories fronting onto the water and key locations and a nine storey building providing the end of the long view at the south western terminus of the water and acting as a significant landmark for the town.





“Develop a place for Portishead, of Portishead, capturing the town’s unique character and embracing the opportunities for living and working in a better way.”

2 VISION AND PRINCIPLES

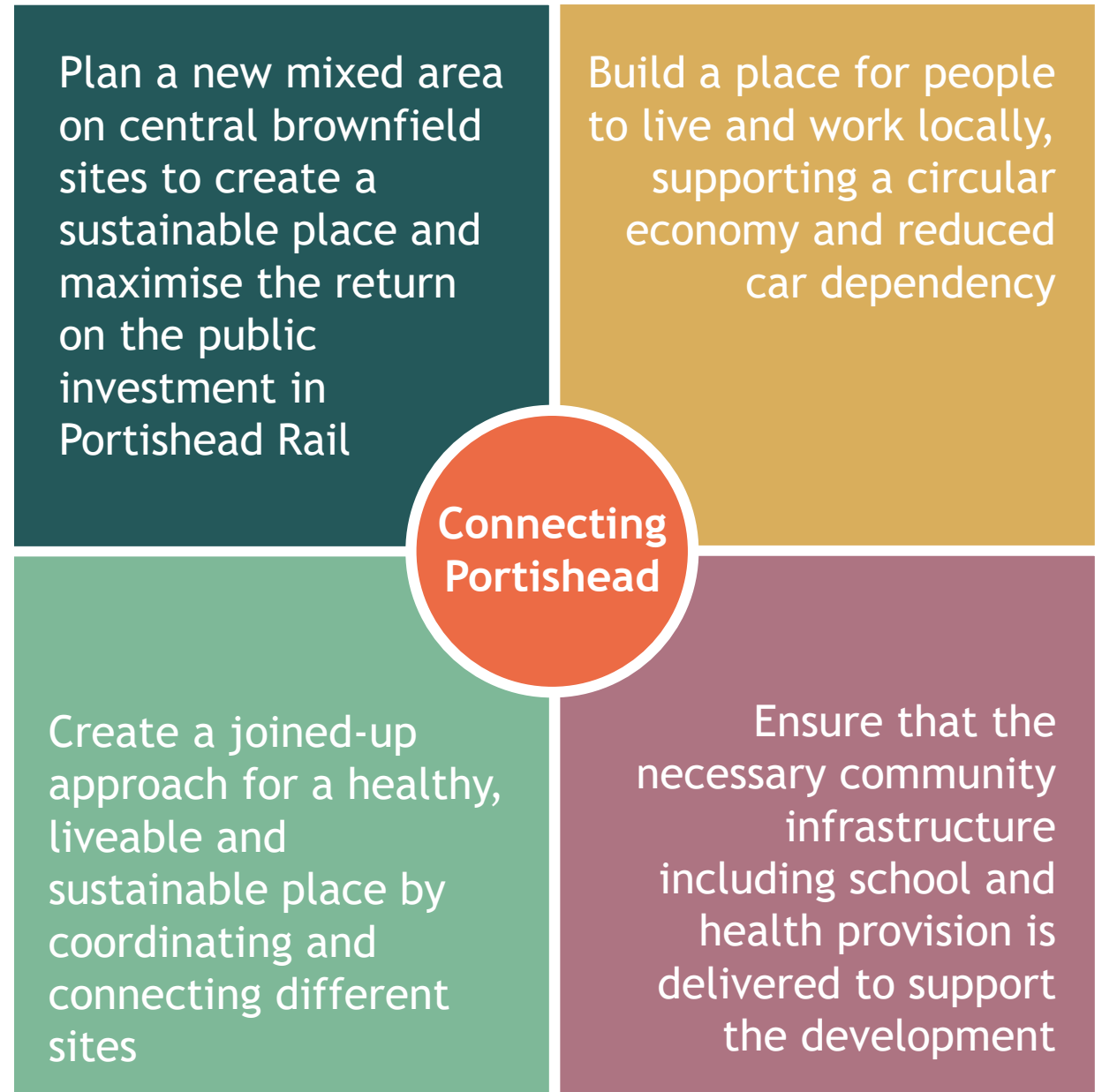
VISION AND PRINCIPLES

Principles and strategy

The Vision, Principles and Strategy have been developed by the project team in collaboration with the Project Steering Group and respond to the particular issues and opportunities which the research and engagement have identified are important for the Wyndham Way area.

This approach has also drawn on the North Somerset Local Plan Challenges and Choices consultation as well as the emerging Portishead Neighbourhood Plan and its key themes.

This Scoping Study and the framework that will follow from it are being developed through a significant period of change. North Somerset has recently declared both Climate and Nature Emergencies and has championed bold proposals through its emerging planning policy. The Neighbourhood Plan will also set out a strong green agenda for change. The direction of travel is clearly set towards more sustainable growth on central previously developed 'brownfield' sites with better opportunity for sustainable travel and reduced reliance on the car.





VISION AND PRINCIPLES

Over 40% of carbon emissions in North Somerset come from transport and this is not currently forecast to fall in future years. Real gains have however been made in emissions from homes and commercial buildings, though there is so much more to achieve.

This work is being undertaken through the COVID-19 pandemic which has significantly challenged the ways in which people live, work, travel and shop. This has accelerated the trend towards local working rather than commuting into larger cities, and as a consequence, many smaller towns have seen a resurgence in local shops due to the increased numbers of people working from home.

This combination of the opportunity to remake a significant central part of Portishead to address some of the key challenges and opportunities of the moment is truly significant. The approach set out here is intended to provide a guide for the development of the future framework, mapping a positive way forward for the benefit of the whole town and the wider area.





VISION AND PRINCIPLES



Digital connectivity and infrastructure have become as important as transport infrastructure for business, and the COVID pandemic has accelerated the emerging trends for remote working to the point where a large number of people are home working. Towns like Portishead are well-placed to benefit from this trend for smaller digitally enabled businesses, workplace hubs and home working.



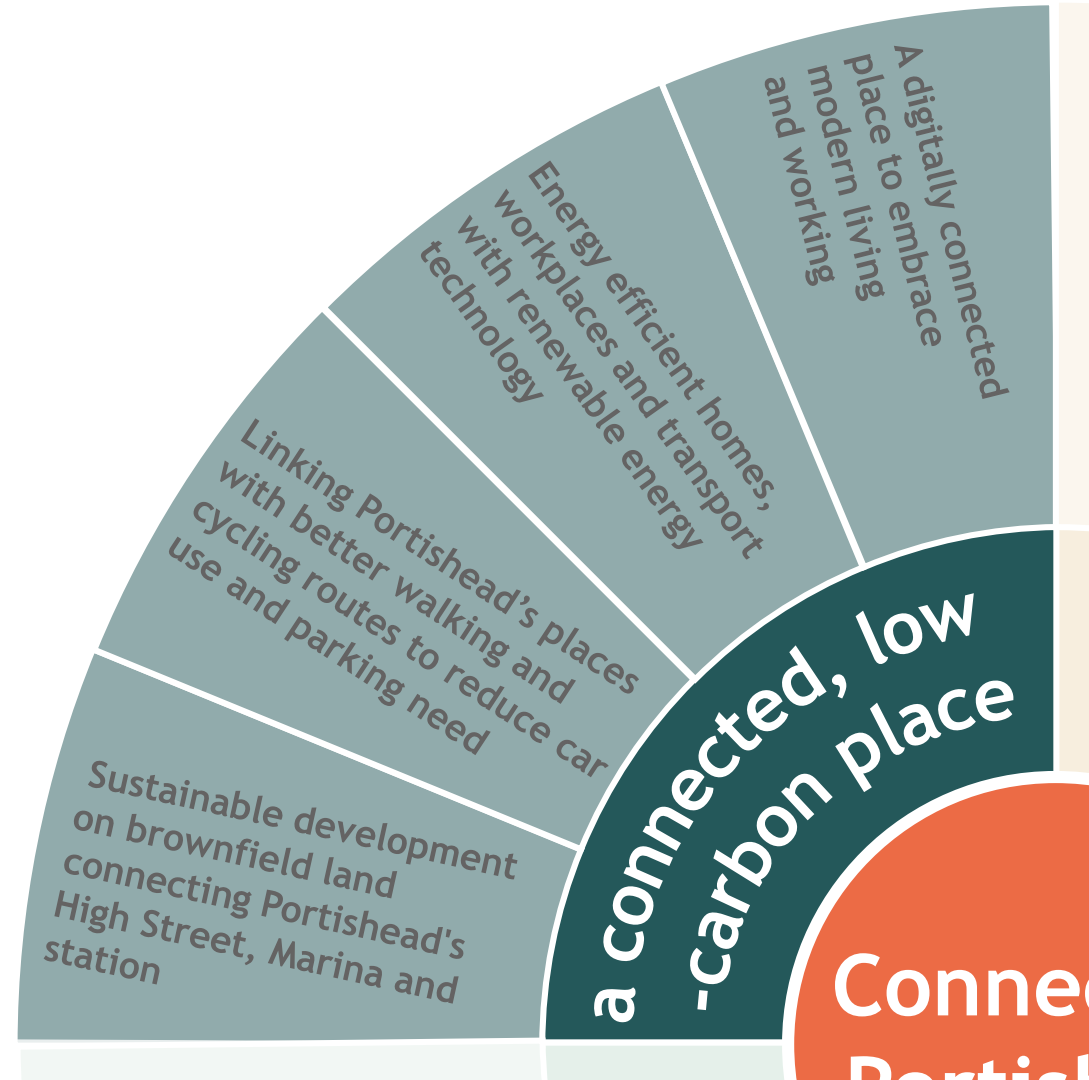
National regulations set minimum standards for the insulation and energy efficiency of homes, gradually increasing to the point where new homes will be able to operate at zero carbon. The scale of new development and the potential mix of uses also means that both renewable energy generation and smart energy network technology could be applied.



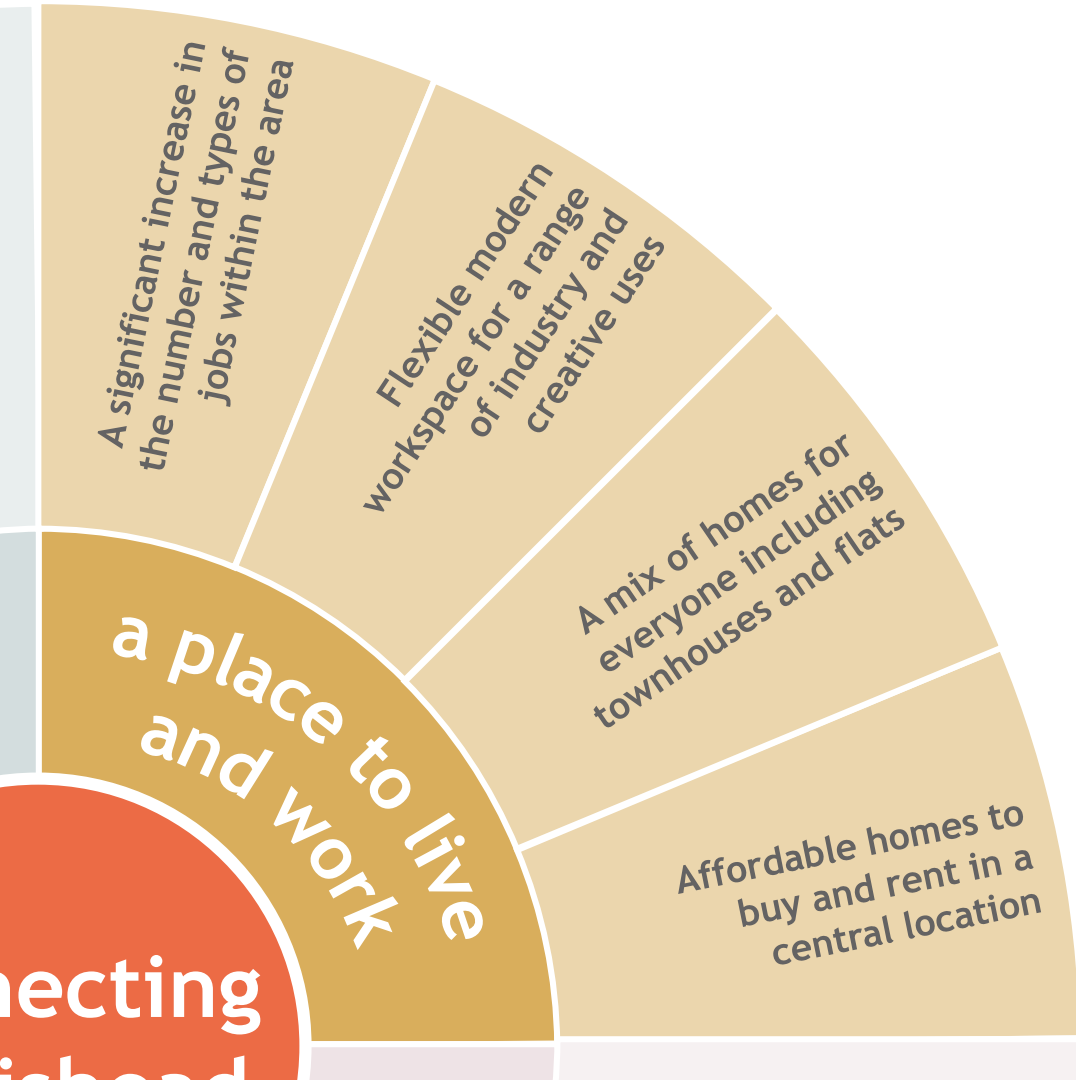
Recent development around Portishead, including the Marina and Port Marine have walkable streets within them, but lack good connections to the town centre. Development of this central area is a good opportunity to create clear and safe street links for walking and cycling which can help to reduce the need for short car trips within the town. This could help to reduce car dependency and make walking and cycling safe for younger people, helping to build healthy lifestyles and reduce traffic congestion.



Brownfield development is the most sustainable option for new development. It reduces the need to further expand the town, saving green-field sites from development. It also places new development in a central location where people can easily walk and cycle to local facilities as well as use the new station. This boosts the viability of the existing High Street, and also makes the development a good location for complementary shops, employment space and leisure facilities



VISION AND PRINCIPLES



The existing industrial and retail uses which provide the bulk of the employment within the study area at the moment tend to provide a relatively low number of jobs. They are in single storey buildings, with large areas of parking and yard space and include uses such as warehousing.

As new development is delivered, it can include new business space and support a wider range of activities to support employment for local people.



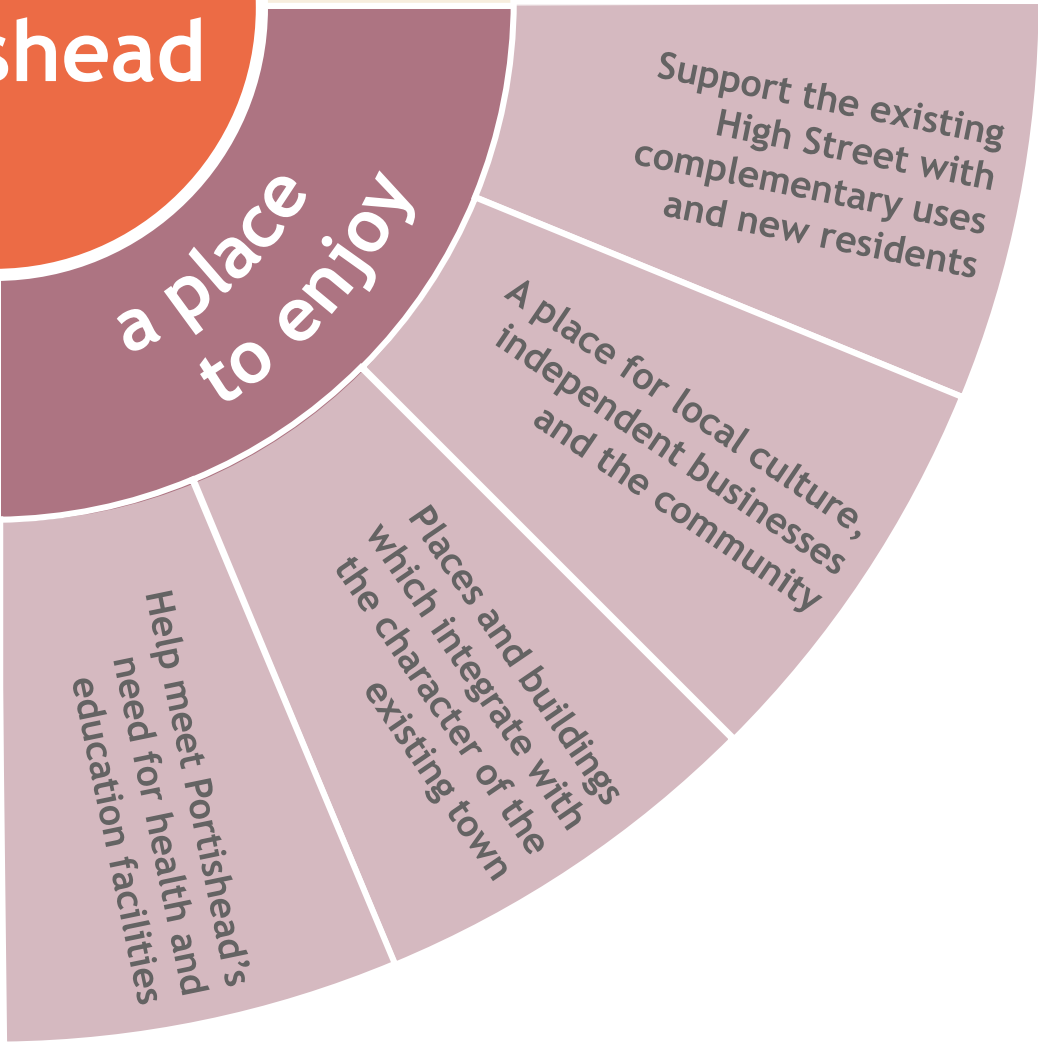
Delivering new workspace as part of a larger development also means that it can be designed to accommodate a wider range of uses and can adapt well to a wide range of workspace needs including workshop, studio and office uses alongside more traditional light industrial uses. Key to this flexibility will be creating modular units which can allow businesses to expand, providing good service access and dealing with infrastructure such as services and ventilation.



As part of contributing to a balanced local community, any development of this size should seek to address the identified need to deliver new housing within Portishead. This should include a range of types, densities tenures of new homes (including affordable housing) from flats through to larger family homes, together with associated amenity spaces.



North Somerset Council requires affordable homes to be delivered in any new residential development, subject to viability considerations, and these requirements will apply to schemes put forward in the Wyndham Way area.



The existing High Street is the retail heart of Portishead, and is complemented by the Marina, with its selection of shops and restaurants. The aim of new development should be to complement it by adding further uses which will benefit Portishead as a growing town. More people living within a short walk of the High Street will boost businesses by increasing the number of customers on their doorsteps.



The Wyndham Way area provides a key growth opportunity right in the heart of Portishead in a district that has long been the focus of the town's industry. A central location like this is an ideal place to locate space for small businesses, flexible workspace and creative spaces that can help to expand opportunities in Portishead. It also offers the potential to expand Portishead's cultural and community provision, with the potential for new cinema and venue space that could either complement or replace the existing Somerset Hall.



Portishead has a characterful historic centre and an attractive Marina area, including attractive buildings, but also great streets and spaces. The local landscape, with hills to the west, means that the roofscape of the central area of Portishead is really visible. The aim for new development should be to create a place with a distinctive character which reflects this existing context and feels like it belongs in Portishead. The development should include streets and spaces which create clear links to help integrate and connect, as well as provide distinctive and characterful design.



Portishead has grown substantially over the last few decades. North Somerset Council and Portishead Town Council have been working to assess what facilities the larger community needs, including the demand for essential services such as school places, healthcare and things like local leisure provision. As well as providing new jobs and homes, any development will need to address the associated infrastructure requirements related to the development providing funding and/or provide new or improved local facilities.



New development in Portishead should provide buildings and spaces which support healthy, happy lifestyles. This includes providing good outdoor space in the form of private gardens and terraces, as well as creating public spaces for play and relaxation. Enabling walking, cycling and reducing local car trips is a well-established way to promote healthy lifestyles. The creation of safe and clear links between different parts of Portishead will help to make walking and cycling easier and replace short car trips for some existing residents as well as new residents.



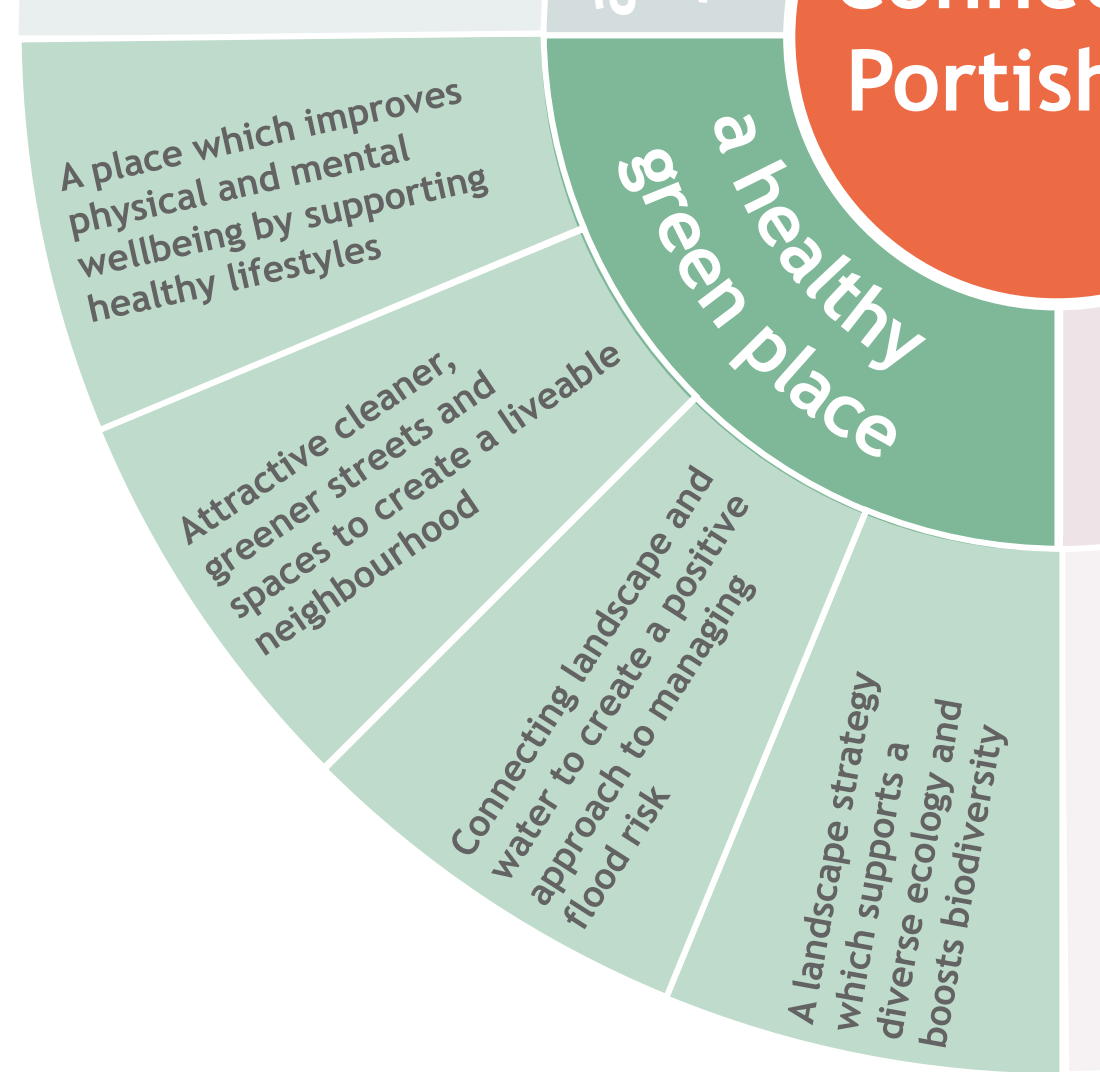
For the central area of Portishead to be an attractive location for people to want to live, work and spend time the streets and spaces need to provide an attractive environment. This could range from central pedestrian spaces which enable cafes or restaurants to provide outdoor seating, to safe streets which enable children to walk and cycle safely to school, to green spaces which provide pockets of space to play in, relax in, or look on to. Green spaces which are interlinked, and which connect into the green corridor of the watercourse will also feel larger and more generous.



The Wyndham Way area is susceptible to flood risk but does benefit from tidal flood protection. The large areas of roof and hard standing in the area contribute to the management and design of the existing watercourse to balance drainage, storage capacity and biodiversity. This should also be complemented by good provision of permeable surfaces within any development, including rain gardens, green or brown roofs and tree planting which can all help to slow down the flow of rainwater and at the same time create a more attractive place.



As well as declaring a climate emergency, North Somerset Council has also declared a nature emergency, drawing attention to the urgent need to improve biodiversity in the district. The existing study area has elements of strong ecological value in its watercourse and some significant trees, but has large areas of hard roof and paved surface. As plans are developed for the area, extending fingers of green space into new development which connect with the green corridor of the watercourse will help to connect and support a much richer and more diverse ecology.



After dark, Wyndham Way becomes a sort of no man's land and doesn't feel too safe

There is no sense of arrival and no great impression of the High Street

The leisure centre is too small, in the wrong place and poor quality

The intersection at the petrol station, Wyndham Way, High Street and Cabstand is a very awkward pinch point. The intersection NEEDS to be eased, it is very difficult to get through, very busy and way too much traffic

More green space!

The rhine greenway could become central green area

Old Mill Road feels like a wasted space. Could this be made into a link between Waitrose and Homebase?

We enjoy coming to Portishead to walk along the greenway, marina and pier.

The area needs to be more attractive with nicer public spaces

The site has a poor structural environment. It disrupts public space and footpaths and is a health hazard

The Old Mill Road businesses are essential and provide important high skilled and professional jobs

Can we improve the building frontages in the Wyndham Way area?

Could we include an arts or culture club?

Harbour Road is aggressive for pedestrians, a better route across the car park would help

3 CONSULTATION

CONSULTATION

Listening to local people

The approach to the framework has been developed through ongoing consultation with local residents, councillors and landowners. It began with a listening exercise in the Vision and Scoping Study and has continued through consultation in spring 2022 and into consultation on the draft document in September and October 2022. We have received hundreds of comments and ideas through our library drop-in, stakeholder site visit workshop and through the website:

Desire for better public transport: people would like to see better bus services and a well-connected railway station.

Improved accessibility: The lack of good walking and cycling routes through the area tends to promote car use. Many enjoy walking but suggested that the area needs new and better connections.

Importance of the rhine greenway: Many people use the rhine greenway as an enjoyable space to walk, cycle and run. People see its environmental importance and would like it to be protected and enhanced.

Improving the attractiveness of the area: People are keen to see more attractive streets including planting and seating.

Parking: There are different opinions around parking provision - some people would like to see parking in Portishead sustained and some people think there is too much. The existing design and location of car parking makes the area hard to navigate and less attractive to walk through.

Traffic: Many commented on the amount of traffic in Portishead and the dominance of cars. The Cabstand junction is a particular pressure point for the area.

Protect current economic uses: People want to see new businesses settle and thrive whilst protecting the current industry within the Wyndham Way Area. There is a desire for smaller independent shops and businesses.

Sustainability: Development must aim for carbon neutrality - energy efficient and enhance and protect local wildlife.

Schools: There is concern that rapid growth in new housing would place pressure on school places.

Leisure: Some people would like to see the leisure centre improved or replaced with a new facility.





CONSULTATION

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Feedback and ideas from the consultation have helped to develop the vision and principles into the draft framework

A cycle way from the High Street down Old Mill Road, past the station and then parallel to the railway to Pill.

Redevelop Old Mill Road and create an attractive connection between the station and the High Street. Encourage independent businesses to set up in Portishead to attract visitors to Portishead.

The Old Mill Road businesses are essential and provide important high skilled and professional jobs

Encourage independent businesses to set up in Portishead to attract visitors to Portishead.

There is no sense of arrival and no great impression of the High Street

This is a good opportunity to create an attractive and distinctive gateway between the new station and the High Street

When you approach Portishead from Wyndham Way, you notice straight away the lack of trees. So we definitely more evergreens needed here

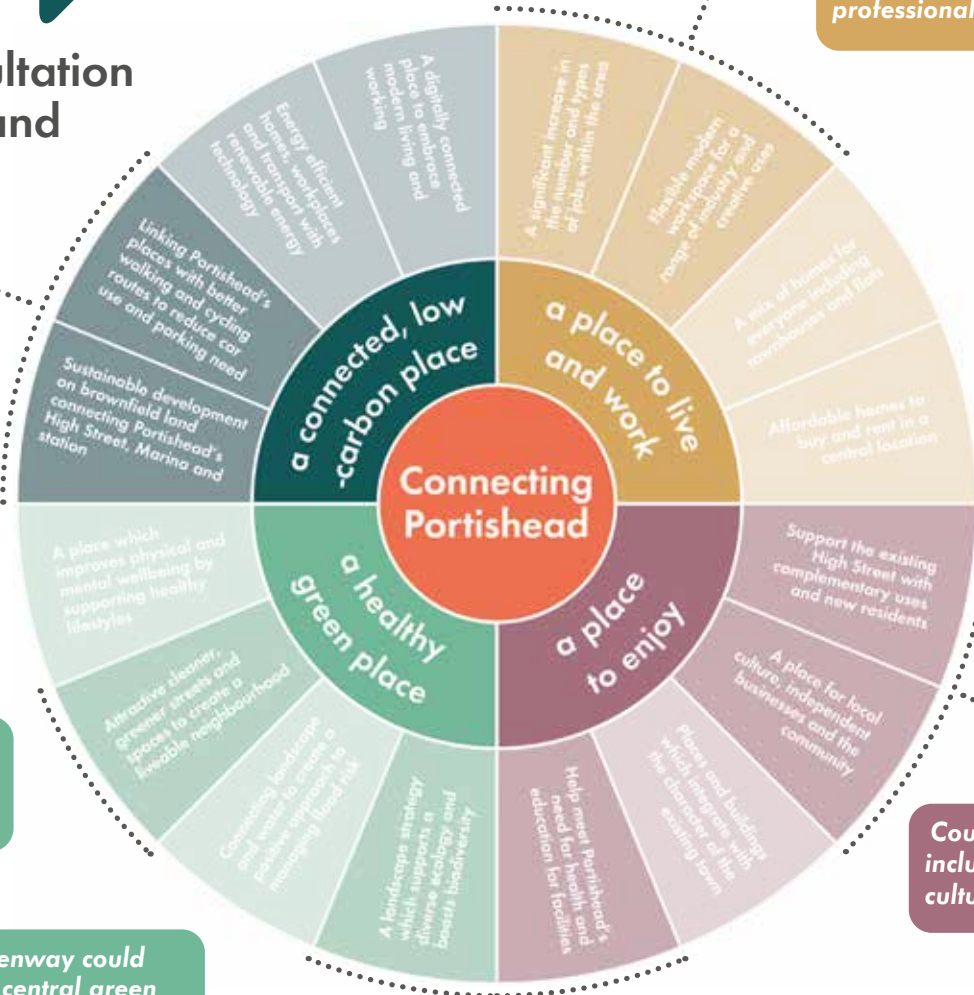
The area needs to be more attractive with nicer public spaces

The greenway could become central green area

More green space and space for wildlife

Could we include an arts or culture club?

A wider range of businesses would encourage people to start business and find work in Portishead



CONSULTATION

Framework consultation

The second round of consultation was held between 23 September and 4 November 2022 and included a blend of online, offline and media engagement as well as a drop-in session at Portishead Library. The project website received over 5,000 visits during the consultation period and hundreds of comments have been received.

Online survey

Forty-nine people responded to the online survey. Overall, the survey found that most respondents expressed support for the masterplan’s aims whilst raising questions and sometimes expressing concerns about parking, community infrastructure and public transport.

The main themes emerging from the feedback were:

Community infrastructure, including medical facilities, community centre, schools and nurseries were regularly highlighted as an important part of the development mix. Some comments highlighted concerns about this keeping pace with any future development.

Concerns and comments about public transport provision, most notably the bus network serving the town. There were also several comments about the rail link, with several respondents wanting to see this align with any development activity.

Parking provision, including concerns about quantity, location and the number of spaces proposed.

Support for green and open space, and comments about how this integrates with and connects the wider town.

Support for employment provision, including space for existing businesses on Wyndham Way. This is set against comments stating that there was too much empty space in the area already.

Comments about a new housing provision, and associated infrastructure provision.

Please make the street network wide enough for both walking and cycling, with plenty of benches, parks and gardens.

Green space must be a top priority in a family-focused town and with current ecological concerns - preferably designed to maximise soaking away waste water and natural drainage.

Solutions for optimising future land use at Portishead, a high order settlement, requires approaching from a strategic level considering all available constraints and opportunities.



Interactive map as part of the WSSA public consultation

CONSULTATION

At the moment, school children walk through the area from the east to get to their schools on the other side of town. But it isn't a very safe route for them and this must be improved!

We could do with a shuttle bus serving the station.

Could the historic building at the end of Old Mill Road be a museum? It could show the history of the port!

At the moment, to get to the high street, I have to walk all the way down Harbour Road. It would be great if there was a more direct route!

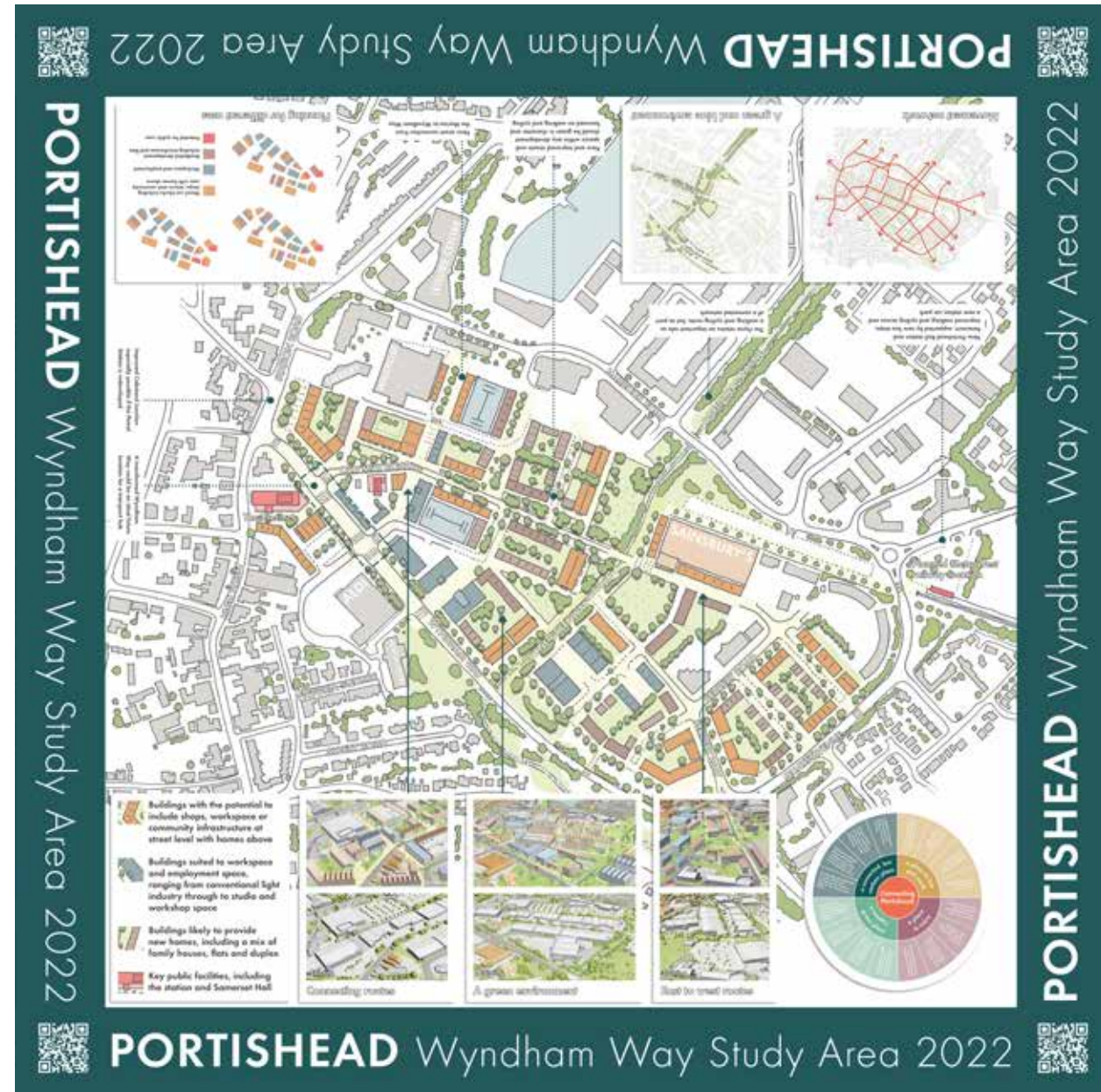
Could you give more detail to some of the terms? Community space can mean different things to different people.

Please provide separate cycle lanes!

After dark, you don't really want to walk through the area so it would be great to get some lighting and activity there, you'd feel a lot safer.

Could you make the colours on the masterplan slightly more vibrant so people are able to distinguish between the uses?

Responses from the in-person engagement event



CONSULTATION

In-person event

Twenty-three people attended the consultation event at Portishead Library on 13 October 2022. Particular themes raised included:

- Supportive of masterplan in general.
- Doubts about whether the rail service will happen.
- Concerns about infrastructure, particularly in relation to the phasing of housing delivery.
- Support for the proposed connections to and from the station.
- Support for change at Old Mill Road, but not at the expense of existing jobs or businesses.
- Support for creating space for local artisan businesses and artists.
- Concerns about local buses, and the knock-on impact this has on car congestion.

- Useful advice on how to improve graphic communication of plans and drawings. Included improvements to colour schemes and the creation of helpful diagrams to aid in an understanding of the masterplan framework.
- Attendees wanted more detail added to terms such as mixed-use, community space and green space.
- Support for creating active spaces to improve safety of the area, particularly after dark.
- Concerns about the impact on the high street, and the loss of the high street as a local centre.

This consultation is the latest phase of engagement on Wyndham Way to have taken place since 2020. Although it's not surprising that engagement levels have dropped compared to the earlier phase in 2020, there is continued interest in the project. The feedback has helped to shape a masterplan for Wyndham Way and a framework for the area's continued evolution.



CONSULTATION

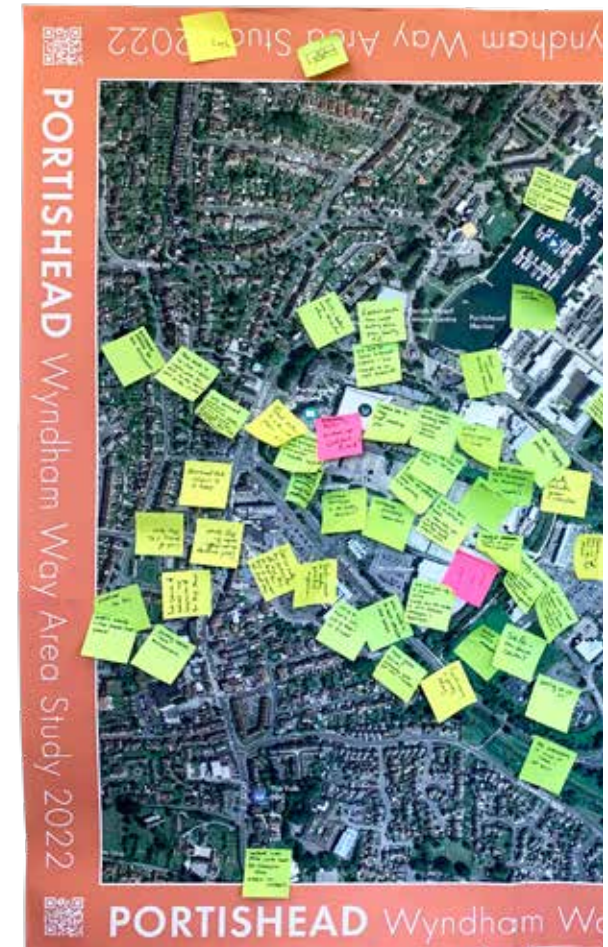
Responding to engagement

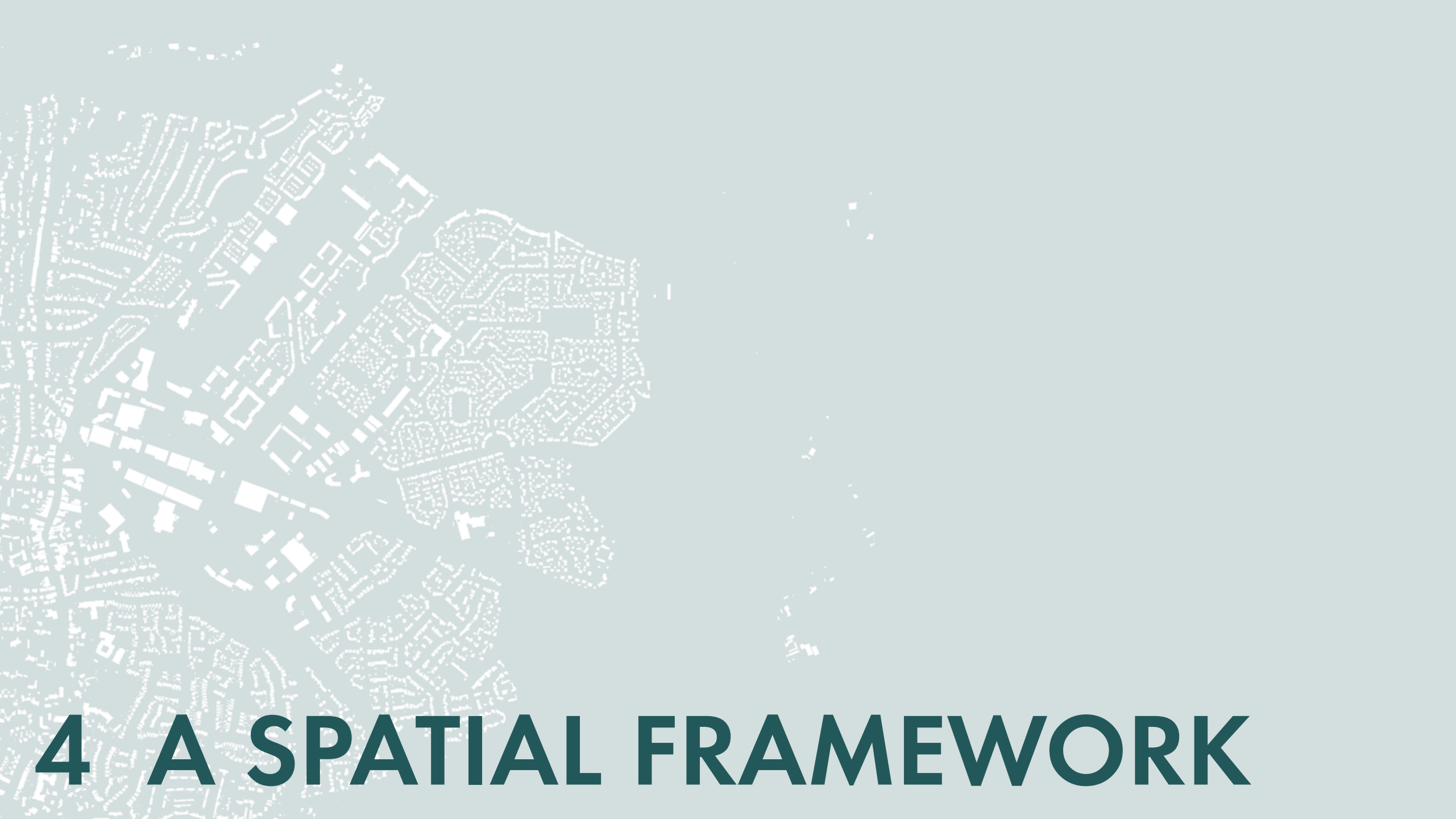
A number of changes have been made to the final draft of the document to respond to the feedback that was received over the course of the project. This includes the following elements:

- The section on employment and workspace has been expanded to respond to concerns about the types of space and risk of loss of jobs. This confirms that there is a clear expectation that the area will see an increase in the range and number of jobs in the future.
- The report now includes more information about new homes, including the possibilities for different types of housing and estimates of the different numbers of new homes which could be delivered in different scenarios and timescales. The gradual delivery of new homes over the fifteen year period of the framework also supports the approach taken to the delivery of community infrastructure.
- The lack of definitive plans with detailed design was noted as a key concern. It is not the role of the framework to respond to this, but more illustrations

and information have been included to help explain the principle of flexibility and the range of options which could come forward. This approach also responds to comments suggesting that a wider range of building scales should be included to demonstrate the ability of the framework to accommodate different density models and massing.

A wider range of comments received relate to the details around elements such as design for accessibility which are elements that are framed by the wider planning policy and regulatory context and which people will have the opportunity to engage with as and when individual applications are proposed.





4 A SPATIAL FRAMEWORK



SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

The framework

The framework has been designed to explore and address the key outcomes of the engagement and research process. It sets out a joined-up approach for the gradual transformation of the area in the context of a series of important discussions which cover not only the Wyndham Way area, but affect the wider town.

In developing the approach, a series of components have been identified which set out how the principles identified in the Vision can be translated into a practical framework for future development. These have been tested through consultation on the draft document and updated to reflect public and stakeholder feedback.

Creating a framework for development



A connected district

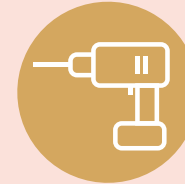


A green and blue environment



A flexible framework

Design for different uses



Workspace and employment



New homes



Parking

Delivering infrastructure



Planning for Portishead rail



School place provision



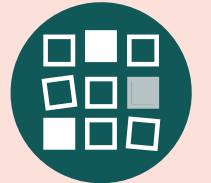
Public buildings



A connected
district



A green and blue
environment



A flexible
framework

A framework for development

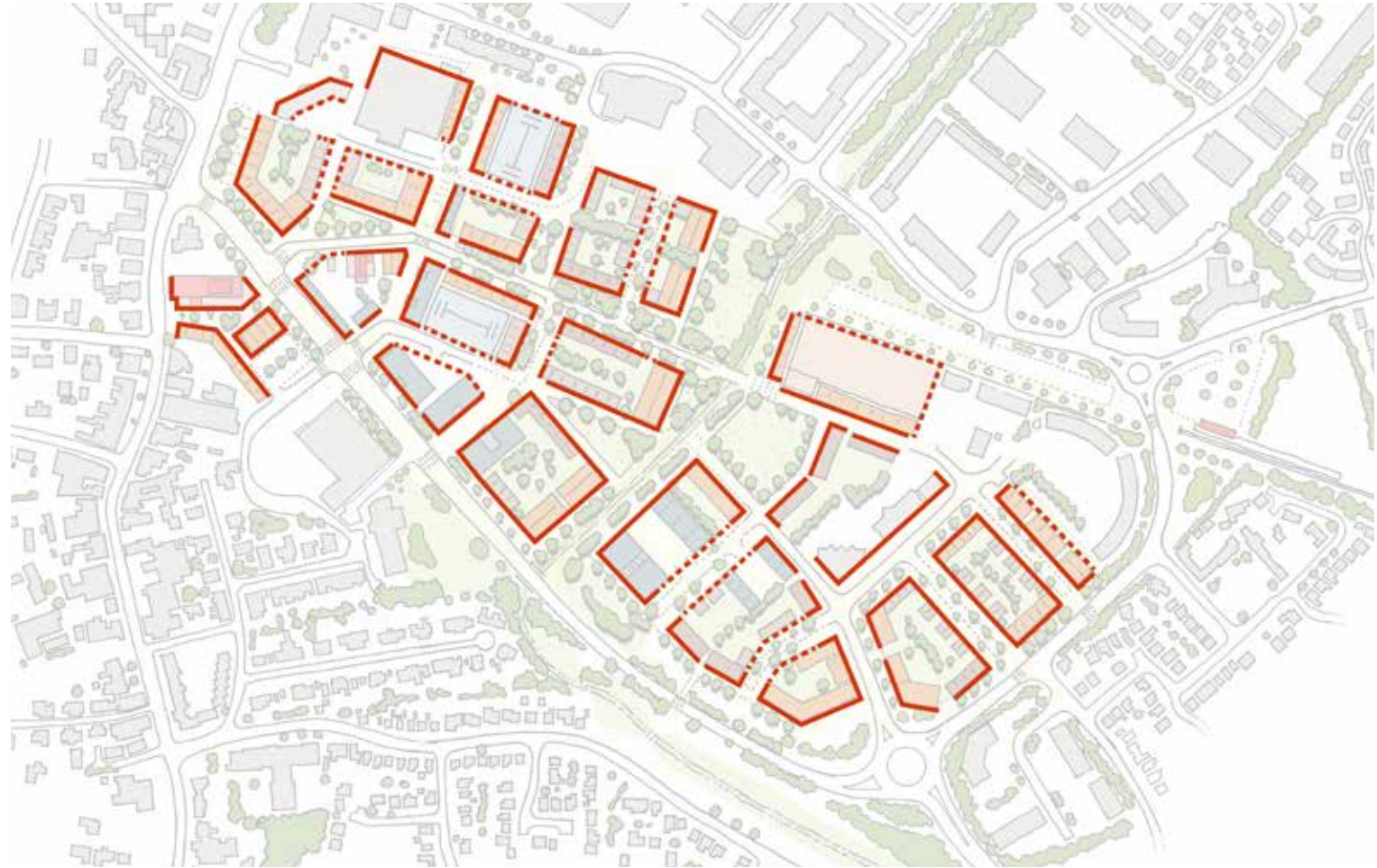
SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

Creating a flexible framework

Urban blocks are the key components of our historic towns and cities. They help to create places which deliver safer streets by overlooking with front doors, windows and shop fronts. They are flexible in being able to accommodate a wide range of uses and enable change over time that supports a resilient economy. They also define clear fronts and backs creating areas for gardens, yards and servicing away from the front faces onto public streets.

The flexibility which a good block structure creates is really important to the Wyndham Way area. Change will happen over a relatively long period of time and through many different projects. Whilst the illustrative framework help to show ways in which the area could change, the framework of blocks defines the essential rules for development that give landowners and developers the opportunity to be creative but still work in a coordinated way.

The block structure which has been developed for the Wyndham Way area takes account of land ownerships and existing buildings to give the most flexibility whilst still unlocking change.



Urban block structure







SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

Planning for different uses

The ability to deliver a range of different uses within the area is a key part of the framework approach and it is important to appreciate that the illustrative scheme shown in this document is just one way in which the area could develop.

The framework which we have proposed not only allows for variations in the design of individual buildings but also allows for variations in uses. A flexible approach will help the wider town adapt to changing demands for workspace, leisure, community facilities, homes and more, helping to support a more resilient economy for the town.

-  Mixed use blocks including shops, leisure and community uses with homes above
-  Workspace and employment
-  Residential development including townhouses and flats
-  Potential for public uses



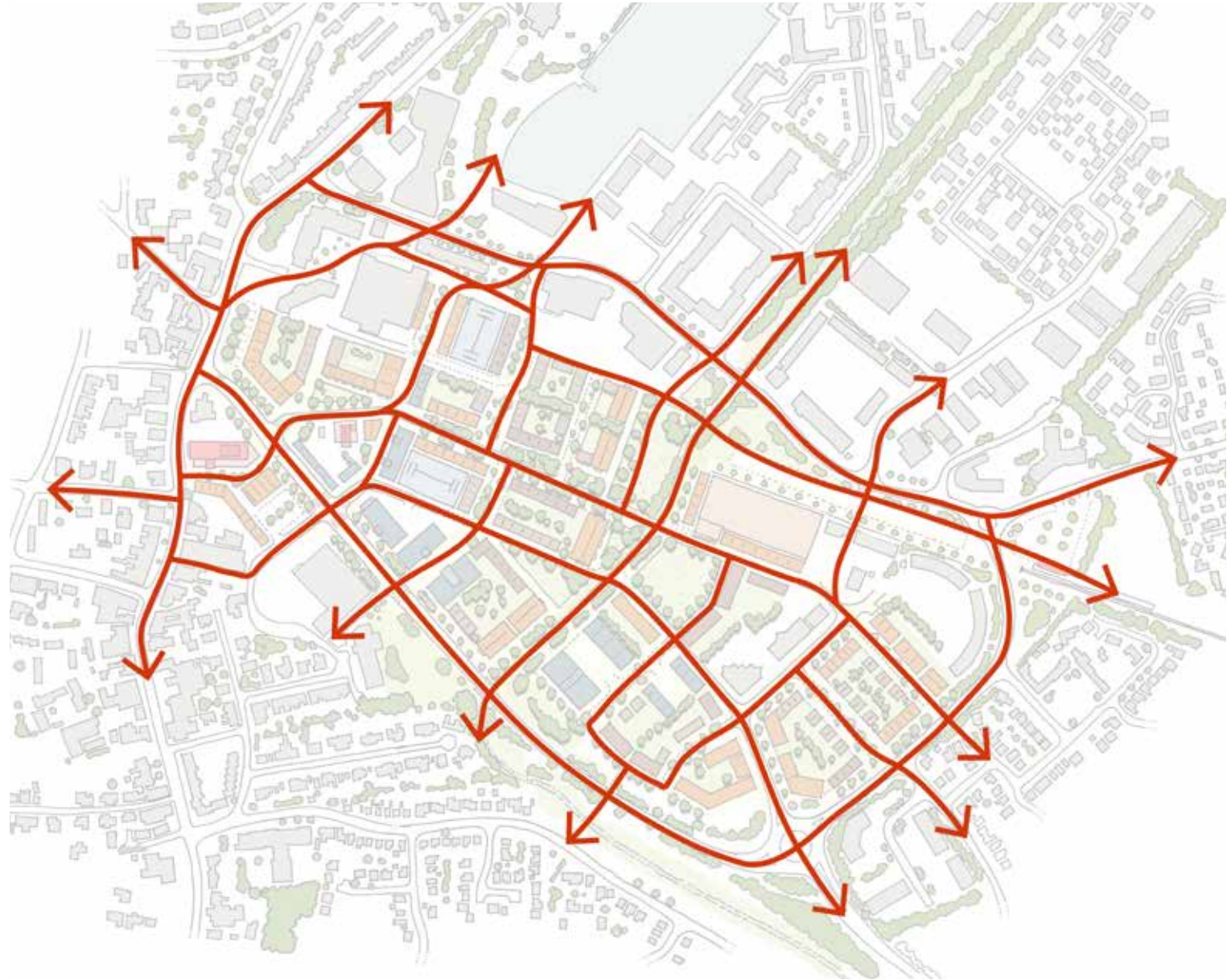
SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

A connected district

Delivering a connecting network of streets and routes for walking and cycling has been one of the consistent ambitions of this project. It tackles one of the big issues that has arisen as Portishead has grown over the last few decades, but without the connecting routes that could make short journeys really easy to do on foot or by bicycle.

The fragmented ownership in the area makes a comprehensive street pattern hard to deliver as a single project. However, the fact that different land owners need to coordinate their developments to deliver joined-up streets is one of the challenges which makes this framework important. Without it, there is a risk that piecemeal development will never produce a connected place.

A clear and attractive street network will help to make walking and cycling easier for some trips. Whilst it won't replace every car journey it can replace some of them, giving healthy choices to more people. It will also make the town better for children and teenagers who don't drive by creating a safe environment which gives them more independence.



Movement network



SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

A green and blue environment

Green streets and spaces are a vital aspect of creating a place which is liveable, supports biodiversity and helps to address the impacts of climate change. Whilst the rhine creates an attractive green corridor through the heart of the area, a large proportion of space is hard surfaces, either roofs, roads or car parks.

Given the fragmented ownership of the area, it is unlikely that a single large park could be created. However, a series of smaller spaces which connect into the rhine corridor will create usable spaces and will help to extend the benefits of green space to a large proportion of the site.

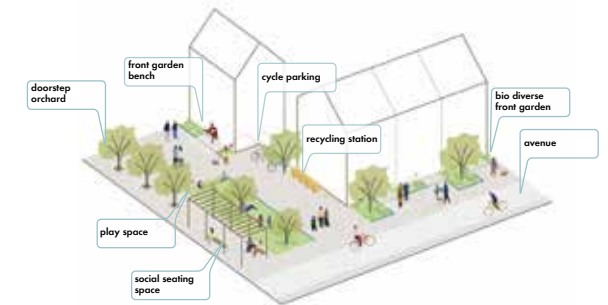
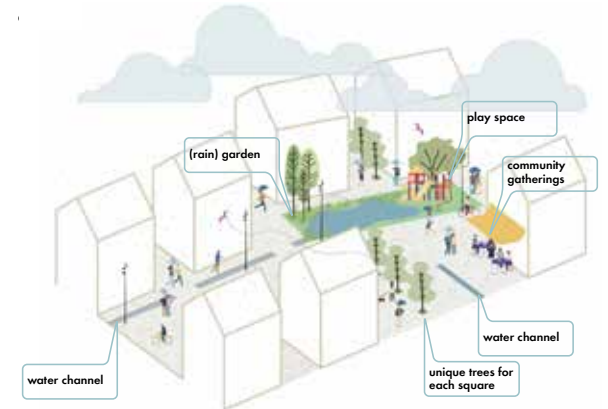
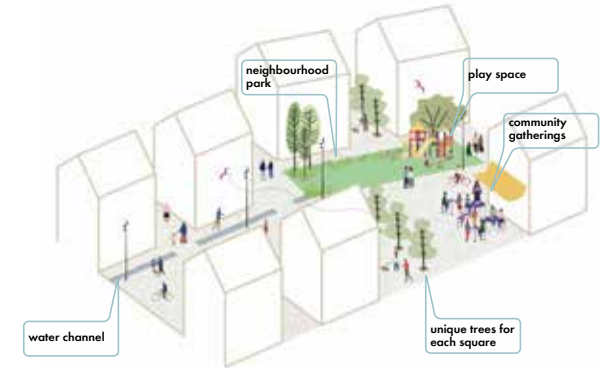
New and improved streets are also expected to be much greener. Trees are important to provide shade and help maintain cooler temperatures. Greenery at ground level can include elements of seating and features for play, but should also include rain-gardens for sustainable urban drainage to help manage water run-off and reduce flood risk downstream.

Finally, gardens and green roofs also have a big part to play in making the area as green as possible and provide space for residents to relax.



Extending Portishead's central greenway

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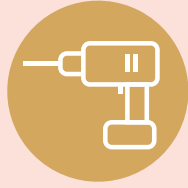


Green streets and spaces serve many functions



SPACIAL FRAMEWORK





**Workspace and
employment**



New homes



Parking

Designing for different uses



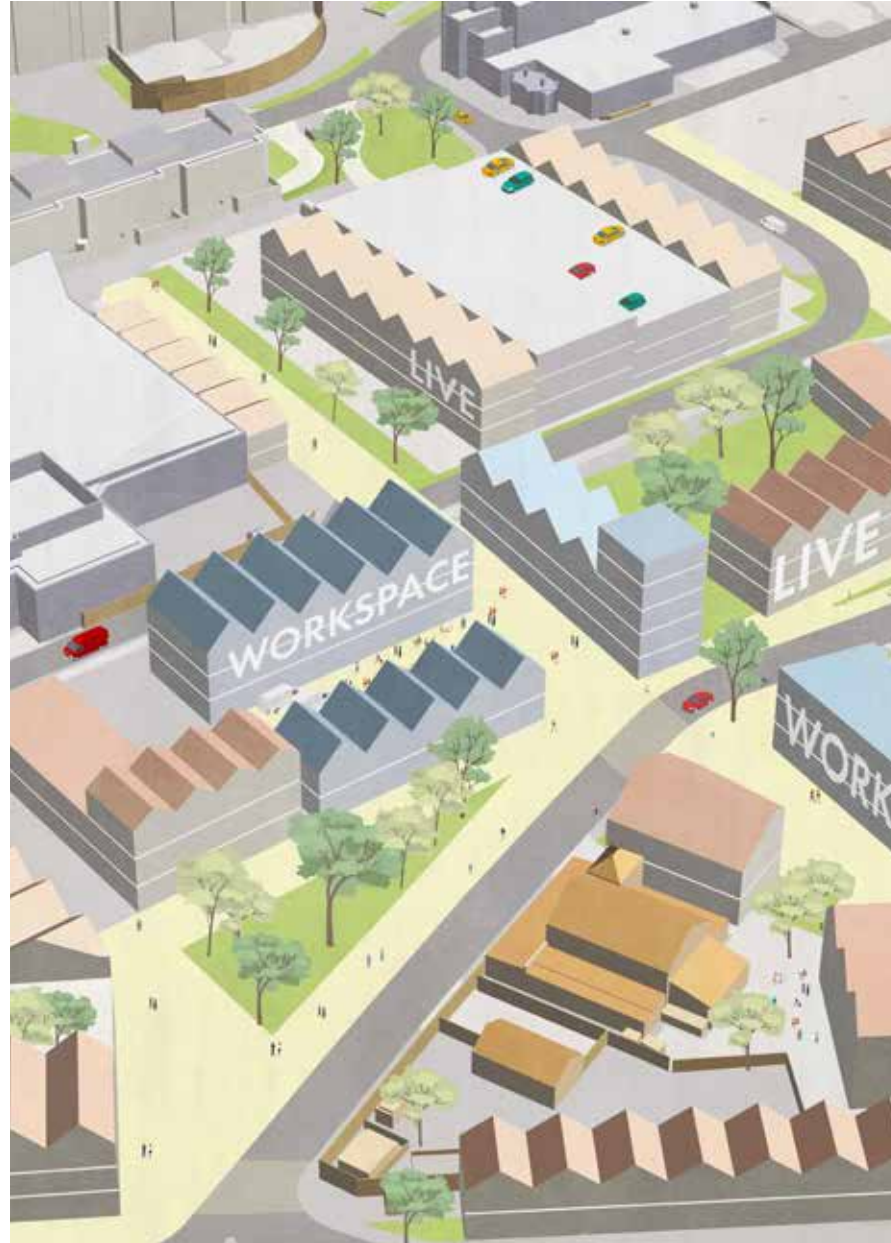
SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

Workspace and employment

The existing employment in the Wyndham Way area has been an important part of the public debate around the framework. Employment and workspace in and around the town centre has a significant role to play in making the town more economically sustainable, with local jobs supporting the high street and giving people more opportunities to work locally.

Over the last few years the national trend has seen demand for employment and commercial space has remained high, making it attractive for land owners. In the short term, this makes the development of existing sites like Old Mill Road less likely as the space is in demand. Change is likely to be gradual and more likely to be about creative mixed use.

Workspace can be designed to be much better integrated into the wider town, helping to create good streets and be a positive part of Portishead. Lots of historic factory and mill buildings in our towns and cities do this very well and show how workspace could be better integrated into the town.



Crate is an example of innovative workspace for small businesses within an existing industrial estate. It includes a cafe and has become a centre for events and markets



SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

New types of workspace

In recent years employment sites have tended to be low density and low rise. This contrasts with more historic developments like Victorian factories and warehouses which tended to be multi-storey. Stacked workspace for creative 'maker-spaces' is returning as a form of development, as is work space as a ground floor use with housing above. Both options mean that more activity can be accommodated within a site, using land more efficiently and helping to support the town centre.

For any workspace as part of mixed use development, providing yard space which can accommodate vans and deliveries is an important factor, as are goods lifts to upper floors. Work space units also typically need much bigger floor-to-ceiling heights than other uses.

When considering a mixed use scheme, it is important that work space is designed so that factors such as noise, air quality and servicing do not affect nearby homes and create conflict. Careful design of service yards and bin stores as well as the orientation of entrances can play a big part in making mixed use areas successful.



Uplands is an example of the modern stacked industrial space being planned. It includes service yards and goods lifts as well as creating good street frontage.



Modern work space can be much more flexible and attractive.



SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

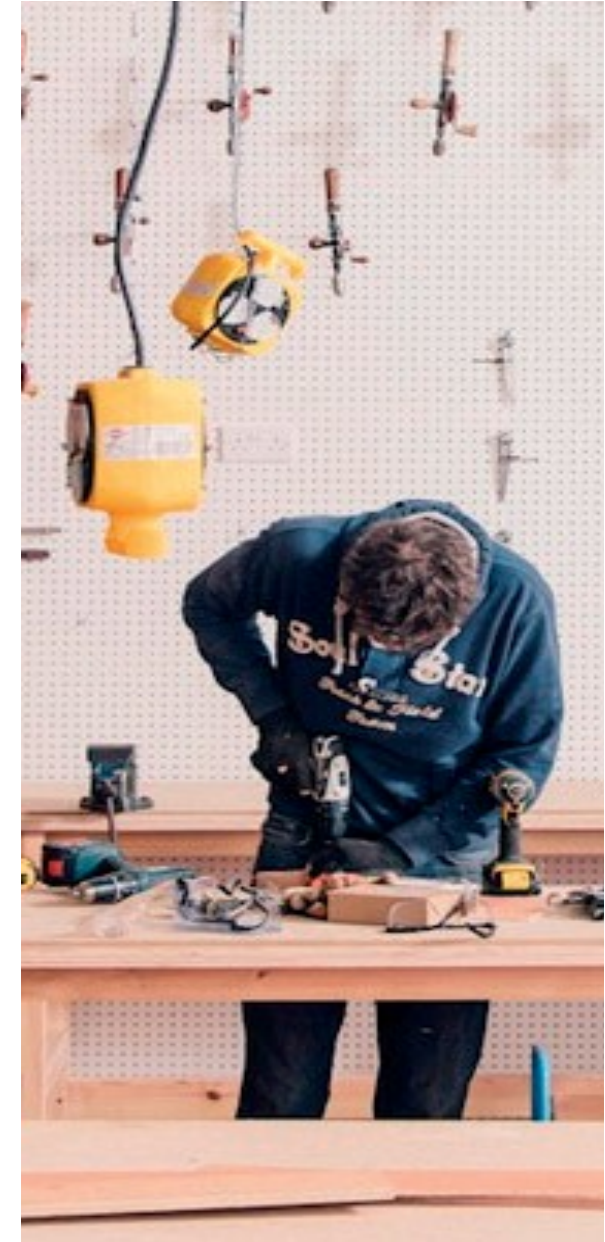
New types of workspace

The discussions about the amount of workspace available in Portishead and the local jobs which this delivers have been a key part of the consultation process supporting this study. Whilst it is not possible in a framework like this to make clear predictions about the future number of jobs the council's expectation is that employment in the area will increase and that there will be a broadening range of opportunities available. There are a number of factors which will inform future schemes and decisions.

- The original Vision and Principles established in 2020 includes a clear expectation that the area will continue to provide employment for Portishead. This continues to form part of the framework and the Council remains committed to the planning designations including the employment allocation on the Gordano Gate site which would introduce new employment land.
- Industrial sites such as Old Mill Road often include a significant number of trade retail units and leisure such as gyms. These are also important sources of employment and can be integrated into mixed use areas.

- A planning policy document can't make a commitment to retain an existing company on its present site. These are commercial matters that are for individual businesses and their landlords to determine.
- Different uses have different job densities - this will benefit Portishead as sites are developed for more modern workspace. We are likely to see more space for creative uses, increasing the number of jobs on the site and widening the range of opportunities.

Based on the illustrative options that have been drawn up for this framework it is estimated that the area could provide up to 600 jobs, depending on the level of change and the sites that come forward for development.



SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

Town centre living

Town centre living has a significant role to play in any future development in central Portishead. It contributes to town centre vitality; it provides a sustainable location for living within walking and cycling distance of shops, services and transport; and it reduces the need for greenfield development by using central brownfield sites.

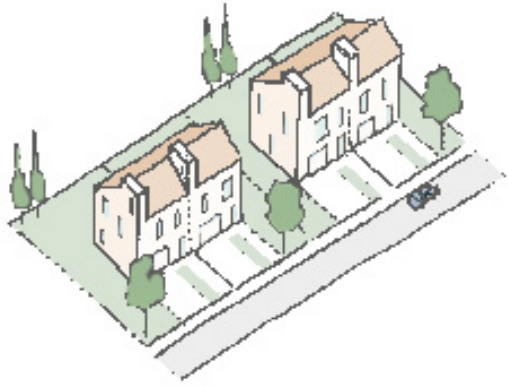
Residential development in a central location can include a range of terraced family houses mixed with flats. Duplex units for family housing in mid-rise blocks can help to maintain a mix of housing types which responds to Portishead’s housing need as set out in the Local Plan, and maintain an active street frontage.

The examples shown here are from a variety of locations in the south of England and so respond to different contexts. Development in Portishead would be expected to reflect the character of the local area in terms of building materials and forms.



Right: Examples of high quality town centre family houses and apartments at a range of densities

A range of housing types



Suburban housing predominates in large areas of Portishead. However, the relatively low density means that it is relatively land-hungry and leads to car dependency due to the scale of development. This approach is expected to have minimal application in new central development in Portishead.

Density - 30 dwellings per hectare

Parking - on plot



Terraced town houses ranging from two to four stories can accommodate everything from relatively small homes to large family dwellings. A typical Victorian street of terraced homes would usually be regarded as working well with on-street parking providing one space per house, but there might be potential for a rear courtyard or off-site parking

Density - up to 60 dwellings per hectare

Parking - on street or in shared parking



Mews homes with the option for integral parking and roof terraces can be used on smaller or constricted sites, often within the middle of a larger scale block. Mews streets with a shared surface are suitable for areas with local traffic only and low speed design.

Density - up to 60 dwellings per hectare

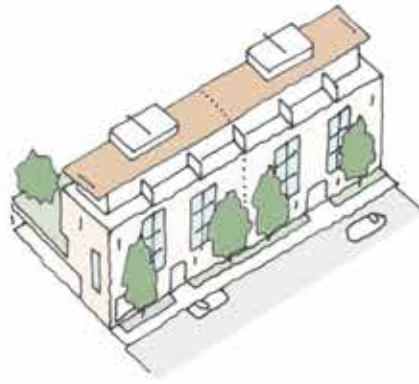
Parking - integrated

A range of housing types



Stacked maisonettes can create an attractive street frontage at four storey and have the advantage of providing each home with a front door directly onto the street. The lower unit would usually be expected to have a garden at ground level, whilst the upper unit might be small and step back to allow space for a roof terrace.

Density - 100 dwellings per hectare
Parking - on street or shared parking



Apartment buildings can contribute to a mix of unit types as part of a larger development. They can make a positive contribution to the streetscape by including front doors onto the street for ground floor flats. Whilst parking in basements is unlikely to be viable in a location like Portishead, the option of parking below a podium courtyard amenity space may be suitable.

Density - up to 200 dwellings per hectare
Parking - on street or in shared parking



Mixed blocks containing a range of apartment buildings, stacked maisonettes and town houses provides an attractive way to achieve good densities with flexibility and the opportunity to include other uses at street level. Parking can be provided within a podium deck or externally as part of a shared provision.

Density - typically 120 dwellings per hectare
Parking - on street, podium or shared parking



SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

Scale and massing

The predominant scale of the study area at the moment is two-storey industrial buildings, with large shallow roofs which become the dominant feature in views from the surrounding hills. This is in contrast to the mainly two and three storey old parts of Portishead and the taller development around the waterside of the Marina.

The framework for the area creates the context for a range of options in terms of scale and massing. The provision of stacked parking or undercroft parking is likely to be required to allow for denser options to be delivered whilst still meeting commercial expectations.

The possible range in densities which different scale and massing options could deliver is reflected in the housing capacity study which forms the final section of this report.



Above: Different options for scale and massing of development with the existing buildings also included for comparison

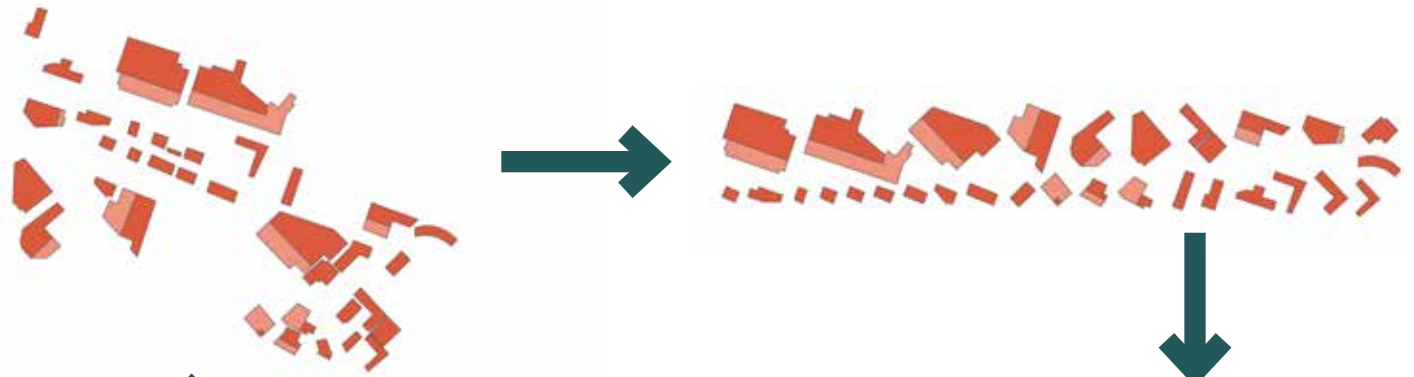
SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

Parking

Surface car parking currently dominates this part of Portishead. Whilst some car parks like the town centre car park adjacent to the High Street are in demand and well used, most of the car parks are bigger than they need to be. This is largely because they each serve different uses and are split across different ownerships.

As the area changes over time, a different approach to parking could help to meet Portishead’s parking needs but also reduce the impact it has on the streets. Greater use of shared parking and multi-storey parking would mean that less space needs to be given over to cars and more can be used for buildings and spaces.

Provision of different parking to suit different needs will also help. Parking near the High Street which is best for short-stay errand parking should be complemented with longer stay parking suitable for people who work in the area, but might not need to park quite so close.



A map of central Portishead highlighting the areas of parking for public use, shopping and businesses



If more parking could be shared by different uses, it would be much more efficient, easier to use and have less impact on Portishead’s streets



If some of the parking could be multi-storey, it would free up even more space for productive uses, including workspace and homes in a sustainable location

SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

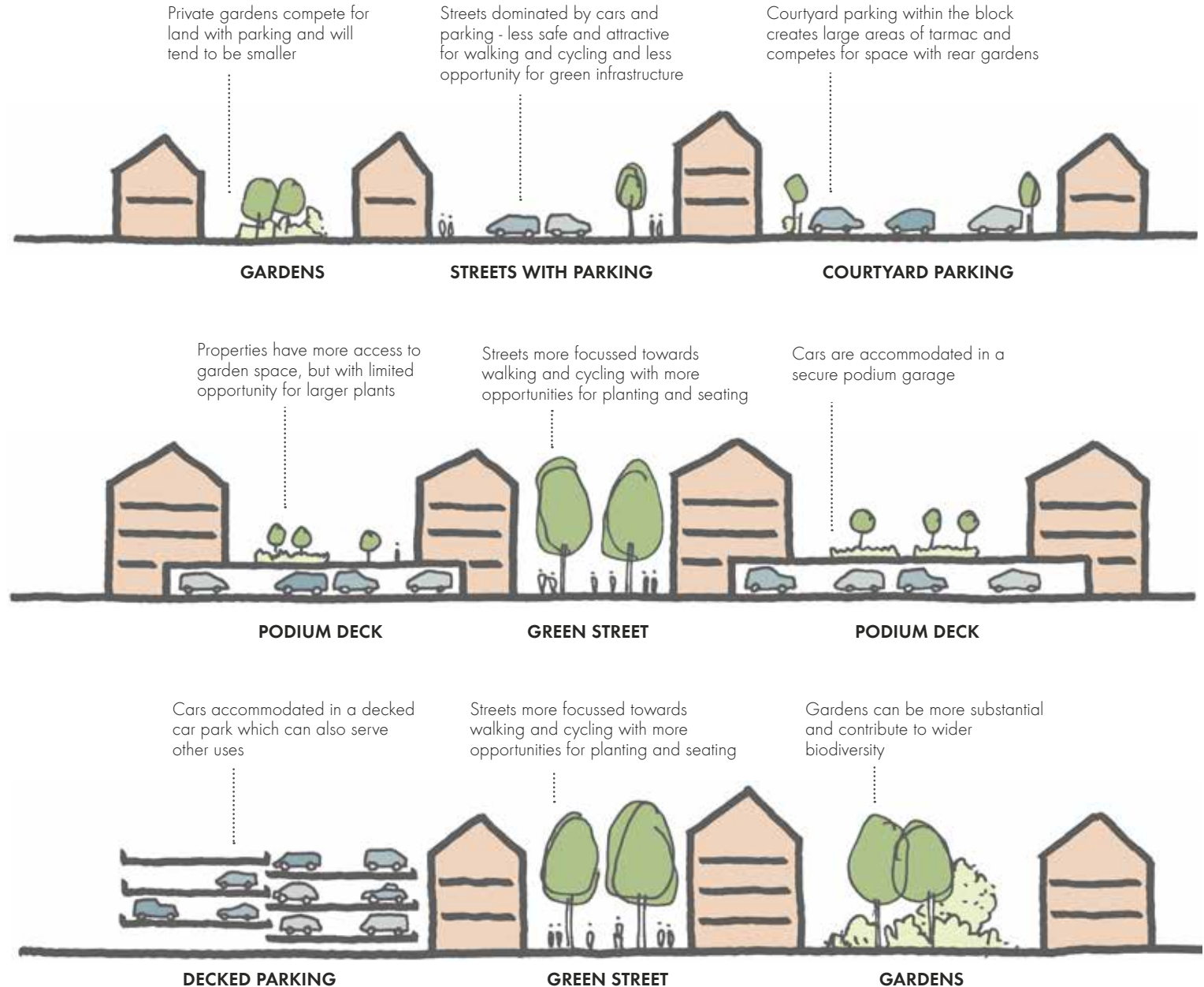
Residential parking

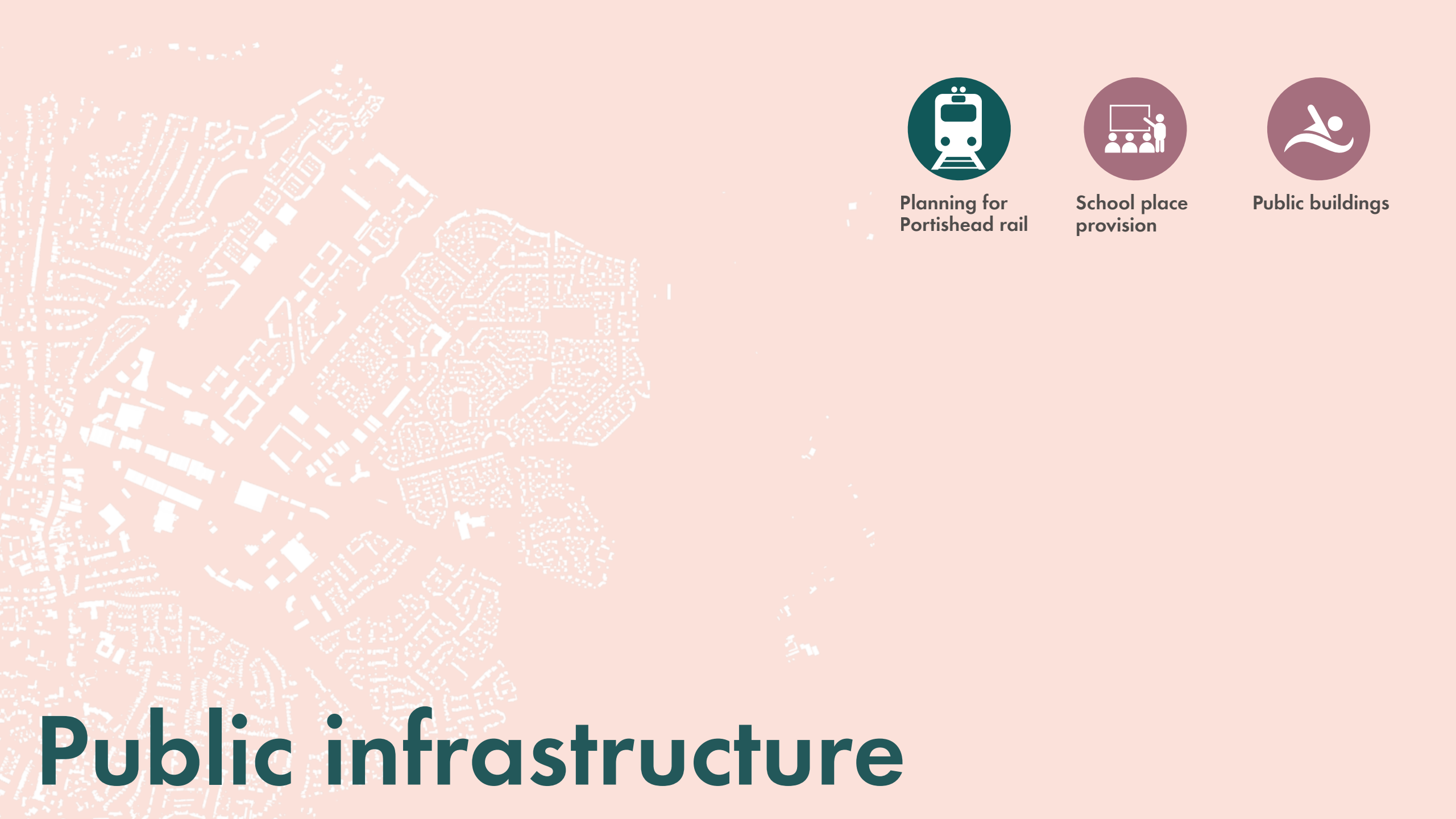
Any new homes in the area will need some parking, although the central location and delivery of the station will help to reduce the overall requirement. There are different ways to deliver this, each with their strengths and weaknesses.

Surface parking, either on street or in courtyards is space-hungry and has a big impact on the public spaces. It limits the amount of development that can be delivered, but has the advantage of being cheap to build.

Parking in a podium or a multi-storey car park is more expensive to build, but can be used to create better streets and more garden space for residents. They allow for streets to be focussed around walking and cycling as well as allowing deliveries and servicing, and can support schemes like car sharing which reduce the need for car ownership.

The spacial framework is flexible and can accommodate a range of options. However, options which reduce the need for surface parking will work best with the other objectives in the framework to create a sustainable place.





Planning for
Portishead rail



School place
provision



Public buildings

Public infrastructure



SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

School place provision

Even if change in a neighbourhood is gradual over a medium term, it is essential that planning for the requirement of infrastructure is considered at an early stage by stakeholders.

Regarding education, there is currently some capacity in Portishead’s primary schools, although there could be a deficit in secondary provision by 2026 without intervention. Portishead as a town has grown significantly in the last twenty years and a school age bulge passing through the academic years.

If the framework proposals were delivered in a single or two or three large schemes, it would likely trigger the need to deliver a new primary school as it could create a new demographic bulge which the existing schools may not be able to meet.

However, as the area is in many different land ownerships, change is expected to be gradual over time. Schemes that would be delivered within the individual ownerships would not on their own be large enough to trigger a school nor create a site large enough to accommodate one.

Given this context, it is expected that a gradual evolution of change over the medium to long term will create a need for school places which is itself gradual and each development will be expected to make a contribution to funding new school places through Development Contributions.

The local planning authority and education authority will continue to keep this under review and may choose to identify land for a new school. Proposals that derive demand for a new school can be expected to be asked to provide this capacity.

In all cases, land owners and prospective planning applicants are strongly encouraged to engage with the local planning authority and local education at an early stage.



SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

Leisure centre options

Although local people have told us they would like a better leisure centre, Portishead’s existing facility is one of the better and newer ones in the district. This means that it isn’t likely to be replaced in the short or medium term. However, as the Framework sets out a gradual process for change, it is possible to anticipate that a new leisure centre could be developed in the longer term. There are a number of factors to consider which can help to plan for this:

- Having the leisure centre in a central location helps to support the High Street and means that it is as accessible as possible
- To ensure continuous operation, it would be good to deliver a new leisure centre on a different site before closing or redeveloping the old site
- A new centre could allow for a more extensive leisure offer, including a training pool, and could include basketball courts and five-a-side pitches - possibly on the roof
- There could be opportunities to integrate and re-provide other public uses



The Britannia leisure centre in Hackney is a good example of a modern facility in an urban area, including rooftop pitches and courts.

SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

Planning for Portishead rail

The delivery of Portishead Rail creates a new context for the centre of the town and a genuine alternative for travel to Bristol. The plans for the station including changes to the road network to create space for the station and forecourt, and a new car park on land to the north of Sainsbury's.

The framework will help to deliver good walking and cycling routes to the station which will help some people to travel without a car. It also shows how new sustainable development in the area around the station will help to capitalise on the investment of public money.

The station will help people commuting to Bristol, but will also make it easier for people who want to get to Portishead. This will support local businesses and should make Portishead a more attractive location for investment.

Along with the delivery of the railway, page 55 of the framework also highlights wider potential transport improvements, including the opportunity for a mobility hub on Wyndham Way.

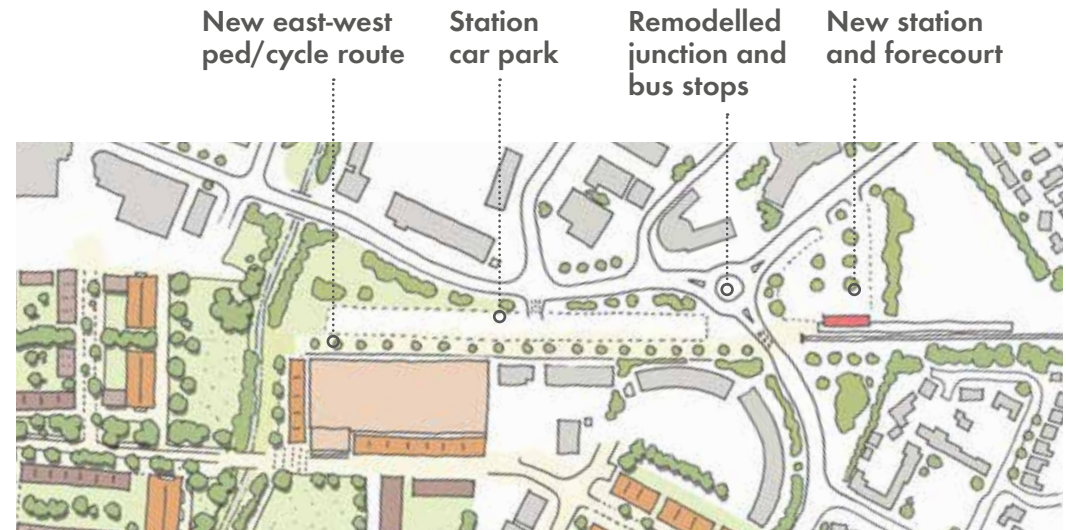
Existing station area

showing the current road layout and building.



Proposed plans for the station

showing how the existing Phoenix Way roundabout will be moved to create the station site. It will be connected with improved pedestrian routes, new bus stops and a new station car park.





SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

Somerset Hall options

Somerset Hall and the Precinct are important parts of the town centre, but also rather turn their backs on Wyndham Way and create a poor first impression of Portishead for many people.

The framework sets out how the Precinct could be redeveloped around a remodelled Somerset Hall, creating an opportunity for supporting the growing range of businesses in the area, alongside space for community events. Remodelling the existing building reduces cost and complexity, but is also a more sustainable approach.

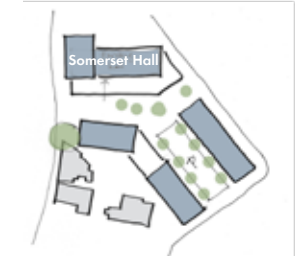
Any development would need to be carefully phased and to work with the existing businesses, ideally to re-provide new accommodation which minimises the disruption to continuity of trade.

Some parking should be retained to support short stay parking for shopping and errands but could be designed like a market square so that it can be turned over for big public events on special days. Active street frontage onto Wyndham Way will make it a better point of arrival into the town and could be a future location for bus stops.



Top: Historic images of the Precinct
Below: The Precinct today

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- 5



Different sketch options for the development of the Precinct and Somerset Hall with new public space



SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

An illustrative plan

This illustration shows how the area could look if it was all developed in line with the principles set out in this framework. It has the potential to be a connected and sustainable district with a mix of homes, jobs, green space and community infrastructure.



Buildings with the potential to include shops, workspace or community infrastructure at street level with homes above



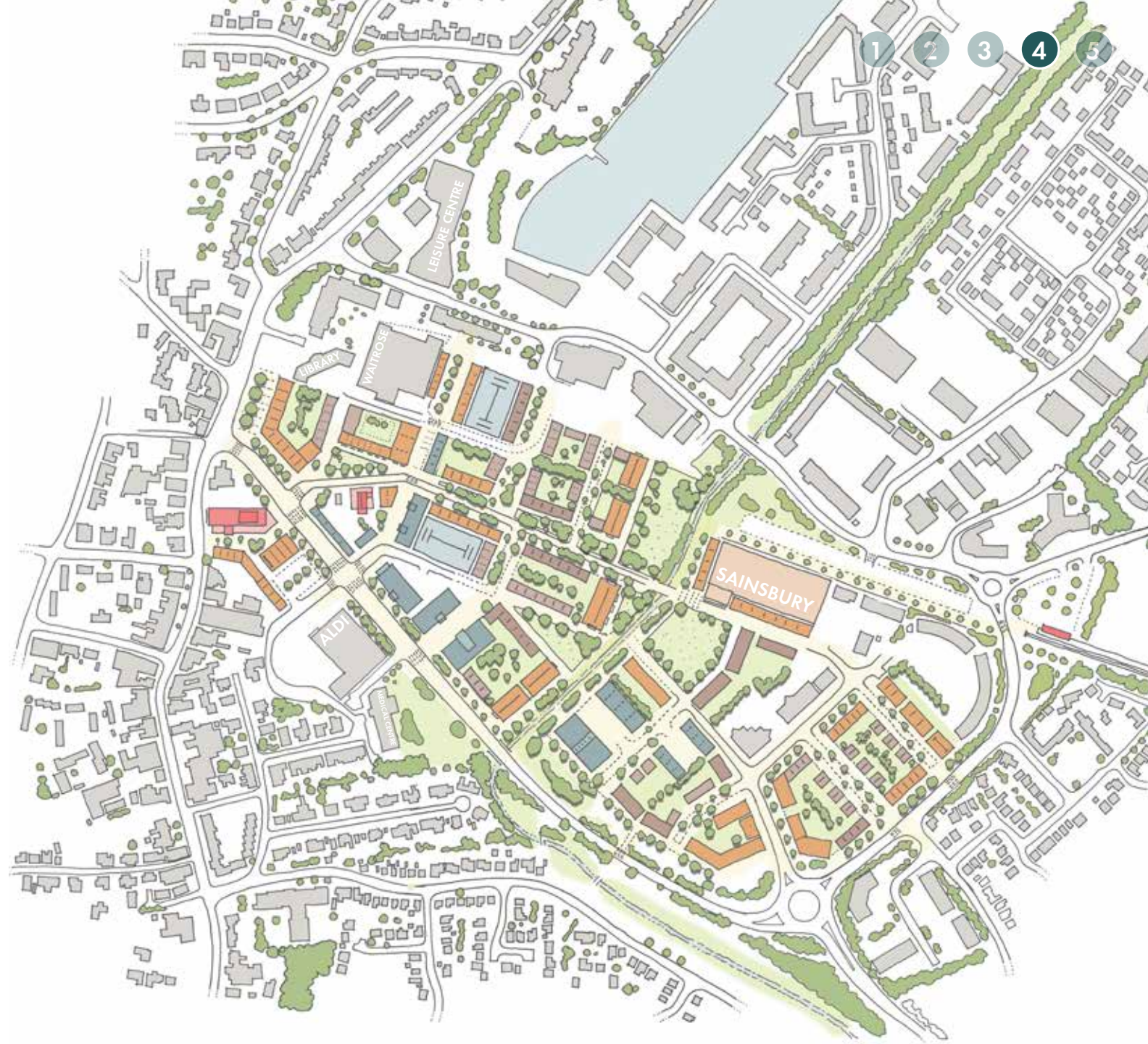
Buildings suited to workspace and employment space, ranging from conventional light industry through to studio and workshop space



Buildings likely to provide new homes, including a mix of family houses, flats and duplex



Key public facilities, including the station and Somerset Hall





SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

A vision for transport improvements

New street connection from the Marina to Wyndham Way

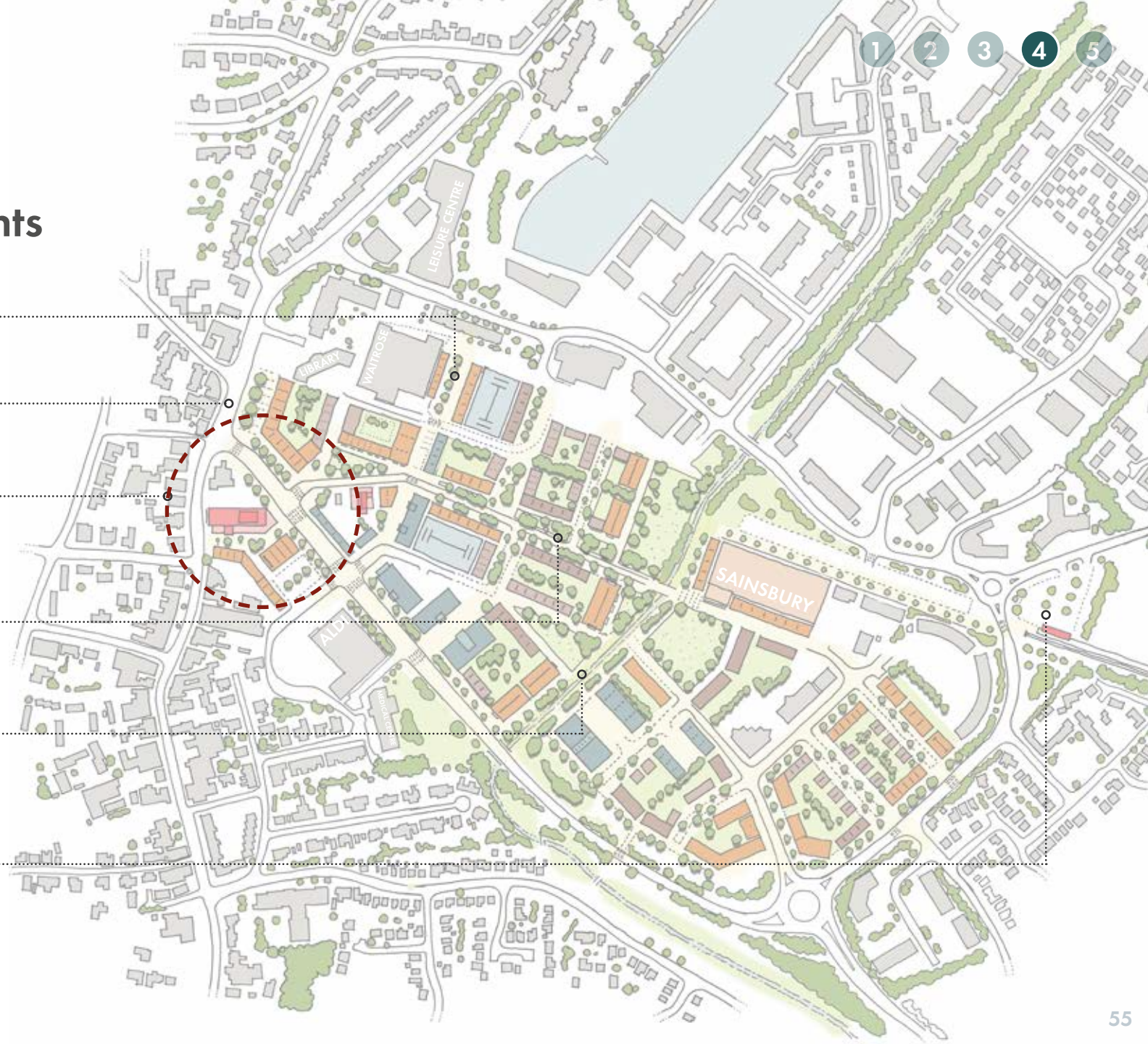
Improved Cabstand Junction especially possible if the Petrol Station is redeveloped

As Wyndham Way is transformed it could support the northern part of the High Street as an important focus for bus connections

New and improved streets and spaces within any development should be green in character and focussed on walking and cycling.

The rhyne retains an important role as a walking and cycling route, but as part of a connected network

New Portishead Rail station and forecourt, supported by new bus stops, improved walking and cycling access and a new station car park





SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

Connecting routes

This image shows the new connecting route from the High Street to Portishead Marina, through the Old Mill Road area. New buildings would include a mix of uses with workspace and commercial premises at street level and new homes above. As with the flexible approach to buildings and uses, there is also potential for scale and massing to vary as detailed building designs are developed. This could include taller buildings reflecting the context of the marina and subject to high quality design.



Existing





SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

A green environment

The proposals show how the greenway can be enhanced and extended to create a green corridor with soft edges connecting into new development. Homes and businesses overlooking the corridor help to create safer routes for pedestrians and cyclists.



Existing





SPACIAL FRAMEWORK

East to west routes

This image shows the improved links along Old Mill Road between the station and the town centre. It also illustrates how developing new parking for Sainsbury's above the store could release land for homes and open space overlooking the greenway.



Existing





5 PHASING AND DELIVERY

PHASING AND DELIVERY

Gradual and flexible change

This framework for central Portishead is designed to be flexible, allowing for changes in the economic and development context over a long period of time. There are lots of different land ownerships and it is hard to predict or dictate how change will happen. Some sites will come forward for development before others while some may remain in commercial use for the long term. The following section explores how change could happen, but there are many other ways in which development could be delivered.

This framework approach is important as it helps to form part of the evidence base for the Local Plan and supports decisions about the need for community infrastructure such as school places. This process includes understanding how quickly sites might be redeveloped, bearing in mind their current use - some are completely vacant, and others have long-standing businesses and tenants.

The plans capture a few key principles which will help to coordinate and unlock change:

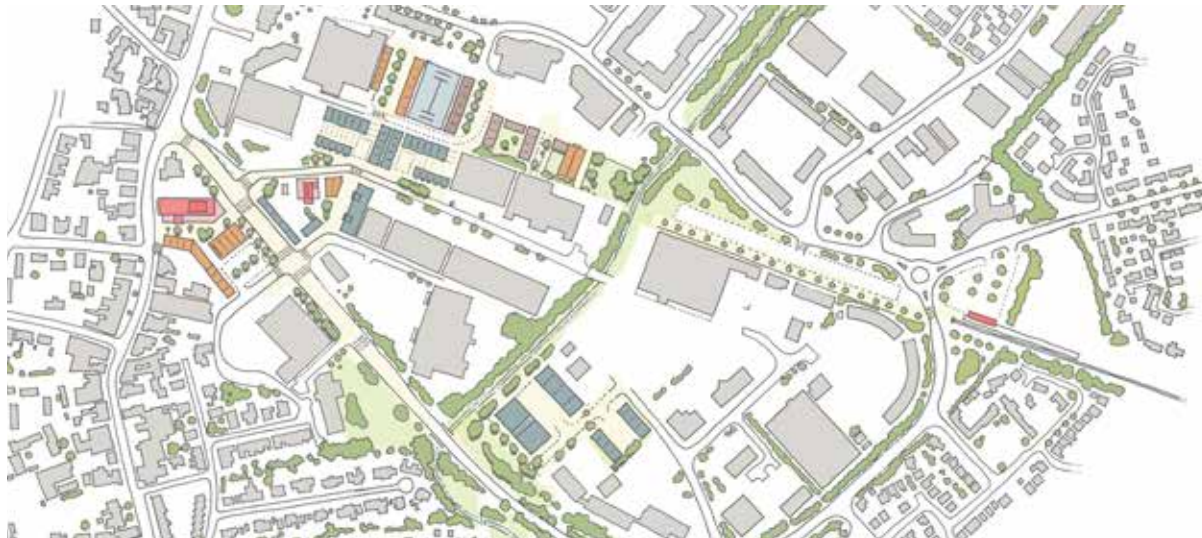
Enable independent delivery: The more that individual land owners can plan and deliver development by themselves, the easier it will be to deliver. However, the local planning authority will want to ensure that proposals do not blight neighbouring sites and that local infrastructure delivery (for example open space) is equitable and practical.

Enable quick wins, not expedient solutions: Setting out a clear framework will be helpful in unlocking early projects, as people can see that they form part of a wider strategy. However, it is also important to make sure that the projects delivered contribute to the wider vision for a connected place, rather than just being expedient.

Minimises changes to infrastructure: Leaving roads, sub-stations and buried services in place as much as possible keeps costs down and makes change easier for individual land owners. However even gradual change and growth will require contributions to and investment in local infrastructure along the way.



Understanding growth



Short term - 0 to 5 years

Change in the short term is likely to be limited to available sites like Gordano Gate (as an industrial site) and some residential or mixed use development elsewhere in the study area, though no planning applications for development of any of the sites have been received.

Opportunities for the Precinct and delivering different types of workspace on Old Mill Road could help to strengthen links from the High Street to the Marina. The delivery of the railway station and improved bus infrastructure could also materialise in the first five years.



Medium term - 5 to 10 years

In the medium term, we could see redevelopment of the Sainsbury's site and parts of the Old Mill Road area to deliver a mix of uses including new homes, commercial and community space new green space, along with development at other sites.



Long term - 10 to 15 years

In the longer term we might expect that sites like the retail park and petrol station at the Cabstand junction are redeveloped for a mix of homes, commercial and community space, along with the Homebase site and other parcels of land down towards Quays Avenue.

PHASING AND DELIVERY

Housing delivery

A key consideration of the planning policy context for Portishead is future housing delivery. The following scenarios have therefore been measured and calculated to illustrate the possible housing delivery within the framework area over the coming fifteen years. Each scenarios also makes allowance for the other uses within the framework, including workspace, shops and community needs.

The three different models also include an assumption that there will variations in density across the area, and the descriptions all still allow for a range of family housing and would still be expected to include some element of density in the more central area.

As previously noted, the context for development coming forward, particularly around the transformation of some existing sites, means that these are indicative estimates which are likely to change. Different economic trends and changes to national planning policy requirements could influence very different outcomes, and it is also worth noting that some sites included within these figures may not be developed at all during the framework period.



Low density model
overall density 40 dph



Medium density model
overall density 55 dph



Mixed density model
overall density 70 dph

Short term opportunities

0 - 5 years

Medium term opportunities

5 - 10 years

Long term opportunities

10 - 15 years

Total potential number of homes over 15 years

120	250	350
270	330	410
160	170	190

550

750

950

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