



Consultation Report:

Southport Development Framework

Introduction

The Council commissioned consultants to prepare a Development Framework for Southport. The Development Framework reflects a commitment to attract new investment and work towards realising long term ambitions through a co-ordinated approach to town centre management, unlocking sites, enhancing key heritage assets, improving the public realm and enhancing accessibility.

Stakeholder and public consultation and engagement was an essential element in the production of a draft Framework. This report provides the findings from the engagement process undertaken by Sefton Council and the consultants. The Council worked closely with Stakeholders such as the Southport BID, Southport College, the voluntary, community and faith sector, the private sector and the community to help us focus on what's important and to be ambitious for Southport.

NB At the time of the consultation exercise the Southport Development Framework was known as the Southport Development Strategy.

Consultation and Engagement

The aim of the consultation and engagement process was to:

- Inform the development of the Southport Development Framework
- Provide a platform for key stakeholders including the public to shape a future vision for Southport

Key themes

Methodology

Officers brought the consultation proposals to the November 2015 Consultation and Engagement Panel for advice. Following guidance from the Panel the following consultation activity took place:

- Public consultation
 - Ran from 1st December 2015 to 8th February 2016
 - 2 drop-in sessions in Southport Library (Saturday 12th January and Saturday 23rd January)
 - Hard copies of documentation available in Southport Library, Southport Town Hall and Southport One Stop Shop
 - E-consultation through the Sefton website
- Stakeholder's event
- BID event

The Strategy consultation was publicised through:

- Information on the Sefton website
- Tweets out from Sefton Council
- Press releases to local papers
- Leaflets in town centre locations

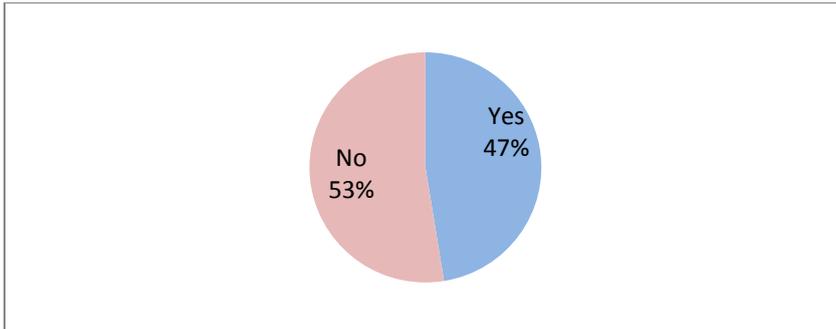
Officers also held two briefings for Southport Ward Councillors, before the public consultation and during the consultation period. Southport Area Committee discussed the strategy as a single item. A briefing with John Pugh MP was also held.

The Results

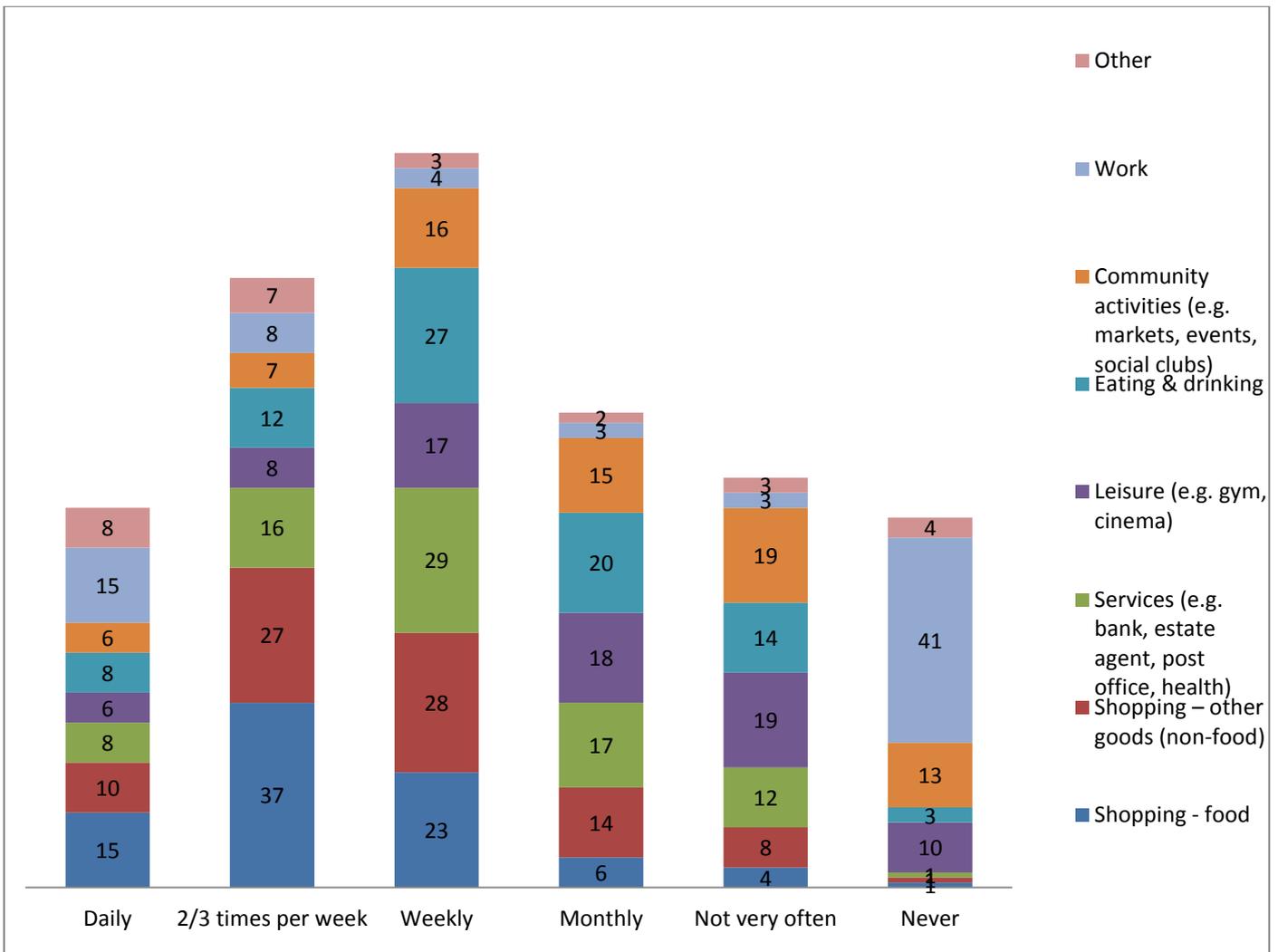
125 responses were received. Of these 92 were from e-consult, 18 were postal questionnaire returns and 15 were written or email returns (where a questionnaire was not completed). Approximately 150 people also spoke to officers about the Strategy at the drop-in sessions. The Stakeholder's event was attended by approximately 40 people and the BID event was attended by 26 people.

Consultation Responses

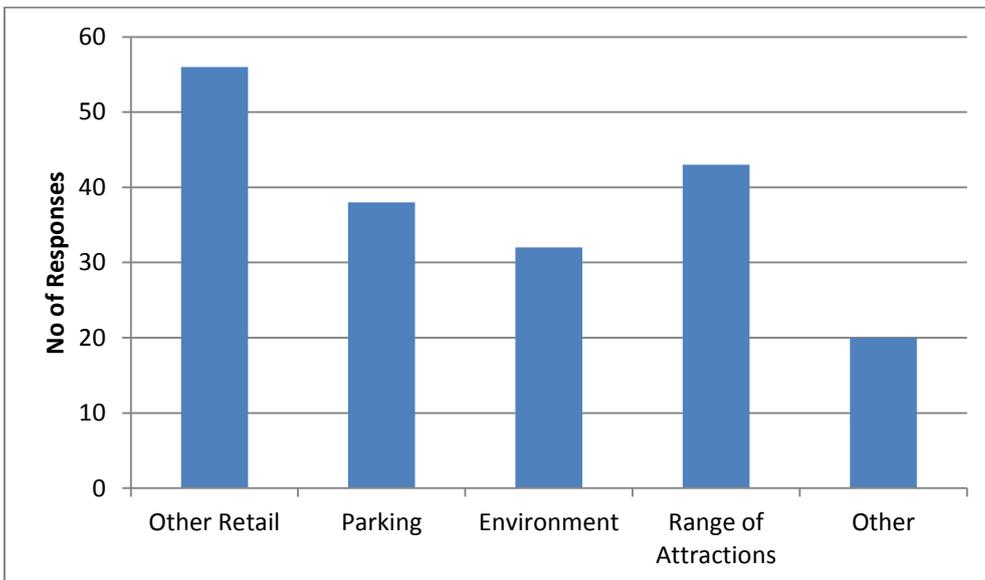
The consultation carried out for the Southport Development Framework showed that people were mixed in their broad agreement with the Framework document, as shown in the table below. Although when the component elements were discussed there was broad agreement on the direction of travel.



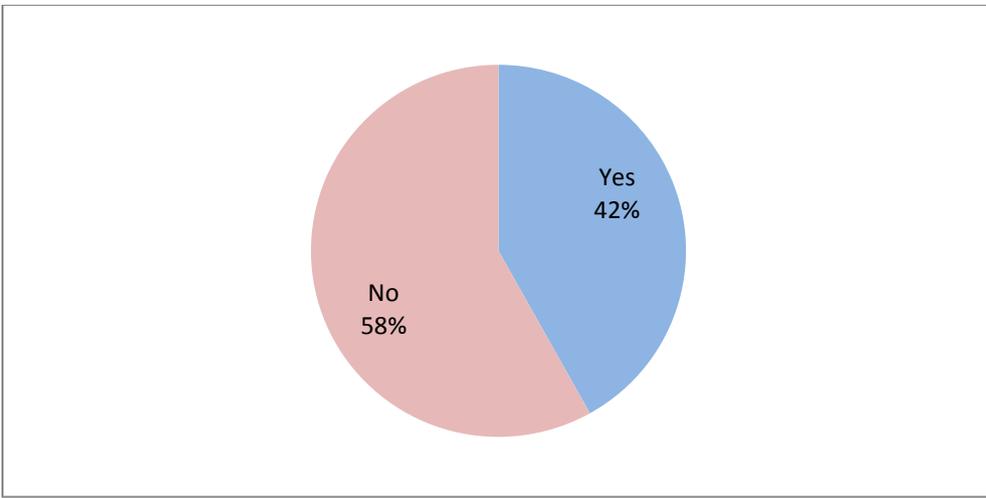
When asked 'Why do you visit Southport?' a range of answers was provided, as shown in the chart below



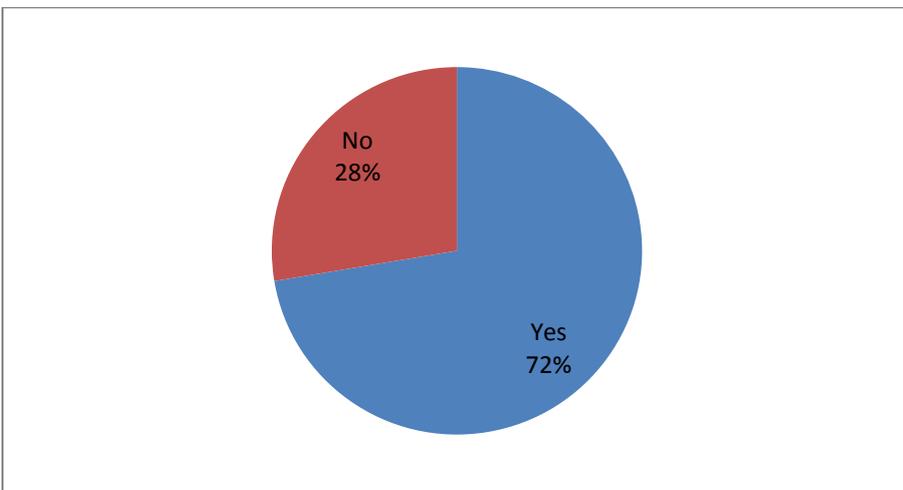
When asked 'Why do you visit other places?' The table below shows that other retail, range of attractions and parking were the most popular answers.



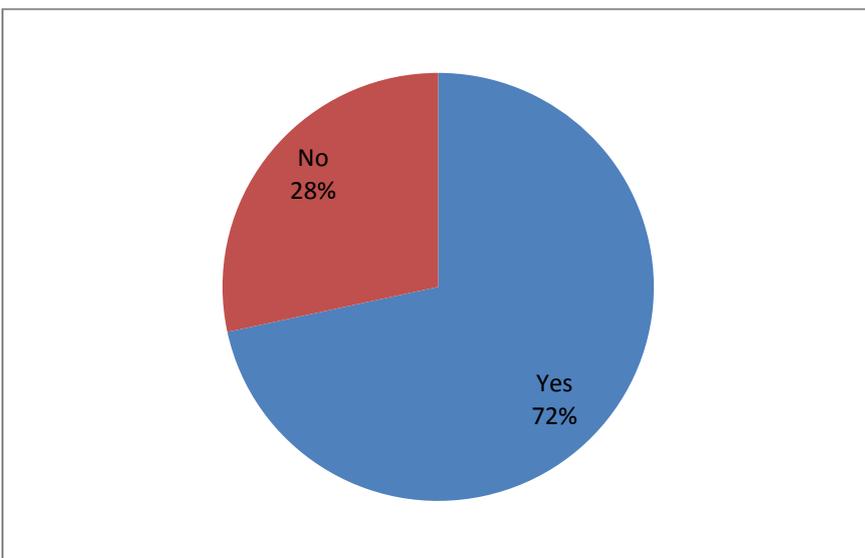
When asked 'Do you broadly agree with the proposals for Lord Street' more people disagreed than agreed, as shown in the chart below.



When asked 'Do you like the prospect of more Events in and around Lord Street the majority of respondents agreed, as shown below.

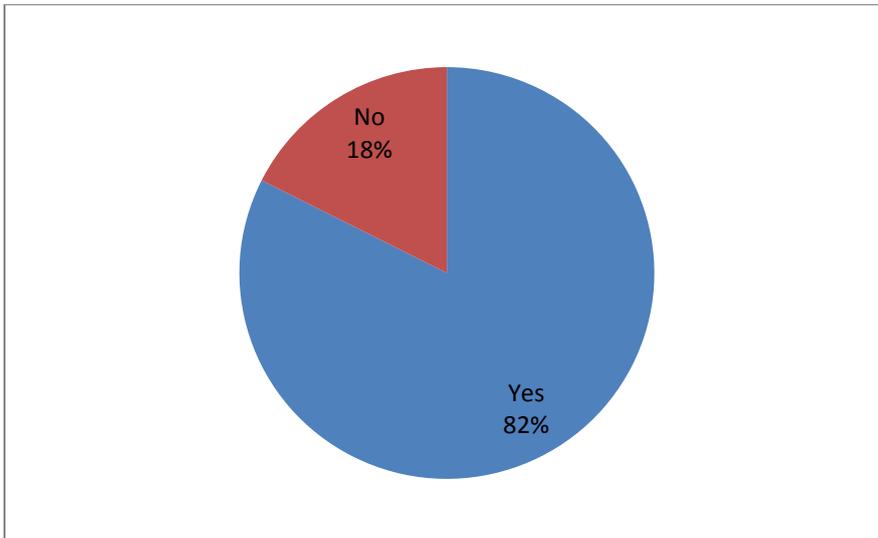


When asked 'Do you broadly agree with the proposals for Southport Beach Front' the majority of respondents agreed, as shown below.



The majority of people also supported the beach being used for existing and new events and thought that the beach should become more of an attraction in its own right.

When asked 'Should the beach either side of the Pier be maintained as sand (if this is feasible due to natural processes and subject to the required permissions and resources being available) the majority of respondents agreed, as shown below.



When asked what type of improvements would like to be seen in the short term key themes were:

- Lord Street improvements – including diversity of shops, maintenance of canopies
- The beach
- Parking
- Management of existing environment/streets

Key themes that emerged from the Stakeholder Event were:

- Review car parking signage
- Station improvements
- Retail issues, including canopies
- Mixed views on events space
- Clarification on the type of beach required going forward
- More use/connectivity of Pier
- More family leisure facilities

Key themes that emerged from the written responses and meetings included:

- More events, including festivals
- Eco-tourism
- More use of marine lake
- Mixed views on Lord Street events space
- More use of beach
- Lord Street traffic management
- Better parking and signage
- Better management of existing assets
- Wider road network improvements
- Focus on heritage

Appendix 1 – Consultation Responses

A 'You said, we did' table, using responses from the questionnaire, has been provided in Appendix 1. Feedback from the Southport Development Strategy Stakeholder Event, held on 13th January, is also included here.

Appendix 2 – Written Responses

- The Atkinson
- Aviva Investors Pensions Limited
- Client-Argyle Developments/Argyle Construction (Marcel Zachariah)
Consultant-Martin Lowe C Build E FCABE FInstLM
- Cllr Barton
- Presentation to Southport BID Members
- Updated Response from Liberal Democrat Group
- Southport College
- Southport Civic Society
- Martin Perry-Individual response
- Historic England
- Merseyside Civic society
- Note of Meeting with Ward Cllrs 4th Feb
- Mersey Travel

Conclusion

The consultation carried out for the Southport Development Framework showed that people were mixed in their broad agreement with the Framework document, however, when the component elements were discussed there was broad agreement on the direction of travel (see below for key themes).

Improving Access (parking, plus road, bus, rail, cycling and pedestrian access):

The range of comments about parking concerns suggest a desire for a better experience of parking (e.g. convenient to town centre shopping areas, clean, safe and clearly signed) which is about value and not simply the cost.

There were comments on the transport options (including bus and cycling); ensuring good access from the north and east via rail and road and ensuring existing routes into Southport are maintained in good condition.

Community/facilities and attraction:

Comments were received on the importance of attractions, facilities and events being applicable and accessible for residential communities as well as traditional tourism visitors, that will also help extend visits all year round. Comments included suggestions on different options to strengthen the Southport offer.

Beachfront:

Beach: The majority of responses 68 of 75 supported a beach offer for events and an attraction in its own right. 61 respondents out of 75 said yes to a traditional sandy beach offer (subject to technical, natural processes, statutory permissions and affordability issues. It's suggested this issue will require some detailed thought and further discussions.

Tidal Lagoon: 56 of the 76 respondents said yes to the principle of a tidal lagoon. A number of written comments were also received on this question. Approximately two thirds of the comments were supportive of the principle and potential benefits, whilst recognizing it would be extremely ambitious. Approximately a third of written comments on this question received, were unsupportive outright or had reservations.

Development Opportunities:

65 of the 73 comments received said they did recognise the development opportunity sites in the framework document.

Creative and digital:

There was support for the encouragement of the creative sector.

Next Steps

All comments were considered, comments that were directly relevant to the Framework were fed back to the consultants. Comments outside the scope of this consultation exercise included opening hours of The Atkinson and specific rail services. The consultants then produced a final draft version of the Southport Development Framework. These comments are discussed in more detail in Appendix 1.

The final draft was taken to the 6th October Cabinet meeting for permission to publish.

The 'You said, we did' document will be circulated to those people who requested it as part of the consultation process and will also be available on the Sefton Council website.

Discussions are on-going with the Sefton Consultant, Engagement and Performance Officer about the best way to maintain consultation with key stakeholders and the wider public as developments in Southport are taken forward. This consultation was about the overall direction of travel for the town. Further engagement and/or consultation will be required as individual proposals are taken forward, however the format that this takes is still to be determined.

Recommendations

- That the Consultation and Engagement Panel notes the contents of this report.

Contact

If you have queries about the Southport Development Framework please contact Andrew Hall at Sefton Council on 0151 934 3604.

Appendix 1 – Consultation Responses

- Questionnaire – You said we did responses
- Southport Development Strategy Stakeholder Event 13th January 2016

The Results

- Public Consultation

Feedback from questionnaires is as follows:

1. How did you find out about the Southport Development feedback opportunity?

Newspaper	61
Sefton Website	22
Twitter	1
Email	9
Letter	1
Leaflet	5
Other	Neighbours 2 Material from John Pugh's office Library visit 2

2. Do you currently visit Southport?

Yes	100
No	5
Live in	4

3. If you answered yes, how often do you visit?

Daily	55
2/3 times per week	25
Weekly	14
Monthly	2
Not very often	3
Never	1

4. Which part of Southport do you visit?

<u>Town Centre</u>		<u>Beachfront</u>	
Daily	38	Daily	6
2/3 times per week	40	2/3 times per week	18

Weekly	17	Weekly	26
Monthly	3	Monthly	13
Not very often	2	Not very often	18
Never	2	Never	3

5. Who do you visit Southport with?

<u>Town Centre</u>		<u>Beachfront</u>	
Alone	64	Alone	42
Family	68	Family	56
Friends	39	Friends	26
Other	Walking/nature groups resident.	Other	

6. What do you visit Southport for?

	Daily	2/3 times per week	Weekly	Monthly	Not very often	Never
Shopping - food	15	37	23	6	4	1
Shopping – other goods (non-food)	10	27	28	14	8	1
Services (e.g. bank, estate agent, post office, health)	8	16	29	17	12	1
Leisure (e.g. gym, cinema)	6	8	17	18	19	10
Eating & drinking	8	12	27	20	14	3
Community activities (e.g. markets, events, social clubs)	6	7	16	15	19	13
Work	15	8	4	3	3	41
Other	8	7	3	2	3	4
<u>Comments</u>	<p>Walks along the beach, seafront, pier and Parks x3</p> <p>Visit friends, concerts, jazz at Clifton & wine bar, cafes x2</p> <p>Atkinson exhibitions x5</p>					
	<p>Most visits to Southport have centred on Pleasure land amusement park. However the entire resort package has assisted in yearly visits to the resort, including shopping and other leisure facilities x1</p> <p>sailing activities on Marine lake x1</p> <p>Visit Southport before and after playing sport x1</p> <p>To commute to Manchester x1</p>					

Education, doctor, library, dentist, church x 4	
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7. If you do not visit Southport Town Centre regularly, where do you prefer to go?

	Daily	2/3 times per week	Weekly	Monthly	Not very often	Never
Preston	0	1	1	15	15	12
Liverpool	3	5	7	18	18	2
Formby	0	3	11	11	11	7
Ormskirk	0	2	3	17	17	8
Other	0	1	2	2	2	3
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Kirkby, New Brighton, Chester x2, Lytham x2 • Manchester x8, Salford Quays, Trafford Centre x3 • Lake District • Wigan where there are a better range of quality clothes shops • Meols Cop And Kew x2 • London • Places in relation to work e.g. Lancaster • Rufford (Rufford Old Hall/Marinas/Canal/Burscough (Martin Mere and the Hop Vine) 					

8. Why do you visit other areas?

		Comments
Retail offer (please specify)	56	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TJ Hughes • Shopping not available in Southport (Wider & different choice) • Clothes and if I'm buying furniture or wallpaper etc. • Excellent supermarket & parking in Formby-Village atmosphere • Liverpool-unsurpassed quality offer e.g. John Lewis. Formby-Waitrose store • Tesco Extra-Kew, Farm shop-Kew, Costco-Liverpool
Parking (please specify)	38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better more central car parking and cheaper • Parking easier in malls e.g. Cheshire Oaks etc. • Convenient parking, close to shops, always a space for as long as required (Liverpool 1) • Free parking @ Waitrose and 2 pounds for 4 hours elsewhere • Easier, cheaper parking • Formby-Waitrose car park. Liverpool-John Lewis carpark, convenient but expensive
Environment (please	32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formby Beach • I visit Formby as the beach is more attractive than

specify)		<p>Southport beach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between spring to winter I get out of Southport to escape to a more peaceful environment • Waterfront @ Liverpool interesting + well-kept environment • Different habitats of wildlife + nature. Although Southport + Sefton good • Change of scenery. Cleaner environment • Both Liverpool One and Formby Village do not have a depressing impact (see attached report) • Chester-interesting heritage/historic environment. Liverpool-waterfront etc.
Range of attractions (please specify)	43	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RLPO, Theatre, Galleries, Eating • Galleries, concert venues, libraries • For example, West Kirby-lovely walks, same in New Brighton, lovely walks along the promenade • Around the docks and on the ferry • Good range of entertainment in Liverpool. Choice at Southport Theatre very poor • More variety of cultural attractions in Liverpool • Major shows (theatre), and national exhibitions, museums • Liverpool-excellent cultural offer (theatre, galleries etc.) and leisure (food & drink) facilities
Other (please specify)	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease of train travel to Liverpool, ships from cruise terminal, sightseeing for guests • Cathedrals + beautiful architecture • Horrendous ice cream van parked next to steel sculpture at the end of the pier. Gives a poor impression of cultural ethos of Southport • Training courses • Southport, particularly Lord St, looks increasingly run down and quality of offer has declined • Variety of shopping • More facilities for gay people (LGBT) + cultural events • To visit family. To eat out. Work

Question 9 –Q22

Q9 What would encourage you to visit Southport more often?

Q10 Do you broadly agree with the strategy for Southport (Consultation document)? 37 Yes 41 No

Q11 How would you improve the vision for Southport?

Q12 Do you broadly agree with the proposals for Lord Street? 31 Yes 43 No

Of the comments received in response to questions 9, 10, 11 and 12 these have been captured within a number of themed headings;

- Town Centre and Lord Street
- Improving Access (parking, plus road, bus, rail and pedestrian access)
- The environment
- The community
- Improved leisure facilities/attractions
- Destination Management

These are captured in the table below.

NB: The Development Framework is a high level document, many of the comments below are issue specific and would be addressed during the development of specific projects or initiatives.

You Said	We Did
<p>Particularly in respect to Lord Street, there is the desire for the town to aspire to a better range of shops including the prospect of more independent, specialist, arts and craft or boutique stores. There were concerns about the quality of the retail offer, in respect to perceived increase in value shops, pop- up, charity shops for example and vacancies. There was recognition that the nature of retailing is changing and that includes the way people choose to shop. For example online purchases and that people will travel further where there is a wider choice. Concern expressed about the cost of rents and business rates.</p>	<p>(Section 7) promotes an ambitious project for Lord Street to create a destination and quality environment that will attract the footfall and dwell time necessary to sustain the town centre economy and attract retailers to the town. This would include a focus on how the public realm operates, including events space with the aim of attracting more tourism visits and local visits by the community.</p> <p>Unlike destinations such as Liverpool One and Trafford Centre who are able to influence the types of shops, food and drink outlets, Lord Street is not under a single management company. Stakeholders will need to work together to maintain and improve the retail offer.</p>
<p>The importance of Lord Street's heritage was felt important to Southport's sense of place, its shopper and visitor experience. Linked to this is Southport's cultural offer and favourable comments were received about the Atkinson and its existing and future potential role. There was a specific comment about the limit on its opening hours and closure at Christmas.</p>	<p>The consultation draft and the final document emphasised the critical importance of the towns heritage assets and opportunities for further investment opportunities in them (para 4.17). The Framework (Section 7) also records any redesign of the public realm will be cognitive of the existing heritage.</p> <p>The operation of the Atkinson is outside of this specific Framework document.</p>
<p>Comments included placing more of an emphasis on the management and maintenance of the streetscape of the town generally. For example, maintaining verandas/canopies, safety railings, existing</p>	<p>The importance of the streetscape is noted within the Framework document (para 7.15).</p>

<p>paving in good order and improving legibility for visitors. A heritage style in terms of shop fronts and colour pallet was suggested. One or two respondents suggested consolidation of shops to a smaller core whilst others expressed a need to support businesses at either end of Lord Street. One or two comments recorded in terms of the opportunity to reduce street clutter.</p>	
<p>Some respondents perceive the need for more pedestrian priority on Lord Street whilst others have some reservations about the prospect of this, consequence for vehicle flow and bus access, and its impact on businesses.</p> <p>There were several concerns on a number of different environment related comments. Some of these related to Lord Street and Chapel Street.</p> <p>Concerns were expressed about the environmental condition of Cambridge Arcade, and perceptions as to the attractiveness of Chapel Street, and impact following pedestrianisation of Chapel Street, where vehicle access is no longer permitted at the Eastbank street end of Chapel Street into Tulketh Street.</p>	<p>The published Framework document explains that any proposals for Lord Street will involve key stakeholders 7.23 and new proposals would be put in the public domain. The concept for Lord Street retains traffic movement as well as ease of access for pedestrians and events space. A clearer image has been included in the Framework document. Cambridge Arcade has been acknowledged in the spatial framework diagram as an opportunity for investment. No changes to the framework document have been made in response to perceptions about impact of a pedestrianised Chapel Street. The Framework document recognises the importance of a high quality, well maintained environment.</p>
<p>Parking: A number of points regarding parking have been received including opinions on the expense of parking charges, parking enforcement and the ability to easily access good quality parking close to the town centre itself. Some respondents asked for more flexibility on the length of stay for on-street parking and asked for more modern multi-storey parking suggesting the station car park or Tulketh street. Other comments about improved parking could be summarised in terms of a desire for a better experience of parking overall including convenient, clean, safe and clearly signed town centre parking.</p> <p>Access by Road: Congestion into Southport can be an issue especially on bank holidays and major events; this includes the approach from the east. From Kew Roundabout Foul Lane should be opened up to allow access to</p>	<p>Comments around access have already been picked up within (Sections 3, and 7) of the Development Framework. Some specific comments go beyond the parameters of the high level Development Framework, whilst others are relevant to the forward planning of future improvements and scheme development, ensuring a choice of travel options.</p> <p>The Framework states that there has been some traffic modelling with a view to progressing further studies relating to access by road to Southport from the east (para 3.16).</p> <p>The Framework notes in para 7.10 that in creating a shared civic space traffic flow is intended to be retained along Lord Street.</p>

<p>trading estate in Crowland street.</p> <p>Traffic flow: The flow of traffic along Lord Street needs to be maintained as part of any major public realm scheme if footfall is to be maintained and businesses are to do well. Several comments about access to Central 12 (that London street is only in one direction from Lord Street) and that there should be better east west linkage on public transport from Central 12 to the Seafront.</p> <p>General: More focus on sustainable forms of transport and access. Ensuring good access from the north and east via rail and road is very important. Compete for infrastructure funding, and ensure existing routes into Southport are maintained in good condition. Bypass around Ormskirk was mentioned.</p> <p>Access by Rail: Comments that the service to Liverpool was good whilst the service to Manchester was poor.</p> <p>Access by Bus: There should be a bus/rail interchange.</p> <p>Access by bike: Framework should ensure Southport picks up on cycling and its important role in Southport, including areas for further development and lift bans in pedestrianized zones on a trial basis.</p>	<p>Aspirations for improved rail services and station environment and relevant strategy to date are covered in Paras 3.18 and 3.19. References to specific services go beyond the scope of this Framework consultation exercise.</p> <p>Cycling has been picked up in paras 3.22 and 3.23.</p>
<p>There were a number of comments around the importance of maintaining attractions, existing greenspace, existing buildings, roads, railings and street furniture in good condition, accompanied by high standards of cleansing in order to attract visitors. Some respondents said they were generally happy with the existing environment whilst others thought it was poor and needed investment.</p>	<p>The Framework document recognises the importance of a high quality, well maintained environment.</p>
<p>Comments suggested the framework Strategy should say more about existing population profile and its needs, recognizing deprivation in central wards, ethnic as well as relative affluence elsewhere. Plus the business profile.</p> <p>More events which generated local family appeal beyond the main visitor economy</p>	<p>More information was included in the published Framework document about population (paras 3.7 and 3.8) and the applicability of new investment being relevant to the local population not just tourist (day and overnight) visitors is acknowledged. The Framework has recognised the need to project and develop the events programme (para 8.16 onwards).</p>

<p>events was suggested to incorporate local sports clubs, creative arts, music and movie nights - were some of the suggestions.</p> <p>More indoor facilities were suggested that the local population could benefit from and afford.</p> <p>The future scale of theme park rides affecting the vista of Marine Lake was raised.</p>	<p>The framework recognises the importance of year round attractions (Section 6).</p> <p>Any future proposals e.g. Marine Park, will need to follow the statutory planning process.</p>
<p>More facilities, activities and attractions, which are open all year, especially indoor ones are important for the local population and reasons to visit more often. This includes the town centre.</p> <p>Examples of specific activity included outdoor swimming pool, indoor skate park, indoor trampolining, modern mini golf, new soft play areas. An extended Pleasure Land facility was quoted several times and having more attractions on the pier and at the end to make it more of a destination worth visiting.</p> <p>Comments about Southport included - where the town should position itself in respect to potential competing destinations. Some questions about access to information for visitors in the centre of town and the station to promote the Southport offer.</p> <p>Suggestion that greater emphasis is given to ecotourism in respect to Southport and its natural coast offer, renewable energy, arts and cultural offer, also perhaps around health e.g. natural health, holistic therapies, cycling, walking, local business (dementia friendly, response to cardiac arrest e.g. introduce defibrillators), local food and beverage, and 'Boulevard of Light' offering.</p> <p>Comments received in respect to the need for better quality hotels and whether student accommodation was something that needed to be planned for.</p>	<p>The Framework recognises the importance of new attractions (Section 6) and some case studies have been included (Appendices).</p> <p>The Framework has given more emphasis to the wider natural coast offer para 3.28 and Paragraphs 6.22 to 6.26) of the framework pick up on these comments and the potential of the wider natural coast. Art and culture, digital and creative possibilities in respect to business, food and drink offering and some case studies regarding these and events are included section 8 and the Appendices.</p> <p>Paragraph 6.26 references the importance of the natural coast to the Southport visitor 'offer'.</p> <p>The Framework document (para 6.15) notes the need for high quality hotel and self-catering accommodation.</p>
<p>Comments that the strategy should explain Southport's business opportunities. Comment as to whether a training initiative to catering businesses should be offered to improve</p>	<p>Within the Framework and the Appendices are examples of potential for working closer with colleges and businesses (paras 8.3 to 8.35).</p>

<p>customer experience in respect to local shop and café/restaurant establishments. Suggestion for more emphasis on the role of businesses in working with the colleges in supporting apprenticeships and traineeships. Businesses and potential to access funding through the LEP for education growth.</p>	
<p>Land and property owners need to bring forward/make available their sites for investment.</p>	<p>The framework acknowledges the need to continue to discuss opportunities for investment with owners of key sites. The proposals outlined within the Framework document will be delivered by property owners, developers, investors and other stakeholders. The Council's primary role will be to facilitate and enable future developments.</p>
<p>Of the written comments these were generally supportive with a desire to ensure that infrastructure is in place, bus operators are consulted and large events are managed from a safety perspective. Several comments querying the benefits to businesses on Lord Street or suggesting events should be elsewhere such as beachfront.</p>	<p>The Framework document is a high level document these comments will be addressed at the project level – such as proposals to re-design the public realm. The operational nature of events falls outside the scope of the framework, but in response to transport/safety comments these will be addressed by the event organisers.</p>
<p>Of the written comments some specific suggestions included, craft fair/quarter; antiques event; competition for sculptors; open areas for Chess; Links to Southport College; Music events Of the written comments provided, there was emphasis on the need for attractions to be planned well and be of a high quality. There were several comments both supportive and less supportive for a theme park attraction. Several comments were unsupportive of reducing the size of Marine Lake. The north end of Marine Lake is the area used by powerboats. Comments included more attractions on the pier. Several comments that there was no need to move the Carousel.</p> <p>Tidal Lagoon (please see response to Question 19) or Marina was mixed.</p> <p>One comment received suggested re-opening the underground block of shops under Neville street as an attraction.</p>	<p>The Framework has made suggestions and included case studies in respect to creative and digital development.</p> <p>The document noted the need for the provision of high quality attractions including a theme/amusement park.</p> <p>The published Framework does not show the Marine Lake reduced in size and references enhancing the Pier offer (para 6.3).</p>

<p>Of the written comments received in respect of question 19 (Tidal Lagoon), approximately 2/3rd of the comments were supportive of the principle and potential benefits, whilst recognizing it would be extremely ambitious. Approximately a third of written comments on this question received, were unsupportive outright or has reservations about impact on wildlife or felt that the focus should be on more immediate issues or existing infrastructure.</p>	<p>The potential of a tidal lagoon has been retained as a high level ambition (paras 6.19 to 6.21).</p>
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Q 13. Do you like the prospect of more Events in and around Lord Street? 55 Yes 21 No

Q14. Do you support the concept of Southport developing, over time as a creative hub? 55 Yes 17 No

Q15 Do you broadly agree with the proposals for Southport Beachfront? 53 Yes 21 No

Q16 Do you support the beach being used for existing or new events? 69 Yes and 6 No

Q17 Should the beach become more of an attraction in its own right? 68 Yes and 7 No

Q18 Should the beach either side of the Pier be maintained as sand (if this is feasible due to natural processes and subject to the required permissions and resources being available)? 61 Yes 13 No

Of the written comments regarding the beach (Q17 and Q18), there was significant consensus on bringing sand back to the central area of Southport's beach, but this was qualified with several comments about the practicalities and costs associated with such possibilities.

Q19 Do you support the principle of a tidal lagoon (albeit a high level long term aspiration) that could generate renewable energy and provide significant leisure opportunities?

Q20 Do you recognise the development opportunity sites identified in the draft strategy having the potential to support Southport's town centre/destination offer?

Of the written comments received the main points were observations on the detail of any development proposed in the future.

Q21 If some improvements to Southport could be achieved in the short term (1-3 years) what would be your top 3 priorities?

Tulketh Street (remove pedestrian element on Chapel Street between Tulketh Street and Eastbank Street)	10
Lord Street general - including diversity of shops	22
Lord Street specific – verandas/canopies	8
Lord Street specific – support for public realm	3
The beach (managed as a traditional active beach)	16
Management of existing infrastructure, green environment and streets	12
Convenient town centre parking (short and all day)	8
Cheaper/Free town centre parking	6

Improved strategic transport links (rail & road to towns and cities) (including Manchester airport)	5
Appearance of southern end of Lord Street	1
Lord Street – living over the shop	1
Town Centre Management (Lord Street) liaison with landlords/tenants pop up shops, promotional investment prospectus and gap analysis.	1
More events	1
Promenade	3
Lake/Sea view café/restaurants	1
Reduce Business rates	2
Pier and area near it (things to do)	2
Scarisbrick Av	2
Market Hall	1
Victoria Baths	4
Grand Casino	6
Kingsway Car Park	2
B and M site	1
Marine Park (including theme park)	4
Refurbish Splashworld/Dunes	1
Focus attention on promoting existing development sites	2
Acquire tail ends of Lord Street	1
Children's paddling pool	1
Improve Station Entrance	3
Traffic Management	3
Monorail/land train within town	1
Town Centre cycling links and infrastructure	1
Short family walks/Way finding	3
More cultural activities and events	1
Destination Management (about Southport)	2
Growing higher education offer and campus (outreach depts., accommodation) - Creative& Digital, Coast and climate change, Health and wellbeing agenda - Links with Edge Hill University?	1
Attract big name investors	2
De-clutter	1
Illumination of the town and its buildings	1
More indoor leisure attractions	1
RSPB Nature Reserve	1

Q22 Are there any other priorities for Southport that you would like to see that we have not included in the Framework

A linked public transport system from the railway station
The creation of larger footplates on lord Street and selective clearance/de-listing if necessary.
Pro-active public sector approach towards heritage assets
Change the chime of the Town hall clock (more pleasant, cheerful)
Do citizen lessons for 13-18 age in the town centre
Can't Park and ride be routed through Ocean plaza

Write on the white canopy of the carousel 'the Pier is here'
Elderly, disabled and LGBT,
Encourage young adults to open arts and crafts stores (subsidized
Council owned property)
Widen the geographic area of the study

We did: The Framework has picked up on types of investment also being relevant to the local communities not just tourism visitors; the creative sector and opportunities for young people; the geographic area was always the town of Southport; and ideally larger footplates that would attract regional and national retailers. Some specific comments fall outside the scope of the Framework.

Southport Development Strategy Stakeholder Event 13th January 2016

In respect to the topics groups (Lord Street, Town Centre, Transport and Beachfront & Promenade) Stakeholders were asked to consider the key Issues, Where should the topic be in 5-10 years' time from now, What are the current obstacles, What are quick wins ? The following is a summary of those discussions.

Transport

In respect to this topic the recorded stakeholder comments are extremely similar to those comments received from the public consultation response. The two transport stakeholder groups between them suggested;

- Car parking review
- Pedestrian signage improvements, including temporary signage, e.g. vacant retail units
- Tourist map
- Put parking information on Visit Southport website – It was noted that the Visit Southport website is being redrafted
- Map of area at car parks
- Development of proposals for improving road access around Kew and from Ormskirk Road.
- Good quality, easily accessible and convenient car parking
- The Station could be more of a transport hub e.g. bus and rail interchange
- Any proposals taken forward from the Strategy should have more detailed consultation at the appropriate time

Parking

Officer view is that there is adequate parking numbers in Southport at the moment, but this may change subject to new development and parking sites coming forward for development. Responses on parking included the need for convenient town centre parking (short and all day) to access the main shopping streets including Lord Street. This included scope for a new car park in the future (that supports pay on exit) and zonal visitor signage to parking including on-street which there is plenty of (in relation to different offers). Some suggested that the length of stay on Lord Street should be extended and it was explained that this would be extended on the 1st June to 4 hours. New parking meters do accept cards and understand this will include pay by phone. Suggestion that winter parking charges should be lower to support footfall or free car parking for first 30 minutes. Comments regarding more leniency when it comes to enforcement. There is the

suggestion to work towards zoned car parking with appropriate signage on main routes into and out of the town.

Suggested that neighbouring roads may need to be improved to compensate for any additional traffic as a result of traffic management change on Lord Street.

Road access

The transport topic groups questioned how much traffic on Lord Street was through traffic and traffic trying to find parking. Some concern raised about impact of traffic flow if Lord Street is redesigned. Congestion into Southport can be an issue especially on bank holidays and major events particularly east and north directions. Suggested that the road to Bickerstaffe (M58) should be dualled.

The question was asked whether the side of the monument could be opened to traffic.

Rail, Bus

Entrance to the station is considered a key gateway to the town and the station frontage (owned Manchester Pension Fund) should be improved including information for visitors. Integration between bus and rail felt to be important. Good services via the Liverpool line. Aspiration for improved train links to the north would be dependent on re-instatement of the Burscough Curves.

Southport Rail Transport Forum (a voluntary group) is working with partners to try and get some improvements to the station building. It's understood that rail stock on the Manchester line will be upgraded soon. The possibility of electrification of Manchester line might be more likely after 2020 (Since stakeholder event Arriva are now the new Franchise for the northern line). Potential loss of a direct Southport to Manchester Piccadilly and Airport service a concern for SRTF from a commuter perspective.

The local bus service for Southport particularly during the day and in north and south directions is good. The possibility of a circular bus route around the town centre and beachfront (assumes central 12 as well) was suggested. It was recorded that Marine Way Bridge is weight-limited and can't carry buses. It's understood that the central 12 bus link to Ocean Plaza has been tried and wasn't commercially viable. Maintaining bus accessibility for residents was important.

The comment was made that 2 million people use the bus stops on Lord Street and 2 million people use Southport Station every year.

Pedestrians

The impact on retailers following pedestrianisation of Chapel Street was raised. Suggested impact is mixed depending on what type of retailer you were. It was noted that the concept was for a shared space on Lord Street not pedestrianisation. In terms of quick wins a review of pedestrian signage and visitor information has been suggested.

Town Centre and Lord Street

Town Centre and Lord Street - Stakeholder event responses also mirrored the public consultation in respect to the Lord Street's existing and future offer. For example concern expressed about the cost of business rates, although it was hoped that this will improve if there is a review of business rates in 2017. The small footplates of premises thought to be a restriction to national retailers. The importance of ensuring good management and maintenance of the streetscape e.g. paving and

street furniture, in an environment that's uncluttered but provides good visitor signage and information was also identified as key issues. There was recognition of 'Absentee' landlords' responsibilities (who retain property as part of an investment portfolio) in respect to the condition of properties and the need for a comprehensive solution to the management of the canopies. On this and heritage more generally, suggestions regarding canopies included lease holders being required to maintain canopies as part of a licensing agreement –particularly if they wish to apply for a pavement licence, and grant funding to encourage canopy restoration or the canopies being made a public asset. Another suggestion was to continue with a collaborative approach of persuasion (businesses and landlords) and enforcement powers. There is a perceived conflict that historic buildings don't deliver what retailers want and a more radical suggestion included the possibility of relaxing rules around heritage or some buildings possibly de-listed or aspects of the listings relaxed as a suggestion to encourage businesses to invest and as a way of addressing restrictions on floorplate size?

An important issue about Lord Street is its length. There was some support for focusing improvements on a core area of Lord Street. Stakeholders expressed a desire for more town centre living, interpreted as over the shop living and apartments, although physical constraints exist in respect to adequate access, accommodation above existing retail premises can be adequately serviced from an amenity point of view on Lord street. There was some support for a more mixed offer either end of Lord street and above the shops e.g. office and residential. A desire was expressed for more independent retailers and there was the suggestion of grants to encourage start-ups (artisans and local talent), possibility of quarters or zones for niche retail. Some respondents perceive the need for more pedestrian priority on Lord Street whilst others have some reservations about the prospect of this, in respect to any consequence for vehicle flow and bus access, and its impact on businesses. There was a feeling that there was a lack of opportunities to create dwell time and there was support for large events space but again a need to maintain the flow of traffic. Improving the public realm to help drive footfall between the Market Hall and Lord Street was commented upon.

More general comments from this topic group included, thinking about the town needing to meet the needs of young people, that keeping Southport's identity as a Seaside Town was important, and that themes of the Coast and Gardens should be retained, and the restaurant offer should be stronger. There were comments about the strategy being too visitor economy focused and not enough said in the strategy about residents needs. The vacant Grand Casino is listed and one suggestion was that it could be used as creative arts space whilst another was that it should be demolished.

The Council should try and facilitate/promote some of the identified development opportunities in the strategy to come forward.

Digital and Creative

Very good broadband requested and the need to develop links with Southport College & Edge Hill and business start-ups.

Destination Management

Investment linked/planned to an investment prospectus.

Beach Front & Promenade Groups

There needs to be clarity about what type of beach Southport is striving for. Comments made that the beach should host public art installations similar to Crosby. The beach is important for the air

show a major event and income stream. This is Important from the perspective of viewing the air show for spectators as it affects flight lines as well as loss of parking. As a seaside town, the beach is undergoing change due to natural processes. There is a need for long term maintenance of existing assets. This requirement includes private sector owners who must maintain their property. The rear aspect of Ocean Plaza is very unattractive and should be tidied up.

Whilst the Carousel may block the site line of the Pier from west to east, comments received suggest that there isn't major support for its repositioning at this time. Instead the pier could be signposted to create more of a gateway feature. It's suggested that the pier would benefit from evening opening and a staging post halfway along and more points of interest to encourage visitors to access the pier. Connectivity to the pier is essential from Ocean Plaza, Pleasure land and town centre was considered to be important in future plans for the beachfront. Redevelopment of Marine Park should try and address Ocean Plaza from an urban design perspective and improve legibility around this part of the beachfront, including integration with the pier where possible.

Accommodation was supported at the north end of the lake. Fairways should aspire to be a hotel linked to the golf offer generally and in development terms the adjacent Council owned Golf Course. It's important that Southport has hotel accommodation for families and there was some support for glamping in the form of eco lodges, but not for reducing the size.

Comment that the strategy would benefit from more clarity around what might be possible around Marine Park and the beach front in terms of how the various zones have been labelled and at the appropriate time a more detailed masterplan perhaps. There was support for a theme park and an improved offering, plus more opportunities for car parking on the seafront. The future of the Beachfront is linked to the feeling that there should be more for families to do, year round – including events, indoor facilities. An ice skate rink was one example... It was suggested more footfall could be driven by shops and restaurants integrated with the Lake – that said there was recognition that the commercial leisure market is difficult at the moment with vacant units around the Ramada site. A balance of residential to support footfall at night has been suggested. Kingsway, Victoria Baths (potential for leisure/accommodation), Fairways and Marine Park can help address the comments about the promenade and beachfront needing to generate more activity and footfall, through good quality development.

The programming of the theatre and the events programme needs to raise the aspiration in the town. During the discussion motorsports and balloon festivals were suggested. Connectivity around the promenade and beachfront was important including to the beach itself and Lord Street. Improving Scarisbrick Avenue was a specific project in relation to this and creating focal points of attraction to draw people in east west directions. More cycling and walking activity around the lake was suggested. Agreed that zoning of parking might be something to have a look at in the future including tourism signage, improving gateways and orientation by foot could be marked out through hanging baskets and lighting between anchor points. The Promenade should be one of the anchors.

If the lake is to be considered for bathing or other activities, then its water quality may need to be addressed. The ability to manage the existing assets is very important and any new infrastructure must have a maintenance/management plan in place.

Appendix 2 – Written Responses

- **The Atkinson**
- **Aviva Investors Pensions Limited**
- **Client-Argyle Developments/Argyle Construction (Marcel Zachariah)
Consultant-Martin Lowe C Build E FCABE FInstLM**
- **Cllr Barton**
- **Presentation to Southport BID Members**
- **Updated Response from Lib Dem Group**
- **Southport College**
- **Southport Civic Society**
- **Martin Perry-Individual response**
- **Historic England**
- **Merseyside Civic society**
- **Note of Meeting with Ward Cllrs 4th Feb**
- **Mersey Travel**

The Atkinson

The Atkinson welcomes the Vision for Southport. We thank you for the opportunity to input into the strategy. We believe that the Strategy should have a single, powerful message at the centre. Southport is a resort positioned in the centre of a unique coastal environment. The town's relationship with this outstanding coast and surrounding beautiful natural hinterland needs to define the strategy for its development. This unique selling point, that needs to define key messages about the development town and its tourism offer:

This is what makes it crucial for Southport to focus on developing as an outstandingly environmentally conscious town, with a sustainable tourism offer, and developing businesses in wind and wave energy resources.

The vision needs to express an ambition for Southport to become a place for:-

- Healthy families to visit, to live and to thrive
- Eco-tourism, on the model of Copenhagen - carbon neutral taxis to taxi bikes to eco-labelled hotels to specially designated bike and pedestrian paths, for experience-seeking visitors who want a high quality cultural and active stay – sailing, riding, bird-watching; where we celebrate the quality of local parks, local produce; the distinctive natural environment and wildlife.

Long Term

Southport has a beautiful marine location on the coast; the strategy for the Seafront could look to include more of Sefton's coast from the beautiful sandy beaches of Ainsdale to the nature reserve at RSPB Marshside. The area's extensive sand dunes stretch for several miles, indeed Ainsdale's and Dunes have been designated by Natural England as a national nature reserve where they are a key place for wildlife. This is a larger area but its natural environment is part of Southport's offer, this larger area could be used to make the offer unique by promoting its diversity.

Southport's main offer is its

- Environmental Sustainability
- Local Produce
- Healthy Town

- Cycling Town

The strategy should

- Identify who is our competition
- Identify who is our target audience
- Find out what is their motivation to visit
- Then decide how we differentiate from Manchester and Liverpool

The Vision should sell Southport's story putting the quality and values at the heart of the town.

Events Strategy

This should be ambitious. Other cities and towns have embraced new activities aimed at specific audiences. Examples include the Just So Festival in Cheshire, aimed at families offering a weekend of events that brings people into the area.

Southport could respond to its natural environment and make its offer appeal to visitors. An example of this is Delamere Forrest who has embraced their environment with activities using their natural environment to appeal to families. The Forrest has a range of activities including Stick Man Trail for families, Sports & Adrenalin activities and other activities that cater for a large age range.

The Atkinson has extensive partnerships that could enhance Southport's offer; The Impressionist Festival in Normandy is an example of something all the town could be involved in, bringing people in from all over the world. This five month festival includes exhibitions, multidisciplinary events (music, theatre, dance, etc.) and festivities for all sections of the public. It is a great tourist event in the area. Southport could do something similar to embrace cultural events for the entire town to benefit. The Atkinson already has excellent partnerships that could be built on to attract prestigious cultural events.

Medium Term

Recognising the strengths of Southport, what does attract people? We discussed in the workshops at the Ramada Hotel the unlikelihood of attracting a major retailer into Lord Street due to size of units. This could be an opportunity to look at offering a real alternative to commercial shopping chains, using the proposed pedestrianize idea identified in the strategy. For example, the lanes in Brighton with Boutique shops, craft & gallery shops. If we developed the notion of a cycling town then we could encourage shops based around that industry i.e. cycle shops, out-door themed shops.

Key considerations:

- How do we tie in to the natural environment?
- How do we connect to Liverpool and Manchester, both people who stay here and commute in?
- How do we work with Southport College, developing the right skills?
- How do we attract the Culture tourism market?
- Audience Research – who do we want to attract, who do we attract who spends money
- Look at developing festivals across the town

Our heritage is key to Southport's uniqueness; this should be understood and shared. For example Dan Dare Comics, the founder Frank Hampson lived here, Southport has its first comic con this year, we can relate this to our town's heritage and expand it. For example, we could host an Animation Festival working with LJMU, Edge Hill, Southport College or a Festival of the Future,

using Dan Dare and the Comic Con as a basis for a Comic Festivals. Comics are a rapidly growing industry of interest, as shown in the current trend of successful TV spin offs (Agent Carter, Daredevil, Jessica Jones)

Festivals get people into the town for a longer period of time than one off events. Successful examples of festivals already taking place at The Atkinson that could be extended include:

- Family Festival - using the success of Kidsfest, expand the festival across Southport, similar to Just So Festival, using the areas of Kings Gardens and Lord Street.
- Music Festival – across the town build on the success of the Folk & Blues. The Folk and Blues festival brings hundreds of people in to Southport from out of the area.
- Festival of Speed – attracting the car enthusiast this new festival taking place in March has already gained momentum and builds on the Car heritage of Southport, such as the land speed record on Southport beach by Sir Henry Segrave, the start of Vulcan Motors and the racing cars that use to race on the beach.

Short Term/ Quick Wins

The town could get involved with a number of events, picking up on current events that are already successful or have worked well for other towns

- 1) Flower Show embraced by all of Southport, all of Lord St reflects the flower show including the shops and restaurants. From May to August all of Southport is focussed on flowers!
- 2) Light Night festival –Liverpool and Leeds have had successful events. The Town would come alive and attract visitors from all over the North West. Similar to the success of Spookport, this Light Night would be an opportunity for all to get involved, especially the shops and restaurants.
- 3) Food – we have a fantastic offer, embrace it and promote it. Celebrate our local regional produce; get the local farmers involved so they can showcase what we can do. For example, Formby Asparagus (served first class on the Titanic) could be celebrated and promoted, collaborate with the local farmers to sell their produce. The food festival was very successful; could this be extended and used as an opportunity to feature more on local suppliers and restaurants?

Aviva Investors Pensions Limited

Draft Southport Development Strategy (December 2015)

We act on behalf of Aviva Investors Pensions Limited the owners of Central Twelve (C12) Shopping Park in Southport Town Centre and are instructed to submit the enclosed representations on the Draft Southport Development Strategy (Draft SDS).

C12 Shopping Park forms part of Southport Town Centre as identified in the adopted UDP (Policy R2 and Paragraph 7.13) and in the Submission Draft Sefton Local Plan. C12 Shopping Park is clearly a “key asset” in the Town Centre. It provides an anchor food store and national multiple comparison goods retailers that attract significant numbers of shoppers and expenditure to the Town Centre and it provides a car park that serves the Town Centre. 1

Aviva supports, in principle, the stated purpose of the Development Strategy which is to facilitate the “re-energising” of Southport through bringing forward development opportunities, supporting and enhancing existing “key assets” (which Aviva considers the Draft SDS should reflect more clearly includes C12 Shopping Park) and improving linkages.²

Aviva supports the recognition in the Draft SDS that C12 Shopping Park forms part of the “Retail Core” zone which the document states is “centred around Chapel Street and Central 12 but also

including Lord Street this area provides for the day to day retail and service needs of [the] Southport.” 3

Given this appropriate recognition of C12's role within the “Retail Core” zone it is unfortunate, and potentially misleading, that the Shopping Park has been, presumably mistakenly, omitted from appropriate annotation as an important retail core shopping area in the diagrams in the Draft SDS, e.g. in the “Land Use” diagram on page 18 and on the “Development Framework” diagram on page 25.4

The Draft SDS also contains some inaccurate, and potentially misleading, references to C12 Shopping Park being “out of centre” in nature and style.⁵ C12 is not “out of centre” as a matter of fact (i.e. it has longstanding “town centre” status reflected in the development plan) and it is also clearly “town centre” in its role and function. The fact that C12 accommodates some larger

1 Based on the Figures in the Sefton Retail Strategy Review 2015, C12 currently attracts £68M

2 Draft SDS paragraph 1.3

3 Draft SDS paragraph 5.7, second bullet point

4 NB: The annotation referring to C12 Shopping Park on the diagram on page 15 is illegible and higher resolution legible diagrams should be provide throughout the document

5 Draft SDS paragraph 3.10 and 3.14
relatively modern retail units configured around an accessible car park clearly complements the more traditional parts of the Town Centre, much of which is within a Conservation Area, and it is a key asset for the Town Centre to have this form of development (i.e. C12) within the Centre boundary.

Recent market research commissioned in November 2015 by Burnett Planning consisting of a survey of shoppers at C12, which was submitted to the recent Sefton Local Plan Examination⁶, demonstrates that C12 Shopping Park functions as part of Southport Town Centre, and makes a significant contribution to its vitality and viability. Some key headlines from the survey are as follows;

- shoppers use C12 for a range of different types of shopping, i.e. including food shopping at Asda (54.5%); clothes/shoes shopping (32.3%); household goods/hardware (26.1%); leisure goods shopping (20.3%); chemist goods (13.9%); furniture/furnishings (4.2%); electrical goods (1.9%); other non-food shopping (9.4%); food/drink in café (6.8%);
- shoppers visit C12 frequently, with 74.5% visiting once a fortnight or more frequently, i.e. every day/most days (4.8%); 2 – 3 times/week (27.1%); once week (28.1%); once fortnight (14.5%);
- shoppers use a variety of modes of transport to travel to C12 and overall 39.3% of those interviewed came by non-private car modes (i.e. walk (20.3%); bus (8.4%); taxi (5.8%); train (4.2%); cycle (0.3%); mobility scooter (0.3%);
- 44.5% of shoppers interviewed said they had already, or were intending to visit other parts of the Town Centre as part of their trip to C12 that day;
- overall 77.2% of shoppers said they visited other parts of the Town centre Every time/Most Times/Sometimes as part of their trip to C12. A further 15.8% said they rarely visited other parts of the town centre as part of the same trip. Only 7.1% of respondents said they never visit other parts of the Town Centre as part of a trip to C12;
- shoppers visiting other parts of the Town Centre were doing so for a variety of reasons, i.e. including non-food shopping (68.8%); visit café/pub/restaurant (18.1%); food shopping (15.9%); visit bank (13%);
- the vast majority of shoppers visiting other parts of the Town Centre as part of their trip to C12 were doing so on foot, i.e. 73.2% walked between C12 and other parts of the Town Centre.

As the survey shows, there is already strong pedestrian connectivity along London Street between C12 Shopping Park and other parts of the Town Centre. This may be further enhanced by supporting the introduction of more town centre uses with active frontages along the north east side of London Street for example. This is something that the Development Strategy should

consider further.

Paragraph 5.9 in the Draft SDS refers to the Development Framework seeking to identify sites that can help to support footfall generation in the Town Centre and the Framework also identifies the north – south connections in the Centre including to/from C12 (e.g. page 25) as being important. Clearly, maintaining and improving the attraction of C12 Shopping Park as a shopping location within the Centre is important in maintaining and increasing footfall within the Centre. It is, therefore, surprising that the Draft SDS failed to identify the Teardrop site within C12 as a “*Development Opportunity*” which could accommodate Class A1/Class A3 uses for example, and 6 Sefton Local Plan Examination. Matter 5 – Issue 5b, Hearing Statement - Representor ID: 1310 which could add to the range and choice of facilities in the Town Centre and help to generate additional pedestrian footfall.

The Teardrop site has been the subject of previous planning permissions⁷ for Class A1/Class A3 development which have not been implemented and this site remains a suitable development opportunity within the Town Centre which should be recognised in the Development Strategy. In summary, the Development Framework should;

- reflect more clearly and positively the existing and future role of C12 Shopping Park as an established and important part of the Town Centre;
- specifically identify C12 Shopping Park as a “*key asset*” within the Town Centre which the Framework will support and seek to enhance through, for example,
 - o identifying the Teardrop site as a “*Development Opportunity*” site;
 - o supporting improvements to the already strong pedestrian connectivity along London Street.

Should you require any additional information or wish to discuss these comments further please contact Colin Burnett at this office.

**Client-Argyle Developments/Argyle Construction (Marcel Zachariah)
Consultant-Martin Lowe C Build E FCABE FInstLM**

I am writing on behalf of, and am instructed by, Argyle Properties (Marcel Zacharia), with regard to specific assets and to respond in more detail to the Southport Town Centre Plan.

Whilst detailed observations will follow I have been asked to specifically request the removal of a particular comment in the draft, which Mr Zacharia has found inaccurate and therefore potentially detrimental.

The particular comment is contained in item 6.38 which casts a doubt over the owner of the Casino and at the same time makes no equal remark about the LA delivery or capitulation to attend to the Baths site or other assets and such comments affecting my client may surface elsewhere. It would therefore be appreciated if this was removed and to not appear in any further distribution of the draft or updated versions. Your assurance is sort to confirm that appropriate amendments have been made to remove such comments, quite aside from any other revisions following the consultation.

In reality the client has marketed the premises; they have been passed over due to historic conditions that have existed upon the clients purchase, seen as prohibitive. No serious use will emerge for this, the college have not made any serious intent to purchase or occupy, as mentioned as possible in other passages. Given the loss of the more ornate cinema to make way for the Vincent-we would wish to see a commentary to support a similarly comprehensive re-development of the less valuable casino site and neighbouring moribund premises. The report clearly shows the degree of malaise in more important assets and serious regeneration of sites such as the casino; support the inward investment to the remainder.

I said at the stakeholder discussion to demonstrates this point, 'if Southport was a herd of deer, it would be culled!'

Thank you in anticipation of your attention to this particular point and the prospect of our contributing fully to the consultation process on behalf of the client, and more general observations that may appear pertinent.

SOUTHPORT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY-RESPONSES-February 2016.

The following are comments and responses intended to follow the format of the draft discussed at the stakeholder event-and in the context of the client interests, where applicable highlighted.

Client-Argyle Developments/Argyle Construction (Marcel Zachariah)

Consultant-Martin Lowe C Build E FCABE FInstLM

Comments are not exhaustive and we would seek ongoing communications and a project team identified to progress positive steps in our aim to produce early wins and deliverable schemes of significant scale, and response to concerns indicated.

In the main, the strategy is welcomed, on the assumption there are clear strategies for delivery.

Itemised comments follow:

Transport

2.26

Recent reports have suggested that the Manchester connection for Piccadilly and the Airport may be axed-this has to be resisted, otherwise this could undermine the vision and delivery-in addition to the need to adapt the report.

Natural Environment.

2.37

With regard to the beach, it is critical to protect the beach as sufficient wild life habitat and protected areas exist that need not be expanded or even undermined by the degradation of the beach areas.

Given many events historically taken place on the beach, achieved due to the attraction of flat and open distances, future events and potential uses would be lost for good if grass is not removed and kept in check.

Action is considered vital.

2.40 - 2.41

It is not agreed that Planning Policy wholly supports the development of new facilities in relation to land at the Marine Lake-land to the North has been zoned as urban green belt to potentially barrier development options, although one would hope that the Town Centre Plan would be considered a material consideration and a robust delivery mechanism is in place soon to positively consider proposals. The plan quite rightly demonstrates these areas as capable and necessary for development.

This relates to specific proposals that will be commented on further with regard to delivery.

The delivery mechanism is critical and a clear project plan to achieve this is required.

Existing character.

3.6-3.7

Despite the visitor destination to the Lake, there are significant barriers to greater use and the suggestions in the strategy have insufficient local knowledge included at this stage and it is considered these responses ought to be included to strengthen the document outputs and remove contradictions.

The lake is underused in its entirety due to non-existent lighting and no coherent plan to deliver all year usage across the whole facility. Comprehensive development is hampered by the Northern section sold to our client, for development, to fund expansion of the lake, but then re-classifying the land as urban green belt, which, obviously, potentially barriers development. Now the suggestion is to fill the lake back in and develop.

The land of the client is therefore in private ownership and is strictly speaking not available for public access.

In addition, poor public realm provides a grim outlook in the location, appearing desolate, inaccessible and un-attractive. Our client has considerable plans to meet all aspects of the plan delivery aims and seeks early resolution to delivery mechanisms to bring such prospects to detailed planning stages.

Partnering arrangements are urgently needed with the Local Authority to safeguard the innovation and investment that may include Local Authority controlled land or assets.

Land surrounding the lake has been referred to as 'natural environment' in the strategy-clearly it is not, it is manmade and the emphasis is critical in planning terms for proposals, especially as the strategy includes development of the land. Please amend.

Access around the Lake side is poor and proposals need to strengthen accessibility as the report mentions, with investment needed in lighting, paving and access, to create a continuous route for walking and cycling. We have included such considerations in plans for development to demonstrate the benefit. This links back to the comments for having defined delivery mechanisms to support and engage the prospects as soon as possible.

Proposals shown in the strategy plan are not realistic and potentially undermine delivery in particular to the Lake as an asset. Alternatives are noted in later comments to support the overall aim of the strategy.

Parking areas alongside the Lake boundary and the promenade, along the coast road/Marine drive, are also unlit, and provide a monotonous sea of tarmac with concrete bollards of no merit in terms of overall appearance. This adds to unregulated night time use and an off-putting environment. Given this is a gateway route it would benefit 'arrival' and use considerations, such as a quality, enlivened or attractive avenue.

Scope exists to involve such land in development master plans for the Lake and improve the appearance and use, in particular those the client intends to bring forward.

3.17

Local Authority assets need to have a clear and formal mechanism to include in innovative schemes, or be available as a gateway for innovative proposals and inward investment-we mention in conclusion.

3.20

Clearly a stakeholder suggestion of taking canopies into Public ownership is nonsense; the LA neither looks after their own assets well and do not have the resources or the need to undertake such an idea.

The LA has policing powers and should be more aggressive in seeking repair, refurbishment-especially with absent landlords with property in investment funds. Mechanisms in leases also provide for repair terms.

Of course the LA should set a clear example with its' own assets and town-scape.

4.7

Linkages.

The comment that 'everyone should know where the market is', would encourage a potentially disappointing visit at present. Despite the investment and improvement, it remains of low aspiration and would benefit from an improved, expanded offer and marketing, as is mentioned later.

5.1

The development sites do not appear to schedule an image of the lake, especially the area owned by our client and development proposals indicated in the plan, albeit, the client has higher quality plans to bring forward.

Clearly the lake needs to be included in view of the comments elsewhere regarding asset status.

6.4

This is a chicken and egg comment-occupier demand could be driven by a master plan/development brief to show comprehensive development of Tulketh Street. Perhaps, as part of a suggestion put forward to promote and attract Southport as a designer outlet village destination to improve the Towns offer, or rent/rates reductions/subsidy to attract and foster local, quality, independent businesses.

6.6

It is agreed that if the LA were to sponsor a development brief, and/or advertise the support to assembly mechanisms, developers would respond to the marketing of a much enhanced and clearly defined opportunity.

6.8-6.15

It appears to get the quality outcome, low aspiration needs to be overcome. The sites noted here would also benefit from a clear development brief, with support to CPO and assembly, and secure a cohesive and comprehensive development which is demonstrably important to the appearance and offer of the Town due to scale and position.

The Kingsway site, if to be 'landmark' which has previously shown tall buildings, then it ought to be one with longer term public engagement and active uses, i.e.; to include accessible vantage of views and resort. (Hotel/sky bar) Architectural excellence ought to be the benchmark.

6.26

This part of the report needs to include the Marine Lake section in the title.

The scheme on the park and ride would undermine and compete unnecessarily with our client's proposals and is outside the defined Lake offer. We therefore would object strongly to such a proposal.

Local knowledge suggests that what is missing in the golf offer, (and the site is suited to integrate with it, and compliment it), is a driving range; an added attraction and facility for visitors to the town along with the course users.

It makes much more sense to add a hotel and facilities at the entrance to the golf course integrated with the pavilion and a modernised offer of the course.

Our clients preferred option and plan is to provide a high quality Hotel and accommodation, resort offer that integrates with and enlivens the Lake, with wider and more sustainable all year use-we seek engagement to positively progress such aspirations.

The 'glamping' idea is seen as unsustainable and low aspirational for a 'Classic resort'. With winter use unlikely and impractical (sand, wind, weather-even summer) we believe a more sustainable and permanent solution is merited, with a comprehensive strategy that includes the wider improvement to the Lake offer. Such proposals show much more development delivery prospect than those shown, including the need to fill in the lake, which is seen as unviable and likely to receive bitter objection.

The Authority cannot have it all ways. On the one hand referring to the area as a natural environment and on the other, opting to develop land and fill in the lake. Clearly the areas of the Lake are manmade and development should be acceptable in principle and not least for the prospect of bringing numerous results within all the strategies and planning objectives. (i.e.: tourism, jobs) Rather than fill in the Lake the strategy should include a development plan seeking the North end being landscaped and added to whereby it matches that interest of the existing gardens-with lighting and attractions we may raise the bar to all year engagement and use. (i.e.: Tivoli Gardens Copenhagen-classic gardens, resort based attraction-4 Million visitors). This represents the greater aspiration of a 'classic' or classically cool resort claim.

It is agreed that the Lake and the elements that drive it need to be co-created into a cohesive plan or complimentary development framework, rather necessarily piece meal.

The plans the client has sponsored encourage possibilities for increased events, such as lake based festivals, sculpture trails and installations to encourage full lake use and increased all year usage.

We request the strategies references be amended and the client's aspirations included.

6.35-6.38

Grand Casino.

The sites context has been de-valued with the addition of the development adjacent, and was purchased for redevelopment, not re-use.

There has been and there is an ongoing marketing of the site, with no interest due to the unviable nature of value, use and conditions to repair or retain the structure.

In reality, talk of the Southport college interest has not materialised at all into any offer to rent or buy the premises.

Given the removal of a more ornate cinema to make way for the Vincent, we believe a similar approach would permit a high quality impact on the street scene and town, rather than an ornate ceiling very few are interested in.

It would be of more support to development and the strategy overall to support a realistic prospect, being the demolition and re-development of this site and as would generate wider development of nearby units and bring some useful, sustainable development to the town.

We have objected separately and expect the draft to be amended to remove direct references in 6.38 to our clients 'ability'-there are no similar detrimental comments, for instance, the Local Authorities abilities to attend to the Victoria Baths site.

6-6.39

Victoria Baths.

This building requires significant investment by the Authority or promoted as a development opportunity linked to a thorough programme of refurbishment given the more valuable visual impact and historic importance.

The commentary needs to be strengthened.

7.0

Beach Front.

7.2

The pier is allied to the comments regarding lighting and evening use to extend use. In addition the pier could do with added attractions to pause and enjoy the walk, especially given the failure to maintain and plan for continued use of tram. We believe the Café/arcade is also low aspiration quality and requires a higher quality and accessible offer.

7.6

This contradicts other sections, for instance, trampoline world and seaside wigwams, a likely unsustainable fad, unlike swimming and water/theme parks-this is not to say wigwam attractions would not work elsewhere in the parks/gardens nearer to town.

In essence this section agrees with our earlier comments, to maintain high quality aspirations, by having a clear cohesive plan that seeks the classic, which always relates to quality.

7.9

We support this comment as a major point of need, coupled to lighting and landscaping to all areas underutilised (North/Links lake section)

7.13

It is not agreed the carousel needs to be moved. It ought be promoted and enhanced as the gateway to the pier, especially as it is a major visual draw in the current location.

7.19

This reflects more strongly the individual points made above in terms of higher aspiration, quality and a cohesive plan. Our client's lakeside site represents significant opportunity to deliver scale to this strategy-not wigwams.

In conclusion-our client is in the process of producing a plan for consideration and the mechanisms to achieve agreement on the factors mentioned are critical for delivery-this is an imperative to understand and be involved in going forward.

8.0

Lord Street.

8.11

In the stakeholder group, mention was made of early wins.

Whilst some points are relatively minor, such proposals could be cost neutral and achieve visual amenity and improved movement.

- A) Clad with stone or remove the alien, modern public conveniences, in addition to the obstructive and dated brick versions near to Union Street.
- B) Remove obstructive/restrictive railings and street clutter as soon as possible.
- C) Continue to improve all paving to remove tarmac and grey concrete slabs, which return a quality under foot-this reverses a low aspiration, cheap solution that removed the 'classic' blue quarry tiles that remain part of some conservation areas, but were a feature of the town.

8.26

The only point we would raise concerns with is reducing lanes to 2-as locally it operates as two lanes in any case, with partial parking, stops at commercial premises and by buses or taxi ranks, leaving the central section of two lanes. Southport would gain little from this measure and such actions have been known to deaden town centres and have been reversed, at significant cost. One needs to consider the occasional closure and blockage of the coast road, which would barrier an alternative route, causing a paralysis of traffic. Resources would be best employed in the other strong elements of the proposals.

8.51

Our client has no demonstrable interest in the Casino, and the remark in the strategy ought to be supported by clear evidence or removed-earlier comments apply to the context of the Casino site.

8.52

In Liverpool central library they have Entrepreneurs in residence, helping start up advice for new businesses-this could be added to the offer.

8.53-8.58

A similar lab exists in Liverpool, as a model, which brings together designers and makers with facilities to bring life to projects, be they Art or commercial product and innovation. Whilst edge Hill is synonymous with Ormskirk, it could also be partnered with significantly to create retention of talent in the region and support opportunities to give experience to graduates. This adds a vibrant youthful culture, as is referred to elsewhere (classically cool).Not unlike has occurred in Liverpool and University towns in general.

8.61

This initiative would require clear direction on rent and rates implications, although we would need to caution the prospect of a continued short fix approach, not dissimilar to Charity shops. Southport could however re-brand as a designer outlet village, but maybe for smaller innovative brands-however, again, the absent landlord rents and rates issue would need to be addressed.

9.26

The food festival was a relative success, hampered though by late licence rules preventing the prospect of a party in the park later into the evening.

Suggest liaise with organisers and bar providers as to how to overcome such issues and extend the event and others like it.

9.31

Whilst improvements to the market were welcome, the comments in the strategy are overstated and contradict need, as mentioned in 9.36.

This site was undervalued and every possibility existed to extend the offer and expand the capacity.

The quality of operators is patchy and voids remain an issue. Some form of agreed strategy of occupier profile would however be useful-back with quality and classic aspirations.

10.1

Our client's plans for the Marine Lake bring much to the overall strategy and we welcome a structure being in place to drive the strategy forward.

10.11

The client's aspirations and involvement needs to be strengthened due to the significant investment in the Town and relevant land holdings.

10.12

7. Grand casino-the refurbishment and conversion should not be fixed in this strategy for the reasons stated previously-we would not wish to restrain the option for a comprehensive development following demolition-it is critical to amend this statement due to the most unlikely delivery and financial realities relating to the existing building.

11.6

We would welcome sight of the action plan and a timetable for managing the scale of this initiative, especially the deliverables.

It is vital that implementation constantly involves and promotes stakeholders so momentum is sustained and brings in increased local involvement. Our local knowledge suggests apathy, a lack of knowledge and 'reach' to many businesses and entrepreneurs in the Town.

Other items to consider and include:

- LA needs to take a lead by ensuring all plans include business cases to provide maintenance of that which exists or is created (i.e. the Lord Street gardens-smashed tiles, mossy unkempt surfaces.).
- The LA need to set a clear example and not tolerate lower standards of design, production and maintenance of all aspect of the built environment and operations.

Setting an example becomes the comparable evidence to insist on others doing the same—if not, investors will down grade activity to the Authority and any sign of lower or double standards.

- Appearance of shop windows-random images, poor signs and low aspiration, poor quality view.
- Be mindful of existing business with initiatives (i.e. winter skate rink, with temporary bar, sited next door to new bar, undermining and distracting from the business and an opportunity to support it by dressing the new bar as the ice bar, with ice sculptures etc.!! Or restricting the food festivals possible continuation into the evening)
- Much improved policing, especially for extending sense of safety in the evening.
- We have submitted suggestions for an innovation pathway that allows entrepreneurs to make speculative application to use LA assets within a business plan, to develop or operate added value to the strategy and the Local Authority regions-we welcome the opportunity to progress this prospect with a range of ideas in the pipeline waiting the need to protect intellectual property to the originators.

Cllr Barton

Would it be possible to enquire as to the feasibility of securing a financial incentive system specifically aimed at those businesses here in Southport with Verandahs, whether these be on Lord Street, Stanley Street or Bold Street, etc.

The purpose would be to offer a reduction in the business rates for those that have made considerable efforts (and regular maintenance and upkeep) to their impressive shop properties, particularly the Verandahs, including the Grecian Columns, overhead glass canopies, Victorian filigree and horizontal grating. I fully appreciate this will take some consideration, however I strongly believe this would be a great way of working with the local community here, not only supporting our present long- standing and upcoming businesses, but would serve as a strong welcome beacon for new businesses alike that are yet to fill the vacant units we have remaining here in town.

As part of the ongoing Southport Development Strategy as part of my ongoing discussions with the local community I would like to make a further proposal in addition to the previous list I have submitted to be included as part of the consultation.

If we could work more with the businesses and hotels in order to develop a long- term working relationship that allows both to support one another, particularly during the quieter months of the calendar then I believe this would go a long way towards creating a strong and stable high street once again.

Speaking with various business owners along Lord Street, and hearing their thoughts on the possible reasons why they are currently suffering from greatly reduced footfall during the "Southport Bid" festival events I would like to seek some support on behalf of these businesses

and an explanation as to why so many businesses have not been included in the consultation, planning and progress of the BID's forward plan?

Understandably it is only right that we listen to our residents' concerns and include them in these discussions? I hope to see a more comprehensive and inclusive approach in the future that factors in our local business community, especially the exceptional Independents who I greatly feel deserve our fullest support.

Here is my feedback which I have collated for you after speaking to multiple Southport residents and business owners both past and present on what they would like to see incorporated into Southport's future development, particularly on Lord Street and across the Town Centre district. I must stress that I have only asked what they would wish to see and to give a full candid account. I have not mentioned the fact that we are running a development strategy nor any of its present details to anyone.

Wider age variety of unique tasteful shops with appropriate stylish titles (no gimmicky names)

1. Skating rink near the Promenade
2. Proper department store(s) family friendly to encourage reasons why to shop and socialise (families and young children who meet up could have a reason to "go to work" again at the weekend)
3. More shops aimed at encouraging young families to go out together such as the classic gift shops like "John Duncan's" which catered for ladies & gentlemen
4. More exclusive shops with fine luxury goods to instil confidence into the area such as "Russell & Bromley"
5. Alternative use for former Woolworths site (now British Heart Foundation) as this is creating unfair pressure on independents and carries the wrong image for inward investment and those wanting to set up long term)
6. Free Car Parking (Naturally this is a long term project, but if enough decent shops could be established this may pave the way to implement this eventually. In the meantime more free parking locations across town should be in use again)
7. LESS coffee shops & eateries (People are taking better care of themselves and do not have the time or desire to lounge all day. This also makes the area appear boring to those in their teens up to their 40s on average I am finding)
8. More high class Independents with grand shop fronts and appeal to want to visit (across town) such as "Marshall & Snellgrove", "Lucinda Byre"
9. More quaint unusual shops with "useful" wares and souvenirs that people can use all round the year (dioramas and more literature on Southport architecture and the Arts Centre itself, etc.)
10. Replacement of useful shops which are lacking such as specialists (Tie Rack for Men clothing)

11. More gift shops delving into interesting historical times beyond the Victorian times (Georgian, Edwardian, etc.) such as "Pasttimes"
12. More year round entertainment venues such as a small- scale version of Farmer Ted's "Farmageddon" possibly at the Wayfarers Arcade
13. Specialised food shops offering international cuisine, especially vegetarian food
14. Disney Franchise
15. Many more collectible shops such as "Beanie Market" from Houghton Street and "Planet Eater" from Union Street
16. More nostalgic shops with staff wearing period style attire such as Westminster Tearooms matched to a particular decade
17. Nostalgic decade run restaurants such as a 1950s "Prime Time Diner"
18. More individual "village" style shops providing hard to find yet useful goods that may otherwise have to be bought online
19. Another walk- through store such as the former Woolworths to bring shoppers to both sides of the Town Centre whilst advertising trendy up to date games, films, toys etc. as the former Woolworths was able to

Southport Development Strategy Presentation to Southport BID Members, 2 February, 2016 - Notes from meeting

25 individuals attended from cross section of businesses across the BID area. Attendance sheet attached.

The presentation was well received by those in attendance. These notes are a summary of the comments made from the floor. They represent the views of individuals.

Southport Pier

- This is an underused resource, needs to be developed with new attractions and be open into the evening

Beach

- The beach is a huge space which is not used to its full potential. There should be active management to prevent further encroachment, due to natural processes and the events programme extended e.g. outdoor cinema

Lord St

- General support to creating a large public space suitable for large scale events in front of town hall and introducing measures that make the area more pedestrian friendly.
- Most present felt that the presence of four lanes of traffic through Lord St was detrimental to the businesses.
- There was a need to manage traffic better.
- The Council needs to look at ways of directing through traffic away off Lord St.
- Can emergency vehicles use alternative route. High speed, sirens and flashing lights are not conducive to a premier leisure and retail area.

- Any changes must not deter visitors who visit Southport by car.
- There were concerns expressed that any measures that increased congestion on Lord St would have a negative impact on visitor's perception of the town, especially around peak travel times.
- Any changes to Lord St need to be done incrementally so that people get used to change over a period of time.

Car Parking

- There was general consensus that proposal to create zoned parking area was good and that a clearer signing system was essential.
- The poor quality of the multi storey car park on Tulketh St was seen as a negative for the town creating a very poor initial impression for visitors

New Hotels

- There was concern raised about the potential impact of new hotels on the traditional guest house. Over 40 B and Bs have been lost since the Travel Lodge and Premier Inn opened in the town.
- It was also stated that additional 3 or 4 star bed space was required to generate more use of convention facilities in the town. That this market is different to B and B, Boutique accommodation. Demand is partly demonstrated by Ramada and room bookings which is well over 80% compared with the average of around 65%?

Updated Response from the Lib Dem Group on the draft Southport Development Strategy – following Ward Cllr Briefing on 4th February

We recognise that the draft proposal at this stage is a starting point for discussion rather than an end product. In light of this we have a number of key suggestions and recommendations which we feel should be considered as part of this proposal.

1. Southport as a green destination

Although the current draft mentions "opportunities to increase destination potential and promote the natural coast ecology offer", we feel that more can and should be made of this as a unique selling point for the town. As part of this we feel the strategy should include the possibility of a visitor centre at the former sand-winning plant (similar to the centre at Martin Mere). Such a development could be used to link the Marshside area with the rest of the seafront.

The draft proposal also includes mention of the Tidal Lagoon but as a "longer term strategic consideration", we feel this definition could undermine the prospect of getting the Lagoon and so believe that the strategy should have a more positive position on the Tidal Lagoon.

2. Southport Beach

We feel that the draft strategy does not do enough to recognise the significance of the beach at Southport. As part of this we believe that Southport needs a clear and defined beach management plan which forms part of an overarching Tourist Strategy and which takes into account the beach at Ainsdale, Southport and Marshside.

We have concerns over the wording of this section of the report and would ask that this is reviewed and updated so that it gives a better reflection of the state of the beach both north and south of the Pier.

3. Creative and Digital Technologies

The draft strategy does go into some detail here however again we feel that more can be done to develop this. There are currently examples from across the UK of seaside towns taking steps to regenerate as creative or digital hubs - specifically Bournemouth and Folkestone. Given our location and our green credentials it is possible to consider Southport as the next "Silicon Beach (or sand dune) especially if consideration is given to the digital transatlantic cable which comes to land in Kew. The strategy does reference educational establishments but does not suggest the possibility of colleges in Southport becoming industry leaders in computer programming and design.

Reference is made to "Click and Collect" but digital can be so much more - see the WIFI pavement being launched in Chesham.

4. Retail

The draft strategy does mention retail specifically the Indoor Market however we believe that to develop as a retail destination Southport needs to redefine its offering. As a destination Southport is faced by increased competition from Liverpool One and the Trafford Centre. To combat this Southport needs to emerge as a destination which provides a unique blend of retail opportunities including independent shops. The Lib Dems also recognise that smaller retailers may not be able to afford rates/rents on Lord Street and so believe that the strategy should recognise the important role some of the streets off Lord Street have in delivering a mixed retail environment.

5. Southport as a dementia friendly destination

Southport is already leading the way across Sefton as the pilot for dementia friendly communities and this could be developed further as a possible market for visitors.

6. Lord Street

Whilst we can recognise the idea behind the "cultural heart" of Southport we have concerns about the impact on traffic flow given the dimensions of Southport and limited vehicle routes North to South. We also have concerns about who was consulted on the proposal regarding changing traffic flow on this section of Lord Street – did the consultants have any input from MerseyTravel, Arriva or the Highways department of Sefton Council.

7. Southport as a cycle town

Sefton have committed considerable time and investment in the creation of Southport as a cycle town and although this funding from central government is no longer available it would be a shame to squander the work already done. We feel that the Development Strategy should acknowledge and build on the fact that Southport is a recognised Cycle Town destination which if marketed correctly could link the Beach, Marshside, and the Town Centre together.

8. Hotels & Accommodation

The report references the 3 & 4 star hotels in Southport but we feel that recognition should also be given the B&Bs and Boutique hotels that form a key part of the accommodation offering for Southport. To be successful as a Conference location and as a holiday destination a wide range of accommodation types are required which can cater for a range of budgets. We also believe that the Council need to take whatever action possible to limit the number of HMOs being developed on Bath Street - the main area for B&Bs in the Town Centre.

9. Transport Links

The report does include transport links however more attention should be given to linking the retail areas of Central 12, Lord Street, Ocean Plaza and the Sea Front. The Lib Dems see this as a main issue to encourage footfall between these key areas and are keen to progress the possibility of a bus or tram service linking these with the railways station.

Transport links into Southport are also a key issue moving forward. Whilst there are good links to the South the report should reference links to the North and East specifically Manchester. The possibility of losing the direct train link to Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Airport will have an impact on Southport and it would be helpful if this was acknowledged in the report.

Southport College

Original

Creative and Design Industries

8.43 Creative and Design industries refer to a range of economic activities which are concerned with the generation or exploitation of knowledge and information; activities which are becoming an increasingly important contribution to the economic well-being and diversification of our town centres.

8.44 Such activities include advertising, architecture, crafts, design, film, media production, music technology, television, photography, games design and animation, publishing, museums and galleries, digital design and creation in manufacturing, and business management/enterprise, which are important sources of job creation for the UK and all key government and LEP priorities (Visitor economy, Advanced Manufacturing, Creative and Digital, Financial and Professional)

8.45 Many educational establishments have begun to seek opportunities for their students to build on their ideas and concepts and begin to think commercially about their products/services with the aim of improving entrepreneurial skills in a realistic work environment whilst also strengthening the range of local employment opportunities and links for progressing learners

8.46 Southport College whose mission statement reads “to provide outstanding education and training for individuals and employers” is the leading provider of vocational courses in the area and is graded as ‘good’ by Ofsted for teaching and learning excellence.

8.47 Southport College has a long history of vocational and academic education in the Creative industries and design sector and aims to develop further opportunities for students, and local employers and community groups to support development and sustainability of the town and its wider support industries.

8.48 Southport College in supporting its objectives aims to develop CITED - “The Centre for Innovation in Technology, Engineering and Design” through a staged approach during the next two years focusing on Computer Aided Design and Manufacturing, and Creative Arts - Design and Production. The detail provided in section 8 of this strategy is a key foundation for the success of this centre and when integrated provides the platform for providing a network for employers, the community, visitors and students to pitch, design and develop ideas and access shared services. This project also provides a focal point for engaging the next generation in the Creative and Digital industries through links with current primary and secondary school students.

8.49 Concepts related to the creative industries and design sector would directly complement the existing education offer by providing additional spaces and activities throughout the town to

support students in developing their employability and enterprise skills further, whilst extending opportunities by providing products and services to employers, community groups, and customer stakeholders (existing users, residents and visitors).

8.50 Central locations in Southport could be used to act as focal points to develop this activity whilst also promoting the College and its products/services to key stakeholders. The spaces would provide excellent opportunities to support the extension of the courses being taught at the college in the course areas outlined in 8.44.

8.51 In consultation with Southport College and Sefton Council, a number of potential locations have been identified. These include various units on Lord Street, vacant units in Cambridge Walks Arcade and the Former Grand Casino, Lord Street in addition to facilities for which there are existing strong links with the college already, such as the Atkinson. (We are not sure where reference to Grand Casino came from it was not part of our discussions nor would a development like this be considered when we have arts based extensive facilities in Mornington Road)

8.52 A number of similar concepts have been explored in consultation with the college and have included Enterprise Hubs and Fab Labs (Fabrication Laboratory). The proposed “Centre for Innovation in Technology, Engineering and Design” would be built around these concepts both in terms of the colleges main site facilities, extension into the town, and the links developed with businesses and the community as laid out in this strategy.

8.53 Enterprise Hubs and fab labs are creative spaces for designers and entrepreneurs to pitch, test and develop ideas and bring them into service. An example of a Fab Lab is a fully equipped fabrication workshop to stimulate the conversion from ideas and concepts into a manufactured prototype or product. The main beneficiaries of a Fab Lab are the local community of all ages where using the equipment and ‘learning through play’ develops a spirit of creativity, design and manufacture. Entrepreneurs and businesses are also a key market for a Fab Lab to support product design, prototype development and manufacture. By providing resources and equipment, a Fab Lab can greatly assist in reducing the overall costs of entrepreneurs and businesses.

Fab Labs and Enterprise Hubs

8.54 The Fab Lab concept derived from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 2005 and has spread worldwide. In the UK there are currently eleven Fab Labs and more are in the pipeline. The Manufacturing Institute (TMI) in Trafford Park has the agreement with MIT to develop a network of Fab Labs across the UK and Ireland. How does it work?

8.55 Fab Labs are essentially learning spaces that are open to anybody, containing the workspace and equipment for people to use, and staffed by people with the required skills and expertise. Entrepreneurs and businesses can use the facilities, equipment and staff expertise to develop their ideas into prototypes and products. Case Study – Fabrication Laboratory (Fab Lab), Altrincham

8.56 Trafford College along with primary and secondary schools located in and around the town provide a catchment of potential users for an Altrincham Fab Lab. 4 Manchester, New Islington, Airedale (Keighley), Nerve Centre (Derry), Belfast, Ellesmere Port, BEC (Cockermouth), Ironbridge, Makenow (Falmouth), Cardiff, Lime Wharf (London), Strathclyde Uni (Glasgow).

8.57 The estimated net cost of the Altrincham Fab Lab is £469,000 over a three year period and its understood will be financed from a combination of funding including the Council, developer contributions and grants such as the High Street Renewal Award. Enterprise Hubs

8.58 The Enterprise hub concept could extend the facilities at Southport College through facilities in the town for example through pop-up shops, an enterprise desk set up in the Atkinson for example, exhibition spaces, market stalls, utilising vacant units in the town centre, and establishing linkages with key events and projects in Southport.

8.59 An example of such as use is the Manchester Craft and Design Centre, Northern Quarter which provides an alternative shopping experience and contains coffee shops, restaurants, bars and independent retailers.

8.60 The Escalator (Innovation Loft) on Deansgate Manchester is fronted by a coffee shop but throughout the rest of the premises lays a community of start-ups and networking space to support

entrepreneurs, corporates, innovators, and investors together with state-of-the-art event spaces and conference facilities adding to a multi-purpose, diverse function of the building.

Pop-up Shops

8.61 A pop-up unit is where a short-term lease (usually for a period less than six months) is agreed between a landlord and a business or community project, enabling them to use a vacant, underutilised buildings for a short period of time. Although the concept of a pop-up unit is mostly associated with shops, pop-up units on the high street can also be utilised for a number of activities including art galleries and community projects.

8.62 Pop-up shops is not just a concept that Southport College might pursue, established businesses can use the pop-up concept as a means of testing a new business direction or market opportunity. If your business has an established brand or product, opening a pop-up shop can be a great tool for increasing brand awareness and brand loyalty amongst customers.

8.63 Many large companies have used the pop-up model to open 'guerrilla' operations in fashionable locations, as a 'brand event'. This can be used to target existing customers, improve communication and loyalty, and create a buzz to attract new customers.

8.64 Camden Collective Pop-Ups (formed through funding from Camden Council as well as other public and private sector stakeholders) offers creative individuals and businesses the opportunity to showcase their ideas and products on Camden High Street. The Collective invests in vacant and under-used shops, turning them into vibrant, temporary spaces by curating an exciting programme of cultural and retail events. In the North West, Revolver Retail based in Liverpool City Centre works in partnership with the Liverpool Business Improvement District in bringing together retailers looking for short term retail space or pop up stores and landlords with space to fill. Revolver Retail provides an end to end solution for the growing market for pop up stores and short term leases

8.65 It is recommended that Sefton Council working in partnership with the Southport BID needs to ensure that vacant and underused units within the town centre and where appropriate are proactively marketed with the potential to be utilised as a pop-up shop for Southport College, new and existing businesses in Southport and elsewhere the third sector and also to encourage outside investment from businesses potentially looking at relocating in Southport.

Delivery, subject to funding, a Management Agreement for canopies and appointment of a contractor to clean and maintain them should be taken forward. Implement a Local Development Order that will reduce the number of constraints on the upper floors of buildings and to encourage residential and office uses above. \ This Local Development Order will reduce the constraints on flexibility of ground floor units that could potentially attract a wider range of occupants.

Complete the review of Southport's Conservation Area Appraisals Commission outline feasibility (technical and financial) work and potential phasing, ensuring stakeholder discussions with transport stakeholders take place. The object should be to arrive at a high level public realm strategy for Lord Street that is capable of delivering a quality open retail and leisure environment for visitors and residents.

As in the development and promotion of the Creative and Design sector in line with government and LEP priorities through the development of the "Centre for Innovation in Technology, Engineering and Design" in partnership with Southport College and local businesses which will be based on the concepts of Fab Labs and Enterprise Hubs (described above) including the use of town centre spaces that can support diversity in the town centre.

Individual Response

Further to a point made at last Wednesday's meeting to link up sections of the town, would it be possible to make London St two way to ALL traffic for its whole length? It seems wasteful not to use this connecting road.

We clearly need to improve the town's infrastructure as best we can and it would not be helpful to put any more obstacle on Lord St either. It's pavements are very wide anyhow.

On another matter raised at the meeting, would it be possible to turn the sand factory into an

ecology centre with specific interest in birdlife and the coast. Perhaps Mike Booth could persuade the RSPB to contribute to the project?

Perhaps it would be an idea for residents to be involved at the start of any future planning rather than a consultancy? It would create a sense of real participation and be much much cheaper.

SOUTHPORT CIVIC SOCIETY COMMENTS

ON THE SOUTHPORT REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGY DRAFT REPORT

With respect of the recently published *Southport Redevelopment Strategy Draft Report* Southport Civic Society comments as follows:

1. **We fail to look after our existing assets in the public realm of Southport.** The proposals in the Southport Development Strategy Report do not address this. The neglect of the Lord Street Conservation Area is endemic and in spite of frequent protests Sefton Council are reluctant and apparently unable to do anything about it. The proposed planting of 19no. trees (out of 45no. trees in need of work) after much protest and lobbying and surveys by Southport Civic Society, and without details of timing, species, size, details of root protection and edging, is an example of this malaise. Major schemes such as Lord Street narrowing, proposed in the report, will not solve the fundamental need for wide-ranging refurbishment and investment in the public realm.
2. Southport is *not* a suburb of Liverpool, *nor* of Bootle. It is a substantial town with its own character and identity and is a destination for visitors and day-trippers to stay and enjoy. **Our town is not properly marketed, advertised nor promoted.**
3. **Transport links** to Southport have deteriorated and Sefton Council has not looked after our interests. The train links to Manchester and its airport are very poor and getting worse; road links to the motorways are inadequate. Visitors cannot access our town as easily as they should and particularly during peak times.
4. **Car parking** is inadequate and visitors continue to go to other destinations where they can park easily, and for long enough (more than 2 hours) without penalty. Radical proposals for town centre parking such as a new multi-storey are needed.
5. The proposal to move **Silcock's carousel** on the Pier forecourt is ill-considered. See appended letter which refers to this in detail.
6. **The proposal to narrow Lord Street is also ill-considered.** Shop servicing, public transport and general traffic flows through the centre of Southport will make any reduction in the width of Lord Street road into a bottleneck and would be a backward step. However proposals to provide a better **exhibition/ event space in front of the Civic buildings** by opening up the balustrading in front of The Atkinson and extending through to the existing Lord Street pavement is a good idea. That is provided we actually *use* such an outdoor space. We are told that the sub-base (foundations) under the paving between the Municipal Gardens Café and the former Tourist Information Centre pavilions is inadequate and that is why the paving here is cracking up. How could Sefton Council have made such a mistake on a multi-million pound scheme that is barely fifteen years old? Relaying of this area with new levels, new species opened up to The Atkinson will improve this area and then must be used (and promoted!) for events. The Report also suggests removing the previous Tourist Information Centre pavilion in its drawn submission; this is either an oversight, or if intended would be a loss to the character of Lord Street.
7. Proposals to extend and allow upgrading of **Pleasure land** with better connections to the centre of Southport are to be welcomed. However the existing tenant who has only had a very short-term lease from Sefton, and who has the expertise, experience, local connections, knowledge, track record and a passion and drive, must be offered a new long-term lease to enable Pleasure land to be developed as a tourist asset for Southport, and a nationally known destination resort. Ways must be found by Sefton Council to avoid legislation that makes this end up with the wrong tenant.
8. Proposals to improve and develop land at the north end of the Lake and on the failed **Park & Ride site** are good in principle. High quality development of a non-residential kind is needed. We must not end up with a holiday camp of low-quality which would not be of benefit to the town.

9. The potential of the **sand-winning plant** by the Coast Road and RSPB sanctuaries has not been addressed in the Report. Here, the possibility of a development such as a look-out with restaurant, with a bird-watching/ star-gazing emphasis and possibly accommodation for visitors would be an asset which would draw visitors, improve this stretch of road and show off Southport's natural ecology.

10. Lord Street is a major asset in the Northwest and visitors from all over the world are enchanted by it when they come. However decline of shops because of high rents and consequent high rates is a major cause of this. **Subsidy of rent and rates reduction** (or removal of rates), particularly to encourage smaller non-multiple retail units must be considered. Proposals for smaller units within the existing fabric would help small business start-ups. At the same time maintenance of canopies is essential and consideration should be given for the Council to take over these and take responsibility for maintaining them. We would support minor reduction of retail frontages to enable access to upper floors of Lord Street units and to allow conversion from office/ commercial space to residential units. People living in the centre will be good for the local economy.

In conclusion, that we are talking about the future of Southport is good. We must not just accept subservience to Liverpool and Bootle, while we watch decline. Southport is a special place and Southport people must insist it is no longer neglected.

A Comment:

Southport Development Strategy – Draft report December 2015

This report released in December 2015 and available for public comment, proposes to move the carousel on the pier forecourt. It tells us that, "this attraction currently blocks the view from Nevill Street to the pier leaving visitors who are not familiar with the area, unaware that the pier is behind it." It goes on to say, "The carousel could simply be moved immediately to the left which would enable the pier to be visible to visitors without causing too much disruption to the operators of the carousel"

This proposal has not been thought through properly for the following reasons:-

1. The entrance to Southport Pier had become lost over the years, first by the loss of the Pier Pavilion in the 1960's and then by the forward development of a café and amusement arcade either side of the pier entrance.
2. In the 1980's Sefton Council commissioned architects to redesign the pier forecourt, which was then a windswept wilderness with no sign of where the pier entrance lay or indeed that there was a pier at all.
3. The proposal for a tensile structure with Silcock's Victorian Carousel under it was approved by Sefton Council and this was built. The high tensile structure with the carousel under, lies precisely on the axis of the pier. It was designed to re-identify the entrance to the pier and to form a major landmark in the town. This indeed it does as it can be seen from the length of the Promenade, the Kings Gardens, the sea front, and Ocean Plaza and not least, it can be seen from Nevill St.
Visitors can be directed to the pier by directing them to this major landmark that identifies the pier entrance.
4. If the Carousel and the tensile structure are relocated, the entrance to the pier will be no more visible than it was back in the 1980's. There will be nothing visible from Nevill Street or indeed the promenade. A new major identifying feature would be needed and then the pier forecourt would become cluttered.
5. The authors of the report have not fully considered the implications of moving the carousel and tensile structure, which they tell us, can "simply be done." In order to resist high wind loads the structure has massive concrete foundations. Without these, it would have blown away during the first year of its existence. It cannot simply be moved!
6. The practicalities, the concept of identifying the pier entrance and indeed the costs have not been adequately considered in the proposal set out in clause 7.13 (page46) of the report.

**Martin Perry MA, DIP ARCH, RIBA
DECEMBER 2015**

Individual Response

I attended the public meeting at Southport Town Hall last night and was disappointed by the level of scepticism and negative comment made about the strategy document. I was however, inspired by the passionate, upbeat and positive comments made by Councillor Sue McGuire who is clearly an excellent ambassador for Southport and responsible member of Sefton Council. I decided to make my comments by written submission.

I believe Nexus has captured the classic resort image of Southport fairly well and has highlighted the desirable outcomes for tourism effectively. It establishes an exciting vision for Southport worthy of further development and support.

Despite local press reports to the contrary the report does not sound the demise of Pleasure land, on the contrary, it promotes the opportunity for further investment and improvement both at Pleasure land and the adjacent sites. It recognises the contribution Pleasure land makes to Southport in terms of footfall pull.

A balanced re-establishment of the beach area, consistent with a seaside town, with consideration for the natural incursion of salt marshes is welcomed. It is worth pointing out however the natural incursion of salt marshes is only made possible by the unnatural man made embankment along the Southern edge of the River Ribble, maintenance of the embankment has been stopped for a number of years and it is eroding rapidly, if as is forecast the embankment is breached, the Southport salt marshes will very likely be washed away.

The document fails to inspire in a few areas:

It does not deal with a major development opportunity of the railway area. The railway, sidings and station area is an eyesore and badly in need of improvement. The land footprint is large and as such would provide opportunity for major redevelopment. A redevelopment comprising of a covered station with a major mall type retail premises constructed over it possibly with residential living on the upper floors would promote the town centre as a place to live not just a place to visit. Both rail and road transport infrastructure desperately needs to be improved to make the Southport visit experience less of a travel nightmare. Opposition to the degrading of services to Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Airport must be robustly and quickly delivered and the electrification of the line to Southport must be positively supported.

It does not make clear how the traffic flows could be made to work if areas of Lord Street are narrowed or pedestrianised. The closure of Lord Street which is a North-South route will further exacerbate traffic flow if not carefully planned, the next North-South route to the East not being until St Luke's bridge. A redevelopment of the Station area could provide opportunity for an additional North-South route under the railway line between Derby Road and Tulketh Street. It does not maximise the potential of Southport as a Golf Resort, we should be promoting the Sefton Coast as the 'Golf Coast' and we should be involving the golf clubs in the definition of what that means.

It does not discuss local skills or industry development. With a proposal to construct a tidal lagoon there would be need for a significant number of construction and engineering jobs, there needs to be urgent dialogue with Southport college to create these skill sets locally ahead of the project start.

There has been a lack of nurturing of Southport over the last 20+ years which has resulted in Southport falling behind other surrounding areas in terms of facility and attraction, maintenance and development.

There needs to be a clear message of Political intent to ensure this strategy gets sufficient traction to attract the significant investment that will be necessary to bring the plan to fruition.

I welcome this initiative and look forward to opportunity to participate in providing further comment and input as proposals are developed.

Boom Developments

I am writing on behalf of, and am instructed by, Argyle Properties (Marcel Zacharia), with regard to specific assets and to respond in more detail to the Southport Town Centre Plan.

Whilst detailed observations will follow I have been asked to specifically request the removal of a particular comment in the draft, which Mr Zacharia has found inaccurate and therefore potentially detrimental.

The particular comment is contained in item 6.38 which casts a doubt over the owner of the Casino and at the same time makes no equal remark about the LA delivery or capitulation to attend to the Baths site or other assets and such comments affecting my client may surface elsewhere. It would therefore be appreciated if this was removed and to not appear in any further distribution of the draft or updated versions. Your assurance is sort to confirm that appropriate amendments have been made to remove such comments, quite aside from any other revisions following the consultation.

In reality the client has marketed the premises, they have been passed over due to historic conditions that have existed upon the clients purchase, seen as prohibitive. No serious use will emerge for this, the college have not made any serious intent to purchase or occupy, as mentioned as possible in other passages. Given the loss of the more ornate cinema to make way for the Vincent-we would wish to see a commentary to support a similarly comprehensive re-development of the less valuable casino site and neighbouring moribund premises. The report clearly shows the degree of malaise in more important assets and serious regeneration of sites such as the casino, support the inward investment to the remainder. I said at the stakeholder discussion to demonstrates this point, 'if Southport was a herd of deer, it would be culled!'.

Thank you in anticipation of your attention to this particular point and the prospect of our contributing fully to the consultation process on behalf of the client, and more general observations that may appear pertinent.

Individual Response

I note a BAD error in this report on page 37 section 6.26.

The report states '*Southport Golf Links is a high quality and popular 9-hole municipal golf course*' It is an 18-hole golf course in excellent condition reportedly one of the best municipal courses in the country.

visa:

In my opinion this is one of the best municipal courses in the north west and is excellent value.

Recent course improvements have a positive impact on the course.

Any developer initially looking at developing the Fairway as suggested could well be misled by this statement.

It needs to be amended.

Individual Response

I am a Southport resident that has used Southport skate park since it first opened, there is many great things about skate parks in communities, many listed online about the good things they bring to the areas,

This was certainly the case with Southport skate park,

it helped shape my life and now I currently build skate parks around the UK and Europe full time

I noticed on the reading Southport development project there was talkings of an indoor skate park facility?

as you can understand having the opportunity to build something in your home town would be a dream come true

I was wondering who would know more about such a thing and how I can basically try getting involved, I feel I could have some great use in this project regarding a skate park, I have a history in building private indoor wooden skate parks and also outdoor public concrete ones.

whatever it may be that Southport wants from a skate park indoor or outdoor I believe I can be a great help..

many of the indoor skate parks don't do so well currently in the UK. The ones that survive are mostly ran as charities! The biggest most established one close to us is Rampworx in Aintree and in summer they struggle..

The amount of outdoor skate parks that are currently getting built are an example of why the indoor parks struggle in summer.

Liverpool spent 1 million last year building skate parks around the city, all in concrete by various companies - I was lucky to be on two of them with Wheelscape skate parks.

also are you familiar with this facebook page??

<https://www.facebook.com/Southport-Skatepark-Project-2014-718885261497169/?fref=ts>

The new pour in place concrete skate parks are the future, and it's what everyone really wants. It can be designed to suit the town, it doesn't have to look ugly and have hidden areas like our current outdated skate park, it can be designed for all sorts of age groups and users. Have a really long life span, and generally bring the town up to speed with surrounding areas,

Euxton, Preston and Chorley have all recently got new skate parks.

I understand the council has problems with some funding for such things, but there has to be a point when the maintenance costs of the Southport's skate park added up over the years could have bought us a good concrete 10 year guaranteed park..

Individual Response

Re the above, I am a Southport resident and have read the strategies suggested and, although many are good, there will be a question of where the finances will come from when so many basic things are being cut by Sefton Council . I do feel the following would be fairly inexpensive, important basics to start the initiative and that rebranding is totally unnecessary, expensive and a waste of money - e.g. cool Southport - as opinions are formed by the people who visit and by word of mouth.

1) a regular clean-up of rubbish in all central visitor areas up to shoreline would improve the visual aspect for visitors. Volunteers should not be relied on as the presentation of the town is important for visitors to return.

2) the gardens in the centre to be maintained properly - again not by volunteers.

3) Lord Street is so important to the town both for shoppers and visitors. Owners/landlords of the property on Lord Street should be responsible for maintenance of the buildings - upkeep and general presentation to match the history and reputation egg remove plants growing out of buildings ! and good standard of painting and shop fronts, including ironwork of the balconies and the canopies.

4) landlords/owners of empty properties on Lord Street be expected to maintain to same levels as above but maybe lower rents should be available. Local shops such as Debenhams should be offered the chance to move to a more central place.

5) a reliable, regular bus route that travelled around the central areas down to Ocean Plaza, along Marine Drive and back to shopping areas.

Obviously a review of traffic levels and directions would have to be done if part of Lord Street becomes pedestrianised but I feel strongly that that residents should have been asked for ideas and suggestions prior to spending money on having these proposals done. Many of the ideas would have been suggested by residents and the money could have been saved for spending on the ideas. It is not the same to be told what is on the table.

I was unable to attend the meeting but would have welcomed a letter/email to ask what I thought good and bad about my town. To hear thousands have been spent by my local council on fairly basic ideas is quite alarming.

Hopefully the views of the interested local people/ visitors will be given much publicity.

Have just read the report about cutting the transport links. This will obviously affect the town, residents and visitors. Surely Sefton Council will fight this as without those links to Manchester and the airport added to the already difficult route to Ormskirk, Wigan etc. the town will definitely slide into oblivion.

Why on earth is this being considered as the trains I have travelled on to Manchester are always busy ?

Individual Response

SOME IDEAS FOR THE REGENERATION TEAM TO CONSIDER

1. Recognising the current restraints on Councils we consider that the Consultants proposals for the central section of Lord Street are unachievable and in any event are not a priority reflecting Southport's current needs.

Lord Street is arguably the finest Victorian boulevard in the Country and in our opinion further discussion on the development of a 'Skypool' so close to our most important listed buildings would be a waste of time.

We also believe that the ideas of the 'Cherry Grove' and the 'Market Square' in front of 'The Vincent Hotel' should be shelved.

.We consider that the following proposals are worthy of consideration :-

2 A Focus on Empty Shops in : - Lord Street

Cambridge Walks/Arcade

Tullketh Street

To further this aim, the Council could initially appoint a leading firm of Chartered Surveyors (London based) with National retail experience to prepare a Report on the retail property market with examples of locations around the Country where Councils and Town Centre management have been successful in attracting retailers.

They would be requested to incorporate in their report their views on the mix of shops in the Town Centre, and the type of uses/traders that may be attracted to the Town. The report should also advise on the size and location of vacant units and their knowledge of rents currently being achieved and requested by Property owners, The surveyors views should also be sought on whether asking rentals are realistic in the context of the Council's aim of assisting the market in gaining full occupancy of the retail stock.

We are hopeful that a reasonable fee could be negotiated for the surveyors Services and Council officers could assist in providing information. Armed with the report the Council could enter into a debate with property Owners, perhaps in the form of an 'Owners Conference' with an agenda to encourage ideas.

The Council could also consider the appointment of a firm of Chartered Surveyors with Retail Agency and Shopping Centre Management experience to act as a market adviser and interface with the Council.

3. The Council should use its powers in regard to the maintenance of properties in the Town in particular where front elevations and the canopies of buildings are being allowed to fall into disrepair.

4. The Council should be rigorous in keeping up standards on Shop front design specifically in regard to materials used, fascia graphics and colours.

Occupiers must not be allowed to use pavements without appropriate consent. There is no sense in spending large sums of money on the public realm and then allowing the shopkeepers to lower standards.

We also believe that the police should be requested to use their powers with zero tolerance re the littering of the streets and their stance in this connection should be suitably advertised.

Importantly also, the Council together with the Fire service should liaise with vacant property owners to prevent mail piling up in full view of the public. This is a fire hazard and also adds to an untidy impression of the street scene.

Request Lord Street Hotels to upgrade their frontages in the interests of the Town and assist with grants if available.

5. Car Parking suggestions :-

a) Review charging System- Consider Council Tax payers being given a 90 minute free pass from Monday to Friday to encourage shopping in the Town Centre. This could be done for a trial period and perhaps would be suspended during the Summer months.

b) Review available car spaces with the object of creating more.

6. Tulketh Street Area

Designate the boundaries of a specific area that the Council would support for a major redevelopment including a new vehicular access from Eastbank Street, substantial car parking and a significant retail element. Of course this would necessitate early discussions with the frontages to Eastbank Street and Tulketh Street and the Council would indicate its support by including its landholdings for the redevelopment. Suitably planned this could improve the gateway to the Town from the east.

7. The Road Network

The Council should aggressively debate with Government and appropriate Authorities, improving the road network from the East (M58) to include a by-pass of Ormskirk.

8. The Indoor Market.

In our opinion the new signage is not impactful. New signage should encourage and lead customers to the Market. Perhaps in addition to considering new signs close to Eastbank Street, the Council could investigate extending the entrance to the Market to the kerb-line and thereby making the market more visible from Eastbank Street. 2/4

9. Cambridge Arcade and Cambridge Walks

These locations are inextricably linked and should work in concert for mutual benefit. Accordingly we consider the Council should discuss with the owner of Cambridge Walks an upgrade of Cambridge Arcade including doors at each end of the Arcade a new roof and a suitable new floor covering to the mall. With good signage this could encourage footfall along this important link between Lord Street and Chapel Street and thereby benefit Cambridge Walks. The Council should also, in our opinion, review its occupancy in the Arcade. We refer to the 'One Stop Shop.' This unit, which has a significant frontage and is valuable in rental terms, breaks up the retail frontage having a negative effect on the retail value of the Arcade. It is our opinion that moving this use out of the Arcade and letting the space to either one or two retailers could help in justifying the investment in the refurbishment of the Mall. The Council may have alternative less valuable office space in the Town that could be used for this purpose. One option could also be, after discussion with the owner of Cambridge Walks, to move the user into a unit within the Shopping Centre, close to the entrance into 'The Atkinson'.

10 Southport Station

The Station entrance is appalling and requires an urgent upgrade. Early discussions should be held with the Owners and Merseyrail on this important matter.

11. 'Fairways' and the 'Glamping Park' proposals

We are not enthusiastic about the 'Glamping Park' proposal but we do believe that the provision of more 'Park & Ride' facilities is essential for the future of the Town. Accordingly we believe that the Fairways site should remain as a Park & Ride facility and subject to a viability exercise and discussion with the Sailing Clubs, part of the Lake (say 50% of the area proposed as a Glamping Park) should be considered as a landscaped surface car park linked to the Fairways site.

12. New Leisure Developments

There is undoubtedly an urgent need to encourage a significant increase in visitors to the Town and we are supportive of well-designed developments fronting the Coastal Road facing the sea wall.(Phase 2.1 in Consultants Report)

13. Scarisbrick Avenue

Continuing with the theme of upgrading the pedestrian ways from Chapel Street to Lord Street and on to the Promenade. The Council could approach the frontages to Scarisbrick Avenue with the idea of Upgrading the thoroughfare to a covered Arcade. This would provide the Scarisbrick Hotel with the opportunity to consider improving its return frontage and could be a catalyst for the overall improvement of the area. The Arcade need not necessarily be enclosed.

14. Family History Centre ?

Probably the principal Centre of Excellence in the Town having National recognition is The General Register Office (GRO) located in Trafalgar Road where are held the Countries Records on Births, Marriages and Deaths, and the Certificate Services Section and Family History Records. This Government Department provides valuable employment for the Town but we do not capitalise any further on the wealth of experience in our midst on the subject of family History, which is of considerable interest to many people. The question is would a National Family History Centre bring visitors to Southport and if so would it merit the development of a landmark building. This is only an idea but we believe that it may be worthwhile for the Council to discuss with the senior management of the GRO the merits of such a proposal and most importantly would the GRO support it. Experienced staff former and present may be interested in joining the project which would work alongside and benefit from GRO expertise and technical knowledge..

15. Events

The following event ideas may be worthy of consideration by the Council.

A Brass Band Festival - Providing concerts and competitions using the excellent open and enclosed venues in the Town.

A Good Cookery Week -This could probably be planned with the sponsorship of a leading Cookery or Housekeeping Magazine and of course the Catering College would benefit if it became involved.

16. Telephone Boxes, 'Forthcoming Attraction' Signs and Other Signage in the vicinity of the Town Hall and 'The Atkinson'.

Historic England

Historic England comments on the Draft Southport Development Strategy.

Thank you for inviting Historic England to your stakeholder consultation event at the Ramada Plaza on the 13th January, attended by Karl Creaser. Following a meeting with your consultants and council staff on the 29th January I am now writing to confirm Historic England's advice on your draft strategy and public realm proposals.

Firstly can we commend Sefton Council for producing a strategy that seeks to identify and guide future development opportunities across the town! Your overall strategic objectives appear to be to grow the local and visitor economy by attracting a younger demographic, creative industry, new visitor attractions and enterprise ("classically cool- a seaside town that is more contemporary and dynamic..."). Also to mend urban gap sites; to review parking provision; to improve destination signage; to remove street clutter and to rationalise and enhance the environment, streetscape & pedestrian movement including providing attractive routes from the town centre through to the promenade- all of these objectives Historic England supports.

The strategy document emphasises the importance of tourism, leisure and shopping as your primary economic drivers. Perhaps more could be said about Southport's architecture, landscape and quality of "place" as a magnet for tourism. Southport's

unique townscape heritage is surely a primary factor, one that helps to draw visitors and thereby to sustain the local economy?

We found it difficult to determine the likely impact of proposed developments on assets and heritage significance from the information provided; some of the tables and maps accompanying the strategy are also provided at low resolution meaning that they cannot be read very clearly. We feel the strategy would benefit from a map and/or table to set out Southport's heritage assets, key heritage sites and features, and assets that need to be improved. For example, the strategy fails to mention two prominent and largely derelict retail blocks blighting the town centre, these have previously pointed out to me as needing to be repaired and brought back into full use, and they also lie on prominent routes between Lord St and the promenade.

We are pleased to note that the strategy identifies the now derelict GdII art deco cinema and the former GdII Victoria baths as opportunities for repair and adaptive new use. Also (at section 8) the need to restore shop canopies along Lord Street, to consider HPA/LDOs, to review designations/CAAs/CMPs and to explore the need for planning enforcement actions. The issue of upper floor vacancy along Lord St remains unclear in your report, perhaps the strategy could be strengthened by saying how much upper floor vacancy exists and how the council intend to tackle it?

Landscape

We are not clear from the strategy what landscape heritage impacts could arise from development proposals at Marine Park and Victoria Park (Section 7). I have previously copied a paper produced by Chris Mayes entitled "*Parks, gardens and open spaces in Southport-heritage significance, issues and options*", please can you ensure Chris's paper is shared with your landscape consultants. Sefton Council would benefit from a clear set of landscape policies for the sea front/promenade area, alongside a public realm/ movement and landscape plan to tie seamlessly back into your plans for the central part of Lord Street. If considered holistically, the sea front/promenade area could provide the opportunity to create a high-class piece of contemporary park/ landscape design to complement the rest of the town. We are concerned that piecemeal development could otherwise, over time, erode Southport's character. There is a real opportunity via the strategy process to embed a coherent and consistent physical vision for Southport's public spaces and landscape. A plan/vision that could then be developed out in phases as resources become available with central Lord St and the two primary connecting routes perhaps representing a first phase?

Public realm/streetscape

I would like to thank the design team for presenting their schematic ideas for enhancing central Lord Street. Having set out the importance of place and landscape continuity, the primary consideration for HE is to understand how your plans for central Lord St will contribute to the overall presentation of the street, other public spaces and important vistas.

When I met your team, it was mentioned that Historic England are likely to be a statutory consultee when designs are submitted for planning approval. We would be delighted to provide our formal pre-application advice, in order to do so please can you submit you plans to our NW regional office, the 14th March was mentioned as a target date? Your request can then be logged and advice offered by a member of our Development Management Team prior to wider public consultation?

I made a few initial comments during the teams presentation:

a) As mentioned previously, the council would benefit from a single adopted Public Realm Strategy or landscape vision for Southport. Without an overall spatial vision it is difficult to see how designs proposed for central Lord St will contribute to a coherent approach to the use of materials, finishes, way marking, street furniture, lighting or landscape design across the town.

b) We feel it important to consider the repair and maintenance of the Lord Street canopies alongside designs for central Lord St. The repair, drainage, function and maintenance of the canopies must surely be considered alongside the design of spaces under and around them?

c) The design team are proposing radical remodelling of some spaces and parts of the highway; we support the aims of this transformation in principle. To bring everyone along on this journey we recommend your design team consider the benefit of peer review prior to submitting a planning application. Places Matter Design Review (involving the highways agency, bus operators and the BID etc., is certainly worth considering?):

<http://www.placesmatter.co.uk/design-review/what-is-design-review/>

You may also find the following document produced by Places Matter to be of interest: [http://www.rudi.net/files/paper/optional file/WEB Creating Inspiring Spaces Low res 0 .pdf](http://www.rudi.net/files/paper/optional%20file/WEB%20Creating%20Inspiring%20Spaces%20Low%20res%200.pdf)

Finally Mark, the strategy aims to provide a framework for sustained stakeholder engagement. Reference is made (1.3) to a *Destination Management Plan*, a *Branding Strategy* and the establishment of a single *Development Management Organisation* to deliver a **Southport Action Plan** (11.6). We are pleased to see that our organisation is mentioned throughout the strategy and that some of our case study recommendations and advice has already been considered and incorporated. We support the overall aims and objectives set out in the draft Southport Development Strategy; Historic England will of course sustain our current engagement and would be pleased to be consulted later as your Action Plan develops.

I trust the following advice proves helpful at this point, if you or the consultant team require clarification on any of the points made in this letter please do contact me.

Merseyside Civic Society

Draft development strategy for Southport town centre

The Society is pleased to have had the opportunity to comment on the draft document and would make the following observations. Although some of the points are somewhat critical of the draft, the Society commends the Council for bringing forward the study, and hopes the comments are constructive. The Council is very aware of the importance of Southport town centre to the residents and economy of the sub region.

1 There is a lack of data to underpin some of the conclusions drawn. There are important statistics about visitor numbers and expenditure, but there is no robust information concerning vacant retail premises, condition of buildings, pedestrian flow, passenger numbers etc. some of which is presumably available. If there are to be action points, then

this background is necessary.

2 There is little discussion of other parts of the Southport economy. In particular, the threat posed by out of centre retailing, alternative locations for business development, and the housing market context are all relevant.

3 Information and comment from the business community is lacking. Whilst the important role of BID is noted, the Society feels that the detail of the input and comment of local business is crucial in making the study credible, and in taking matters forward.

4 The Society considers that there is not enough focus on the facilities for visitors to the town. There is too little reference to tourist information, theatre and convention facilities, park and ride, caravan facilities etc. Detailed reference to the way in which visitors are received in the resort is important and how access to and within could be improved is fundamental.

5 The report, although properly forward looking, should better acknowledge recent improvements within the town (Kings Gardens, Atkinson etc.) and also the resilience of those attractions that have endured (Model Rail Village, Silcocks, sailing clubs, Pleasure land etc.) and accept that these should be supported and not displaced. The proposal to relocate the carousel would be expensive and is not appropriate.

However, much of the report is very useful:

6 The emphasis on marketing and events is correct. The Society consider that the BID team and others have done very well to create and support a wide range of event attractions at the resort and recognise that this is an essential part of the vision created.

7 The way in which site opportunity is raised is very useful. It throws into focus some of the several inadequate parts of the town centre and correctly recognises the difficulties of bringing the sites forward for development.

8 The support implicit in the report for conservation and heritage is welcome and accurate. Public perception and regard for Lord Street in particular, but also for listed buildings is very strong and greatly underpins the “classic resort” message. The Society would like to see reference to the potential for some form of Townscape Heritage Initiative and the possible involvement of owners/occupiers to ensure the ongoing vitality of the conservation area.

9 The concept of small/medium/mixed indoor attractions within the seafront area in particular is very interesting and appears to have considerable potential. The report points to the growth of this kind of development and Southport clearly has the space and sites capitalise on this. Perhaps the report in its final form can advise on the way in which this can be brought forward in terms of site appraisal and marketing.

The Society considers that the report should be extended by:

10 Considering how the sites identified might be handled from this point in time. It is likely that some will not see development in the near future and it would be helpful to develop an approach or programme by which the status of the sites could be monitored, and evaluated as to their appearance, condition , restraints and effect on the town centre generally. This might encourage action and /or funding for enforcement, landscaping, surface treatment etc. and demonstrate the intent of participants.

11 The approach mentioned in para 10 can be extended. There are also numerous small sites and premises where the townscape is degraded. These occur within and adjacent to conservation areas and also very much affect the streets which connect the seafront to Lord Street. Some of these are residential streets. Although these sites might offer limited development opportunity, their impact on the street scene and business confidence is significant. The report identifies the need to look at the way in which people move around the town centre and the differing axes of movement and the sites referred to have a bearing on this.

12 The role of housing in the town centre is largely ignored in the report. There are substantial blocks of housing, but the market for new residential use is not tackled. This could be readily tested, together with the barriers to development and also the potential for further “living over the shop”.

13 Developing (and resourcing) a programme of conservation action enforcement, advice, grant aid). This is generally cost effective for the owner and gives an important signal of the town's intent. Such an approach is an essential part of a "quality" agenda.

14 The issues of parking, pedestrian movement and vehicle flow have presumably not been tested with the business community or transport operators. The concept of improvement to pedestrian areas is welcome but vehicle access to and around the town centre is crucial. There are likely to be other design solutions to further improve pedestrian use of Lord Street.

Merseytravel

Southport Development Strategy

Thank you for the invitation to your Workshop, held on the 20 January 2016 to discuss the Proposed Southport Development Strategy. It is the view of my colleagues who attended the workshop, and myself, that this was a very useful exercise. Further to the workshop and our preceding discussions and views, offered in respect of the earlier drafts of the Development Strategy, Merseytravel would wish to provide the following comments in response to the current Consultation Draft of the Southport Development Strategy.

Merseytravel certainly welcomes the Consultation Strategy and is broadly supportive of the direction in which it seeks to take Southport, as a 're-energised' town, building upon the town's existing assets with a view to re-establishing Southport's credentials as a classic resort. Merseytravel is also fully supportive of the fact that the Strategy rightly seeks to focus upon enhancing the town as a tourist, leisure and shopping destination, whilst simultaneously seeking to improve the town's provision for its local residents. However, a small number of the specific elements and recommendations, contained within the Strategy, create some concern for Merseytravel, and consequently Merseytravel would wish to see these elements and recommendations suitably revised. The relevant elements and revisions are as follows;

Firstly, whilst The Strategy places great emphasis upon the importance of good access and connectivity, both into and out of the town centre, as well as across the town centre, it is Merseytravel's view that the Strategy fails to offer adequate emphasis to the importance that public transport plays in providing these functions of accessibility and connectivity.

There is a heavy focus on car parking, in terms of the quality, price, location and signage for what parking facilities are, or could be available. On the other hand content and recommendations with regard to public transport do not seem to be covered with an appropriate weight.

Secondly, pedestrian movements and connectivity are understandably given very significant emphasis in the overall philosophy, but these movements also do not seem to be adequately balanced against the needs of public transport access and connectivity, particularly in the case of requirements for bus passengers.

It is consequently Merseytravel's view that the Strategy, and subsequent actions should give greater recognition to the town centre's current very good position with regard to bus and rail connectivity, and should seek to exploit these significant benefits.

To reflect this position, and potential future improvements to rail provision, Merseytravel would therefore wish to see clear reference made within the Development Strategy to appropriate aspirations contained within 'The Liverpool City Region (LCR) - Long Term Rail Strategy'. This Rail Strategy represents a very real commitment by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Sefton Council and Merseytravel, to fashion improvements to the sub-regional, and regional rail networks where this can be justified. The Strategy is deliberately crafted to allow flexibility which could be exploited for improvements that could assist and enhance Southport if the business case for such

improvements can be effectively made.

Thirdly, Merseytravel is of the view that there is still an important role for Park & Ride within the provisions to serve Southport Town Centre and consequently within the Development Strategy Merseytravel would wish to see appropriate reference to the potential for increased park and ride facilities, both bus and rail based, as part of any car parking strategy for the town.

Fourthly, it is Merseytravel's view that any initiatives to introduce new attractors to the Marine Drive area would need to be accompanied by suitable improvements to public transport access to this area. At the present time there are very few public transport links between the town centre and most destinations west of Lord Street.

Fifthly, Merseytravel notes the importance placed upon Lord Street within the Strategy, and whilst Merseytravel is supportive of suitable enhancements to the public realm in this area, together with improvements to pedestrian routes and facilities for Lord Street, these enhancements would need to be appropriate within the context of all modes of travel that provide access and connectivity to, and within the town centre. Given this position, Merseytravel has some fundamental difficulties with some elements of the Strategy's proposals for Lord Street

Whilst Merseytravel would welcome the displacement of some general traffic from Lord Street, this action would need to ensure that all current bus movements and flows could be retained upon the Lord Street highway. Additionally if general traffic is to be displaced from Lord Street then there needs to be recognition that alternative routes would need to be identified or created for all displaced traffic.

Sixthly, Merseytravel would be supportive of shared surface treatment where this is appropriate, for the Lord Street area. However, given the now extensive experience of such surfacing within Merseyside it needs to be recognised that this is a complex process. Pedestrian and vehicular behaviour within Merseyside has been established, at some considerable cost, as requiring needs that are subtly different from some of the more generic solutions that are proffered nationally, and this would have to be recognised in Southport Town Centre. Any initiatives contained within the Strategy such as the outline proposals for a diagonal crossings on Lord Street, would need to be carefully considered and evaluated for suitability to, and impact upon all road users before being implemented.

Seventhly, Merseytravel firmly objects to any proposals contained within the Strategy that seek the relocation of the recently revised Lord Street bus stops. Considerable investment and collaboration has been expended over the past two years to create a central bus interchange for the Town centre, an action which has realised public requests that have been outstanding for almost two decades. Rather than seeking the reversal of this progress, Merseytravel would wish to see the Strategy develop initiatives that build upon these recent significant improvements. Merseytravel would certainly, be fully prepared to examine options for enhancing the Lord Street area's public realm and pedestrian routes which would retain and celebrate the importance of bus use and bus passenger access to Lord Street.

Eighthly, Merseytravel would wish to request that the Strategy requires all traffic calming measures that might be introduced upon Lord Street or any other town centre bus highways, should be suitably designed for bus operation, particularly given the high number of older bus passengers who access the town centre.

Ninthly, Merseytravel is very supportive of new initiatives designed to make Southport a more recognised destination for popular events, building upon the town's present good record with The Flower Show, Musical Fireworks, The Air Show and other established successful events. However, from important lessons learned elsewhere across the City Region, Merseytravel would wish to stress the importance of keeping the public transport network running during all major events, in order to maximise the economic and social benefits that can be gained from such investment. This would preclude the use of Lord

Street for significant day time events that would restrict bus operation through the area, but would leave large areas to the east of the Lord Street carriageway as well as The Promenade, Chapel Street, the Parks and many other areas open as excellent venues. In summary there is much to be commended within the Southport Development Strategy Consultation Draft, which Merseytravel would wish to support and work with Sefton Council upon its progress. This support is, however, subject to resolving appropriate agreement on the important issues raised above. In order to facilitate progress upon this matter, we will of course, always be open to further discussions on the Strategy.