

Heart of Poole

Town Centre North Prospectus



Poole is part of one of the largest urban areas on the south coast and is within easy reach of London and the continent. Famous for its enviable harbourside setting, natural beauty and rich history the town also has a successful local economy with expanding sectors in marine technologies, creative industries, advanced manufacturing and engineering, financial services and tourism and leisure.

Poole Town Centre forms an important part of the economy, offering the potential to combine commercial property opportunities with the town's distinctive history and character. In particular the area around Town Centre North (TCN) provides significant opportunities for regeneration and enhancement to create a vibrant heart for Poole.

We want to ensure the town centre is a place we can be proud of, reflecting the best of Poole, somewhere attractive and vibrant that enables people to shop, relax, eat, have a cup of coffee outdoors, swim, go to the gym or watch a film, play or concert. This will be achieved by improvements in transportation provision, leisure, public space, cultural activities and the overall shopping experience.



The vision is clear:

'To realise the potential of Town Centre North as the vibrant heart of the town by generating a bustling, prosperous and safe environment for all'

The opportunity

Poole has a soul but not a heart. While many people gravitate to Town Centre North as it contains a number of key town centre facilities including the Dolphin Shopping Centre, the Lighthouse Centre for the Arts, the Dolphin Swimming Pool/Sports complex, Poole Stadium and the bus and rail stations, these facilities are disjointed and dated.

The regeneration of TCN continues to be a priority for the Council and residents of Poole. The Council owns key development sites immediately surrounding the existing shopping centre and is fully committed to taking a proactive role in facilitating change.

Revitalising the town centre and injecting a new vibrancy, particularly into the evening, will be key to the success of the area and support further enhancement.



TCN Objectives

1. To improve the retail and leisure offer

- To provide a step change in the quality and range of the town's retail and leisure offer which complements the offer in the existing centre.

2. To improve vitality

- To create a town centre that is vibrant, safe and attractive
- To bolster the economy of the town centre and its attraction as an employment destination
- To deliver quality development that meets the needs of a growing town centre population
- To enhance the cultural and leisure offer of the town centre
- To achieve high quality homes for all

3. Invest in streets and spaces

- To provide a better connected and more accessible town centre, providing strong links between the main commercial shopping and leisure quarter and High Street, Quay and new waterfront regeneration area
- To achieve high quality new public spaces and streets

4. Sustainable development

- To ensure development minimises its impact on climate change embracing high technology, low carbon energy solutions

Making things better

To 'kick-start' a delivery process it is necessary to be clear what the challenges are and to identify what we can do to make things better.

New retail and leisure floorspace

The existing retail floorspace trades well. However, it does not compare favourably with other centres of equal size and does not reflect the aspirations of retailers or consumers. The Council wishes to broaden the attraction of Poole as a shopping centre by the inclusion of leisure and other complementary uses that enhance the offer provided by the existing Dolphin Shopping Centre. It is hoped that the regeneration initiative will act as a catalyst, encouraging the owners of this facility to further invest. The offer needs to be innovative, a quality product and technologically advanced if it is to be competitive and meet tougher environmental standards.



Embracing the Lighthouse within the town centre offer is important. A new community space will become the natural focus for cultural activities throughout the day and evening. It could include a new cinema and café/restaurant culture that will evolve to provide a new vibrancy in the evening for the heart of Poole. The Dolphin Swimming Pool/sports complex is reaching the end of its economic life. The renewal of this wet and dry sports facility could tie in with the other uses envisaged for this area, contributing to the creation of a meaningful centre to Poole.



Provide new homes and jobs

The provision of new homes will be an important element of any proposal for this regeneration scheme and a range of housing will be needed to address the differing requirements of the community and create a successful place.

Growth and job creation are important parts of the future of Poole. Office space in the town centre is a key component, and the Council could be a future tenant. Creating jobs in the centre that are sustainable will greatly benefit the local economy.

Remodelling of Kingland Road to through vehicular traffic

Public consultation has put the closure of Kingland Road as a key component to the regeneration of TCN. Remodelling Kingland Road would enable the creation of a new public square for Poole, giving space back to the people of the town and becoming a primary focus for cultural and recreational activity throughout the day and evening.

It would provide better pedestrian linkages to the Lighthouse and create a genuine town centre space for visitors and residents alike. It is accepted that full closure may be challenging, however creative, evidence-based transport solutions will need to be found in order to comprehensively regenerate this area.

Remodel or relocate the Bus station

The current bus station, whilst sustainable as a location, is not attractive or welcoming, and is not in step with 21st century public transport provision. The bus station is an important passenger interchange allowing footfall directly into the centre. Options need to be explored to consider how this requirement can be integrated into the remodelling of Kingland Road, thus

allowing the regeneration of this important frontage and the possible creation of a new piece of public realm.

Resolving the future of the bus depot and the multi storey car park

The future of the bus depot and addressing the issue of the multi storey car park which are located in the centre of the regeneration area are important points to address in order to achieve redevelopment.

Improved connectivity for public transport/cyclists and pedestrians

We want to build on our success and encourage more sustainable transport within the town centre including the provision of a pedestrian loop that connects TCN with the retail offer across the railway and the High Street. This will necessitate exploring the options for a new bridge to the east of the current level crossing which could be part of a redevelopment opportunity in this area. Other opportunities to create sustainable transport solutions and improve the linkages between TCN and the quayside will also need to be explored.

TCN is fortunate to have both a railway and a bus station within walking distance of its shopping centre. This access to the town via public transport is very important. Where possible, the linkages to these transportation hubs need to be improved, in particular the unattractive pedestrian entrance into Falkland Square.



Next Steps

- In partnership with the owners of the Dolphin Centre, agree and fund a new and updated offer to include refreshed open spaces and provide for a café culture in the heart of the town, that supports a family day out.
- Design a town centre with improved sustainable modes of transport, minimising congestion and giving pedestrians and cyclists priority.
- Utilise land the Council owns to deliver an improved retail/leisure/housing/commercial scheme.
- Plan for a cultural and leisure offer in the town that embraces the Lighthouse and includes uses that improve Poole's appeal as a destination.
- Form a stakeholder working group to ensure we collectively deliver a coordinated solution to the town centre with the Council taking a leading role.