

Astmoor Business Park Impact Area

Regeneration Programme

Annual Delivery Plan Year 1 (Financial Year 2018/19)

1. Introduction

1.1. Astmoor is a 1960's planned industrial estate, built as part of Runcorn New Town. Compared to the wider employment offer in East Runcorn, Astmoor has underperformed for a number of years. This is largely due in part to a concentration of dated commercial premises, compounded by a poorly defined public realm and layout. Astmoor struggles to meet modern industrial and business needs. The area is a designated Business Improvement District (BID).

1.2. Astmoor has undergone physical change in recent years, with the construction of the Mersey Gateway Crossing, which crosses the estate on elevated piers. Construction was made possible through the acquisition and clearance of a central area of Astmoor, and a number of businesses relocated. Approximately seven hectares of residual project land is being handed back to the Council following completion of the construction of the bridge. This represents a significant asset for the Council, although land underneath and near the structure will be subject to restrictions on use.

1.3. Astmoor has been identified as a regeneration impact area as the prominence and accessibility brought by the Mersey Gateway crossing could act as catalyst to address its underperformance and create a modern business park environment. The transformation of Astmoor will be guided by a single Masterplan and Delivery Strategy. A dedicated Regeneration Officer has been assigned to work in

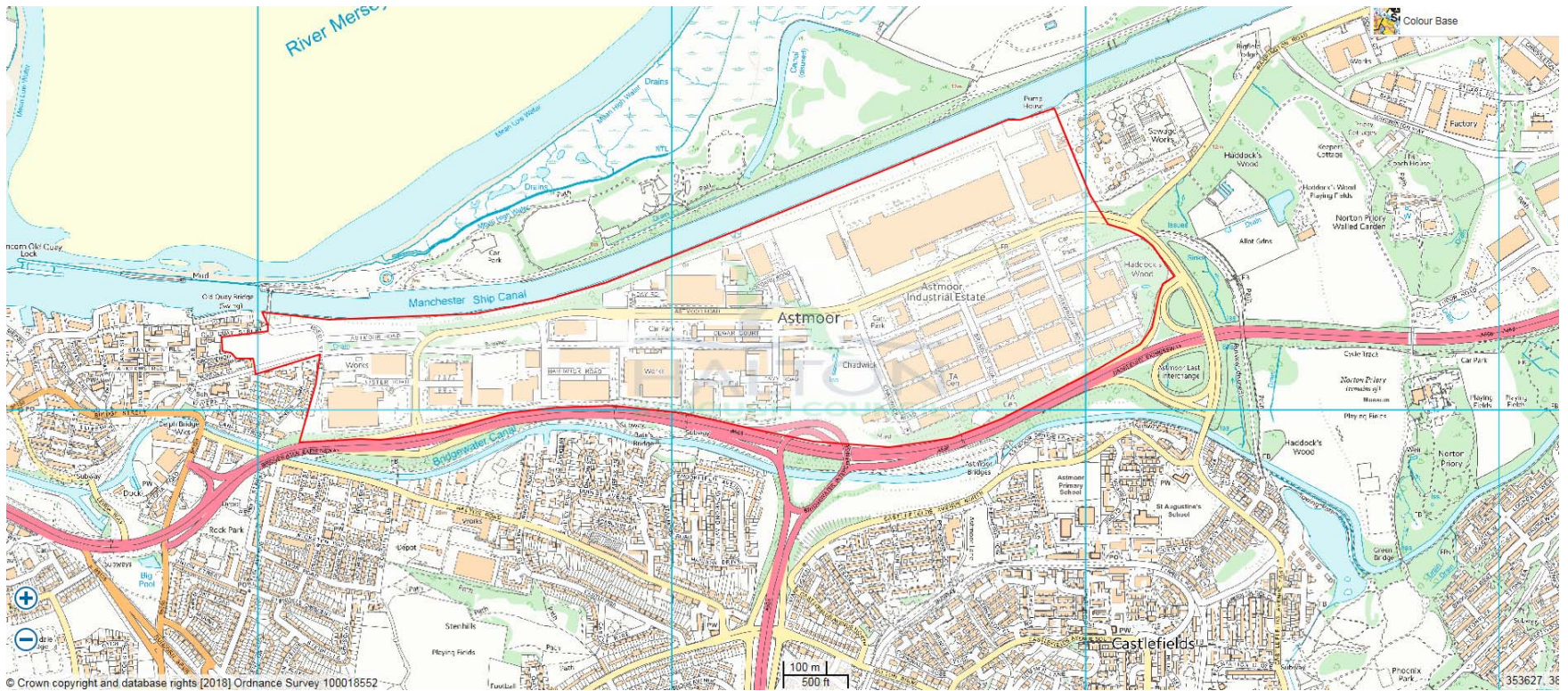
collaboration with existing businesses and landowners; to seek to attract new investment, and to drive an 'outward looking' and 'forward thinking' Programme - by promoting the assets and opportunities within the area to redefine Astmoor within the wider local employment offer. Regeneration will seek to deliver:

- An uplift in business rates receipts of £2 Million per year;
- 1 Million Sqft. of additional commercial floor space;
- 2,000 new jobs and safeguarding many more; and
- £2.52 Million capital land receipt.

1.4. With reference to figure 1, as a planned industrial estate, the immediate impact area is clearly defined - it is bounded by, the Manchester Ship Canal to the North, the Expressway to the South and Link road to the East. On its western boundary, the impact area has been extended beyond the industrial estate to include a small area of informal green space where Astmoor interfaces with the edge of 'Runcorn Old Town'. This area includes an access road to Old Quay Bridge which provides a road link to Wigg Island Local Nature Reserve.

1.5. Whilst providing a focus for delivery of the Programme, interventions will not be constrained by this boundary.

Figure 1: Astmoor Regeneration Impact Area Boundary



2. Strategic Context

2.1. The economic and physical baseline analysis set out below has largely been drawn from work the Council was able to commission through the Mersey Gateway Time bank initiative.

Underperformance and scope for reinvestment

2.2. A study of employment land and premises within Halton (JELPS, 2010¹) identified that Astmoor as having a concentration of lesser quality space not considered to be acceptable to modern occupiers' standards. This is supported by the following evidence:

- Property agents which reported that commercial rent of between £1.50 and £3.50 per square foot are being achieved on Astmoor. The higher end rental levels are achieved in larger and modernised units that have undergone recent investment. These are however below the rents achieved on neighbouring estates such as Manor Park which are reported to reach £4.50 per square foot;
- Incidences of vacant unit are heavily skewed towards smaller sized units of a poorer quality with lower eave heights;
- The dated layout of the estate offers limited space for HGV movements, parking and external storage. Property Agents felt this severely limited their usability.

¹ Joint Employment Land and Premises Study
<https://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/planning/policyguidance/PolicyBackgroundDocuments.aspx>

2.3. The JELPS also identified that the Mersey Gateway Bridge construction will see acquisitions and demolitions in the central part of Astmoor, which provides opportunities for remodelling following completion and potential to help secure further wider estate regeneration.

2.4. Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy² recognises the potential contribution that regeneration and remodelling opportunities within existing employment areas (Such as Astmoor) can make to meet the Boroughs employment land supply. This is reflected in Astmoor designation as an Employment Renewal Area within the Draft Delivery and Allocations Plan³ which seeks to facilitate the beneficial and efficient use of existing employment land and prioritise the re-use of brownfield sites.

2.5. Astmoor is not meeting its full potential. Manor Park is performing well and demonstrates that with the right level of investment Astmoor could provide a similar offer. It must also be noted that there are a number of successful businesses within Astmoor, particularly in the larger more modern premises.

² Halton Core Strategy Local Plan, Adopted April 2013
<https://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/planning/policyguidance/pdf/CoreStrategy.pdf>

³ Draft Halton Delivery and allocations Local Plan, published December 2017
<https://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/planning/policyguidance/planningplans.aspx>

Active and engaged business community

2.6. Since 2004 the Council has been engaging and working with businesses and landlords on Astmoor to tackle estate wide issues and improve its management. A Business Improvement District (BID) was established in 2008 to formalise the governance of this activity, which is renewed every five years via a vote of the business community.

The focus of BID activity has been on four themes:

- Safe and secure trading environment;
- Image enhancement;
- Better Connected; and
- Training, skills and Knowledge.

2.7. Types of interventions have included, installation of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras, branding and gateway features to estate, improvements to communal landscape areas. A number of interventions by the BID have been in response to the 1960's design and layout which has resulted in public realm with no clear ownership.

2.8. Since 2016, the BID has been managed by Halton Chamber and in 2018, it was renewed a further five years. Priority business plan projects for 2018 - 2023 are:

- Additional security measures for the estate;
- Superfast Broadband for every business;
- Further image improvements;
- Improved connectivity between businesses to encourage inter-trading and collaboration; and

- An enhanced and expanded training programme, including more innovative courses that reflect modern business needs and technological changes.

2.9. Any vision and objectives for the regeneration of Astmoor should seek to benefit and embrace existing businesses as well as attracting new investment. This, in part, will be achieved through aligning regeneration activities with the BID Business Plan. The BID also provides an established governance structure for working with local stakeholders to develop and take forward regeneration and development opportunities.

Access, layout and environment

2.10. Parts of the Astmoor estate are dominated by ageing industrial units that, although well served by the surrounding road network, have limited parking and poor vehicular site access. This results in users parking alongside the small access roads or within the gated forecourts associated with the units. The units also offer limited space for the movement of Heavy Goods Vehicles which commercial property agents felt severely limited their usability. Additionally, limited external storage space associated with some units also results in smaller units utilising highway and highway verge as overspill storage areas.

2.11. Figure 2 summarises the key findings from a survey of Astmoor businesses within the Business Improvement District (BID), carried out in October 2014. The survey sought opinions on many access and environmental aspects of the Astmoor estate. The responses show that most aspects did not receive a strong satisfaction rating. This was

particularly true for the visual look of the estate in terms of its image and landscaping.

Figure 2: Astmoor Business Survey - Opinions

Aspect of Astmoor Industrial estate	% rated as 'good'
Security signage	56%
Control of traffic movements	48%
Parking	46%
Street lighting	44%
Public Transport	39%
Road markings	37%
Landscaping	30%
The overall image of the estate	22%
The condition of the roads	7%

2.12. Astmoor suffers from poor quality and poorly maintained areas between the industrial units. The reasons for this are multi-faceted and include a combination of the low quality nature of some of the users, an absence of care and ownership on the part of businesses, and poor management due to no clear ownership, both within the boundary of a site, and within the public realm, including parking areas, footpaths and adopted highways.

2.13. This is also partly a result of the original '1960s' estate layout which sought 'pedestrian routes that were segregated from the main road as far as possible'. Some of these routes are poorly maintained and poorly lit with over grown landscaping, making them unattractive to use.

2.14. Some of these routes are poorly maintained with overgrown landscaping making them unattractive to use. In some instances they are intimidating especially where they are poorly lit and run along the back of derelict units (Figure 3). In some areas the pedestrian routes are confusing and not clearly defined; paths do not link to bus stops and make it difficult for pedestrians to walk safely along Astmoor Road.

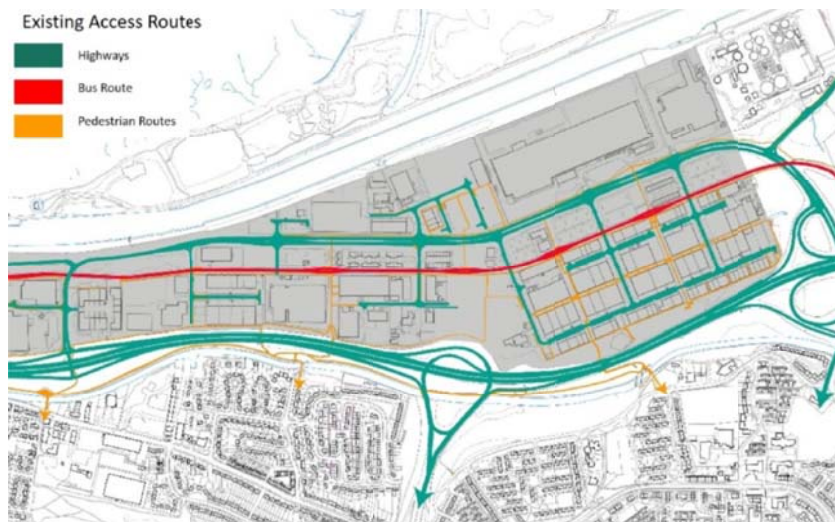
Figure 3: Pedestrian access to rear of properties



2.15. The existing movement plan (Figure 4) shows existing adopted highway which comprises: footpath and cycleway; roads; and Busway. This plan indicates the warren of often unwelcome paths and ease of access by pedestrians to rear as well as front of units, which undermines security of units. This plan also shows connectivity with neighbouring areas, particularly pedestrian routes which are not attractive or desirable to use.

2.16. Bus stop locations on the Busway are indicated. It is evident that traffic signals which enable the Busway to flow are in need of replacement and ongoing maintenance. The current bus stop locations on the busway do provide central locations to encourage use of public transport, although this could be tempered by the fact that bus stops are served by footpaths which are overgrown by adjacent shrubbery and tend not to be overlooked by neighbouring users. As such, access to existing bus stops is adversely affected.

Figure 4: Existing Movement Plan (Prior to Mersey Gateway)



Mersey Gateway Bridge - prominence and accessibility

2.17. The prominence and accessibility of Astmoor to the strategic road network has been increased significantly by the Mersey Gateway Bridge, which crosses Astmoor via an elevated road. Following completion of the Mersey Gateway Bridge, approximately seven hectares of residual project land will be handed back to the Council. This includes land underneath elevated sections which will be subject to restricted uses but may be suitable for ancillary car parking connected to adjoining developments. [Last point, also see section 5 emerging issues]

3. Vision and Objectives

Vision

3.1. To transform Astmoor Industrial Estate; to create a modern, business park environment to enable it to prosper to meet existing business needs and create new employment development opportunities. Astmoor will provide an attractive and distinctive location within the Liverpool City Region where business and nature thrive together.

Objective 1: A connected Estate

3.2. The connectivity of Astmoor to the strategic road network, enhanced by the Mersey Gateway Bridge, will be a driver for investment and shaping the transformation of the Estate. Opportunities for remodelling and restructuring the layout will be used to improve local connectivity between Astmoor and surrounding neighbourhoods to encourage access by walking, cycling and public transport. Physical connectivity will be matched by enhanced digital connectivity.

Objective 2: Meeting the demands of modern business

3.3. Hand back land, vacant sites, and underutilised sites and buildings will be used in order to remodel the estate. These sites will help to improve and upgrade the mix of commercial space available in Astmoor, and will offer sites and investment opportunities to meet the demands of modern businesses, particular in LCR Core Sectors. This will be achieved by working in partnership with existing landowners to increase the size and quality of plots and buildings.

Objective 3: Improve the image and Profile of Astmoor

3.4. The prominence of the estate to the Mersey Gateway Bridge will be harnessed to recast the image and reposition the profile of Astmoor as a well-connected modern business park and gateway location to the Liverpool City Region.

Objective 4: A safe and attractive environment

3.5. Remodelling of the estate presents a one-off opportunity to address problems caused by its outdated (1960s) segregated layout. Walking, cycling and public transport will be encouraged by developing a movement strategy which shall rationalise the excessive road and footpath network and reinforce a more simple estate layout focussed on a redefined Astmoor road as central boulevard and existing secondary roads leading from it. Where possible, the location of car parking and the requirements of key stakeholders in the area will also be considered.

Objective 5: Business led and inclusive growth

3.6. The BID has produced a shared vision for the area and will serve to further enhance partnership working. The Astmoor business community is diverse, skilled and possesses a good local knowledge. The BID, will provide a mechanism for increasing the capacity of the business community so that in the longer-term, it can contribute to, and take ownership of, the regeneration of the estate so that it continues to prosper beyond the completion of the Mersey Gateway. Local employment, training and skills opportunities will be promoted to ensure that neighbouring residential communities share in the success of Astmoor.

Objective 6: Exemplar green business location

- 3.7. Capturing the value of Astmoor's natural setting to develop a unique selling point where: nature and commerce co-exist in a mutually beneficial relationship: businesses and their employees benefit from a more ecological, wildlife friendly setting; and, industries can 'learn' from nature to adopt systems and techniques which reduce waste, improve efficiencies and productivity.

4. Summary of Masterplan & Delivery Strategy

4.1. Due to the concentration, visibility and scale of residual project land, it was always envisaged that Astmoor would feature as a priority programme within the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Plan. As a result preparatory work has already been undertaken to consider the key components needed to develop a Masterplan and Delivery Strategy for the area. The Masterplan and Delivery Plan is proposed to comprise four cohesive regeneration programme strands:

1 - Development and Investment Opportunities

4.2. Through analysis of the type, tenure and land ownership patterns; as well as the physical and economic make up of Astmoor, the estate can be divided into three character areas:

- Land and buildings in good condition - no significant change;
- Land and buildings in variable condition - potential for expansion of existing units or creation of new plots;
- Land within the Mersey Gateway construction corridor - land available for redevelopment.

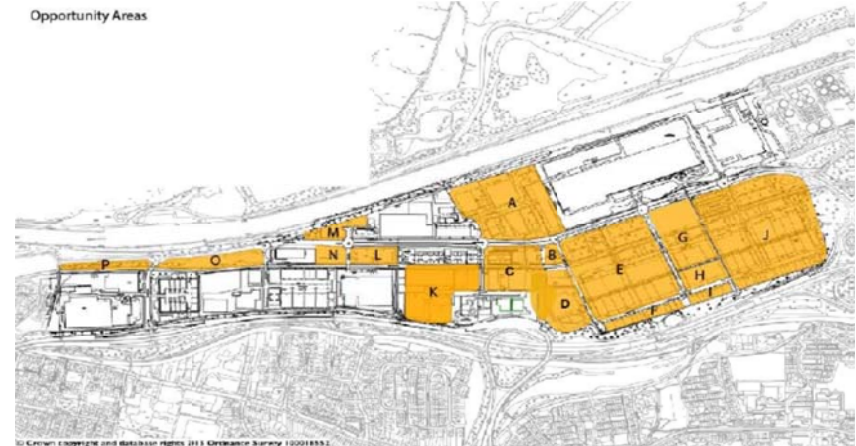
4.3. From assessment of these character areas, development and investment opportunities can be identified (land parcel references shown on Figure 5). The needs of existing viable businesses are safeguarded with opportunities for them to grow and improve their premises. The broad opportunity areas are:

- **Central Redevelopment Area (Parcels A - D)**
Comprising residual project land adjoining and beneath the new bridge structure. Approximate area of seven hectares of residual project land will be returned to the Council, and brought forward

independently or through land assembly with adjacent under-utilised sites to create major commercial sites. Approach will respect the agreements and safeguards regards use of land underneath and immediately adjoining the elevated structure, with ideally opportunities for ancillary parking secured. [Also see section 5 emerging issues]

- **Eastern Employment Renewal Area (Parcels E - J)**
Comprising redevelopment and remodelling of existing dated 1960's industrial estate to release new development plots and renewal of dated layout. Potential area of approximate 10 hectares will be brought forward for redevelopment.
- **Western Employment Renewal Area (Parcels K - P)**
Comprising 5 hectares of vacant and under-utilised employment land to be brought forward for commercial development and renewal of dated layout

Figure 5: Development and Investment Opportunity Areas



4.4. It is anticipated that the Central redevelopment offers the opportunity for some quick wins and as such would represent phase 1. This would help stimulate development within the Eastern and Western estate employment renewal areas, which would be brought forward through engaging businesses and landlords.

4.5. Upon completion of the Astmoor Regeneration Programme, together these three opportunity areas would address under performance of the estate and estimated to generate:

- An uplift in business rate receipts of £2 Million per year
- 1 Million Sqft. of additional commercial floor space
- 2,000 new jobs and safeguard many more.

2 - Placemaking, Connectivity and Movement Strategy

4.6. Astmoor is being 'held back' by its 1960's design and layout and it cannot be repositioned solely by its prominence and accessibility to the Mersey Gateway Bridge. As such, to help stimulate investment and new development a placemaking, connectivity and movement strategy will be delivered. This will also help support the future prosperity of existing businesses on Astmoor. In particular this strategy will seek to address these aspect of the design and layout of the Estate:

- The segregated approach to movement by different modes of transport within Astmoor;
- The 'severing effect' of the Busway;
- The lack of clear ownership of public and semi-private areas and problems this causes for management and maintenance; and
- The unattractive and intimidating public footpaths.

4.7. Likely key projects within placemaking, connectivity and movement strategy will be:

- **'Astmoor Boulevard'**

First impressions will be improved through remodelling of Astmoor Road to create as a new boulevard with a central reservation. It would incorporate the installation of continuous footpaths and cycle ways on either side, running its entire length with crossing points. The boulevard will become a central feature in the rebranding and repositioning of Astmoor, and be a high quality landscape / public realm corridor.

- **Footpath Rationalisation**

Remodelling of the footpath network to create a more legible, safe and attractive pedestrian experience. This will be achieved through selective closure (subject to utilities), improvements to retained footpaths and provision of a new footpath on along spine roads (i.e. Chadwick Road) linking to Astmoor Boulevard.

- **Busway / Cycleway Enhancement**

Enhancement of the Busway and adjoining cycleway / footpath to create a central sustainable transport spine running through Astmoor to encourage means of access other than the private car (committed project, see section 5 emerging issues).

- **New junctions at eastern and western end of Astmoor Road**

Enhanced entrance points to improve accessibility and facilitate wider remodelling of the Estate.

- **Views of the Mersey**

To help create a stronger sense of place on Astmoor, opportunities to open up views of the Mersey will be sought, particularly from Astmoor Road, through selective landscape removal.

- **Communal Service Centre**

This is an opportunity to create a focal point and destination within Astmoor. It would be somewhere where the business community, visitors and workers can come together and access communal facilities. An indicative location close to the new Western junction has been identified, which will benefit from new views of Mersey, can incorporate adjoining undeveloped sites (O and P).

4.8. Whilst designed as a cohesive package of interventions to contribute to the transformation of Astmoor from a 1960s industrial estate to a modern business environment, individual projects can be brought forward in a phased and pragmatic way. Implementation will be structured to be: 1) responsive to funding opportunities; 2) help inform development opportunities; and, 3) help shape packaging and disposal of residual project land.

4.9. A summary of the broad brush overall approach to a 5 year delivery strategy for the Astmoor Regeneration programme is set out in Figure 8. This is subject to review on an annual basis and particularly following production and adoption of formal masterplan.

3 - Inclusive Growth Initiative

4.10. Supporting growth and investment is not just to drive physical regeneration and new job creation; but to provide jobs that the people of Halton can access, to improve their own life chances. The Mersey Gateway Regeneration Plan *Plus* promotes an integrated and inclusive approach between job creation and providing local training, work experience, work placement, skills and apprenticeship opportunities.

4.11. It is projected that the Astmoor Regeneration Programme will seek to deliver 2,000 new and safeguarded jobs, opportunities for local residents will be maximised. Working with the Halton Employment Partnership and Careers Education Service an inclusive growth initiative will be integrated into the Programme. This will be a dedicated resource which will focus on securing benefits for residents within the three neighbouring Wards of Halton Castle, Mersey and Windmill Hill. It will also promote the benefits of a local supply chain at both construction and operational phases of development.

4 - Nature of Business - Integrated ecological and environmental strategy

4.12. It is recognised that the transformation of Astmoor into a 'stand out' business location will require a more holistic approach to capture the attention and imagination of businesses and investors. Alongside its prominent and accessible location, the Council is considering developing a USP to transform Astmoor into an exemplar 'green'

business park location. The provisional title for this concept is ‘The Nature of Business’

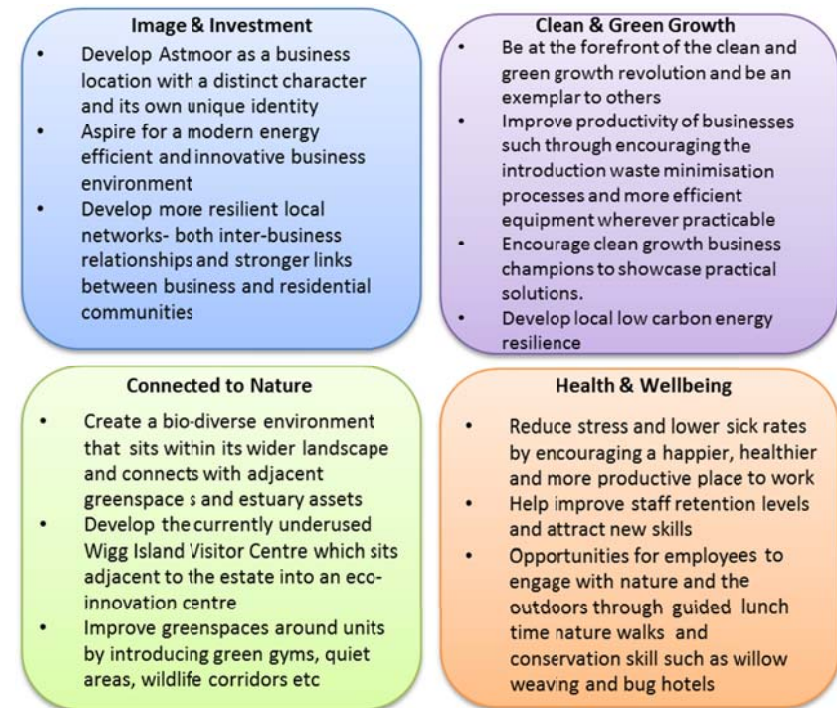
4.13. Whilst Astmoor itself is not currently valued as a particularly attractive or ‘green’ environment; it sits within a wider natural landscape setting containing a number of important ecological areas and environmental assets, including:

- Mid-Mersey Estuary
- Wigg Island
- Oxmore Nature Reserve
- Norton Priory
- Haddocks Wood, Big Wood , Fountains Wood and Windmill Hill Wood
- Town Park

4.14. There is currently a disconnect between the industry on the estate and these wonderful greenspaces and Estuary. This network of assets (and the organisations responsible for their management) presents an opportunity to add value by being incorporated and utilised when developing an ecological and environmental of ecological environmental strategy for Astmoor.

4.15. Based on the initial ‘Nature of Business’ concept, it is proposed that four broad themes would be included within the Ecological and Environmental Strategy. It would be an holistic approach and include a series of interlinked projects. This is illustrated in figure 6 below.

Figure 6: Nature of Business Project Themes



5. Emerging Issues

5.1. The following emerging issues have been identified:

Astmoor BID - Renewal Ballot and Aligning delivery

5.2. In March 2018, the BID was renewed for a further five years. Bid campaign material included reference to Astmoor being identified as Regeneration Impact Area and the opportunities presented by the Mersey Crossing; presentations were also given to BID Executive Board and Landlords on the potential scope of a regeneration programme. Progression of the Regeneration Programme was paused to allow the BID ballot process to be undertaken to avoid any potential confusion for the business community.

5.3. It is important that continued engagement and an inclusive approach to working with the business community and the BID takes place - the business community is a key stakeholder and a resource for the Programme. Consultation will, of course, be key to ensuring that there is a shared vision arising from the Masterplanning process. This will be further strengthened at the implementation stage, by ensuring that programme delivery complements the BID Business Plan and an appropriate role for the BID within programme governance is embedded. [Consultation, aligning delivery, and governance structure, are addressed in subsequent sections]

Residual Project Land

5.4. Although the Mersey Gateway is open, construction work continues. Details for residual project land are still being firmed up and is subject to an internal review process and agreement between all parties

before formal hand over from the Project Company to the Council. This internal review process allows for a more detailed assessment of the development potential and viability. A key matter is clarification of the potential use of land under elevated piers for ancillary car parking. This is now time critical, with the decision having implications for the Masterplan and its delivery. This is currently trying to be resolved and forms part of the matters being looked at by the Officer review group and on-going dialogue with MGCB and Merseylink. Image 1 provides an artist impression of how residual land could be developed.

Busway & Cycleway Enhancement Scheme

5.5. The Council has secured £1.2 Million Liverpool City Region transport funding for enhancement of the Busway and adjoining central cycleway / footpath within Astmoor. Both running through Astmoor and improving external connectivity. Whilst a formal programme has not been instigated, it is important that the wider value of this project to the regeneration of Astmoor is captured.

5.6. This project presents the opportunity to demonstrate a quick-win and commitment to the business community through Council investment within the physical environment of Astmoor. Preliminary landscape clearance works commenced in early 2018, with the main project delivery anticipated to begin in July 2018. Regeneration input into the project is on-going with business community engagement expected in June 2018.

Capital Programme Allocation

5.7. Whilst it is probable that some external funding will be secured through the development and delivery of individual sites within the programme area; clearly some Council funding will be required to improve the public realm, promote better connectivity within the area thereby leading to the creation of a modern business and employment environment. Additionally, expenditure will be required to evaluate and prepare land for disposal and or development.

5.8. As a result, the Astmoor Regeneration Programme will require a dedicated capital budget allocation. A robust business case will be developed which will set out in more detail why the funding is needed but importantly will provide an assessment of potential return on investment. This will form part of the production of the Masterplan and Delivery Strategy. [This is discussed in more detail within section 7 funding].

5.9. These emerging issues have been taken into account in shaping both the overall Astmoor Programme Roadmap (figure 8) and the main actions for the year ahead [section 6].

Image 1: Artist Impression of Development on Residual Project Land



6. Progress Report and Year Ahead

Progress

6.1. Achievements and progress in last 12 months have focussed on laying the foundation for the formal inception of the Programme, including:

- Baseline intelligence gathering and analysis;
- Supporting the successful BID renewal ballot;
- Developing masterplan elements;
- Review of residual project hand back land;
- £1.2million LCR funding secured for a 'quick win' Astmoor Busway / cycleway enhancement;
- Initial informal discussions with some existing and new businesses to relocate on Astmoor and landlords looking to invest; and
- Engagement with Astmoor BID Executive Board and Halton Chamber of Commerce.

The Year Ahead

6.2. The key actions in Year 1 (2018-19) are:

- Commencement of quick-win Busway / cycleway enhancement scheme (July 2018).
- Complete the handback land process, including receipt and initial development and viability assessment of residual project land (December 2018) ha;
- Initial stakeholder consultation exercise on the Masterplan undertaken (August - September 2018);
- Formal public consultation on the draft Masterplan (December 2018 - January 2019);

- Formal corporate approval of draft Masterplan and Delivery Strategy (by March 2019); and
- Seek approval to formally commence implementation, including approval of any capital regeneration programme allocation (by March 2019).

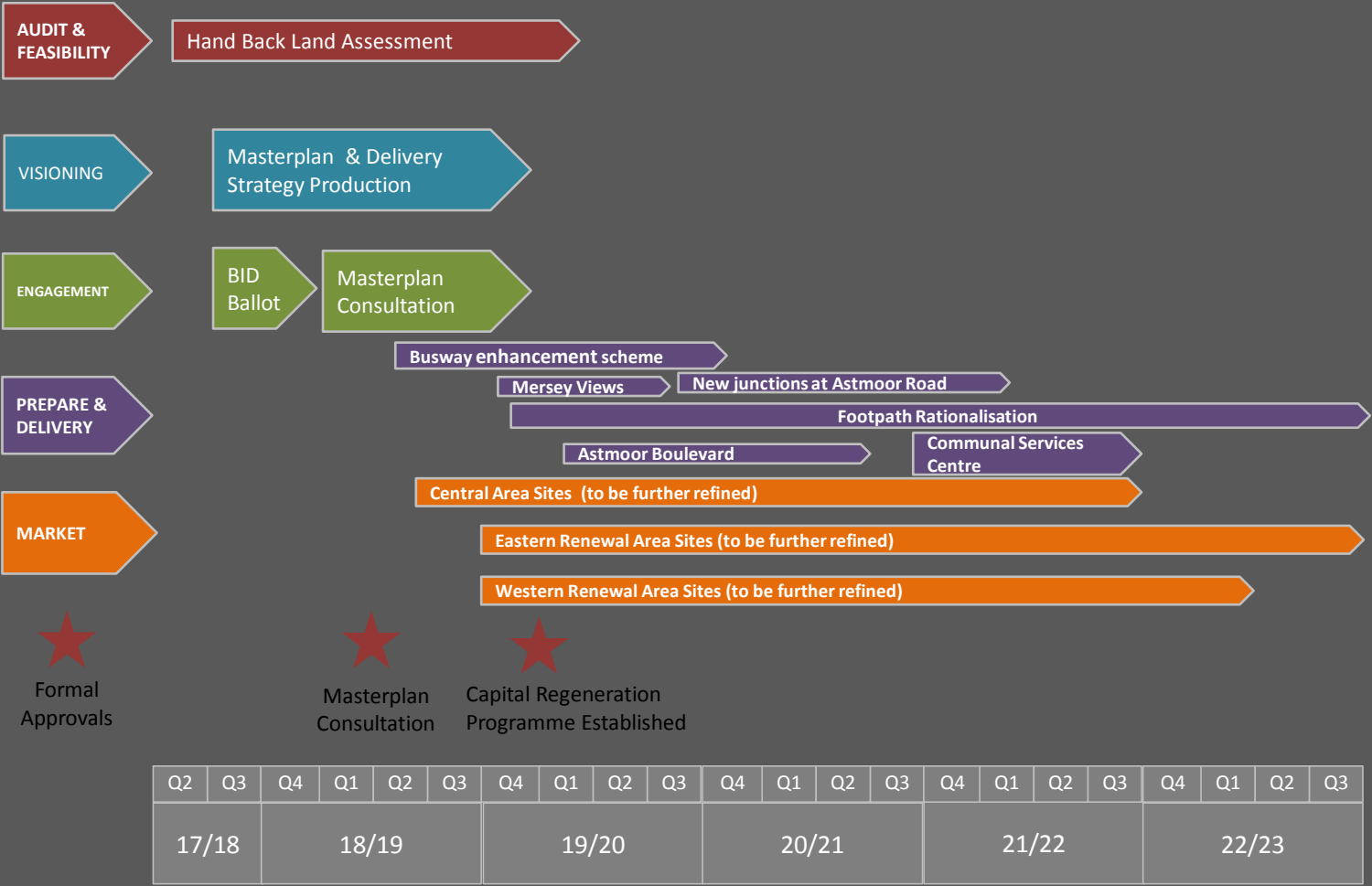
6.3. Whilst Officers have developed a strong understanding for a vision and objectives to guide to the regeneration Astmoor and the likely programme strands and some of the project elements to realise the vision - It is crucial that this is developed as a shared vision and masterplan in coalition with key stakeholders.

6.4. To help realise the objective of business led and inclusive growth, a two-stage process of engagement for developing a Masterplan and Delivery Strategy is proposed:

- Stage 1 - Initial consultation targeted at key stakeholders including the Astmoor business community, BID (and by extension Halton Chamber), landlords, landowners and commercial developers. This stage will be focussed on developing a shared vision for the transformation of Astmoor and identifying - issues, challenges and opportunities;
- Stage 2 - More formal consultation on draft Masterplan and include those stakeholders at stage 1, as well as: Public bodies (such as Liverpool City-Region Local Enterprise Partnership, Natural England and Environment Agency); and, general public, targeted at neighbouring residential communities.

6.5. The year ahead is shown in the context of the broader five year programme Roadmap (figure 7).

Figure 7: Astmoor Regeneration Programme Roadmap



7. Funding Profile

7.1. Future funding requirements for this programme is likely to comprise four elements:

Programme Management

7.2. Existing Regeneration Team resources will provide a Core HBC Officer delivery team and comprise:

- 100% Regeneration (Lead) Officer (HBC8)
- 100% Business Support Officer (HBC5)

7.3. Existing departmental resources will also be utilised to acquire any specialist services for the Masterplan refinement process and prepare and support the initial stakeholder engagement and subsequent formal masterplan consultation.

7.4. Beyond the masterplanning and consultation stages of delivery, a Capital Allocation may be required to support key aspects of programme management, such as the production and delivery of consultation, communication and marketing material undertaken at key stages in the delivery. These costs will be minimised through using internal marketing and communication expertise and also the BID communication channels for engaging the existing business community.

Development Site Fees

7.5. Bringing new development sites to market to secure investment and new business rates receipts is crucial to the success of the programme - whether through disposal of residual project land (within the central redevelopment area); or through working with other landlords, landowners and existing businesses to secure redevelopment of vacant and underutilised sites (within the Eastern and Western employment Renewal areas).

7.6. Across these three development and investment areas, a Capital Allocation may be required to fund development sites fees. This could include site survey work, submission of planning applications, enabling works and associated matters to bring sites to market. The amount allocated for renewal areas is set at a lower rate due to take account of likely private sector lead and HBC capital used as leverage.

Placemaking, Connectivity and Movement Projects

7.7. Public Realm work will likely require some Capital Allocation. This may also include physical elements of the 'nature of business' programme strand. The scope of these projects will be devised and costed as part of Masterplan. Whilst opportunities for securing this through external funders and alternative funding mechanism such as alongside the development process and utilising Highway cyclical maintenance funds, will be maximised; a Capital Allocation helps provides certainty and investor confidence.

Inclusive Growth Initiative

- 7.8. Funding may be required to deliver any local employment and associated social value projects such as supporting training, mentoring and apprenticeships opportunities linked to new and existing businesses on Astmoor. This programme strand will be developed in partnership with the Halton Employment Partnership, Careers Education Service and Astmoor BID. It will focus on securing external funding and bending existing employment and training programmes being delivered by partners to focus on Astmoor. A similar approach will be applied to any business support and revenue elements of the 'nature for business' programme strand.
- 7.9. As part of developing the Masterplan and Delivery Strategy, a detailed funding, spend and income profile will be produced.
- 7.10. Any capital allocation requests will be undertaken in phases, to take account of alternative and external funding opportunities, with any first phase in early 2019 alongside seeking formal approval to commence implementation of the regeneration of Astmoor. This initial tranche will focus on bringing forward the first development sites to market and key placemaking projects to signal to the investor market.
- 7.11. It must also be noted that the income generated from disposal of residual project land is £2.52 Million based upon an estimate of achieving £360,000.00 per hectare (£150,000.00 per acre) as well any associated uplift in business rate receipts.

8. Key milestones and Risks

8.1. Section 6.2 (the year ahead) and the corresponding programme roadmap (figure 7) set out the key actions and milestones for the year ahead, these are focussed on the inception stages of a regeneration programme and highlighted on the year 1 milestones table (figure 8).

Figure 8: Year 1 Key Milestones

Action	2017 -18		2018 -19			
	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
BID Renewal Ballot	Campaign starts	Ballot & result	New BID commences			
HBC Virtual Officer Team			Establish virtual team			
Residual project land assessment	Review Group Est.	Corporate Report			Review process complete	
Corporate approval to consult on masterplan				Corporate report		
Initial stakeholder engagement on masterplan					Sessions held	
Formal masterplan consultation						Sessions held
Formal capital regeneration programme established						Formal report
Commence 'quick win' Busway / cycleway enhancement scheme				Engage businesses / commence works		Works completed

8.2. For the inception year milestones and actions the following risk register has been prepared (figure 9):

Figure 9: Year 1 Risk register

Risk	Impact	Mitigation	Responsibility
Residual project land - No agreement on use of land underneath bridge for car parking	This would significantly reduce the potential of hand back land as a resource within the regeneration programme and its financial value. It would also create a large dead void space within Astmoor - having a segregating effect and detracting from the aspiration to create a modern business park environment.	First queried in July 2015, the regeneration team is continuing to liaise with the Mersey Crossing Board to get a sensible common sense solution reflecting the shared interests of all parties. The matter has not yet been escalated internally - but this is the next option.	Lead Officer - Astmoor Programme.
Capital programme allocation - Not approved	Quick win delivery is based on a fully resourced capital programme. Delivery could still be achieved but would take longer and rely upon external funding being secured, it would also impact on confidence to the existing business community and potential inward investors.	Build a strong business case and demonstrate a clear return on investment for any capital allocation.	Lead Officer - Astmoor Regeneration Programme.

9. Governance/Management

9.1. The proposed organisational structure (figure 10) sets out the management and governance arrangements for the Astmoor Regeneration programme. The key components of this are:

- **Core Delivery Team**

Providing the day-to-day management of the programme and driving forward and championing the regeneration of Astmoor, would meet weekly as a programme team.

- **Wider Corporate Virtual Programme Team**

Drawn from across the Council, key enabling and complementary functions, would meet bi-monthly as a corporate team with additional meetings on a project by project basis.

- **Business Community Forum (BID Steering Group)**

The existing business community of Astmoor are a key stakeholder in the programme. The BID offers a potential mechanism for dialogue and an interface between the regeneration programme and the business community; this will be first explored through initial engagement with businesses on the proposed Astmoor Masterplan. Liaison proposed to be achieved through the established BID Steering Group (which meets four times a year), with additional liaison through dedicated consultation events and communications.

- **Mersey Gateway Regeneration - Member Working Party**

It is proposed that Member input and oversight of developing and delivery of the regeneration programme will be undertaken by the Environment and Urban Renewal PPB Working Party. Subject to the agreement of Chair, Members representing the Wards of Halton Castle, Mersey and Windmill Hill be invited when Astmoor is presented.

9.2. The approach outlined within this delivery plan is based upon a simple model whereby the Council would drive forward the programme with support and input from businesses via the Astmoor BID. The provision of a preferred development partner or single private sector investor is not anticipated at this stage. However, this could emerge during the first year at which point the governance and management arrangements would need to be revisited.

10. People Resource

10.1. The roles and responsibilities of key people within the organisational structure (figure 10) are:

- **Lead Officer**

A dedicated full time Lead Regeneration Officer will take overall ownership and drive the Programme forward. This includes responsibility for managing the programme, directing the work of the core and virtual teams and external consultants and reporting to MG Steering Group as required.

- **Business & Investment Support Officer (100% FTE)**

Supporting the Lead Officer to act as interface with existing and prospective businesses respectively, and more generally work alongside the Lead Officer to deliver the programme. Support requires a business support skills set due to nature and language of communicating with businesses and spin off growth opportunities that might emerge from the programme.

- **BID Manager (Halton Chamber)**

Working in partnership with Halton Chamber of Commerce to provide an additional interface with the business community and help align delivery with the outputs and outcomes of the BID Business Plan. The post also brings experience and intelligence on Astmoor.

- **Regeneration Manager (5% FTE)**

Direct line management responsibility for the Lead Officer and provide input and oversee programme delivery and oversight of capital expenditure.

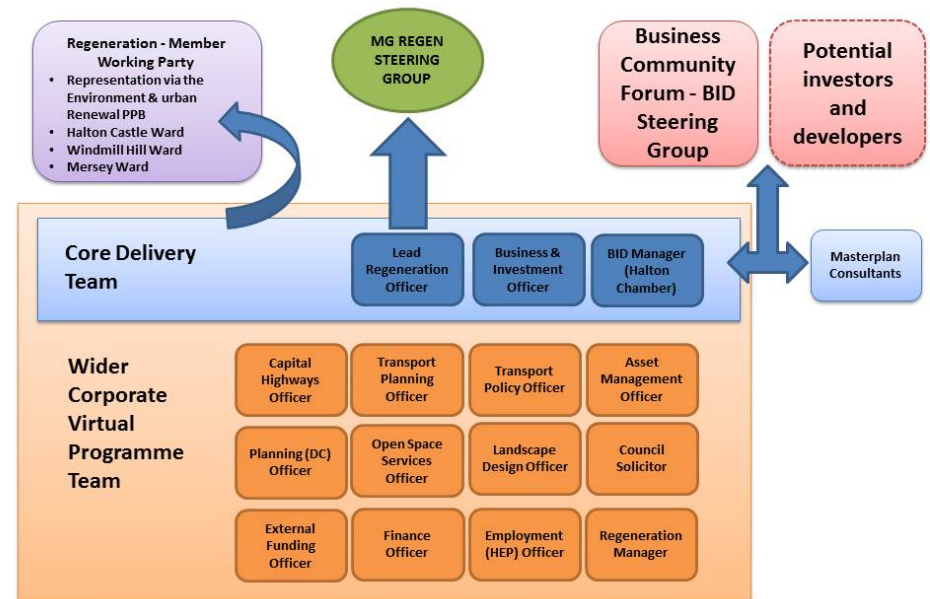
- **Corporate Virtual Team (10% capital programme fee)**

Support implementation of the programme. Where appropriate (such as for Highway and landscape works) a 10% project design fee will be paid.

- **Masterplan Consultants**

Externally appointed consultants to support revising draft masterplan and delivery strategy and prepare and assist with engagement and consultation exercises.

Figure 10: Proposed Programme Organisational Structure



11. Key Performance Indicators

11.1. The key performance indicators for this programme are that by the end of year 5 (2023), Astmoor will have delivered:

- An uplift in business rate receipts of £2 Million per year
- 1 Million Sqft. of additional commercial floor space
- 2,000 new jobs and safeguarding many more
- £2.52 Million capital land receipt

11.2. To achieve these key performance indicators, the following programme outputs will be delivered (figure 11):

Figure 11: Programme Outputs

Output	Target
Hectares of employment land redeveloped	18 hectares
Linear Metres of new / enhanced Footpath and Cycleway Improved	7,000
Linear Metres of new / enhanced roads	3,000
Views of River Mersey created	4
New / enhanced Junctions	2
Number of units in Communal Services Centres	3

11.3. Additionally satisfaction in the business community will improve on the 2014 baseline (figure 12):

Figure 12: Business Community Satisfaction Targets

Aspect of Astmoor Industrial estate	% rated as 'good' (2014 Baseline)	Target (2023)
Security signage	56%	85%
Control of traffic movements	48%	80%
Parking	46%	70%
Street lighting	44%	90%
Public Transport	39%	80%
Road markings	37%	80%
Landscaping	30%	70%
The overall image of the estate	22%	80%
The condition of the roads	7%	70%