

theurbanists

theurbanists

Prepared by: The Urbanists

Address: **Cardiff**
Westgate House
11 Womanby Street
Cardiff, CF10 1BR

Bristol
Studio 410, Generator Building
Finzels Reach
Bristol, BS1 6BX

Email: info@theurbanists.net

Website: www.theurbanists.net

Issue date: 2025.10.17

Document status: FINAL

Revision: E

Author: ET, SY, FV, JD & LH

Checked by: JD & LH

On behalf of:



All plans within this document are reproduced from Ordnance Survey with permission of the controller of His Majesty's Stationary Office (C) Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution/civil proceedings. Licence No 100054593.





Introduction

This document has been prepared to align with the objectives of the Transforming Towns funding initiative, which provides crucial support for the regeneration and revitalization of Welsh town centres. As a framework for future investment and development, this document aims to position Denbigh in accessing Transforming Towns resources effectively while also serving as a tool to unlock additional funding opportunities from other sources.

This Placemaking Plan has been developed with an emphasis on addressing local economic need, which was a key determinant in the selection of towns as part of the preparation for the Placemaking Plans. Denbigh's unique challenges and opportunities have been carefully considered to ensure this plan is not only a vision for the future but also a strategic guide for immediate and long-term improvements.

This plan is fully compliant with the principals and guidance outlined in the 'Placemaking Plans for Town Centres' document, published by the Design Commission for Wales (DCFW) and the Welsh Government (WG). By adhering to these standards, this Placemaking Plan ensures alignment with national strategies and objectives, fostering an integrated approach to town centre regeneration.





The Town

Denbigh is a main settlement for the County as a service and retail destination for the local community and a place of work for local business owners. As one of the largest towns in the county area, Denbigh also plays an important strategic role, with its services and retail offer also helping to support the ongoing vitality of the communities living in central Denbighshire.

Like many towns across Wales and the UK, Denbigh has faced stern challenges in recent years; increased competition from out of town retail in the wider North Wales region and a continued rise in online retailing has provided stiff competition to traditional high street purchasing. This was exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic which made an already difficult commercial environment for high street businesses worse, closing much of the high street for large periods and cutting off many business from its loyal customers.

Denbigh is a historic town nestled in North Wales, and holds significance as one of the fortified towns commissioned by Edward I. Towering above the encompassing valley, adorned with its medieval castle, Denbigh has witnessed a gradual decline in its social and economic standing. Concurrently, much of its architectural heritage has also deteriorated.

To help the town recover and ultimately thrive, the Denbigh Placemaking Plan has been prepared. The plan offers a bespoke place vision for Denbigh based on the shared aspirations of residents, businesses and the Council. It sets out our ambitions for the town centre in line with the Placemaking Wales Charter and explains the type of bespoke interventions that shall be pursued and delivered to ensure aspirations for the town are achieved.

Legend:

Project Location

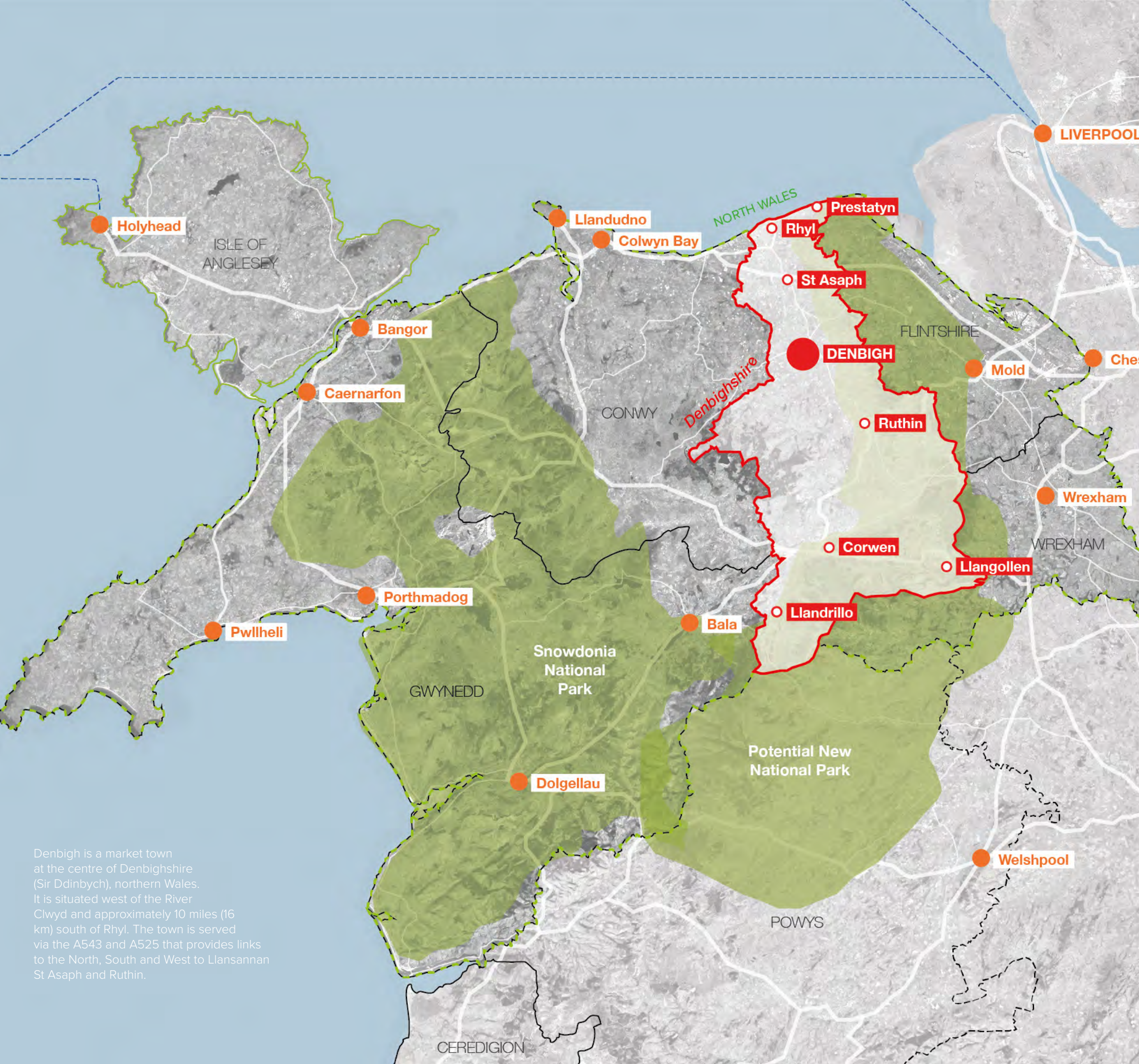
Sub-regional Centre

Principal Centre

Local Centre

City

Town



Denbigh is a market town at the centre of Denbighshire (Sir Ddinbych), northern Wales. It is situated west of the River Clwyd and approximately 10 miles (16 km) south of Rhyl. The town is served via the A543 and A525 that provides links to the North, South and West to Llansannan St Asaph and Ruthin.

County Importance

Denbigh is located centrally within the County in close proximity to the Clwydian Range & Dee Valley National Landscape, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which runs the length of the county.

The town and its surrounding transportation network is oriented along north-south routes, reflecting the topographical character of the area. The A543 and A525 are notable north-south roads that connect Denbigh with neighbouring towns and major routes. The A525 links Denbigh with Ruthin to the south and connects with the A55 Expressway, providing access to the coastal areas and major cities like Chester to the northeast.

While east-west highway connectivity may be limited due to the areas history and geography, Denbigh benefits from its strategic location along key routes. The A525 and A543 facilitate access to regional hubs and arterial roads, enhancing connectivity for residents and businesses.

Denbigh boasts a rich history and cultural heritage, with landmarks such as Denbigh Castle and St. Hilary’s Chapel attracting tourists and preserving the town’s heritage. The town’s cultural institutions, events, and festivals also contribute to its role as a cultural centre within Denbighshire.

As a key settlement within Denbighshire, Denbigh serves as a focal point for the surrounding settlements, offering a range of services and amenities. This includes retail, cultural, and administrative functions that may not be available in smaller neighbouring communities. The town’s role as a service centre is essential for the region’s development and growth, with plans likely in place to further enhance its connectivity and infrastructure.

Legend:

Project Location

Sub-regional Centre

Principal Centre

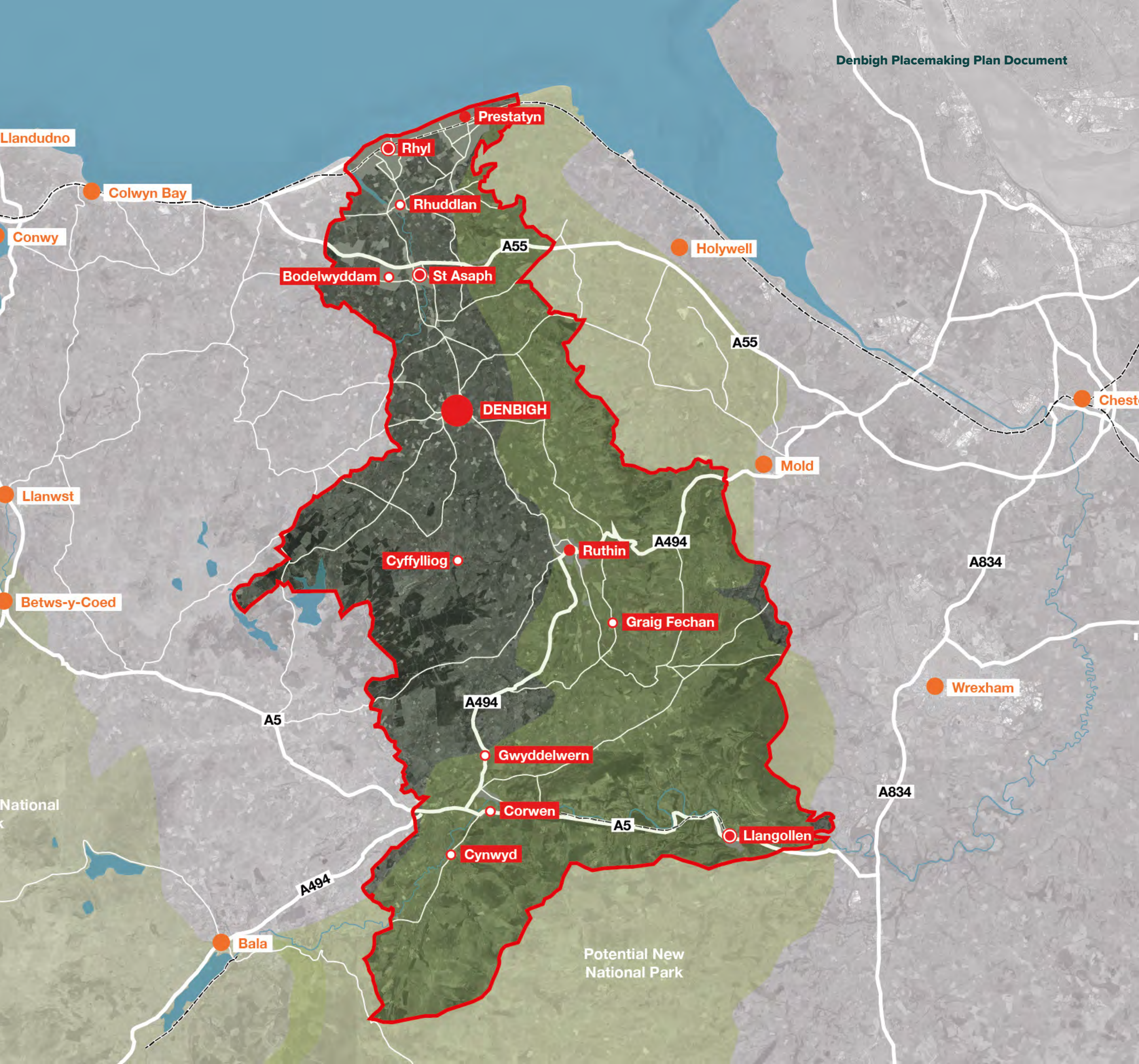
Local Centre

City

Town

Road

Railway



National Policy

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 and Planning Policy Wales identify placemaking as the means to maximise well-being and create sustainable places. Placemaking is a holistic approach to planning and designing development that considers development opportunities holistically in the context of the local place to ensure they are appropriate to the place and best support the community. In this way placemaking ensures the design and delivery of development that promote people’s prosperity, health, happiness, and well being in the widest sense.

Placemaking is a statutory process in Wales and underpins decision making to ensure that new development and investment build on and enhance the sense of place of our town’s and wider settlements. Plans are required to be in place in order to access TT funding.

In recognition of the important role of placemaking, the Placemaking Wales Charter has been introduced in Wales and reflects a commitment by those that practice in development, design and regeneration to support the development of high quality places.

General health reporting shows pronounced differences across Wales. Denbighshire falls within the 68-69 percentile of adults age 16 and over, reporting they are in good health highlighting potential room for improvement in this area.

Broad goals within the national plan include increasing the use of Welsh across Wales and embedding it as a living language. Historic data shows a higher number of Welsh speakers in northern Denbighshire than in the south of the county, highlighting an opportunity to increase the prominence of the welsh language in southern Denbighshire to balance the disparity.

The responsibility for Wales’ built environment, especially town centres, lies in achieving climate resilience and actively combating climate change, as emphasized in the national plan, alongside the Welsh Government’s target to make Wales net carbon zero by 2050. The focus is on creating sustainable living, working, and recreational spaces by promoting active travel and maximising carbon capture. This approach is essential for enhancing social, economic, and ecological resilience.

The future regeneration of Denbigh has the potential to realise the following ambitions set out within the national plan:

- Work towards settlements that are physically and digitally well connected places, offering good quality of life to their residents.
- Create job opportunities and enhance community services in rural areas to help attract and retain people.
- Recognise that different parts of Wales work differently to each other, and respond to their distinct underlying characteristics and challenges.
- Aim to have a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 – an increase of almost 80% on current levels.
- Establish large towns as magnets for jobs and investment, while people are drawn to live and work there for the economic and social opportunities they provide.
- Develop plans that are forward thinking and have a positive attitude towards enabling economic development, investment and innovation.
- Ensure all methods of travel have low environmental impact and low emissions, with increased use of public transport and ultra-low emission vehicles replacing today’s petrol and diesel vehicles.
- Improve broadband provision which will help businesses to be more productive, resilient and innovative and improve the way of life for communities and individuals.
- Recognise and capitalise on Wales’ natural resources, including its minerals, soils and geodiversity, coast, water, forests and landscape and their potential to support a range of activities and sectors. These are assets of great value in their own right.
- Promote and deliver a competitive, sustainable de-carbonised society.

Securing a Sustainable Future: Environmental Principals, Governance and Biodiversity targets for a Greener Wales (2024)

On 30 January 2024, the Welsh Government published its White Paper consultation, ‘*Securing a Sustainable Future: Environmental Principals, Governance, and Biodiversity Targets for a Greener Wales.*’ The White Paper proposes embedding environmental principals into Welsh law, establishing a governance body to oversee compliance, and creating a strategic framework with biodiversity targets for nature recovery. These measures underscore the need for transformative, long-term action to address the climate and nature emergencies, as outlined in the Programme for Government.

The consultation, which closed on 30 April with 1,171 responses, highlighted public engagement and provided valuable feedback. An independent analysis of responses has been published, alongside a Policy Response detailing key themes and government actions in response to the input received. This proposed legislation affirms the Welsh Government’s commitment to prioritising climate and nature, maintaining environmental standards post-Brexit, and fostering ongoing collaboration with stakeholders to shape the future policy direction

Wales Technical Advice Note 15 (TAN 15); Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion (2023)

TAN 15 provides technical guidance to support Planning Policy Wales (PPW), helping to meet its requirements and promote the creation of sustainable places.

Core Principals of TAN 15:

- Aligns with Wales’ National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management, advocating a risk-based approach for new developments in flood-prone areas.

Defines ‘risk’ as encompassing both:

- The likelihood of a flooding event.
- The potential impact if such an event occurs.

The application of TAN 15 can significantly affect proposed developments like Denbigh’s.

Key points include:

- 1. Restrictions on Development:** Overnight accommodations and “highly vulnerable” uses (e.g., care homes, schools) cannot be built in flood-prone areas.
- 2. Infrastructure Requirements:** Developments need robust flood infrastructure and emergency access routes that remain functional during floods.
- 3. Planning Complexity:** Compliance with TAN15 adds the need for flood risk assessments, potentially delaying approvals and increasing costs.
- 4. Land Use Impact:** Flood risk zones may limit development potential, affecting project viability or requiring alternative uses like recreation or commercial spaces.

TAN15 also highlights opportunities to integrate flood resilience measures, such as green infrastructure and SUDS.

The **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act** is focused on improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It requires all public bodies to think more about the long-term, to work better with people and communities and one another, and to work collectively to improve the wellbeing of Wales. The Act identifies seven Well-being Goals to guide action and identifies how public bodies should work.

Sustainable development is central to the Act, and is based on giving equal priority to improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. Each aspect of well-being is as important as the other and it is critical that all four are improved. This approach will ensure that “the needs of the present are met without compromising those of the future”.

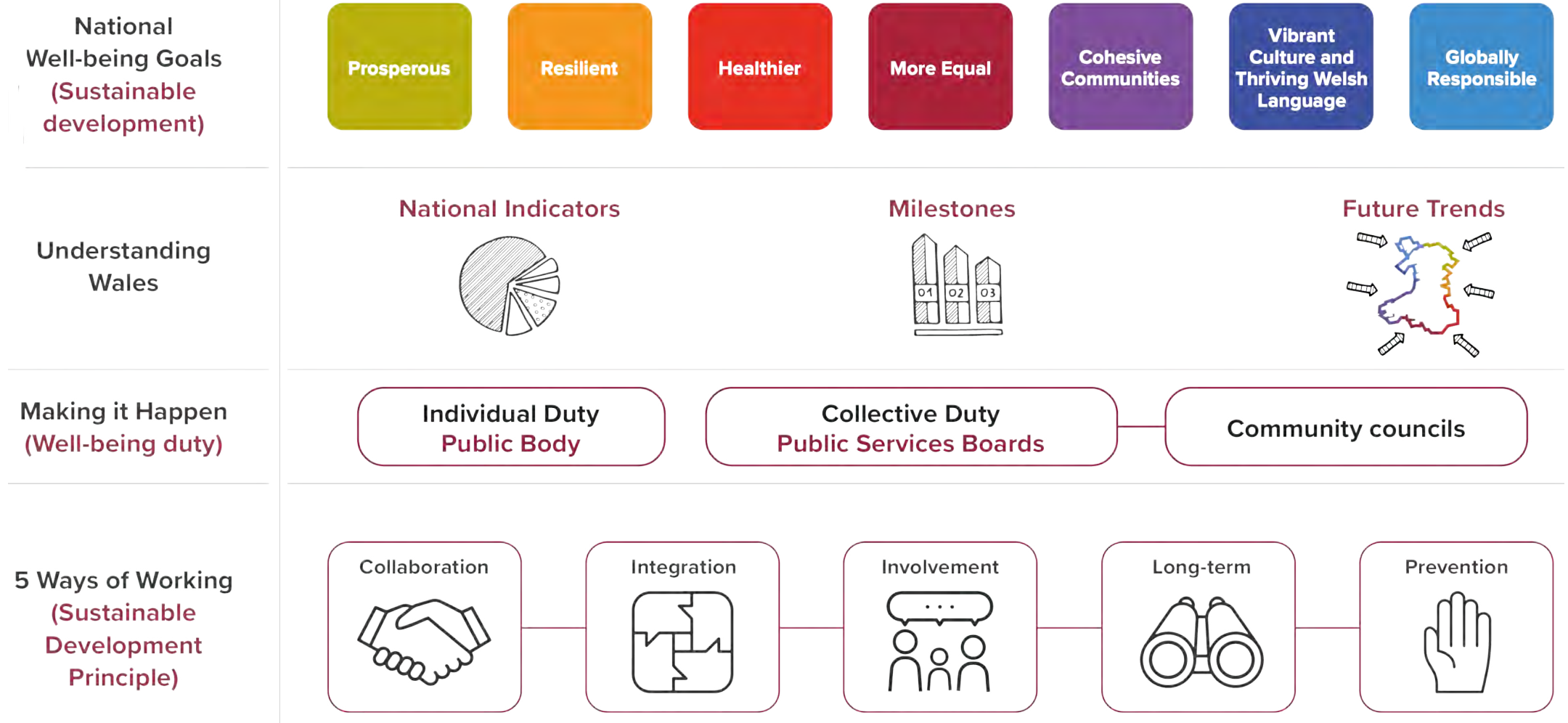
Sustainability is also at the core of the Welsh Government’s environment and climate change policies. The **Natural Resources Policy** (NRP) is the second statutory product of the Environment (Wales) Act. The focus of the NRP is the sustainable management of Wales’ natural resources, to maximise their contribution to achieving goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

The policy sets out three National Priorities:

- Delivering nature-based solutions
- Increasing renewable energy and resource efficiency
- Taking a place-based approach

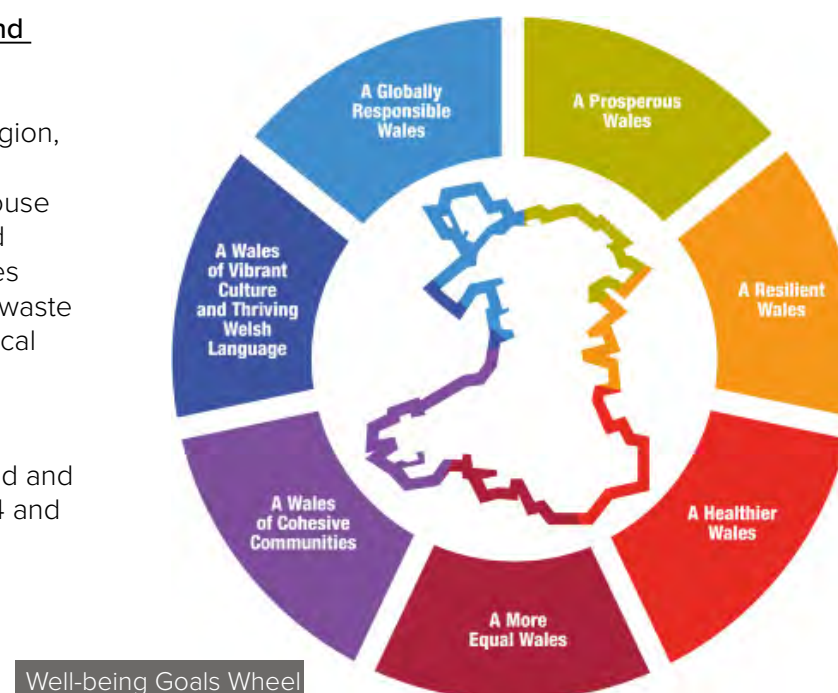
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 and Planning Policy Wales requires planning, investment and development to create sustainable places. Sustainable places have the right mix of homes in the right place; include local employment and services; have excellent public transport and active travel infrastructure; and, are green. National policy defines that they also require mixed-use town centres that satisfy local needs.

In recognition of the key role that town centres have in building sustainable places, the Welsh Government has introduced the ‘Town Centre First’ principal, which requires all new major commercial, retail, education, health and public service investment and proposals to be located in town centres. Further, the Welsh Government has established the **Transforming Towns funding programme**, to enable projects to redevelop and improve town centres and nearby areas.



The **Denbighshire County Council’s Climate and Nature Strategy (2021/22 to 2029/30)** outlines a comprehensive approach to address climate change and enhance biodiversity across the region, whilst promoting community involvement. The strategy’s main goals include reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to climate impacts, and fostering environmental resilience. It emphasises sustainable practices in energy, transportation, waste management and land use, aiming to protect local wildlife and ecosystems.

The strategy document will be formally reviewed and refreshed every 3 years up until 2030 (2023/24 and 2026/27).



Well-being of Future Generations Act Architecture

The Denbigh Placemaking Plan has been developed in accordance with national policy and legislation and advances this agenda, setting out the pathway for investment and ensuring that Denbigh Town Centre is a sustainable place that serves the needs of its wider community.

Regional Policy

North Wales Regeneration Plan 2018 – 2035 (2018) The strategy serves as a guiding document intended to synchronise regeneration efforts in North Wales with concurrent initiatives aimed at fostering economic growth in the area, including the North Wales Growth Vision (2016) and the North Wales Regional Economic Framework (2021). It delineates a spatial and thematic framework for prioritising investments, outlining the following regional regeneration objectives:

- Reduce inequality
- Strengthen the visitor economy
- Protect the rural economy
- Modernise town centres
- Improve housing offer

A Growth Vision for the Economy of North Wales (2016)
The North Wales Economic Ambition Board partnership crafted a vision for North Wales to evolve into: *“A confident, cohesive region with sustainable economic growth, capitalising on the success of high value economic sectors and our connection to the economies of the Northern Powerhouse and Ireland.”* This Growth Vision was built upon three fundamental principals:

- Smart – with a focus on innovation and high value economic sectors to advance economic performance.
- Resilient – with a focus on retaining young people, increasing employment levels and skills to achieve inclusive growth.
- Connected – with a focus on improving transport and digital infrastructure to enhance strategic connectivity to and within the region.

The vision developed by Ambition North Wales and its partners, shaped the North Wales Growth Deal, signed in 2020. Welsh Government and UK Government are jointly investing £240 million into the Growth Deal over 15 years. The aim of the Growth Deal is to build a more vibrant, sustainable and resilient economy in North Wales, building on it’s strengths to boost productivity while tackling long-term challenges and economic barriers to delivering inclusive growth. Three high growth sectors have been targeted by Ambition North Wales to drive productivity in the region:

- Low carbon energy;
- High value manufacturing; and,
- Agri-food and tourism.

Denbigh with its rich tourism opportunities tied to it’s strong character and heritage is well placed to contribute towards these goals.
Commercial land and property market failure and digital infrastructure are identified as key barriers to growth and are also targets for investments.



View from Temple Bar Garden across Denbigh

North Wales Regional Economic Framework (2021)

The North Wales Regional Economic Framework (REF), developed by Welsh Government, provides a framework that captures how the public, private and third sectors will deliver on their priorities. The REF links directly with the structure of the Growth Deal and the aim is for the achievement of priorities to boost productivity and accelerate sustainable economic and inclusive prosperity. Three core themes for the region are defined within the REF :

1. Social and community wellbeing;
2. Low carbon economy; and ,
3. The experience economy.

The REF recognises the region's strengths in low carbon energy, tourism, and food and drink sectors, whilst also identifying pockets of deprivation, poor connectivity and longer commutes, with residents of North Wales having the longest commute anywhere in Wales.

Based on an analysis of key issues and opportunities in the region and stakeholder feedback, ten priorities for the region are identified offering areas of focus for Denbigh's Placemaking Plan:

1. Skills & Workforce;
2. Investment in magnets, hubs, supply chains, R&D, innovation & entrepreneurship;
3. Balanced support for indigenous & inward investors;
4. Language, culture, place & heritage;
5. Foundation Economy & a vibrant Micro/SME base;
6. Empowering communities for the benefit of our future generations;
7. Connectivity (transport & digital);
8. Leverage benefits of the public sector;
9. Low carbon energy; and,
10. Food & Drink Industry.

Town centres are identified within the framework as a key component of the Social and Community Wellbeing Economy. The role of town centres to support smaller businesses to be more competitive, act as focal centres for remote working and amenities, and establishing community hubs are emphasised.

Social and Community Wellbeing Economy Diagram



Local Policy

Net Zero Strategic Plan Wales, Welsh Government (2021)

The Welsh Government has set an ambitious goal to achieve net zero emissions by 2030, contributing to the collective 2030 target for the Welsh Public Sector. This net zero target places the organisation on a robust de-carbonisation path, requiring significant organisational transformation. The Strategic Plan consolidates evidence and outlines priority de-carbonisation initiatives, establishing a framework to identify carbon reduction opportunities and track progress toward net zero.

In 2020-21, the Welsh Government reduced its carbon footprint by 18% compared to 2019-20, partly due to COVID-19 impacts but also through proactive efforts to lessen environmental impact. Progress has been made in enhancing energy efficiency, increasing renewable energy generation, optimising operations, and engaging suppliers. The Strategic Plan now aims to expand these efforts further to meet the 2030 target. De-carbonisation targets are divided into two categories: measurable reductions in operational emissions and qualitative targets for supply chain and land use practices.

DCC’s Climate and Nature Strategy (July 2024)

Denbighshire County Council has set a target to become a Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive Council by 2030, building on progress made through its *Corporate Plan* priority for the Environment and current *A Greener Denbighshire theme* (2022-2027). The Council’s Net Carbon Zero Footprint goals encompass reducing emissions from buildings, waste, fleet vehicles, staff commuting, street lighting, and business travel.

Guided by the Denbighshire Climate and Nature Strategy (2021/22 to 2029/30), the Council takes a comprehensive approach to climate action and biodiversity enhancement, involving the community in promoting sustainable practices across areas such as

- energy
- transport
- waste management
- land use

This strategy aims to cut greenhouse gas emissions, increase resilience to climate impacts, and support local ecosystems.

The strategy document will be formally reviewed and refreshed every 3 years up until 2030 (2023/24 and 2026/27).

Denbighshire Local Area Energy Plan (2024)

On behalf of the Welsh Government, Ambition North Wales managed to contract with consultants developing the Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) for Denbighshire, and the other north Wales countries. The LAEP was authored by The Carbon Trust and Arup, following an internationally recognised method, and was based on modelling, insights from data, and stakeholder plans and ideas including through workshops. The plans will fall under the ownership of each local authority in Wales. They are aimed at being a guidance tool in how best to work towards a fully de-carbonised energy system by 2050.

Tailored to local needs while aligning with regional and national objectives, the LAEP focuses on sustainable energy transitions, enhancing community resilience, and fostering economic vibrancy. It seeks to strengthen planning, build partnerships, and secure funding for sustainable development.

Supporting the *Corporate Plan* theme *A Greener Denbighshire*, the LAEP contributes to emission reductions and aligns with the Climate and Nature Strategy (2021/22-2029/30). The plan also advances *A Prosperous Denbighshire* by boosting economic growth and expanding the green economy. Its vision is to achieve substantial local economic, social, ecological, and well being benefits from the shift to a net-zero economy, ultimately positioning Denbighshire as a net exporter of low-carbon electricity through regional cooperation.

The LAEP proposals provide opportunity for:

- De-carbonisation of energy supply and delivery in Denbighshire
- New non-temporary/non-seasonal jobs
- Better energy efficiency in homes that can increase quality of life and health and reduce energy requirements
- Reduced air pollution and increased energy resiliency

Regeneration Summary

Denbigh Town Regeneration Summary captures significant capital projects that are planned for the town over the next 5 years as well as recently completed projects. These are then updated annually. The range of projects captured includes significant regeneration projects within the town and the surrounding area and are delivered by Denbighshire County Council, partner organisations and the local community.

The regeneration summary has 3 main goals:

- List significant capital projects that are planned including projects that have emerged from various consultations over recent years;
- List of significant capital projects that have been completed in recent years; and,
- Start of the process to develop a strategic regeneration plan for the town (Placemaking Plan).

The summary categorises Denbigh as a medieval market town that offers convenient mix of retail with good parking capacity. Retail and services are primarily focused on local community and surrounding hinterland. The summary also identifies that an industrial area on the edge of town recently expanded demonstrating commitment to local employment.

These projects can be accessed via the Regeneration part of the Denbighshire County Council website.

Denbighshire's Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033 and associated Denbighshire Adopted LDP sets out key aspirations and areas of growth within the county. The Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) is the basis for planning and development decisions in Denbighshire.

The policy highlights Denbigh as a 'main centre' which means it is a settlement with a strategic role in delivery of a variety of services and facilities. Denbigh is identified as a key centre in the Denbighshire Adopted LDP with recognition of its importance for residents as a site for employment, retail and services and its role as a major visitor destination. Within the retail hierarchy Denbigh is identified as a 'Town Centre' meaning it is the preferred location for new retail, leisure, office, social and other town centre uses, second only to Rhyl and Prestatyn.

The Housing Land Prospectus (2016) highlights 9.2ha of land for residential development within Denbigh highlighting an increased pressure on the services of the town in the future to sustain future residents.

Placemaking goals that are present within the Denbighshire Adopted LDP's objectives include:

- Protecting, enhancing and sustainably developing Denbighshire's natural resources including green and blue infrastructure, renewable energy and mineral resources;
- Protecting and enhancing Denbighshire's natural, built and historic environment;
- Supporting the provision, operation and development of infrastructure and services;
- Enabling the regeneration and renewal of Denbighshire's built environment and public realm to contribute to vital, viable and attractive town centres with employment premises that meet the requirements of modern businesses; and,
- Supporting development that promotes well-being, community cohesion and resilience including measures to address the effects of flood risk and climate change.

Socio-Economic Snapshot

Demographic



Denbigh generally has an older demographic with only **15.4%** of the population being under **29 years old**.

The annual population has **increased by 2.2% over 10 years** with the population increasing from **93,700** to **95,800**.

Education

17.1% of people aged over 5 years old are a **full-time student** and **19%** of people aged over 16 years old have **no qualifications**.



Employment Statistics

57% of people aged 16 years and over are economically active.



30.9% travel less than 10km to work.

34.6% travel 10km and over to work.

20.6% of people **work mainly from home**.



13.45% of people **work mainly at an offshore installation, in no fixed place or outside the UK**.



[Data is based on Denbigh and Pentre Llanhaeadr]

Health and Wellbeing



47% of people in Denbighshire have very good health. **6.5%** are in bad to very bad health.

Deprivation

47.4% of households are deprived. This is just below the Welsh average of **54.1%**.



Denbigh's History and Culture

Denbigh, or 'Dinbych' in Welsh translates to the 'little fortress'. This refers to the fortified settlement Denbigh was rumoured to be during the Roman occupation. It is first mentioned in records from the Norman Conquest, when Denbigh acted as a guard for the approach to the Hiraethog Hills and Eryri.

After the Norman conquest of 1282, Denbigh was granted to the Earl of Lincoln, Henry De Lacy, who then became the first Lord of Denbigh. He then built Denbigh Castle, along with the town walls, by order of King Edward 1. The town then grew within these castle walls, however was burnt down during the War of the Roses, causing the town to relocate to the hill top, where the present high street lies.

In 1579, Robert Dudley, the first Earl of Leicester and Baron of Denbigh, developed plans to build a cathedral within Denbigh, intending to move the city status from St Asaph. However, the project, known as Leicester's Church, was left incomplete after his death, and is now owned by CADW.

In the mid 1500s, Robert Dudley commissioned the Shire Hall, which is now used as the town library. This was likely the first covered market building in Denbigh, until a large market hall was built between Chapel Place and Crown Square in 1848. Denbigh flourished as a market town during the Tudor and Stuart periods, with trades such as shoemakers, saddlers, smiths and weavers. These survived in the area until the industrial age in the 19th century.

By the mid 1800s, the town had become the main centre of the Vale of Clywd, and was introduced onto the railway network as a junction for the Vale of Clwyd railway line. This led north towards St Asaph and Rhyl. The railway closed in 1955, and was developed into a small retail park.

In 1848, the Former North Wales Hospital opened just west of the town and provided employment for the majority of the Denbigh population. At its peak it had 1500 patients. The hospital closed in the mid 1990s, falling into disrepair, but was obtained by Denbighshire County Council in 2018.

Another important part of Denbigh's culture was the former cinema at the top end of Love Lane. In 1928, the 'Scala' cinema opened, and was kept open till 1982, where it was renamed the Futura Cinema. Closing again in the 1990s, the building became a video rental store. In 1995, it was reopened again for a short period of time before closing. The building is now in ruin and awaiting redevelopment.

Opportunities exist to reinforce Denbigh's rich heritage as a modern historic market town, honouring its past while creating a vibrant future. Revitalising the town centre through heritage-led interventions can reclaim Denbigh's role as a hub for trade and community life. This has the potential to boost economic activity, foster social cohesion, and ensure that Denbigh's market town legacy thrives for generations to come.



Placemaking Plans

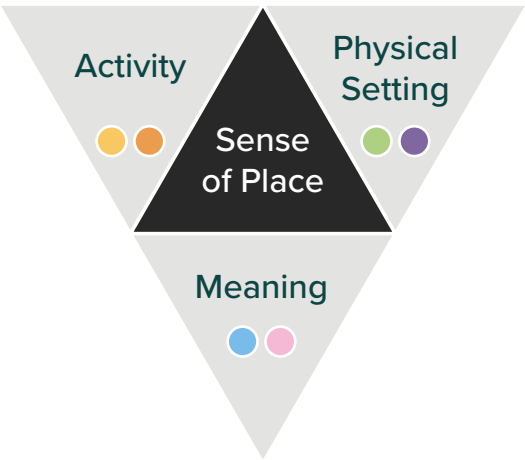
Placemaking plans are the means to ensure placemaking is used as a statutory process. The plans are particularly important to satisfy the Welsh Government’s ‘town centre first’ principal to address the decline in our traditional high streets. They provide the means to set an agreed place vision for town centres that is supported by stakeholders and can be used to deliver investment that enhances diversity and resilience and increases vitality.

The Placemaking Wales Charter

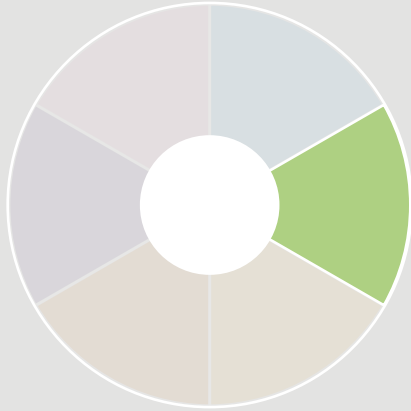
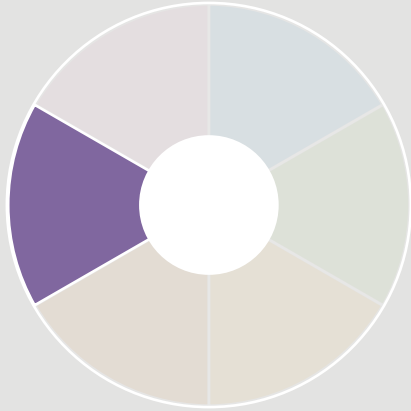
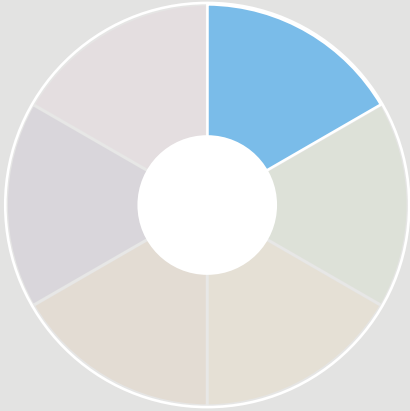
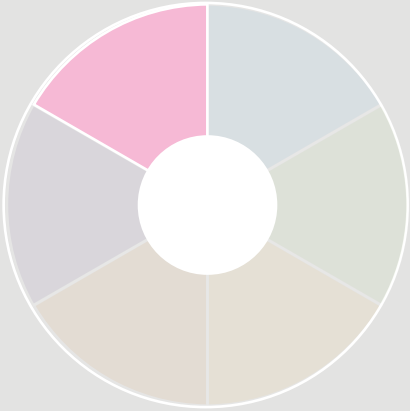
In 2020 Welsh Government and the Design Commission for Wales, in collaboration with the Placemaking Wales Partnership, developed the Wales Placemaking Charter.

The Charter provides advice for placemaking practice that can be applied to the preparation of the plans; building on the focus of placemaking in policy and practice in Wales, aiming to provide an overview of the wide range of considerations. This also promotes the creation of vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive communities across Wales by focusing on the quality and design of the places where people live, work, and play.

To help shape practice, the Charter introduces six placemaking principals: People and Community; Movement; Public Realm; Location; Mix of Uses; and Identity. The Placemaking Plan has been prepared in accordance with these principals. The principals are set out below and have been used to structure this document.



The diagram above shows how the placemaking principals, identified in the *Wales Placemaking Guide (2020)* document, collectively contributes towards the creation of a better sense of place and high-quality environment for all.

WALES PLACEMAKING GUIDE PRINCIPALS					
PHYSICAL SETTING		ACTIVITY		MEANING	
					
Movement	Mix of Uses	Location	Public Realm	People and Community	Identity
Walking, cycling and public transport are prioritised to provide a choice of transport modes and avoid dependence on private vehicles. Well designed and safe active travel routes connect to the wider active travel network and public transport stations and stops are positively integrated.		Places should grow and develop in a way that uses land efficiently, supports and enhances existing places and is well connected. The location of housing, employment and leisure and other facilities are planned to help reduce the need to travel.		The local community is involved in the development of proposals. The needs, aspirations, health and well-being of all people are considered at the outset. Proposals are shaped to help to meet these needs as well as creating, integrating, protecting and/or enhancing a sense of community and to promote equality.	
Places have a range of purposes which provide opportunities for community development, local business growth and access to jobs, services and facilities via walking, cycling or public transport. Development density and a mix of uses and tenures helps to support a diverse community and vibrant public realm.				The positive, distinctive qualities of existing places are valued and respected. The unique features and opportunities of a location including heritage, culture, language, built and natural physical attributes are identified and responded to.	



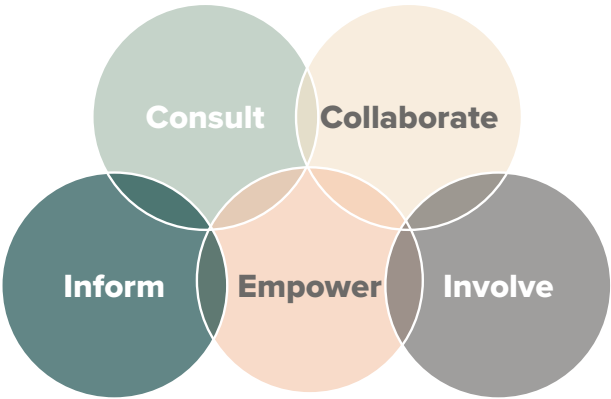
Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement is essential for the development of successful Placemaking Plans. It is critical to fully understand and deliver on the Community and Identity placemaking principals of the Placemaking Charter, and is also essential to ensure shared ownership and enable all stakeholders involved in shaping the character and vitality of towns to work together to deliver investments.

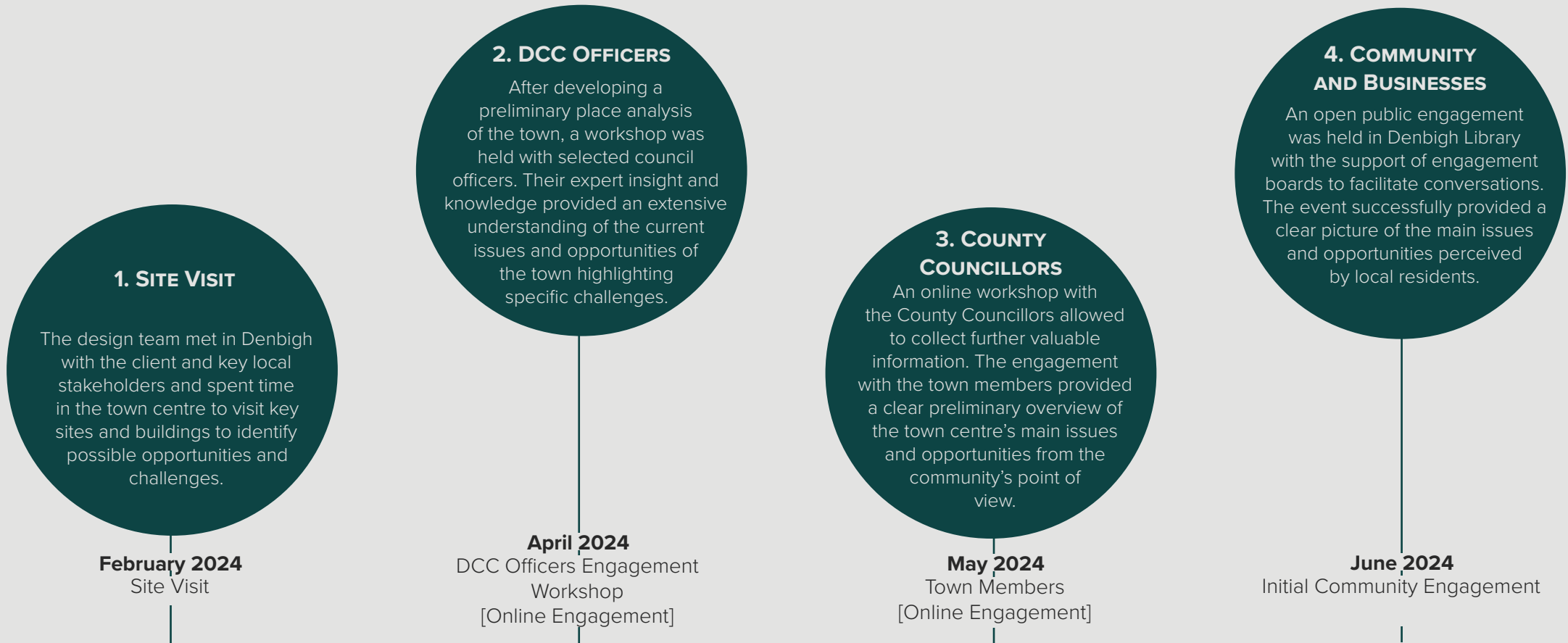
The Denbigh Town Centre Placemaking Plan has been underpinned by key stakeholder engagements with a wide range of professional and local stakeholders. This has included the Denbighshire County Council Officers, Local Members, the Town Council, local business owners and the community. Engagement was undertaken through a variety of forms, including online and in-person workshops and time spent in the town centre.

The initial engagement was undertaken from April through to June 2024, with further engagement to follow and iteratively informed the preparation of the Placemaking Plan.

An overview of the engagement process is illustrated to the right. Further information regarding the feedback collected during the engagement is provided later in the document.



The Urbanists stakeholder engagement goals.



February 2024
Beginning of the project



Town Centre Issues and Opportunities Engagements



5. TOWN MEMBERS

A second round of online workshops with town members offered further opportunities to gather valuable insights. This engagement helped refine the preliminary understanding of the town centre's main challenges and opportunities from the community's perspective.

September 2024

Town Members
[Online Engagement]

6. COMMUNITY AND BUSINESSES

The second round of public engagement took place at Denbigh Library, supported by engagement boards to encourage discussions. The event effectively helped us refine what worked well and identify areas for improvement on the placemaking plan.

September 2024

Second Round of Community
Engagement

7. DCC OFFICERS

An final workshop with DCC Officers provided an opportunity to gather further valuable information. This engagement offered a clear preliminary overview of main issues and insights, helping our understanding of what would work well for Denbigh.

September 2024

DCC Officers
[Online Engagement]

Strategy Plan Engagements







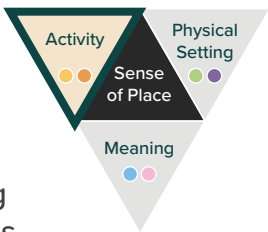
02

Denbigh Today: Place Analysis

Town Centre Analysis

Place Analysis

To understand the issues and opportunities a physical place analysis was undertaken of the town centre. The analysis considered each of the Placemaking Wales Charter principals, reflecting on each of the key aspects of what contributes to a sense of place; namely activity, physical setting and meaning.



Activity

Movement

- at both gateways to the town centre/high street partly due to buses and narrow roads. In certain areas, there is only room for one car to pass through at a time. This is most noticeable at the Western side of the high street. The vehicle access to the castle is narrow and unclear, and with a steep incline towards it, making driving a necessity for some people. Exploring the possibility of implementing an alternative one way system could offer a solution, and enhance the overall accessibility for a wider range of transport modes.
- Parking - Good amount of car parks off of high street with some offering free parking. Parking situated around the Castle is limited, with only one dedicated accessible parking space, restricting accessibility and enjoyment of the heritage asset.
- Public transport - There are no trains to Denbigh and so the only public transport available is via buses. These connect Denbigh to the surrounding towns and cities such as Wrexham, and a bus every 30 minutes to nearby Ruthin. At the roundabout on the Western side of town, the bus stops are situated along the busy road with no pedestrian crossings causing safety issues.
- Cycle routes - There are no national cycle routes though Denbigh or surrounding area, however future routes have been planned and should be taken into consideration as part of any future regeneration proposals to ensure they are well accommodated.

Denbigh has a total footfall of **654,633 per year (2022)**, with the majority of footfall taking place between July and December.

Mix of Uses

- The High Street - The historic high street includes part of Vale Street and Hall Square. Extending approximately 850m from each roundabout on either side in which the area of retail stretches. There is a significant vacancy rate of 26.4% - one of the highest in Welsh town centres currently. The business offer consists of everyday services, with a large concentration of independent units.
- Western Gateway - At this end of the high street, a pub, sports cafe/bar, and church surround a spacious roundabout. Two bus stops sit along the edges of the pavement around this creating a busy and unwelcoming point of arrival to the town centre.
- Eastern Gateway - The high street is linear with the majority of shops clustered in the centre with other dispersed and fragmented out along the Eastern area. This area feels slightly isolated from the town centre, mixed in with residential units and is very road dominated. Uses in this location consist of large supermarkets and several retail units.
- Castle - One of the main historic tourist attractions in the town is Denbigh Castle, sitting to the South of the town centre. Pedestrian and vehicle routes to the Castle are convoluted and unclear, presenting opportunities to enhance its connection with the town centre.



Vehicle dominated western gateway to the town



Pedestrian entrance to Car Park from the centre



Visually interesting street frontage along Hall Square



Western end of High Street showing harsh environment

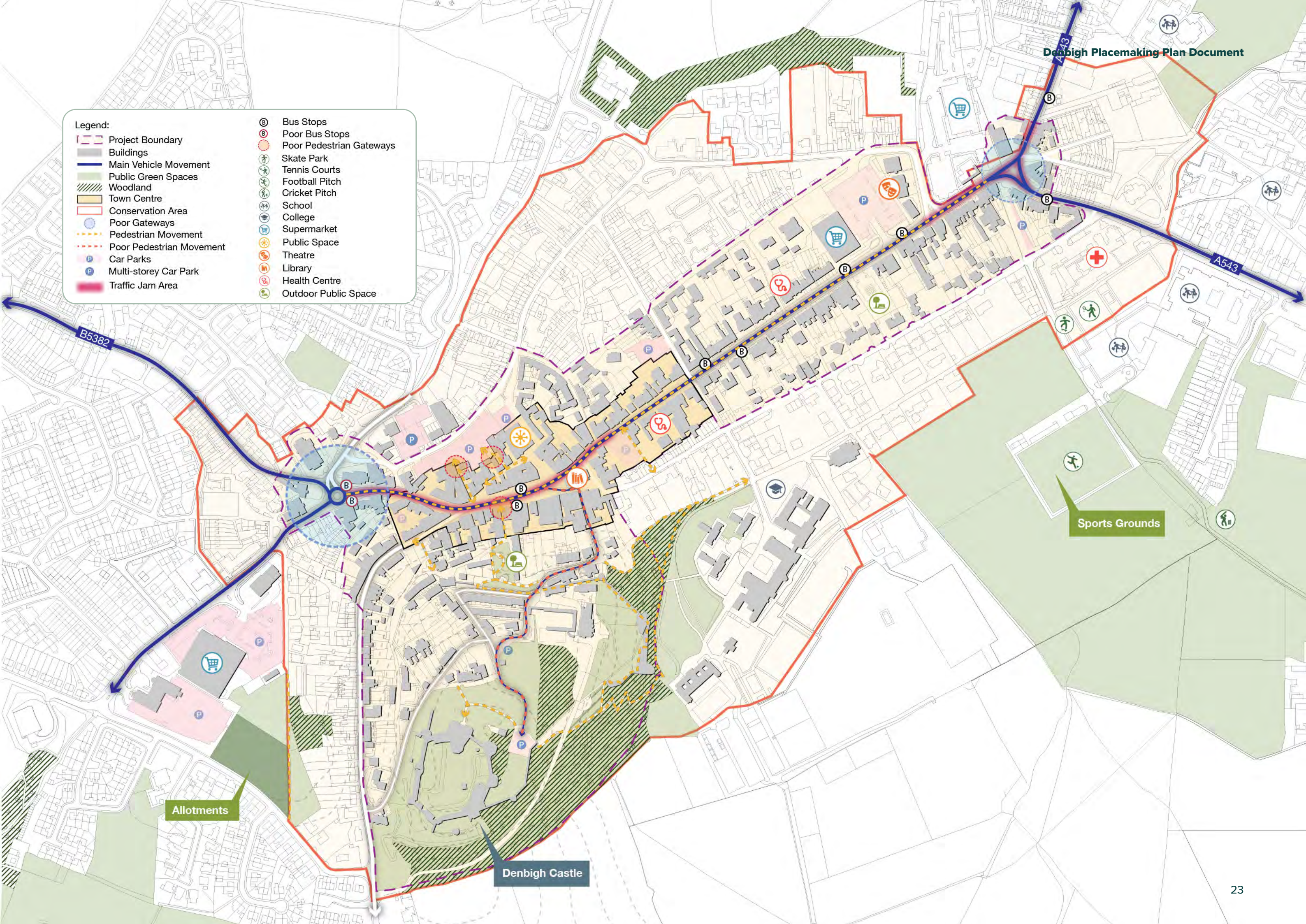


View over High Street towards Denbigh Library



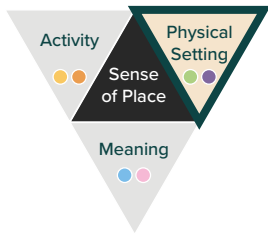
Uninviting side street towards Castle

- Legend:**
- Project Boundary
 - Buildings
 - Main Vehicle Movement
 - Public Green Spaces
 - Woodland
 - Town Centre
 - Conservation Area
 - Poor Gateways
 - Pedestrian Movement
 - Poor Pedestrian Movement
 - Car Parks
 - Multi-storey Car Park
 - Traffic Jam Area
 - Bus Stops
 - Poor Bus Stops
 - Poor Pedestrian Gateways
 - Skate Park
 - Tennis Courts
 - Football Pitch
 - Cricket Pitch
 - School
 - College
 - Supermarket
 - Public Space
 - Theatre
 - Library
 - Health Centre
 - Outdoor Public Space



Town Centre Analysis

Physical Setting



Location

- Catchment and Topography - Denbigh town centre is located at the heart of the settlement bounded by residential areas on either side. Topography across the settlement significantly inclines from the Western end South towards Denbigh Castle, and the High Street has a steady decline from West to East. This can inhibit descent for some residents utilising active travel.
- Homes - While some homes are sat above commercial units, the main residential areas are on either side of the town centre. The varying topography of the site may present challenges for residents then accessing the centre by foot. Exploring the potential demand and opportunity to introduce new homes into the central area could improve the vitality of the town centre and increase footfall for local businesses.
- Public Services - The Former County Hall, now Denbigh Library, sits in the centre of the high street. This offers facilities such as co-working spaces. Other public facilities include a Post Office in the centre and key health and leisure uses dispersed across the settlement. With the vacancies there is potential to increase the provision of public services within the centre if there is a need.
- Natural Resources - There are limited natural resources within the town centre. To the east of Denbigh lies the Clwydian Range, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and to the west are the Denbigh Moors. Berwyn Hills lie south of the Vale, and the North Wales coastline is 15 miles in the opposite direction.

Public Realm

- Streets - With a hard landscape and a road dominated High Street, the town does not present a high quality or welcoming pedestrian environment. Congestion and narrow pavements in various locations can result in unsafe spaces for pedestrians. The roundabout on the western end of the High Street has narrow pavements and no crossings creating a poor gateway to the town. Pavements are lined with bollards and railings which feel unnecessary and cluttered.
- Public Spaces - There are few defined pockets of public spaces along the High Street, some pedestrianised, but are underused as they offer limited opportunities for visitors to dwell, wait and socialise. Many of these sit along the busy High Street. As events in summer are often held in these spaces, there is an opportunity here to improve their role in this sense.
- Trees and Plants - Currently there is next to no natural shading and shelter from green infrastructure within the centre. While planters have been placed along the High Street there are other opportunities available to green the public realm and soften the landscape.



Back Row, pedestrian street off of Hall Square



Focal piece within Hall Square



Public gardens leading up towards Denbigh Castle



Pocket public space beside Denbigh Library



Public space outside Library



Incline South towards Castle from the town centre

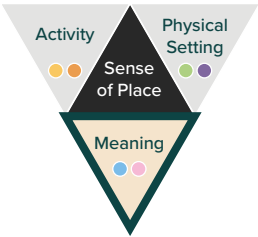
Legend:

- Project Boundary
- Buildings
- Poor Quality Buildings
- Public Green Spaces
- ▨ Woodland
- Town Centre
- Conservation Area
- Poor Gateways
- ▨ Underused Public Space
- ▨ Key Public Spaces
- Poor Facade
- P Car Parks
- P Multi-storey Car Park
- B Bus Stops
- B Poor Bus Stops
- ⚽ Skate Park
- 🎾 Tennis Courts
- ⚽ Football Pitch
- ⚽ Cricket Pitch



Town Centre Analysis

Meaning



People and Community

- Drawing people into the centre - Even with one of the highest vacancy rates among all the main town centres at 26.4% in 2024, Denbigh is home to a mix of independent shops, cafés, pubs and restaurants. Large supermarkets are located at both far ends of the centre potentially competing with retail uses within the centre.
- Events - Each year Denbigh holds the Denbigh Midsummer Festival in June, attracting all different people and ages in the community into the town centre. The festival is spread across town in different venues including the Market Hall, Crown Square, Library, schools and the Theatre. This brings a sense of community to the town as well as attracting tourists. Opportunities to explore how the town centre can support and facilitate these events should be considered.
- Facilities for young people - Historic facilities which are welcomed from a broad range of demographics have been lost over time such as the town cinema. Vacant historic structures can provide opportunities for community run uses to bring empty buildings back into use and benefit younger groups.

Identity

- Architecture - Sitting within a conservation area, Denbigh holds more listed buildings than any other town in Wales and prides itself in the little generic regeneration that has taken place. The character of the old agricultural market town still remains, and a series of heritage sites surround the centre too including Denbigh Castle, Burgess Gate, Leicester’s Church and the now privately owned Former North Wales Hospital. The 1572 former County Hall now stands in the centre of the High Street as a public library and information centre.

- High street feel - The medieval layout of the town centre creates a series of small side streets and pockets of public spaces. With a traditional market town feel, and similar building heights the centre has a positive sense of enclosure, however, some of the side alleys leading to key visitor attractions, such as the castle, suffer from poor wayfinding. The architecture and historical aspects of the town make it an interesting place to explore and traverse, however the lack of green infrastructure creates a hard landscape.
- Topography - Steep level changes across the centre and wider settlement creates accessibility challenges. While there are level changes between some car parks and the high street these are slight.
- Future identity - There is a strong sense of pride in the community with regard to Denbigh’s history. The area, rich in medieval history, attracts tourists, but improvement in wayfinding, access, and accommodations is needed to enhance the overall experience.
- Culture and Art - Denbigh has a strong art, music and theatre scene, mostly organised by local volunteer groups and social enterprises. The Welsh Radio Museum, located on the western side of the high street, only opens on Fridays and occasional Saturdays. There are several monuments throughout the town, some controversial, that form part of the towns history. Local artists have worked to enliven the main pedestrian walkway from the high street to the castle.



Lawn area in front of Denbigh Castle



Burgess Gate



Traditional Architecture and materials within the town



Retail units along Vale Street



Traditional Market Town Architecture



Market Hall punctuating key view from Hall Square

- Legend:**
- Project Boundary
 - Buildings
 - Listed Buildings
 - Public Green Spaces
 - Woodland
 - Town Centre
 - Conservation Area
 - Car Parks
 - Multi-storey Car Park
 - Bus Stops
 - Poor Bus Stops
 - Castle Walls
 - Public Art/Monument
 - Key Public Space



Town Centre Analysis

This spider graph displays in two-dimensions Denbigh’s performance against the 6 placemaking principals stipulated in the Placemaking Wales Charter. This graph provides a useful summary identifying areas where the town is under performing which will guide the development of proposals and options. Scores are based on information collated and conclusions drawn from the town centre analysis. The following provides criteria sets which have been adopted to assess Denbigh:

Identity

1

Has a distinct identity

2

Strong sense of heritage and culture

3

Safe and welcoming

4

Strong use of iconography / storytelling

People and Community

1

Opportunities for community cohesion

2

Strong use of welsh language

3

Promotes community pride

4

Good access to community facilities

Mix of Uses

1

Provision for a diverse audience

2

Vibrant town centre

3

Diverse multifunctional green spaces

4

Strong day and night time economy

Movement

1

Active Travel well accommodated

2

Permeable routes that reflect desire lines

3

Safe and convenient public transport

4

Prioritise people over vehicles

Public Realm

1

High quality buildings and streetscape

2

Strong legibility and wayfinding

3

Provides inclusive spaces for all

4

Well integrated green infrastructure

Location

1

Well connected and supports wider context

2

Connections to nature at different scales

3

Appropriate scale and density

4

Land is used efficiently

Baseline scores:	
1	Significantly underperforms against the principals set out within Placemaking Guide
2	Underperforms against the principals set out within Placemaking Guide
3	Meets the principals set out within Placemaking Guide
4	Exceeds the principals set out within Placemaking Guide
5	Significantly exceeds the principals set out within Placemaking Guide

Based on our observations, we have undertaken a qualitative and subjective review of Denbigh’s placemaking qualities. This is necessary as it addresses the human-centric and experiential aspects that cannot be fully captured by quantitative metrics alone. Placemaking involves creating spaces that resonate with people’s identities, emotions, and cultural contexts, making subjective evaluation necessary for assessing factors like visual appeal, sense of belonging, and community engagement.



Placemaking Principal	Key Observations	Score
Identity		<u>13</u>
1. Has a distinct identity	Distinct historic core and architectural heritage, home to Denbigh Castle, surrounded by picturesque Welsh countryside which is visible from within the town, opportunities exist to enhance and celebrate these assets.	4
2. Strong sense of heritage and culture	Boasts many well-preserved buildings from various periods, including Tudor, Georgian, and Victorian architecture. Setting to and links to these structure can be poor, some historic structures within the town are vacant.	3
3. Safe and welcoming	Hosts a number of large events that appeal to a broad demographic, narrow pavements next to busy roads and unsurveilled lanes with poor wayfinding.	2
4. Strong use of iconography / storytelling	Home to a number of historical landmarks, buildings include decorative motifs, number of art installations and interpretive signage, opportunity to better emphasise	4
People and Community		<u>11</u>
1. Opportunities for community cohesion	Hosts a number of large community events, limited dwelling space within the town centre, loss of historic facilities that have been lost over time.	2
2. Strong use of welsh language	Many signs and public notices within Denbigh are bilingual, cultural events are held within the town which showcase Welsh language.	4
3. Promotes community pride	Dated building frontages and cluttered public realm, high percentage of vacant units, could better promote local culture and heritage.	2
4. Good access to community facilities	Broad range of community facilities including library, gallery and museum, opportunities to expand the number and variety of community facilities available.	3
Mix of Uses		<u>11</u>
1. Provision for a diverse audience	Positive mix of independent uses, wider range of uses evident outside of the town centre, opportunities for recreation within the town centre could be improved.	3
2. Vibrant town centre	Reasonable choice of food and beverage operators, high 26.4% vacancy rate within the town centre including long term vacant units.	2
3. Diverse multifunctional green spaces	Wide range of public open spaces around the periphery of the town, limited green spaces within the town centre.	3
4. Strong day and night time economy	Former uses associated with night time economy make up large portion of long term vacancies, opportunities to improve offer and attract investment exist.	3
Movement		<u>11</u>
1. Active Travel well accommodated	Narrow pavements and vehicle dominated pedestrian links hinder active travel, there are no strategic cycle routes within Denbigh or its immediate context.	2
2. Permeable routes that reflect desire lines	Historic pattern of the town results in convoluted links and poor wayfinding, opportunities to reinforce and enhance more direct routes exist.	3
3. Safe and convenient public transport	No trains link exist within Denbigh, bus stops are regularly positioned throughout the town centre, some stops result in congestion and are uncomfortable to wait in.	3
4. Prioritise people over vehicles	Wide carriageways and large junction resulting in narrow pavements, limited space for crossings, vehicles parked on pavements and limited pedestrian infrastructure.	2
Public Realm		<u>9</u>
1. High quality buildings and streetscape	Strong architectural character reflecting a rich history creating a visually interesting and attractive street scene, this is diminished by the level of street clutter.	4
2. Strong legibility and wayfinding	Organic irregular street patterns that pose challenge to legibility, number of strong landmarks and distinct features.	2
3. Provides inclusive spaces for all	Areas of public realm can be hostile to certain groups such as very young or old, there is limited pedestrian infrastructure within the town centre.	1
4. Well integrated green infrastructure	Little to no green infrastructure within the town centre, concentrated towards the edge of settlement and around the castle.	2
Location		<u>11</u>
1. Well connected and supports wider context	Links through Denbigh can be convoluted and hindered by the geography of the area, town centre is located centrally which improves town wide catchment	3
2. Connections to nature at different scales	Limited natural resources within the town centre, wide range of green spaces located to the perimeter of the town.	2
3. Appropriate scale and density	The architecture within the historic centre results in a ‘gentle density’ and ‘human scale’,	4
4. Land is used efficiently	Large areas of surface level parking and vacant land/buildings highlight opportunities for better utilisation.	2





03

Place Ambitions and Strategy

Vision and Core Ambitions

Following the completion of the place analysis, a series of core place ambitions have been prepared to provide a future vision for the town and frame the type of investment and projects that will be pursued. The ambitions respond to the place analysis and the stakeholders’ key feedback.

The core ambitions are presented below by each of the Placemaking Charter Principals.

Vision

To revitalise Denbigh as a vibrant historic destination, celebrating its rich Welsh heritage, stunning landscapes, and iconic High Street and castle. Denbigh will thrive as a pedestrian-friendly market town, nurturing community spirit with a diverse mix of homes, independent shops, and amenities. With excellent travel connections, Denbigh will be the gateway to the surrounding natural beauty. As a centre for Welsh culture, history, and language, it will host cultural events, showcase architecture and art, and support local businesses, residents, and future generations, fostering pride and a deep sense of community.

PHYSICAL SETTING

ACTIVITY

A THRIVING, HISTORICAL
DESTINATION

...in the heart of Denbighshire,
built upon the rich Welsh
heritage and history,
outstanding natural landscapes
and array of independent shops
creating an exceptional leisure
and recreational offer.

LOCATION

A VIBRANT MARKET TOWN
AND INVITING PUBLIC
REALM

...facilitating enjoyment of it’s listed
buildings and characterised by an
attractive and bustling High Street,
with pedestrian focused public
spaces able to support social
interactions and a strong sense of
community.

PUBLIC REALM

A CONNECTED AND
ACCESSIBLE TOWN FOR ALL

...with excellent active travel routes
connecting the High Street to the
east and west, key heritage sites
and surrounding areas; establishing
Denbigh as a base to explore the
wider natural landscape.

MOVEMENT

VITY

MEANING

A RICH MIX OF HOMES, INDEPENDENT SHOPS AND FACILITIES

...providing a broader range of uses that contribute towards day and night-time vibrancy for the town, benefiting from a series of spaces designed to support small businesses, community amenities and access to a wide range of local services.

MIX OF USES

A STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND PRIDE

...to support and serve the local residents, businesses and groups, as well as create a stronger offer for the younger generations; providing spaces that support local organisations operating within Denbigh's town centre.

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY

A CENTRE FOR WELSH CULTURE, HISTORY AND LANGUAGE

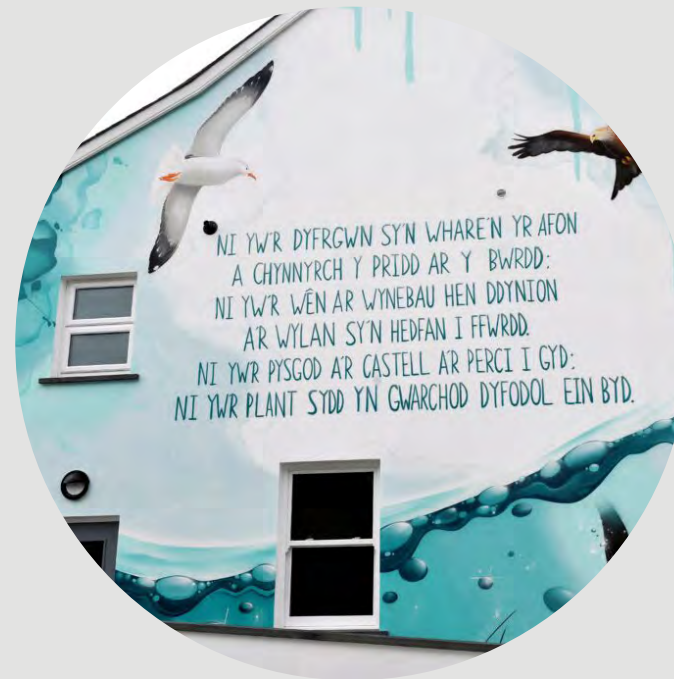
...that celebrates Denbigh's rich heritage and history through facilitating local and cultural events, architecture, and art, with a strong emphasis on promoting the Welsh language.

IDENTITY

Place Strategy and Intervention List

Town Wide Area Interventions

- Improve pedestrian links from the surrounding residential areas across Denbigh into the town centre, particularly from the west, where there are opportunities to improve existing connections.
- Invest in, secure and broaden the range of activities available on green spaces within Denbigh. Introduce new facilities that will maximise utility and appeal to all demographics.
- Introduce stronger wayfinding throughout the town, specifically towards the many valuable historic features, buildings and cultural assets. This can be achieved in a manner that also supports and enhances welsh language.
- Refurbish vacant buildings across the high street to introduce new uses including residential and commercial/retail, enhancing the vitality and sense of place these structures contribute towards the high street.
- Pedestrian safety to be prioritised throughout, this can be achieved by sensibly reconsidering the distribution of space between pedestrians and vehicles and mitigating conflicts between the two users.





Denbigh Industrial Estate

Denbigh Leisure Centre

Cae Hywel Park

Former North Wales Hospital and 1950s museum

Legend:

- Focused Study Areas
- Town Centre Boundary
- Roads
- Conservation Boundary
- Overarching Study Area
- Community Building
- Improved connections to centre
- Historical Building

Place Strategy and Intervention List

Denbigh Castle & Western Denbigh

- 1

Caledfryn Council Office Retrofit with new use as a healthcare facility.
- 2

Expand outdoor green space offer of the western side of town with new recreational facilities Cae Hywel Park including new running track, multi-use games area (MUGA) and outdoor fitness equipment to diversify recreational offer, while supporting and enhancing biodiversity.
- 3

Improve existing heritage trails with additional wayfinding with an emphasis on links to Denbigh Castle from the high street.
- 4

Improve access to the castle with designated parking adjacent to St Hilary’s Terrace, within highway boundary, for those with mobility challenges, as well as potential for alternative modes of public mode of transport visitors.
- 5

Improved infrastructure around the walking routes, to and from the castle, along the town walls, and to other heritage destinations. Examples of this could include improving the ground materials and adding handrails at steep points, aiding accessibility.
- 6

Explore opportunities for additional public art installations / murals along Broomhill Lane towards the castle building upon past efforts.
- 7

Create designated space for bins along Broomhill Lane to deal with the waste issue along this important connecting route between the town centre and Denbigh Castle.
- 8

Improve the wayfinding around the castle to the local car park. Narrow road with roadside parking to allow the green space to expand and create a less harsh landscape in front of St Hilary’s Chapel.
- 9

Improve utilisation of the green area around Denbigh Castle including provision of a flexible green space which includes space for events, social seating and children’s play provision.
- 10

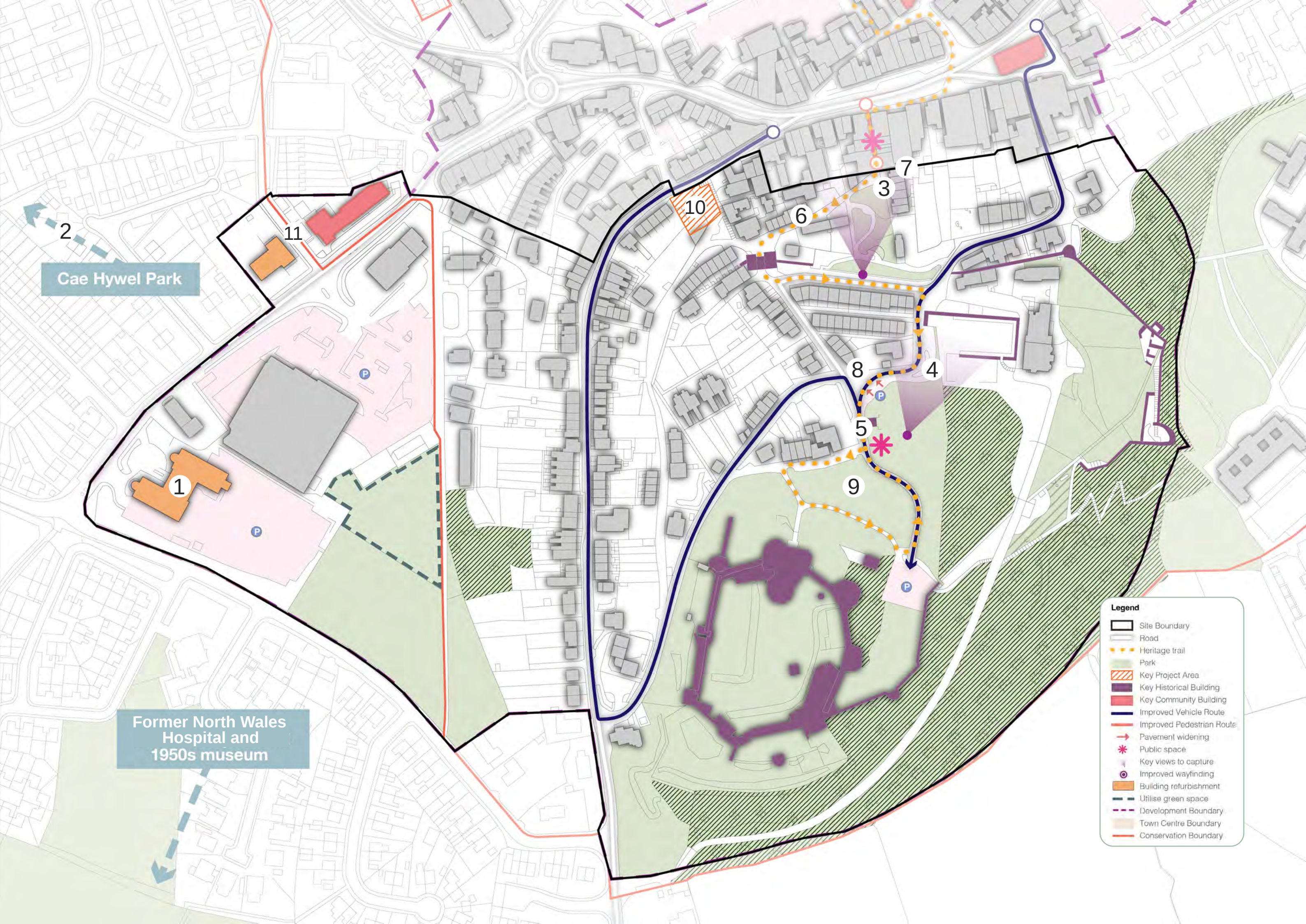
Explore redevelopment of the former Scala Cinema (Wedgewood Cinema) site for residential or multi-purpose hub for community, business, and well-being, capable of housing uses such as business hub and multi-purpose rooms.
- 11

Explore opportunity to consolidate fire station with other emergency services providing the Hwb more space to expand.

Projects already under consideration

Supported core place ambition(s)





Legend

- Site Boundary
- Road
- Heritage trail
- Park
- Key Project Area
- Key Historical Building
- Key Community Building
- Improved Vehicle Route
- Improved Pedestrian Route
- Pavement widening
- Public space
- Key views to capture
- Improved wayfinding
- Building refurbishment
- Utilise green space
- Development Boundary
- Town Centre Boundary
- Conservation Boundary

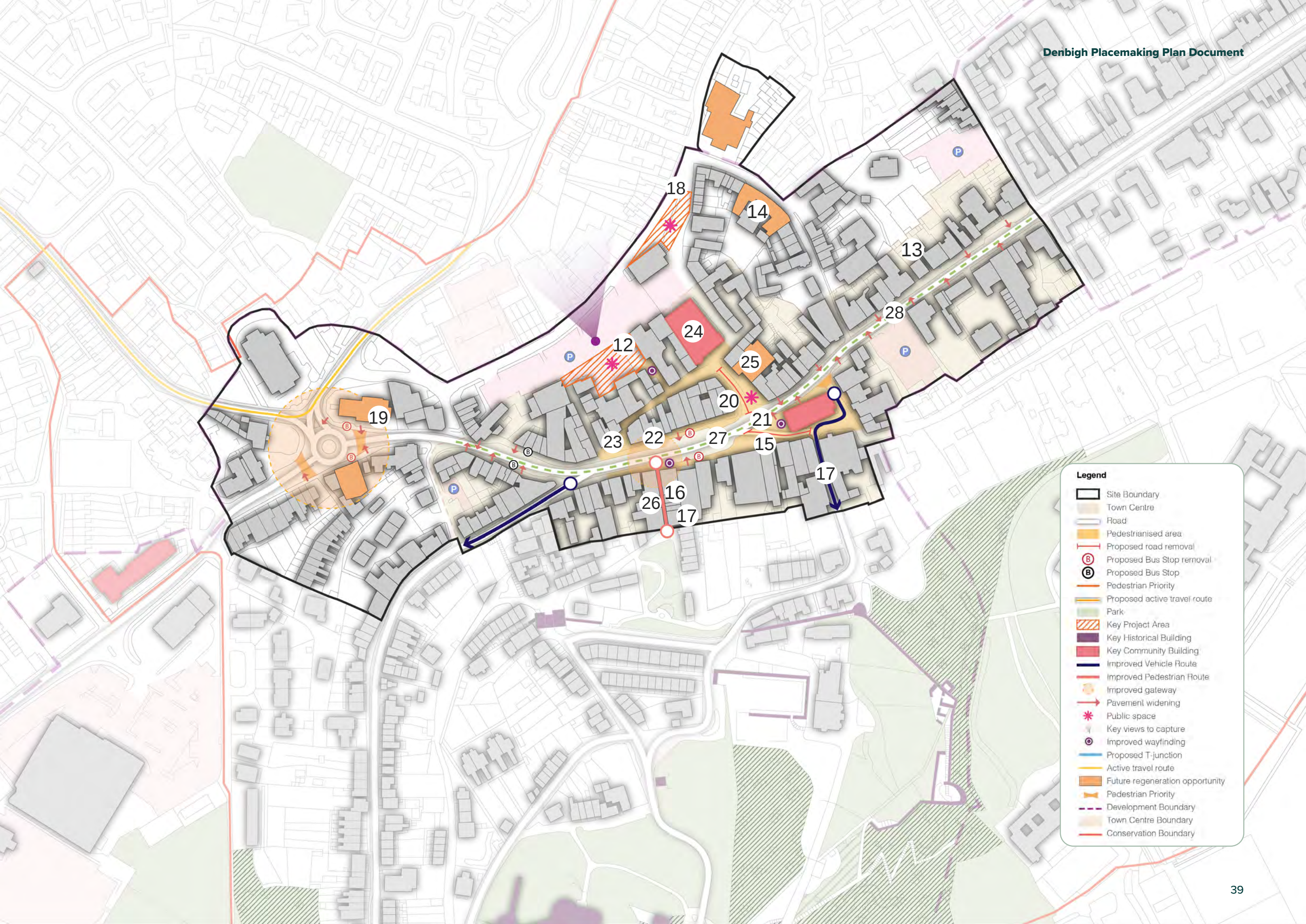
Place Strategy and Intervention List

Western Gateway & Town Centre

12. Better utilise Factory Ward car park, redesigning a small part of the area to create a flexible event space capable of housing outdoor market and meanwhile uses units targeted towards early start ups.
13. Explore the conversion underutilised upper storeys of buildings along High Street into flats; making use of redundant space and providing new housing and creating greater activity in the centre outside of core retail hours.
14. Invest in and restore the historic Gwasg Gee Print Works listed building to provide new flexible mixed-use space, including residential, commercial, or community uses within the heart of Denbigh
15. Access to the rear of the library (Sgwar Y Neuadd) to be pedestrian only to create a high quality environment and more pedestrian friendly space local businesses can spill into.
16. Invest in and reinforce the heritage trails within Denbigh through stronger wayfinding, including within High Street, Bull Lane, Broomhill Lane to incentivise movement between Denbigh Castle and the centre.
17. Improve access to Denbigh Castle through street design enhancements, including pedestrian priority treatments and highways reconfiguration along Bull Lane running from south to north, gaining spaces for defined on street parking and safe pedestrian routes. The highways reconfiguration would stretch to St. Hilary's terrace where a rationalised public realm would start with pinch points to help control the traffic from this point onwards, taking into account the historic features and street patterns.
18. Explore opportunities around Chapel Place which could be activated by bringing the arches back into use, targeted towards local start-ups, reclaiming a small part of the street to create small spill out space.
19. Introduce new pedestrian crossings to improve pedestrian access, priority and safety, responding to the desire lines and explore reducing the dominance of vehicle infrastructure. Plans for Lenten Pool are already underway to improve the area.
20. Create a more pedestrian orientated space in front of The Crown, between Back Row and Hall Square, by redesigning the space to restrict vehicle movement; allow surrounding businesses to spill out onto the street and more appropriate space to be created to enjoy the positive historic structures in this location.
21. Improve wayfinding and public awareness of local events and activate this through a new bilingual town/heritage information board near to Denbigh Library. Incorporate digital capabilities into the notice board to better allow for promotion of local events.
22. Improve the public realm along High Street and Hall Square to make the environment more attractive and subservient to the positive historical architecture introducing greenery and de-cluttering. Add more sociable seating to create more appealing places to stop and sit.
23. Improve and invest in consistent high quality shop fronts within the town centre to create a more attractive offer for existing local businesses and improve overall sense of place.
24. Invest in the Town Hall to better enable its role as a multi-generational community hub, enhancing it's capabilities in hosting local events and community facilities targeted towards helping vulnerable users.
25. Explore opportunities to invest in The Crown to bring the structure back into use, helping sustain the historic building and contribute towards the vibrancy of the town.
26. Express Welsh language and culture in public art and wayfinding around the town centre.
27. Leverage current and implement new digital infrastructure within the town centre to produce near-real-time, hyper-local data, and provide reliable and trustworthy free Wi-Fi in public spaces like Crown Lane and High Street to encourage people to spend more time in them and using the network's splash page to promote upcoming events or local businesses.
28. Explore implementation of a vacant unit activation scheme to help regenerate empty town centre units in prominent location, improving the offer and perceived quality of the town.



- Projects already under consideration
- Supported core place ambition(s)



Legend

- Site Boundary
- Town Centre
- Road
- Pedestrianised area
- Proposed road removal
- Proposed Bus Stop removal
- Proposed Bus Stop
- Pedestrian Priority
- Proposed active travel route
- Park
- Key Project Area
- Key Historical Building
- Key Community Building
- Improved Vehicle Route
- Improved Pedestrian Route
- Improved gateway
- Pavement widening
- Public space
- Key views to capture
- Improved wayfinding
- Proposed T-junction
- Active travel route
- Future regeneration opportunity
- Pedestrian Priority
- Development Boundary
- Town Centre Boundary
- Conservation Boundary

Place Strategy and Intervention List

Eastern Gateway & Vale Street

29. Explore opportunities to reduce the extent of vehicle infrastructure at Ruthin and Ryan Road junction at the eastern edge of town centre to create a more attractive and safe environment for pedestrians, as well as better sense of arrival into the town.
30. Improve Vale Street with new street furniture such as benches to make the street more inviting for pedestrians, also utilise material changes at key junctions to facilitate pedestrian crossing movements and naturally calm traffic. Benches should be orientated to capitalise on positive views out from the street.
31. Implement street greening where appropriate with planters, rain gardens and trees along the street to provide shade and a pleasant environment which will improve overall aesthetic and support local businesses. Work with local grassroots groups invested in maintaining and introducing greenery in the town when exploring this.
32. Express Welsh language and culture in public art and wayfinding along Vale Street through bilingual signage, cultural themes in public art and use of poetry and literature.
33. Invest in Middle Parc to introduce more facilities and amenities to attract a broader range of users, including outdoor exercise equipment, fitness trail, social seating areas with some sheltered provision.
34. Provide new cycle infrastructure secure storage along Vale Street to build upon the future active travel links and support connectivity to Theatr Twm o'r Nant. Explore opportunities to utilise disused railway lines to contribute towards an expanded active travel network and the provision of a bike repair station, including pump, tools and stand adjacent to active travel link through the park
35. Explore how new digital infrastructure along Vale Street can enhance the visitor experience in Denbigh and bring more people in to the town centre and heritage attractions. This could include implementing reliable and secure public Wi-Fi, which could also provide access to a local events information. Additionally, a digital noticeboard placed in a prominent location could provide visitors with local information and special offers, making their stay more convenient and enjoyable.
36. Improve pedestrian links along Vale Street and surroundings, with better links east to west, to schools and retail, and integrating with past and future initiatives, while promoting sustainable transport and reducing carbon emissions.
37. Create pedestrian priority junctions at secondary junctions, prioritising pedestrian movement along Vale street and creating a more attractive street.
38. Explore implementation of a vacant unit activation scheme to help regenerate empty Vale Street units in prominent location, improving the offer and perceived quality of the town.

Projects already under consideration

Supported core place ambition(s)

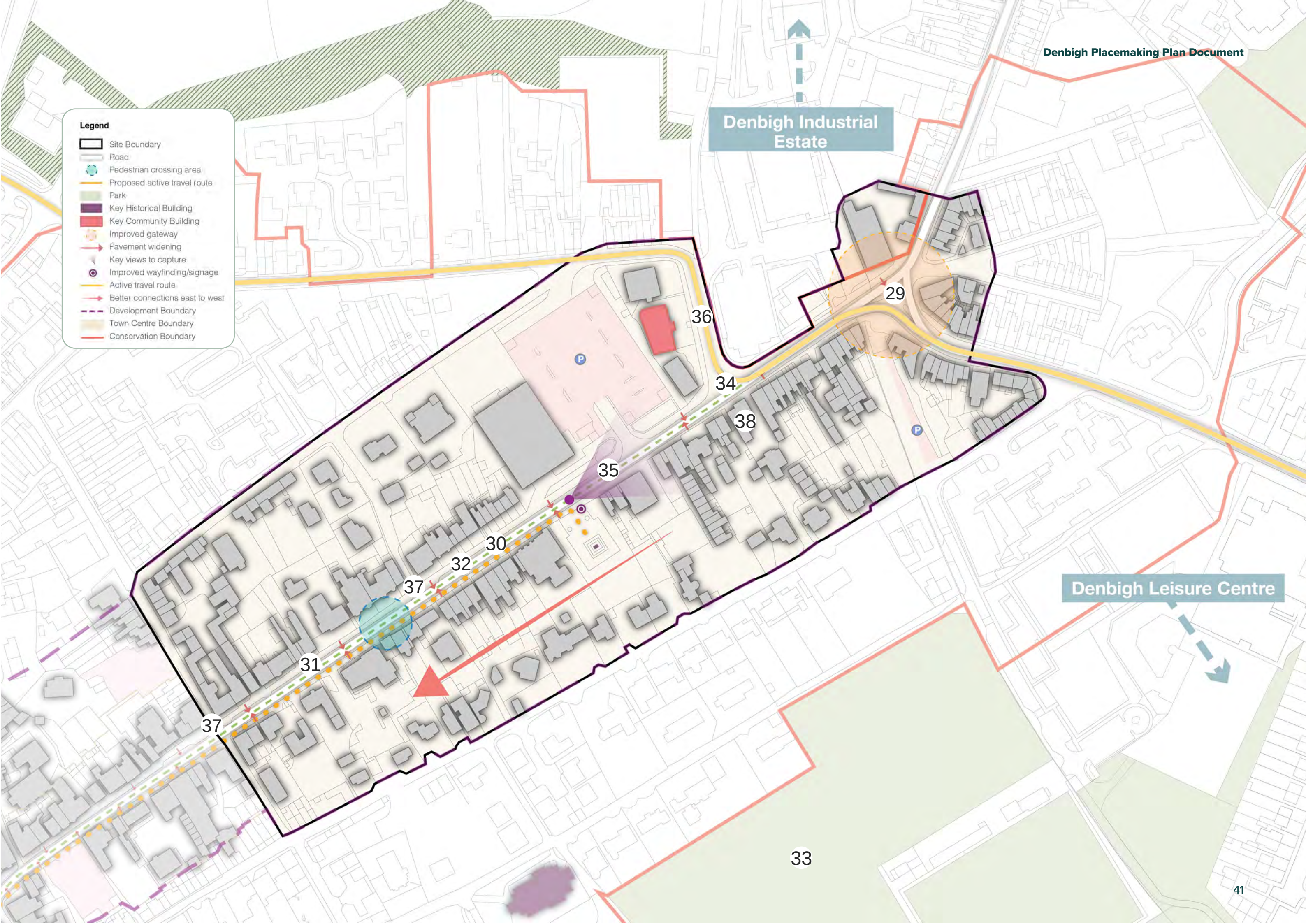


Denbigh Industrial Estate

Denbigh Leisure Centre

Legend

-  Site Boundary
-  Road
-  Pedestrian crossing area
-  Proposed active travel route
-  Park
-  Key Historical Building
-  Key Community Building
-  Improved gateway
-  Pavement widening
-  Key views to capture
-  Improved wayfinding/signage
-  Active travel route
-  Better connections east to west
-  Development Boundary
-  Town Centre Boundary
-  Conservation Boundary



Town Centre Analysis

Post implementation of Proposals

This spider graph displays in two-dimensions Denbigh’s performance against the 6 placemaking principals stipulated in the Placemaking Wales Charter. This graph provides a useful summary to show how the implementation of proposals will improve each aspect of the town, in comparison to the previous scores.

Identity

- 1 Has a distinct identity
- 2 Strong sense of heritage and culture
- 3 Safe and welcoming
- 4 Strong use of iconography / stroytelling

Movement

- 1 Active Travel well accommodated
- 2 Permeable routes that reflect desire lines
- 3 Safe and convenient public transport
- 4 Prioritise people over vehicles

People and Community

- 1 Opportunities for community cohesion
- 2 Strong use of welsh language
- 3 Promotes community pride
- 4 Good access to community facilities

Public Realm

- 1 High quality buildings and streetscape
- 2 Strong legibility and wayfinding
- 3 Provides inclusive spaces for all
- 4 Well integrated green infrastructure

Mix of Uses

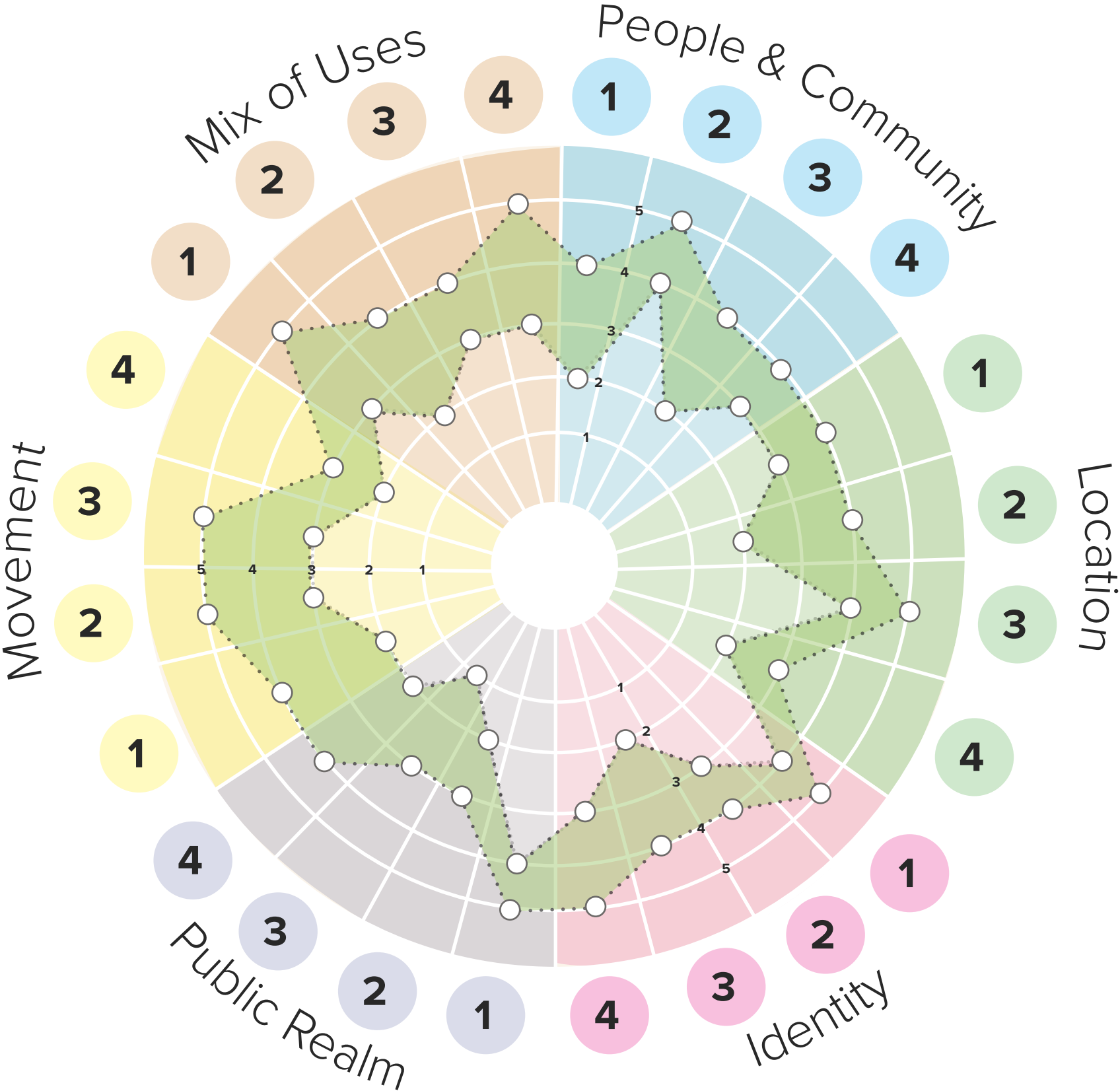
- 1 Provision for a diverse audience
- 2 Vibrant town centre
- 3 Diverse multifunctional green spaces
- 4 Strong day and night time economy

Location

- 1 Well connected and supports wider context
- 2 Connections to nature at different scales
- 3 Appropriate scale and density
- 4 Land is used efficiently

Baseline scores:	
1	Significantly underperforms against the principals set out within Placemaking Guide
2	Underperforms against the principals set out within Placemaking Guide
3	Meets the principals set out within Placemaking Guide
4	Exceeds the principals set out within Placemaking Guide
5	Significantly exceeds the principals set out within Placemaking Guide

A qualitative and subjective review of Denbigh’s placemaking qualities is necessary as it addresses the human-centric and experiential aspects that cannot be fully captured by quantitative metrics alone. Placemaking involves creating spaces that resonate with people’s identities, emotions, and cultural contexts, making subjective evaluation necessary for assessing factors like visual appeal, sense of belonging, and community engagement.



Placemaking Principal	Key Observations	Score
Identity		18
1. Has a distinct identity	Investment into the refurbishment of the historic buildings. Restoring landmarks like the Crown Hotel will enhance Denbigh’s rich heritage, creating a more appealing townscape for both residents and visitors to enjoy.	5
2. Strong sense of heritage and culture	Enhancing heritage trails and signage. Bilingual Welsh-English signs will encourage exploration of historic sites while celebrating and promoting the Welsh language and culture.	4
3. Safe and welcoming	Improving pedestrian priority through streetscape and transport enhancements will make the area feel safer and more welcoming for everyone.	4
4. Strong use of iconography / storytelling	Adding vibrant murals of Denbigh’s history and Welsh-language signs will make the town more attractive to visitors and strengthen Denbigh’s cultural identity.	5
People and Community		17
1. Opportunities for community cohesion	Reintroducing markets and festivals to the town centre, along with re-purposing vacant properties for housing, will boost footfall and revitalise the area.	4
2. Strong use of welsh language	Ensuring Welsh is prominently featured in signage and festivals will celebrate the town’s cultural heritage and foster a sense of identity.	5
3. Promotes community pride	Expanding on the success of current festivals, while focusing on cleaning up the town and refurbishing historic buildings, will make Denbigh a source of pride for its community.	4
4. Good access to community facilities	Developing and improving a cluster of accessible facilities, such as the Library, in the town centre will attract more visitors, encouraging increased use and further boosting footfall.	4
Mix of Uses		18
1. Provision for a diverse audience	Developing amenities, particularly on the High Street that cater to both locals and visitors will create a more inclusive and vibrant town centre.	5
2. Vibrant town centre	Bringing back more uses into the centre, as well as more homes within the centre will increase footfall and levels of activity making it a more vibrant destination.	4
3. Diverse multifunctional green spaces	Upgrading and promoting existing green areas, eg, around the castle, for events, dog walking, and sports activities will strengthen the town’s recreational offerings.	4
4. Strong day and night time economy	Introducing more food and beverage options and creating venues for evening events will establish the town centre as a lively and inviting destination.	5
Movement		17
1. Active Travel well economy	Developing dedicated cycling paths and improving pavements will make the town more accessible and enjoyable for cyclists and pedestrians.	4
2. Permeable routes that reflect desire lines	Establishing new routes to the castle will encourage more visitors to explore this historic landmark.	5
3. Safe and convenient public transport	Works to Lenten Pool Roundabout will reduce congestion and improve the quality of access to public transport.	5
4. Prioritise people over vehicles	Increasing pedestrian focused environments will create a safer, more pleasant environment for walking and shopping, particularly around Crown Square.	3
Public Realm		15
1. High quality buildings and streetscape	Improved street furniture, such as benches, planters and bins, makes the setting more desirable to spend time in.	5
2. Strong legibility and wayfinding	Clearer signage and well-defined trails will help visitors navigate easily, allowing them to explore more of the town’s attractions.	3
3. Provides inclusive spaces for all	Pedestrianisation of certain areas, such as Crown Square, to create a more pleasant environment to be in with better street furniture and lighting.	3
4. Well integrated green infrastructure	Introducing more plants and improving existing green spaces will create a pleasant, natural environment that enhances the town.	4
Location		16
1. Well connected and supports wider context	Upgrading the main gateways into Denbigh and improving transport connections will make the town more accessible and appealing to visitors.	4
2. Connections to nature at different scales	Developing existing green areas close to the town and promoting their use will attract both locals and visitors to enjoy the natural surroundings.	4
3. Appropriate scale and density	Maintaining Denbigh’s historic character while ensuring the town centre remains easily walkable for people.	5
4. Land is used efficiently	Utilising vacant buildings and underutilised spaces, such as part of the Factory Ward Car Park, creates opportunities for a more vibrant and inviting destination.	3

theurbanists

Cardiff

Westgate House
11 Womanby Street
Cardiff, CF10 1BR

Email

info@theurbanists.net

www.theurbanists.net

Bristol

Studio 410, Generator Building
Finzels Reach
Bristol, BS1 6BX

Phone

029 2023 6133