

Draft Riverside Park Strategy

Gateshead Council November 2007

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Vision

RIVERSIDE PARK IS A **UNIQUE ASSET** AT THE HEART OF NEWCASTLEGATESHEAD, THAT **LINKS** GATESHEAD QUAYS WITH DUNSTON STAITHS AND THE **COMMUNITIES** WHICH SURROUND IT. RIVERSIDE PARK HAS THE **POTENTIAL** TO BECOME AN **ESSENTIAL LEISURE, RECREATION AND ARTS VENUE**. IT IS TO BE DEVELOPED INTO A **DESTINATION** IN ITS OWN RIGHT THAT BEFITS ITS **CHARACTER, LOCATION** AND WHICH WILL BENEFIT THE RESIDENTS OF NEWCASTLEGATESHEAD AND THE REGION.

A recent CABE study found that ninety-one per cent of people believe that public parks and open spaces improve their quality of life; it is therefore essential that open space in Gateshead is improved and maintained to improve the quality of life of Gateshead's residents. This strategy focuses on priorities to develop Riverside Park for the local community and visitors to NewcastleGateshead.

How Will This Strategy Make a Difference?

This draft strategy has been formulated to develop a set of key strategic objectives, and actions to regenerate Riverside Park. Following consultation with local residents and key stakeholders and the final adoption of the document the strategy will:

- Provide a single, agreed plan to take forward to improve Riverside Park.
- Build confidence in the park, and the emerging communities in central Gateshead, to increase the number of visitors to the park.
- Create and sustains effective partnerships with the local community and key stakeholders.
- Clarify the issues and improves strategic decision-making.
- Provide a strategic justification for funding bids that will address Riverside Park's needs.



Riverside Park's Context



Fig 1: Riverside Park Strategy Boundary

Riverside Park is a major asset of Newcastle Gateshead's urban centre. The park is located on the banks of the Tyne, and is in a strategic position alongside the established and emerging residential communities, leisure and employment opportunities on the riverside, Gateshead Quays and the Town Centre.

Riverside Park is not a traditional park, like Saltwell Park. Riverside Park is an informal recreational space, which is open to the public 24 hours a day, and has the potential to become self-policing due to its size, topography, historical and cultural characteristics.

Riverside Park's Context

The plans on this page and the next page illustrates Riverside Park's unique location within Central Gateshead, and the scale of new development that is proposed and is being constructed within the Town Centre, Gateshead Quays and one the riverfront. As well as individual new developments, a Regeneration Delivery Strategy has been commissioned to guide the overall delivery of the regeneration of Gateshead Town Centre. This is particularly important as the study boundary is adjacent to the eastern park boundary

In addition to new developments, there is an existing social housing residential development which backs onto the park towards the west.

Running through the heart of Riverside Park is a dedicated busway, which is used by the Centrelink bus service, a frequent non-stop bus service between Gateshead Town Centre and the Metrocentre which commenced in Spring 2005, and provides passengers with impressive views of Riverside Park and the River Tyne. Although the service does not currently stop at Riverside Park or at any other stops between Gateshead Town Centre and the Metrocentre.

Alongside Riverside Park and the riverfront is part of the Keelman's Way (National Cycle Network route 14), a 14-mile route following the south bank and the River Tyne from Wylam to Bill Quay. This route is being continually improved alongside new development providing a sustainable means of access.

Pedestrian footpaths run throughout Riverside Park, and link the park to its surrounding areas. The condition of the footpaths vary from undeveloped desire lines to the formal entrance of Riverside Park at the Rise and Fall sculpture.

The park, therefore has the opportunity to create a safe and pleasant route for public transport users commuting or visiting the attractions of NewcastleGateshead, therefore reducing car use and congestion.

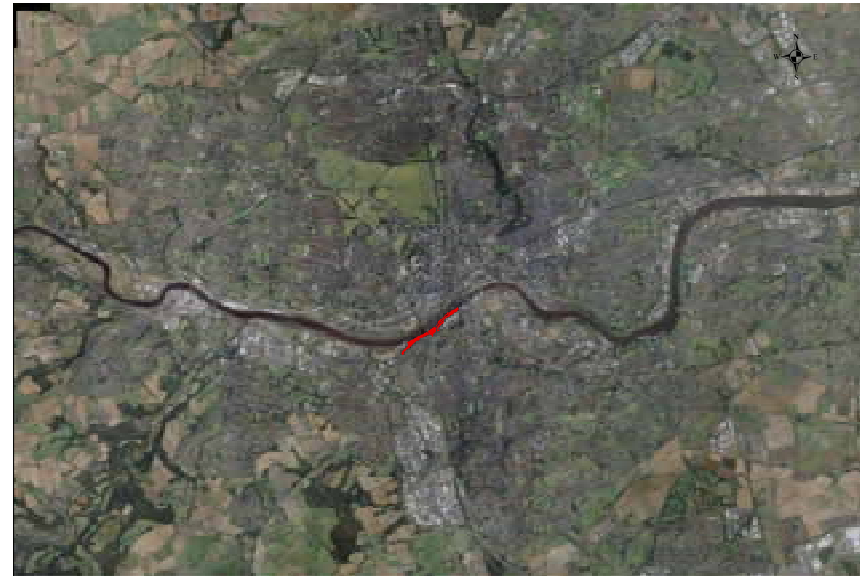
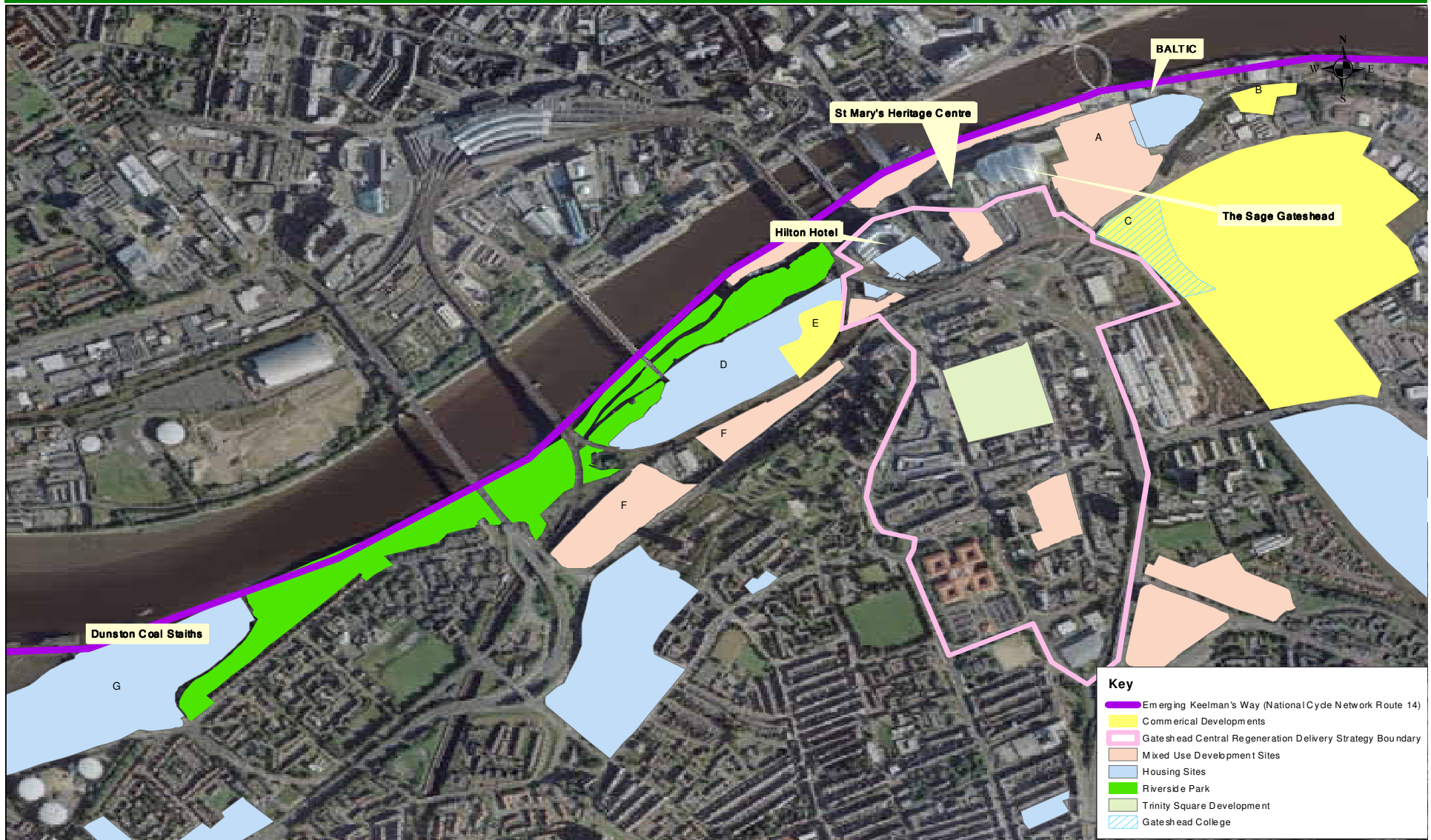


Fig 2: Plan illustrating Riverside Park's central location within the heart of NewcastleGateshead conurbation and Tyne and Wear

Riverside Park's Context



- A Hawks Road/South Shore Road Site, prestigious mixed use site
- B Baltic Place, new office accommodation under construction
- C New Gateshead College campus, due to open January 2008
- D Ochre Yards, 600+ apartments currently under construction

- E The Point mixed use developments, currently under construction
- F Askew Road mixed use development sites
- G Staiths South Bank, award winning housing development 600+ homes currently under construction

History of Riverside Park

Riverside Park was landscaped following a clearance and reclamation scheme during 1960-1970 and was once a thriving industrial, commercial and residential area. Pipewellgate which still runs through Riverside Park was once part of a popular trading community which looked to the river for its transport. The area benefited from access to the south by the main London to Newcastle road and to the north by the Tyne Bridge, with limited access to the east and west by tracks alongside the riverside. The first evidence of industrial activity on Pipewellgate was in 1408, in 1819 the gasworks were built, and the area began the transition into an unpleasant place to live and work in. By the middle of the nineteenth century the area was described by health visitors as a 'vile place'.

Emerging developments in rail, tram and road transport all bypassed Pipewellgate, and instead bridged the river directly from higher ground via the High Level bridge and later the (new) Tyne Bridge to avoid the steep slopes above Pipewellgate. During the second half of the nineteenth century, those who could afford to do so moved to more pleasant areas and by the 1930s even the poorest had been move from the area as a result of slum clearance programmes, and the last of the old housing was cleared.



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The images above illustrate how Riverside Park has transformed from an industrial area into an open space resource, and also its setting and relationship with nearby buildings structures and areas. The images on the left are from 1910-25, the images in the middle from the 1930's and the images on the right are from 1973-1975.

History of Riverside Park

The Rabbit Banks area was named after the local wildlife which, was found there. In 1834 a railway linking Gateshead, South Shields and Monkwearmouth was planned. Construction began in 1836 and the railway was opened on the 15 January 1839 carrying passengers as well as goods, initially only as far as Redheugh and then as far as Oakwellgate. It was agreed in 1844 to construct a station at Greenesfield and a 'high-level' bridge across the Tyne. The station was closed to passenger traffic in August 1850 when the Central Station in Newcastle was opened. This area was then converted into railway workshops.

By the early years of the 20th century Greenesfield Works was Gateshead's largest single employer, with 3,300 employees in 1909. However, by 1910 the site had reached the physical limits of expansion, and locomotive construction was transferred to Darlington. The site continued to be used as a railway maintenance facility into the 1980s, and some of the buildings have now been converted into residential apartments as part of Bellway's Ochre Yards development or offices as part of the UK Land development.

Some industry still remains on Pipewellgate; Brett Oils and Grease company was established in 1877 on the site of Joseph Price's glass works, and is still in operation today however, the plans are being developed to redevelop this site into a high quality mixed use development. Pipewellgate is now used as part of the route for the Centrelink bus service, and a fragment of the old railway line still remains in the park.



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Dunston Coal Staiths

To the west of Riverside Park lies the Dunston Coal Staiths (a grade II listed building and Scheduled Ancient Monument), which was constructed for coal shipping in 1890 and was a significant part of the North East's economic development.

Until recently it was famously the last remaining complete timber Staith in the UK, and is reputedly the largest timber structure in Europe.

Unfortunately vandalism and a fire in 2003 damaged a 40m section of the structure. However, a strategy is now being developed to repair the Staiths and to develop access for the general public onto the Staiths. As part of this strategy a consultation group consisting of local residents and key stakeholders has been created and it is hoped subject to funding that a Project Officer will be appointed.



History of Riverside Park

Riverside Park was gradually landscaped during 1960-1970, and during the late 1980s and early 1990s a number of sculptures were introduced within the park and the eastern side of Riverside Park has now become Riverside Sculpture Park. Riverside Park Sculptures. The following artworks are currently located in Riverside Park:



A



B



C



D



E



F



G



I

Riverside Park Sculptures

The following artworks are currently located in Riverside Park:

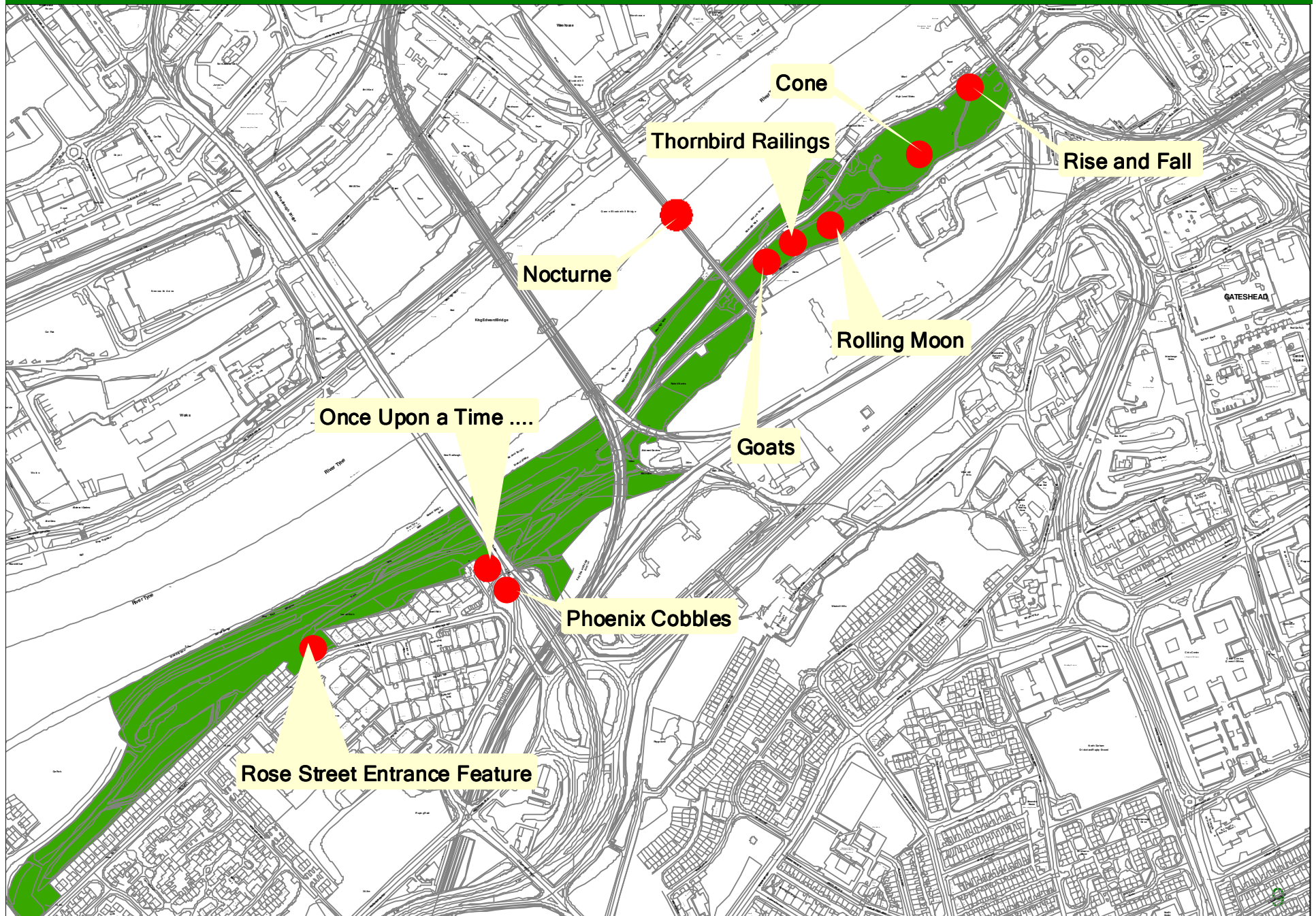
- A Rise and Fall - Lulu Quinn (2007)
- B Rolling Moon - Colin Rose (1990)
- C Once Upon a Time - Richard Deacon (1990)
- D Thornbird Railings - Marcella Livingstone (2005)
- E Cone - Andy Goldsworthy (1992)
- F Phoenix Cobbles - Maggy Howarth (1994)
- G Goats - Sally Matthews (1992)
- H Rose Street Entrance Feature - Graeme Hopper (2006)



H

In addition the QEII Metro Bridge which, cuts through Riverside Park has recently been refurbished, and now features the Nocturne architectural lighting installation which illuminates nightly (I).

History of Riverside Park



Related Documents

It is essential that the Riverside Park Strategy takes into account the following documents to help achieve Gateshead Council's overarching aims and objectives, and to make Gateshead the best place to live, work and visit.

Vision 2030

The Gateshead Strategic Partnership has prepared its Sustainable Community Strategy for 2007 onwards, called Vision 2030. It outlines the long-term vision and priorities for the future of Gateshead, and sets the direction and focus for the Local Area Agreement (LAA), which is the delivery plan for Vision 2030. Vision 2030's vision is:

"Local people realising their full potential enjoying best quality of life in a healthy, equal, safe, prosperous and sustainable Gateshead."

Vision 2030 also identifies six strategic interventions;

- City of Gateshead
- Gateshead goes Global
- Creative Gateshead
- Sustainable Gateshead
- Active and Healthy Gateshead
- Gateshead Volunteers

A table showing how Vision 2030's strategic interventions link with the Riverside Park strategy is found in appendix A.

Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2007)

The UDP sets out the policies and proposals for land use, transport and the environment. This document was adopted in July 2007, and will be 'saved' for three years to enable the Council to progress the production of the new style development plan-the Local Development Framework.

Riverside Park is designated in the UDP as the following:

ENV 27 Urban Green Space

CFR 23 Public Open Space Protection Policy

ENV 28 Green Corridor

CFR 26 Accessible Natural Green Space

ENV 26 The River Tyne Gorge

T6 River Tyne Corridor

ENV 57 Flood Risk

ENV46 - The Durham Biodiversity Action Plan

ENV47 - Wildlife Habitats

ENV51 - Wildlife Corridors

ENV52 - Creation of New Wildlife Habitats

The UDP process and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has identified parts of Riverside Park, as medium and high risk flooding areas. It is anticipated that with continuing climate change, the flood risk areas may change and increase.

Planning Policy Statement 25 identifies open space such as Riverside Park as being an appropriate land use in medium and high risk flooding areas.

The Tyne Gorge Study

The Tyne Gorge Study was commissioned by Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council and English Heritage to provide guidance on the views and the character of the Tyne Gorge, in order to protect and enhance the Tyne Gorge in the future. The principles of the Tyne Gorge Study has been adopted as Interim Planning Advice (IPA) as part of the adopted UDP (2007) (UDP policy ENV 26).

The study identifies character areas within the gorge, one of these being the Rabbit Banks area within Riverside Park. The Rabbit Banks character area occupies the narrow, steep gorge slopes below the Greenesfield Railway Works, running west from the High Level Bridge to the Teams floodplain on the south bank of the Tyne. Rabbits Banks is highly visible, particularly from the Queen Elizabeth II, King Edward and New Redheugh Bridges and from several character areas and views on the north banks of the Tyne.

The study also identifies three strategic views within Riverside Park, which have valuable views across NewcastleGateshead, these are;

Pipewellgate Car Park-the view encompasses the New Redheugh Bridge in the west and the High Level Bridge in the east.



Tyne and Wear Footpath, West of Redheugh Bridge-the view encompasses all of the bridges (except the Gateshead Millennium Bridge) in line. The whole view is framed by the Gorge slopes on either side of the Tyne.



Old Redheugh Bridgehead, Gateshead-the view presents a view of the Gorge spanned by the New Redheugh Bridge and King Edward Bridge.



Related Documents

Gateshead Play Strategy 2007-2010

The aim of Gateshead's first Strategy for Play, is to develop more high quality, accessible play opportunities for children and young people, aged up to 19 years. The vision for play in Gateshead is:

"Children and young people enjoy easy access to a range of appropriate, stimulating and free play opportunities that enhances their development and helps them to achieve their full potential."

The five key objectives for play development have been identified and are at the heart of the Strategy. These are:

1. Develop and promote high standards for children and young people's play across Gateshead.
2. Develop varied and appropriately risk managed play environments, which challenge and stimulate children and young people.
3. Promote free inclusive and accessible play opportunities for all children and young people, whatever their age, ability and circumstance.
4. Increase child-led play opportunities across Gateshead.
5. Ensure children, young people and adults are involved in reviewing and responding to the development of play provision.

Riverside Park Woodland Management Plan

The Riverside Park Woodland Management Plan was prepared in late 2006 to; maintain and enhance the visual amenity, encourage outdoor recreational opportunities, enhance wildlife value and establish venues for artworks.

Appendix B summarises the major issues, which will need to be addressed in the future management of the park.

Riverside Park Wildlife Habitat Assessment

The Riverside Park Wildlife Habitat Assessment was prepared during the summer of 2007 to look at the wildlife which is present within the park, and how biodiversity can be improved and managed alongside wider improvements to the park.

The existing wildlife habitat features are:

Woodland: well-established young woodland with a good variety of native and non-native tree species, shrub layer and ground flora, birds, foxes, grey squirrels, rabbits, and pipistrelle bats.

The Quay Wall: Presence of flora, ferns and flowering plants, this is also a critical stretch of the river for otters who are re-colonising the north-east's rivers

Appendix C identifies the wildlife that is present, and recommendations which, will need to be addressed in the future.

Where are we Now?

NewcastleGateshead has transformed itself into a successful, vibrant centre, and the northeast's tourist and economic hub.

However, despite the existing and emerging residential developments being created alongside Riverside Park the park still requires intervention in order to realise its true potential.

The SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis below summarises the current issues with Riverside Park. The wide-ranging strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats are interchangeable, but the Riverside Park's vision will only be achieved once the weaknesses, opportunities and threats have been addressed.

Recent publicity of Rise and Fall sculpture Unique character Size and location Topography Existing Redheugh residential community Local community involvement in environmental improvements (e.g. Rose Street) Dramatic landscape and views Provision of shade and shelter for visitors Care free environment Hilton link pedestrian route Keelman's Way cycle route Existing wildlife habitats Surrounding regeneration Proximity to NewcastleGateshead centre Existing Sculpture Park area On the eastern side of the park Proximity to Dunston Coal Staiths Local heritage and history Strengths	Lack of circular route, or reason to be in the park Inadequate maintenance budget Graffiti and misuse in isolated areas Lack of management, promotion and priority Historically, low numbers of people using the park Dominance of bus route Lack of visitor facilities Unattractive car park Some steep slopes limit access to the park Perceived threat of crime, safety and anti social behaviour Lack of play facilities Misuse of motorbikes North facing Weaknesses
Install a bus stop at Riverside Park/Dunston Coal Staiths to allow access for local people Exploit the central location of Riverside Park Include sculptures which incorporate play opportunities Support the adaptation of biodiversity to climate change Create and encourage wildlife habitats Develop the park into a major tourist attraction focussing on public art Link improvements to the restoration of Dunston Coal Staiths Utilise the emerging Teams Children's Centre (former Tyne View School) Develop community ownership by utilising neighbouring communities Develop Riverside Park for particular activities Exploit the park's potential for health and fitness Provide links with Gateshead Quays Fund physical improvements through neighbouring sites Section 106 agreements Opportunities	Concern that as most of the strategic sites surrounding Riverside Park now have planning permission, further funding through Section 106 agreements will not be available. Lack of investment and maintenance Lack of possible funding streams Negative perception of Riverside Park Risk of flooding as Riverside Park is an area of medium to high flood risk Delay to Dunston Coal Staiths repairs and improvements Vandalism and anti social behaviour Lack of community ownership Threats

Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives and the subsequent priorities and action points have been devised through the analysis in the *Where are we Now?* chapter. The strategic objectives are far reaching and aim to eradicate the threats and weaknesses identified, and will enhance the strengths and opportunities.

It has been recognised in the case for change chapter that to improve Riverside Park improvements are interrelated, and mutually beneficial. Hence, there is a degree of overlapping within the strategic objectives, their priorities and action points but this is essential to effectively “join-up” and deliver each strategic objective.

Each action point has a short, medium and/or long-term timescale, which relates to the following timescales:

Short: 2007-2008

Medium: 2008-2009

Long-term: 2009 onwards

The annual action plan attached to this document will be updated each year to continually improve Riverside Park, and to meet the vision at the beginning of this document and to achieve the strategic objectives set out below.



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Strategic Objectives

Improve Accessibility to and within Riverside Park

Riverside Park and its attractions will become easily accessible to visitors to NewcastleGateshead and to local communities. This objective will change Riverside Park from a through route into a destination in its own right.

Priorities

- Improve the physical accesses into Riverside Park for local communities and visitors.
- Improve the perception of safety within Riverside Park.
- Increase the use of the park by local residents and visitors to NewcastleGateshead.
- Be responsive to community needs and desires.

Actions	Timescale
Identify ways cyclists and pedestrians could be encouraged into using Riverside Park, rather than just travelling through it.	S M
Create a bus stop for a potential bus operator to use to enable passengers to visit Riverside Park.	M L
Review, improve and formalise gateway entrances in and out of Riverside Park.	S M L
Introduce signage and publicity for Riverside Park.	S M L
Improve safety, and feeling of safety of users.	S M L
Improve crossing points on the dedicated busway to allow users to safely cross the road and enjoy the park.	M L
Create a pedestrian link along Bankwell Lane, to link with existing pedestrian footpath under the High Level Bridge and the wider footpath network.	M L
Improve access behind the King Edward Bridge.	M L
Ensure Keelman's Way link is continued to the Dunston Coal Staiths.	M

Strategic Objectives

Environmental Improvements to the Park

Riverside Park will build on its reputation for innovative sculpture pieces, and introduce a wide range of environmental improvements to develop the entire park into a valued and popular place to visit for the residents of NewcastleGateshead and visitors to the North East.

Priorities

- Improve the appearance and usability places, and spaces within Riverside Park.
- Improve the landscaping of Riverside Park.
- Increase the amount of attractions within Riverside Park.
- Ensure that all environmental improvements are of a high design quality and are low maintenance.
- Create more usable spaces where topography allows for destination and view points. For example building platforms for viewing and bird watching.
- Improve the health and condition of the woodland, and enhance its value as a wildlife habitat.

Actions	Timescale
Provide more street light lighting within Riverside Park to increase safety within the park at night.	S M L
Include architectural/feature lighting within Riverside Park, to improve the attractiveness of the park and to highlight specific places and spaces.	S M L
Improve and introduce new footpaths within the park where necessary to increase movement within the park.	M L
Undertake the recommendations of the Wildlife Habitat Assessment (appendix C).	S M
Implement the actions as identified in the Woodland Management Plan (appendix B).	S M L
Investigate working with the probation service to utilise the Community Payback scheme, where offenders undertake community projects as part of their sentence.	M
Encourage the development of attractions within Riverside Park which are accessible to all groups of people.	S M L
Promote design competitions for new attractions within Riverside Park.	S M L
Introduce Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) into any new surfaces to prevent flooding.	M L

Strategic Objectives

The Role of Art

Art enhances the sense of destination and creates people presence. There is anecdotal evidence that the presence of qualitative art 'objects' encourages a sense of ownership and discourages vandalism/graffiti.

Priorities

- To confirm, and extend the Riverside Park as a location for public art.
- To maintain existing sculptures.
- Create a link between the cultural hubs; BALTIC and Dunston Coal Staiths.

Actions	Timescale
Utilise the existing short-term funding for the commissioning programme of four artists to develop art locations and proposals for Riverside Park.	S
Develop ideas for an artist led seat to be located in Riverside Park, and funded by Equal Arts.	S M
Identify future opportunities for artist input into the development of Riverside Park, for example signage, performances, planting and lighting.	S M L
Consider the commission of temporary works, these could be linked to events within the park.	S M L
Investigate borrowing pieces of work from other collections, such as the Yorkshire Sculpture Park and the Arts Council.	S M
The park should be presented as a facility that could be used by other institutions e.g. Platform/Sage/Baltic.	S M L
Investigate input from artists already established in the park when planning events and performances.	S M L
There should be an improved and ongoing maintenance programme with the possible inclusion of maintenance 'action zones', surrounding the sculptures.	S M L
Legibility would be improved by a 'mapping system' consisting of small landmark features placed at regular intervals that could create a 'trail'.	M L

Strategic Objectives

Enhance Riverside Park as a Recreational Resource

Riverside Park will be developed into a popular, well-used informal recreational resource for all ages and groups, which will improve the health and quality of life of the local community and visitors to Riverside Park.

Priorities

- Meet the requirements of the Gateshead Play Strategy.
- Design recreational spaces for all ages and groups within the park.
- Promote the park as a venue for passive informal and organised activities.
- Introduce sport and physical activities to the park, to encourage activity and to contribute to healthy lifestyle.
- Encourage the area to be self-policing.

Actions	Timescale
Review existing facilities within the park.	S
Consult with the Gateshead Play Strategy working group on new developments.	S M L
Introduce organised recreational and physical activities to the park and on the river.	S M L
Research the possibility of the provision of “green gyms” within Riverside Park.	S
Link Riverside Park to other recreational activities and schemes in the Borough, such as the adventure playground in the former Tyne View school.	S M L

Strategic Objectives

Reduce the Fear of Crime and Improve Safety within Riverside Park

Riverside Park is perceived by the local community and the media as an area with crime and safety problems. However, reported crime figures indicate that actual crime and anti-social behaviour problems are low in Riverside Park.

The aim is that Riverside Park will become a valued resource where visitors feel safe to use and enjoy the park and its attractions.

Priorities

- Ensure that environmental improvements are designed to reduce the fear of crime and improve safety within Riverside Park.
- Ensure Riverside Park is “visibly maintained” to make visitors to the park feel safer.

Actions	Timetable
Undertake enforcement action against people fly tipping and dumping rubbish in Riverside Park.	S M L
Continue and develop, the multi agency Neighbourhood Tasking and Problem Solving approach.	S M L
Work with the police and neighbourhood wardens to create more of a presence within Riverside Park.	S M L
Remove all evidence of anti social behaviour quickly (e.g. beer cans, drug taking, fire damage, graffiti) to improve the aesthetics of Riverside Park and to reduce the fear of crime.	S M L
Prepare an emergency evacuation plan in case of flooding.	S

Strategic Objectives

Enhance the Community Ownership of Riverside Park

Riverside Park will become a valued asset to the surrounding existing and emerging residential communities. It is hoped that these local communities will champion funding bids, events and improvements to Riverside Park.

Priorities

- Utilise and develop community ownership within Riverside Park.

Actions	Timetable
Utilise the existing Dunston Staiths consultation group, and expand this group into other communities.	S M L
Develop community involvement within the emerging Children's Centre at the former Tyne View School.	S M
Investigate introducing a junior warden scheme.	M
Develop community events within the park.	S M L

Strategic Objectives

Designate and Develop the Park as a Visitor Attraction

Riverside Park will become a popular visitor attraction in its own right and for particular activities for NewcastleGateshead, through word of mouth, press coverage and advertising.

Priorities

- Utilise and develop community ownership within Riverside Park.

Actions	Timetable
Market, advertise and promote Riverside Park.	S M L
Investigate levels and possible landform changes to Riverside Park, to enable large events to be held in the park.	S M
Encourage informal leisure events in the park.	S M L
Work with tourism stakeholders within Tyne and Wear to promote Riverside Park as a tourist destination	M
Introduce signage to enable visitors to use Riverside Park.	S M
Develop interpretation and trails of Riverside Park's history, bridges, setting and sculptures, and in the future wildlife once new habitats have been established.	M L
Develop educational and interpretation links with the Gateshead Heritage Centre to promote the park.	S M
Include Riverside Park in the City Guides' walks and tours.	S

Strategic Objectives

Managing the Maintenance of Riverside Park

Riverside Park will become a well maintained, clean, safe park which is maintained formally by Gateshead Council and informally by its local residents and users.

Priorities

- Ensure Riverside Park is maintained to a clean, attractive, safe and pleasant standard at all times.
- Support and promote biodiversity.
- Change the approach to the maintenance of Riverside Park.

Actions	Timescale
Investigate way maintenance is managed, and levels of intervention.	S
Publicise ways the single non emergency “101” number to report damage and anti-social behaviour within the park.	S
Maintain and develop wildlife habitats, to improve the amount of wildlife, improve biodiversity, support the adaptation of biodiversity to climate change, promote educational benefits and prioritise the maintenance of particular areas within Riverside Park.	S M L

Monitoring the Development of Riverside Park

The development of Riverside Park will be monitored annually to assess the improvements being made to the park and to ascertain the following year's action plan and targets. Annual monitoring of Riverside Park will enable the strategy to achieve the vision set out in the beginning of the document.

Priorities

- Annual monitoring of Riverside Park's developments, action plan and targets.

Actions	Timescale
Monitor attendance within the park at specific events, such as the forthcoming Culture 10 event in Riverside Park.	S M L
Monitor the progress of targets set out in the annual action plan.	S M L
Survey the local community and visitors.	S M

2008/09 Action Plan

Priorities for 2008:

Task	Description	Implemented by	Start Date-End Date
Commission artists to research possible sites for new sculptures, and seek funding for further research and implementation.	Existing Single Programme funding for artists to research possible sites for new sculptures within Riverside Park.	Anna Pepperall, Public Arts Curator	April 2007-March 2008
Funding bid for sporting and cultural events within Riverside Park	As part of Culture 10 programme	Arts Development Team	First bid completed June 2007.
Begin implementation of Woodland Management Plan	Begin thinning of trees as identified in the Woodland Management Plan, within an area to be determined, and investigate the removal of Japanese knotweed found within the park	Local Environmental Services/Contractor	Begin 2007, tree thinning to be undertaken on an annual basis.
Investigate improvements to street lighting, and the inclusion of architectural lighting	Issued raised by local businesses as part of Council review of the economic impact of the regeneration of Gateshead Quays and links to the town centre	Transport and Highways Planning and Environmental Strategy (P&ES)	Ongoing
Continue development of the Riverside Recreational Route	Continue development of the dedicated cycle route as new developments are constructed on the riverside.	Private developers, in particular Wimpey Homes, the future developer of the Brett Oils site,P&ES, Regulatory Services and Transport and Highways	Ongoing Wimpey Homes element to be completed by 2010.
Launch organised events within Riverside Park	Launch organised events within Riverside Park in conjunction with local community groups and Gateshead Council	Council services in conjunction with local community groups	Ongoing

Vision 2030's Links with the Riverside Park Strategy

Strategic Intervention	Link with Riverside Park Strategy
City of Gateshead	✓ Helps Gateshead by achieving one of the key qualities that great cities have all over the world-well designed natural resources and public parks.
Gateshead goes Global	✓ Promotes a further venue for Gateshead to host cultural events, and for world class public art. ✓ Will increase the profile of Gateshead and will attract new people to live and do business with.
Creative Gateshead	✓ Helps recognise, preserve and promote the riverside's heritage and culture. ✓ Deliver new public art sculptures within Gateshead.
Sustainable Gateshead	✓ Improve and protect Riverside Park to contribute to Gateshead developing into the best place to live and work. ✓ Public transport throughout the park. ✓ Increase the amount of wildlife habitat within the park.
Active and Healthy Gateshead	✓ Informal and organised activities within the park to improve resident's health.
Gateshead Volunteers	✓ Introduce junior neighbourhood wardens within Riverside Park to help maintain the park. ✓ Introduce nature conservation volunteers to Riverside Park.

Appendix B

Riverside Park Woodland Management Plan Recommendations

- General thinning of woodland areas to reduce their density, however further investigation is needed to identify if new planting should be introduced to the park.
- Encourage a broader age range of species, as the current tree age classification is generally uniform.
- The thinning work should favour the retention of native species.
- The understory and shrub layer composition should be improved across the park.
- Areas within the woodland encountering specific social problems should be targeted for action, to open up the areas and to ensure acceptable levels of safety within the woodland.
- When making changes to the woodland consider views and potential views, and the need for shelter.
- When considering plant removal, consider the potential risk to Centrelink from objects being propelled down the slope.
- Be cautious about tree removal within the areas extending from Pipewellgate to Rabbit Banks Road, in regard to structural instability of the slope and contaminated land.
- The proposed works will ultimately establish a higher level of aboricultural management for the woodland as a whole.

The full document can be viewed on request.

Riverside Park Wildlife Habitat Assessment Summary and Recommendations

Protection of the nature conservation interest:

- Protection of the Quay wall - Otters (a European Protected Species) are known to occur along the River Tyne at Gateshead and occasionally make use of recesses in the quay wall as holding up sites. Any works that would have an adverse impact upon otters would require a licence from Natural England.
- Conservation of the 'old' grassland and areas of established woodland toward the upper banks on the east side of the park.
- Retain the overall integrity of the woodland as a linear feature to provide habitat for woodland birds and mammals.

Enhancement of the nature conservation interest:

- The appearance and ecological value of the woodland would benefit from the development of a diverse shrub and ground layer. This could be achieved by planting species such as hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*), primrose (*Primula vulgaris*) and red campion (*Silene dioica*). The improved shrub layer would also serve to suppress the growth of tall ruderal species including nettles. Paths and rides should be kept open to encourage public access and improve personal safety.
- The 'old' grassland situated between the King Edward and Metro Bridge should be conserved and not planted with trees. The grassland would benefit from the removal of invading scrub. Two stands of Japanese Knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) near the road should be eradicated using a translocated herbicide such as glyphosate and consideration should be given to re-sowing the area of ground next to Pipewellgate car park with a wildflower seed.
- Small pockets of flowering shrubs such as buddleia occur within Riverside Park. Increasing the number and variety of nectar rich shrubs will provide increased opportunities for insects and other wildlife, and improve the visual amenity of the area.
- Bird populations are present within Riverside Park. Opportunities for hole nesting species, however, are limited. This should be addressed by providing suitably placed timber nest boxes. Similarly bats are known to occur within the park and the provision of bat boxes, where appropriate, would provide increased opportunities for crevice dwelling species.

The full document can be viewed on request.