

# Part One

Findings of the Baseline Review and Initial Consultation

## Findings of the Baseline Review and Initial Consultation

### Baseline Review

The comprehensive baseline review carried out involved the analysis of the city centre in relation to the following aspects:

- Transport, Movement and Linkages
- Townscape Character and Heritage
- Public Realm and Open Spaces
- Future Development Proposals

The following provides a summary of the findings grouped into strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints, in relation to Bangor's public realm.

### Strengths

- Quality of architecture in historic core of the town
- Strong townscape character to High Street area
- Good strategic links
- Regional centre
- Good levels of parking in town centre
- Cathedral and historic legacy
- University
- Attractive views from vantage points
- Greenspaces in city centre

### Opportunities

- City of Learning
- Tourism gateway to Northwest Wales
- Bangor Sustainable Travel City (and implementation of Lon Adda route)
- Hirael Bay masterplan proposals
- University's Arts and Innovation and proposals for College Park
- Redevelopment of Farrar Road Football Ground

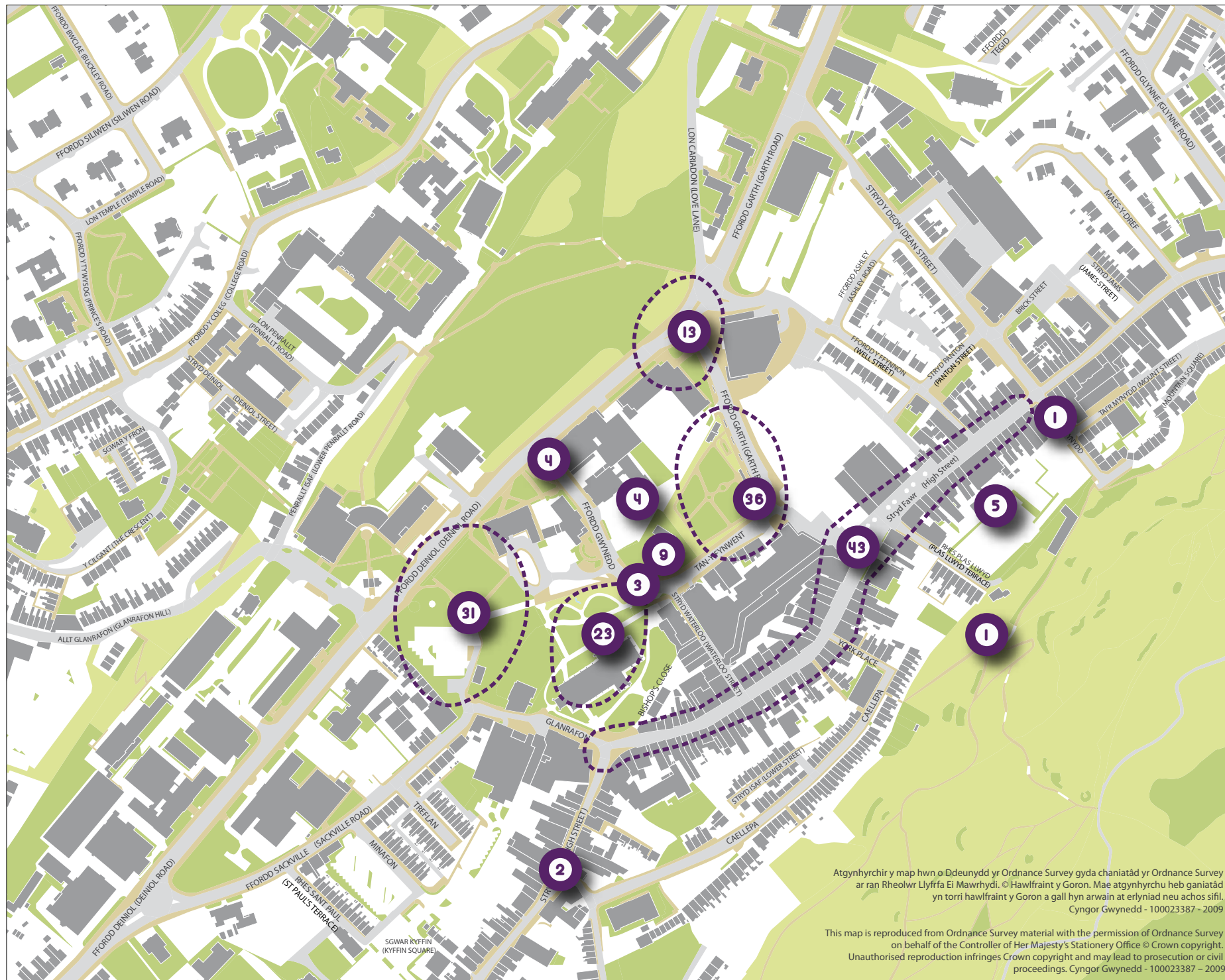
### Weaknesses

- Topography and wider rural population attracts use of car
- Topography creates access difficulties for some users
- Limited permeability of movement network
- Poor pedestrian and cycle environment (legibility, access, quality and maintenance)
- Poor building quality and environmental detractors along A5
- Unattractive and dysfunctional bus station
- Railway station separated from city centre
- Separation of university and Upper Bangor from city centre
- Poor quality of greenspaces in city centre attracting anti-social behaviour
- Arrival points and gateways.

### Constraints

- River Adda culvert
- Mature trees in the Tan-y-fynwent area
- Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings/Monuments

Fig 1 Feedback scores on priority areas from stakeholders & councillor workshops



**Priority Scores from Stakeholder Workshops**

- 43 - High Street including the Clocktower and Cathedral end
- 36 - Tan-Y-Fynwent/Garth Road junction and Garden of Rest
- 31 - Deiniol Road/University Gateway
- 23 - Cathedral and Bible Gardens
- 13 - Deiniol Road/Garth Road junction
- 9 - Oriel
- 5 - Plas Llwyd car park
- 4 - Ffordd Gwynedd car park
- 4 - Deiniol Road/Ffordd Gwynedd junction
- 3 - Ffordd Gwynedd/Tan-Y-Fynwent junction
- 2 - High Street at Plas Pobty
- 1 - High Street at Ger Y Mynydd
- 1 - Bangor Mountain

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## Initial Consultation

During the baseline stage stakeholder and council officer workshops were held to ascertain opinion on Bangor's public realm. In addition, workshops were held with primary and secondary school children.

Figure 1 shows the feedback scores from the stakeholder and councilor workshops identifying the priority public realm areas within the city centre.

Figure 2 shows the feedback from the schools workshop as to places that the children liked and disliked.

There were similarities in the issues and comments raised in all the workshops, these were:

## Issues

- Bus Station – not a nice place to wait and difficult to cross roads.
- Gardens of Rest are a target for anti social behaviour & fear within the local community.
- Kwik Save, Woolworths, Theatre Gwynedd – Closed
- Farrar Road football ground, car parking/derelict space
- No play areas, No cinema, No bowling alley, nothing to do but shop
- Greenspaces around the Cathedral quite run down and under utilised and does not feel safe, intimidating at night (has become another focus for antisocial behavior).
- The High Street looks run down with poor street furniture, surfacing and maintenance, a lack of lighting & is under utilised particularly at night.
- Tourist information centre
- Lack of outdoor café/eating space (hidden cafes)
- Not enough bike parking
- The disused Bowling Green needs a new community function so it can help to reinforce the gateway into the City from Deiniol Road

Fig 2 Feedback from the schools workshop of places liked and disliked



- Not enough signage within the city centre to guide tourists to places of interest & important features.
- A distinct lack of accessible and decent public toilets.
- The current war memorial square is under utilised and has too much hard surfacing compared to what was located there previously.
- Greater control is needed on the delivery traffic servicing the High Street to make it more accessible & safer for pedestrians. Other access issues relating to High Street – cyclists and A-boards.

## Opportunities

- Improve greenspaces (e.g integrate the Gardens of Rest into adjacent shopping area to create a more open and permeable space that feels safer to use, create a children's play area or public space within the disused bowling green, reinstate the Bible Gardens and create better links with Bangor Mountain).
- New shops (i.e Debenhams) make the city centre look better, create an incentive /funding for local shop owners to improve their frontages.

Fig 3 Summary of findings from aspirational image boards

- Utilise the Debenhams terrace to provide outdoor seating which will improve the overlook into the Gardens of Rest & provide a unique view of the city centre.
- Improve the High Street & in particular the wider area around the clock tower front of the old Woolworths to provide better lighting, street furniture & paving quality to reinforce the priority of the High Street within the city centre.
- Link the university & the city centre by creating a linked civic space between the war memorial & new theatre site for the university which will also reinforce the gateway into the city & encourage students into the centre.
- Create a safer, pedestrian friendly area in front of the cathedral to slow down traffic & encourage movement into the High Street.
- Only use the war memorial car park for parking on certain days, with a new market occupying the space when the parking is removed to create a large civic space attracting visitors into the centre from Deiniol Road.

Workshop groups were also asked to give their opinion on particular styles and ideas using an image board. A summary of the images that were chosen as 'liked' and 'disliked' are shown opposite.

It is interesting to note that a number of images disliked by the adult steering group, were liked by the children. Having said this, there were a number of similarities in their responses and these ideas and styles were taken forward into the development of the conceptual designs, as well as the public realm strategy as a whole.



Summary of response from Stakeholder Workshops



Summary of response from Schools Workshops

In the final part of the schools workshops, the children were asked to produce their own designs and ideas for one of two spaces either the Clock Tower Square or Gardens of Rest. A sample of these responses is found on the following pages. The ideas that emerged (summary below) were fed into the conceptual designs of these spaces contained within the public realm strategy.

### Gardens of Rest Ideas

- Play area
- More trees and planting/Flower beds
- Nicer toilets
- Clock and information board
- Ice cream hut
- Water feature/fountain/put river back
- Keep trees/Remove some trees
- Quiet area
- More lighting/fairy lights
- Water fountain/feature
- Transparent bus shelters – more space and light
- Change layout to Gardens of Rest
- Safer crossings
- Picnic area, more seating and bins
- Bring art gallery into space – outdoor art/sculpture
- Bring library into space – loose some car parking
- More community officers to police space
- Remove existing barriers/more open so people can wait in Gardens of Rest for buses

### Clock Tower Square Ideas

- More trees, flowers, wildlife
- More seats/café seating
- Better traffic management
- More lights, floor lights (multi-coloured)
- More clocks/different time clocks – New York, Beijing etc.
- Fountains
- Bike racks – simple hoops
- Cultural history – references to welsh culture
- Trees outside Woolworths need attention
- Timeline with dates/timeline wall
- Signs for tourists/Map of Bangor (also in Welsh)
- New surfacing/mosaic or patterned paving – less bland
- Cleaner and less litter



Ysgol\_Tryfan



Ysgol Friars



Ysgol Friars



Ysgol Llandygai