



The Big Map

'Where there is no vision the people perish' *proverbs 29:18*

Introduction

The Big Map engaged a wide a range of stakeholders in an arts-led programme to re-assess and re- imagine the town. The workshops were aimed to change people's perceptions, develop cooperative working with a range of groups and organisations, and inform the Confluence programme of artist commissions.

Held over an eight-week period between August 16th and October 7th 2015 these built on an earlier pilot of the Big Map, which took place during the launch of the Lab during Whitsun. This was an open 'drop-in' session devised for members of the public, which tied in with a walk and talk given by urban designer Gordon Gibson on the next day as part of the launch week's activities to 'see Haverfordwest differently'.

Five of the seven workshops were hosted with targeted groups whilst two were open to the town community as 'drop in' workshops. See Appendix 2 Target groups and participation. The themes and ideas, which emerged in each workshop, are described in Appendix 3.

The aims for the Big Map programme were

- To inspire groups of people from a wide spectrum to be creatively involved with developing a vision for the town for the next 10 years.
- To provide opportunities for stakeholders, cross sector groups and individuals who live and work in Haverfordwest to work with architects, and town planning consultants engaged in the master-planning process.
- To develop a linking artist commission that aims to test and pilot emerging ideas identified in the plan.

Our objectives were

- To engage up to 200 people participating in the mapping workshops.
- To provide an experimental forum for ideas and laying these down on the plan
- To collate information/ feedback; what people would like to see in a plan for Haverfordwest's town/riverside and feed this to the planning consultants engaged in PCC's master-planning study.
- To provide a research platform and direction for an artist commission that will engage a wider audience in 'changing perceptions' in a key public space in Haverfordwest

The workshops focussed geographically on Haverfordwest's riverside and

surrounding areas of the town centre. Participants were encouraged to draw on overlays of the map and during the course of the workshop ideas were captured and recorded on their version of the map.

Key ideas to develop as part of a vision for Haverfordwest.

Three 'Big' ideas or themes for re-imagining and regenerating Haverfordwest emerged on the maps,

1. **LINK.** A linear park along the River Cleddau
2. **ENTER Haverfordwest.** Creating a sense of arrival and routes into town
3. **SHARED SPACE:** Navigating public space in the town.

A fourth idea/ theme came in mapping empty buildings and proposals for their re-use. How art and artists/ creative practitioners influence the regeneration process, in building a vibrant arts community and cultural programme in Haverfordwest.

4. **ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE:** Creative uses for empty buildings.

A fifth idea based on continuing the process of mapping as a tool to develop

5. **A 'PEOPLE'S PLAN'** that would demonstrate the collective vision.

1 'LINK' a linear park along the River Cleddau.

The river was universally recognised as a key natural asset to Haverfordwest, along with the historic town centre and the castle. Ideas were proposed that would create LINKs to historic and recreational sites along the riverside and improve accessibility despite physical obstacles such as

- Flood walls and levees that create barriers to the river
- Up/ down, constantly changing levels
- Recent development encroaching on the river/ flood plain and blocking views

Notwithstanding the difficulties, there was a desire to create opportunities for leisure, walking and recreation, re-planning and greening the riverside as a linear park.

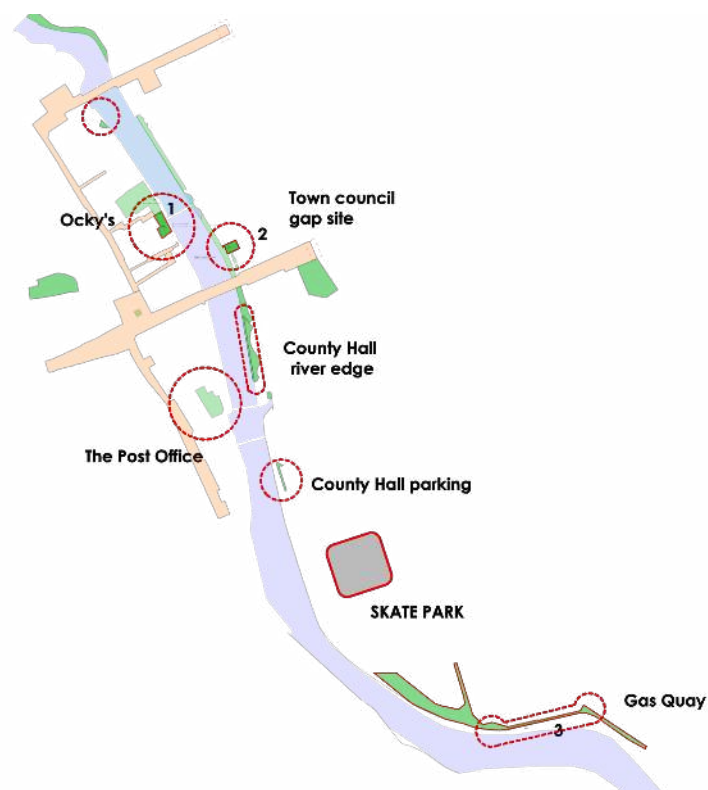
'More parks/open green spaces where people can sit and dream, especially by the river...Create better open spaces. Introduce more leisure activities café, arts, cinema etc.'

*LINEAR PARK proposals

- Create walking and cycling routes along the river to link the skate park and Fortune's Frolic (south) and Bridge meadow/ Withybush (north) with the town centre
- A greened and spacious riverside walk as an integral part of future redevelopment of the riverside shopping centre
- More opportunities for play and recreation on sites currently used for car parking such as Wilkinson's car park
- Activities on the water - boats and/or pontoons.

There is the potential to link a series of places and to create a cohesive riverside

park connecting the stunningly beautiful natural environment of meadows above and the estuarine landscape below to the town centre.



Areas of green space along the town's riverside: opportunities for small-scale interventions for greening and 'pocket parks'

2 ENTER Haverfordwest

Creating a sense of arrival and strengthening the routes into town

This theme came from a perception that the sense of welcome and arrival has been lost. The historic approaches from the north and east have been cut or distorted by new road systems designed to cater for and maximise the flow of traffic around the town, to by-pass it rather than to arrive. The resulting impression is of layers that create barriers to finding one's way in. Should you wish to visit the town by car, the river and historic town is only discovered having negotiated the engineered road system/ found the multi-storey car park/ crossed the bus station/ shopping centre.

In workshop 1 'Traders' looked at how to improve the walking routes into town from Car parks and the bus station. This was centred on

- Redevelopment of the multi storey car park with a larger retail block
- Creating a small public square on the riverside to open vistas into Bridge Street
- A clear walking route/axis from the bus station/ riverside shopping/ parking to Bridge Street and the castle.

Gordon Gibson pointed out in the Big Map pilot and in his 'Walk and Talk' that the

town's real assets can be found in the original layout framework. Despite the increase in vacant shops and loss of independent retailers, footfall remains highest in Bridge Street, Castle Square and Swan Square.

Re-establishing the original north and east connections with walking routes from Prendergast to Old Bridge, and from Salutation Square across the new Bridge into the high street would reinforce this

The entrance into the town created by William Owen over the new bridge from Picton Place into Victoria place in the 1830's still stands as an exemplary piece of urban design that we could celebrate by returning to the clarity of the original design. Salutation Square, the entrance to the town on axis with William Owen's New Bridge is currently lost behind a plethora of crossings, road filters, lights and paraphernalia of junctions leading into the major roundabout in the road system.

This was explored in Workshop 5 'Towns are for people' with an idea to expand the public square and to improve the quality of urban space at the entrance to the town.

Remodelling the A4076 trunk road to either eliminate or reduce the size of the roundabout would open up space to re-establish the entrance approach to Haverfordwest and improve walking routes to the station and surrounding residential areas.

3 SHARED SPACE

Navigating public space in Haverfordwest

'Shared space' emerged as a recurring theme. This is potentially a more immediate proposal, which requires less physical change, but involves a change of attitude to the function of the town centre and how its public space is 'shared'.

The proposal would adopt a new approach to sharing public space in the town centre similar to leading examples in European towns and cities and in the UK, such as Poynton in Cheshire. Typically the roads 'disappear' and merge with the surroundings. Signage is minimal and drivers must engage with people and cyclists in a neutral zone where the cyclist or pedestrian share the space equally with vehicles. Traffic speeds slow to walking pace but flow is constant, rather than intermittent – stop /start.

Only 'access only' cars, taxis and buses would be allowed into the town, reducing traffic volume and making the concept of 'shared space' feasible.

This would alleviate the present scenario of a one-way system that gives drivers priority and encourages local traffic to drive through the town centre to other destinations, using the high street as a shortcut. The detrimental effects of this can be seen in

- Engines revving with exhaust fumes polluting
- Queues of people waiting to cross in Castle Square
- Lack of footfall in Upper High Street
- The number of empty commercial properties.

Furthermore, restricting the volume and type of traffic opens up possibilities for greater flexibility in how the town centre could function and develop. Benefits could include new uses and improvements such as

- Street markets and fairs
- Evening events
- Cafés and outdoor shop stalls
- Evening and weekend events (Sunset cinema)
- Festivals
- Greening-trees and planters

The bus station would be redundant, and the site could be redeveloped as landscaped gardens/ additional car parking, and included in a remodelled shopping centre

Shared Space underpins a change in emphasis from traffic highways management to celebrating the quality of the architecture, urban space, and heritage of Haverfordwest.

4 Artists in Residence: Creative new uses for empty buildings.

A number of key buildings in the town centre currently stand empty. These include

- The Shire Hall
- The Post Office
- The Old Gaol
- The Bonded Stores Warehouse (on the quay).
- The Library
- Minnie's' nightclub (former warehouse)

In addition there are numerous empty shops and retail units – seventeen were counted on a walk between the Shire hall and Bridge end Square.

This idea could unfold in a variety of ways. Firstly, through the creation of an Arts Hub or Centre in one of the key buildings listed. This would provide a place, and venue for the Arts and cultural life of Haverfordwest, adding significantly to the cultural 'offer', which currently no longer exists since the closure of the Library.

4A Arts Hub/Centre model

A regional arts centre linked to other regional and national museums and art galleries would significantly add to making Haverfordwest a destination for arts and culture.

However a building-based amenity will have running and revenue costs, and the model must be sustainable if it is to thrive without subsidy or grants. It would also need to serve artists and the community/ visitors differently, bearing in mind that there are other proposals for a new Library and for a Heritage Centre in Haverfordwest.

One way forward could be to build a 'community' of artists and creative practitioners, possibly in partnership with other local organisations and businesses who would share the vision/development and management of an arts/ creative hub.

The two buildings most suited to this are the Shire Hall and the Post Office, both are in central locations and easily accessible. The Shire Hall is problematic in that ownership has passed out of public into private/ developer's hands, and there is criticism in the community having to now entertain paying a market price to get it back. Having said this, it is one of the architectural jewels in the town, as a grade 1 listed building of huge importance, that should not be allowed to deteriorate further by remaining empty, and therefore every effort should be made to find a new use for the building

The Post Office is privately owned but lends itself to a wide variety of new uses, having a range of accommodation at that could suit a mixed arts/ creative business/ community collective. The building is eligible for grant funding but again the building must be purchased and an offer would need to be raised amongst the emerging group. In the meantime the building might be sold to another interested party.



The Post Office

In either case running costs for these buildings would be significant and income generation from business/rental/ other is envisaged. A mixed use could include business and tourism as well as the arts creating a multifunctional environment that is also more likely to be sustainable in the long term.

4B 'INHABIT' the hidden spaces model.

An alternative or second strategy would be to encourage artists to inhabit a number of smaller empty units and buildings. This 'viral' means of occupying buildings could encourage a more independent and stimulating new community, encouraging creative practitioners to base themselves in Haverfordwest.

This approach could also prove effective in bringing back into use empty premises without the running costs associated with a large building-based Arts Centre. Funds

raised within the arts and wider town community would be directed instead into setting up a low-cost organisation/ collective to manage and run the arts programme and promote it's members, in dispersed sites across Haverfordwest.

5 'A People's plan' for Haverfordwest

The notion of a 'People's plan' came out in the workshops as a plan for Haverfordwest that would demonstrate the collective vision. A continuing experiment putting stakeholders; groups and individuals who have a vested interest in Haverfordwest, at the heart of the process, in collaboration with strategists and decision-makers, working alongside the planners, private landowners and possible funders/philanthropists.

The 'People's Plan' would aim to graphically represent the vision for Haverfordwest and creatively examine the need for the right kind of redevelopment that would bring positive outcomes in the town's reimagining of itself.

The agreed plan could be 'adopted' as a document supporting strategic planning and development alongside the Framework Plan. The plan would be updated and reviewed on an annual basis. Planners and regeneration officers would consult the 'People's Plan' to help them make informed planning decisions on individual planning applications in Haverfordwest in the context of a 'bigger picture' or vision.

Key potential projects

3 key potential creative 'projects' emerging from the ideas are

1. **LINK:** a linear park- greening the river through town and connecting underused locations, heritage, recreational sites and nearby natural landscapes with the town centre. These could begin as small-scale interventions such as features for greening hard landscape and creating 'pocket parks' within a more comprehensive and linked up plan. The park could accommodate flood alleviation proposals upstream acknowledging the long-term future and risks from climate change of increasing levels of tidal/ surge flooding on the flood plain.
2. **SHARED SPACE:** A new approach to traffic in the town centre with the creation of a 'shared space' with a revised road system and alterations to allow this to work for the town.
3. **ART an ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE.** Haverfordwest as a vibrant destination with a high quality cultural/arts programme to offer. This could be multi layered: through establishing an Arts hub/ or an academy for contemporary arts located in a key empty building, and/or a community of artists and creative practitioners inhabiting the town, using and working in empty shops and premises across Haverfordwest.

Further emerging projects in 2016 planned by local groups, include the food festival and a new river festival. Events such as these would influence how creative emerging projects and an arts programme develop in the year ahead.

See appendices for further detailed information

CE 9 December 2015

APPENDIX 1 The Big Map in the context of The Confluence Programme

The Big Map takes place within a three year Confluence programme to provide a catalyst for arts-led regeneration in the town that aims to:

- Change perceptions about Haverfordwest.
- Highlight vacant spaces and buildings as assets and potential opportunities
- Encourage new initiatives and develop opportunities for regeneration through the arts and among the creative community
- Facilitate and support co-operation with groups and stakeholders across all sectors as part of the longer term regeneration of Haverfordwest

The Big Map is one line of enquiry to 'map' the riverside/ town within an experimental programme/space called the Lab - a series of workshops, talks and seminars running alongside the Confluence art commissions that explore themes and opportunities for art and regeneration in Haverfordwest.

As well as engaging local groups to participate in the LAB's experimental programme, the workshops have been an opportunity to support the master-planning process being undertaken by Pembrokeshire County Council. The workshops were run in parallel with an updated Regeneration Framework Plan for Haverfordwest to be completed in early 2016.

The town planning consultants Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners, took the opportunity to contribute to the workshops. John Cottrell (Senior director) attended the 'Towns are for people' workshop and actively took part in the session, alongside planning and highways officers. Senior urban planner, Sarah Goy gave a presentation, which reflected on the 2008 plan and outlined a potential vision for the 2015 Framework in an informal Big Map 'Open Review' session.

APPENDIX 2 Target groups and participation

A series of seven workshops were devised to engage different sectors of the community across a wide demographic in actively contributing to the process of planning and regeneration in Haverfordwest.

The workshops targeted local groups and societies as well as group-led open sessions working on overlays of large-scale maps in the Lab. Starting in most cases with a short walk along a planned route and continuing with a two-hour session on the map.

Targeted groups in each workshop were:

- Workshop 1 'Traders': Members of Haverfordwest Chamber of commerce

and the Business Circle

- Workshop 2 'Civitas'; Haverfordwest Civic Society
- Workshop 3 'Back to the future'; open drop in session
- Workshop 4 'Art and Design'. Artists Pembrokeshire
- Workshop 5 'Towns are for people'. PCC Planners and Highways officers
- Workshop 6 'Open review': Second open session – with invites to previous groups and participants
- Workshop 7 'Youth'. Haverfordwest Youth club

Workshop 3 ran as a group-led open session hosted with Confluence partners Transition Haverfordwest. A second open session and review followed which invited previous participants to return and an opportunity for others to engage with the Big Map. Numbers attending were as follows

Launch week pilot	56
Workshop 1 'Traders':	7
Workshop 2 'Civitas':	10
Workshop 3 'Back to the future'	14
Workshop 4 'Art and Design'	7
Workshop 5 'Towns are for people'	13
Workshop 6 'Open review'	16
Workshop 7 'Youth'	10
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Total	77
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Total including the launch week	133



Workshop 5 'Towns are for people'

The workshops provided an opportunity to engage stakeholder group's views about arts-led change and to harness creative ideas for the regeneration of the town in the next 10 years. The emerging themes/ideas were recorded either as written feedback or captured on the Map.

- Mapping empty buildings and charity shops
- Improving car parking provision
- Traffic problem – High St used as short cut
- Relocate the bus-station along Cartlett Road to improve the options for adapting and or redeveloping Riverside Shopping Centre
- Accommodate buses to drop off in town centre - avoids relocating the bus station
- Enlarge riverside retail units in single 'block' with frontage all round (parking above or relocated)
- Reconnect Prendergast via road crossing and strengthen routes into town.
- Create new square on or adjacent to OW site linking Bridge street to river and footbridge
- Multiplex cinema/parking offer sited on or next to Morrison's roundabout
- Relocate entrance to Morrison's store and garage off existing service road
- Extend riverside walk/cycleway into Bridge meadow

[illegible]

- Leisure/recreational attractions - a zip wire across the river to the skate park/ playing fields. Boats on the water.
- Arts/ cultural hub/ riverside café in the Old Post Office
- Cultural events in public spaces-town square concerts/ cinema
- Plant tree avenues; in High street, and around enlarged Swan Square
- Trial 'car free' days in the town centre

- Improve way marking for visitors
- Improve existing / create better routes to the castle
- Improve facades and frontages in Castle Square

Workshop 3 'Back to the future'

- Sell/Let/adapt County Hall's ground floor to encourage a more 'permeable' mixed use in the building
- A surfing weir on the river - Munich example
- Extend the conservation area to include a zone along the East bank for future development of green spaces in town centre along the river
- Lock gate for vessels with hydro-power.
- Solar collector / greened fence along Freemans way in Picton Playing fields to shelter the skate park and riverside from the traffic on the embanked by-pass and power the park lighting.
- Old Post office: form a community-share company to acquire the post office complex for community/mixed use.

Workshop 4 'Art and Design'

- Riverside sculpture park and art trail
- 300 x 300mm mosaic QR codes by artists set in floor to access art trail / other town information
- Artist's mural around the island barrier to Morrison's roundabout
- Relocate bus station and Multi storey: build new frontage to Cartlett road- housing above extended shops in riverside centre
- Old Quay warehouses converted; café bar and apartments
- Re-purpose County hall as a 'Luxury Hotel'
- Old Post Office- Multi-functional Community workshop and Art market/ cafe
- Quayside pontoons
- Art hostel (hotel?) for visiting artists (studio and accommodation)
- Camera obscura in the clock tower
- Convert riverside Market into artisan Flea market e.g. Napa CA.
- Ice rink and water park linked by 'green bridge'

Workshop 5 'Towns are for people'

- Gateways; redesign road system at the eastern entrances to the town to channel trunk road traffic away and celebrate the entrance (Salutation square) with improved townscape design
- Create a 'shared space' in the town centre *
- Restrict traffic in town centre to access only to facilitate shared space**
- Country Park. Potential site on naturally regenerating waste ground along the river lower reach west bank opposite Fortune's Frolic – formerly a rubbish tip
- Create a linking route along the old Gas Quay to Fortune's Frolic via the old Gas Quay
- New Cinema /retail development + parking in Bridge Meadow / mart area behind Morrison's



Traffic

Planners

and highways officers working on the 'towns are for people map'

- Cultural offer in town - Shire Hall County Museum
- Redevelop the area behind Bridge St containing Riverside Market and surroundings to address the River. Retain the lanes and extend them through new development and across the river with footbridges.
- Linear park along river frontage - include river end of Wilkinson's car park
- Easy gains - remove parking along the waterfront; encourage café culture with outdoor seating in Castle Square.
- Strengthen promenade walk to Withybush along Sydney Rees Way (Prendergast by-pass) and link to new development in Bridge meadow

*Shared space zone on map extends north/ south from Salutation Square to top High St, including Dark St to Mariners Sq. East-west from Quay Street to Swan Square including existing pedestrianized areas in Bridge St and Old Bridge.

**Re-route Broad Haven traffic via Barn St (returned to two-way with priority passing places on-street parking points

Workshop 6 'Open review'

- Ownership: How can local groups/community take ownership of key empty premises from commercial/ remote landlords?
- 'Community Heart' needed - a multi-functional space: the Old Gaol?
- What's On? Notices/ banners in strategic locations advertising events/ places to go/what to see
- Attract small start up independent business; review business rates
- 'Shared space' look at Tenby pedestrianisation scheme.
- A 'people's plan'. A visual plan representing a shared vision for the town.

Presentation/ discussion forum and review of existing w/shop maps:

Workshop 7 'Youth'

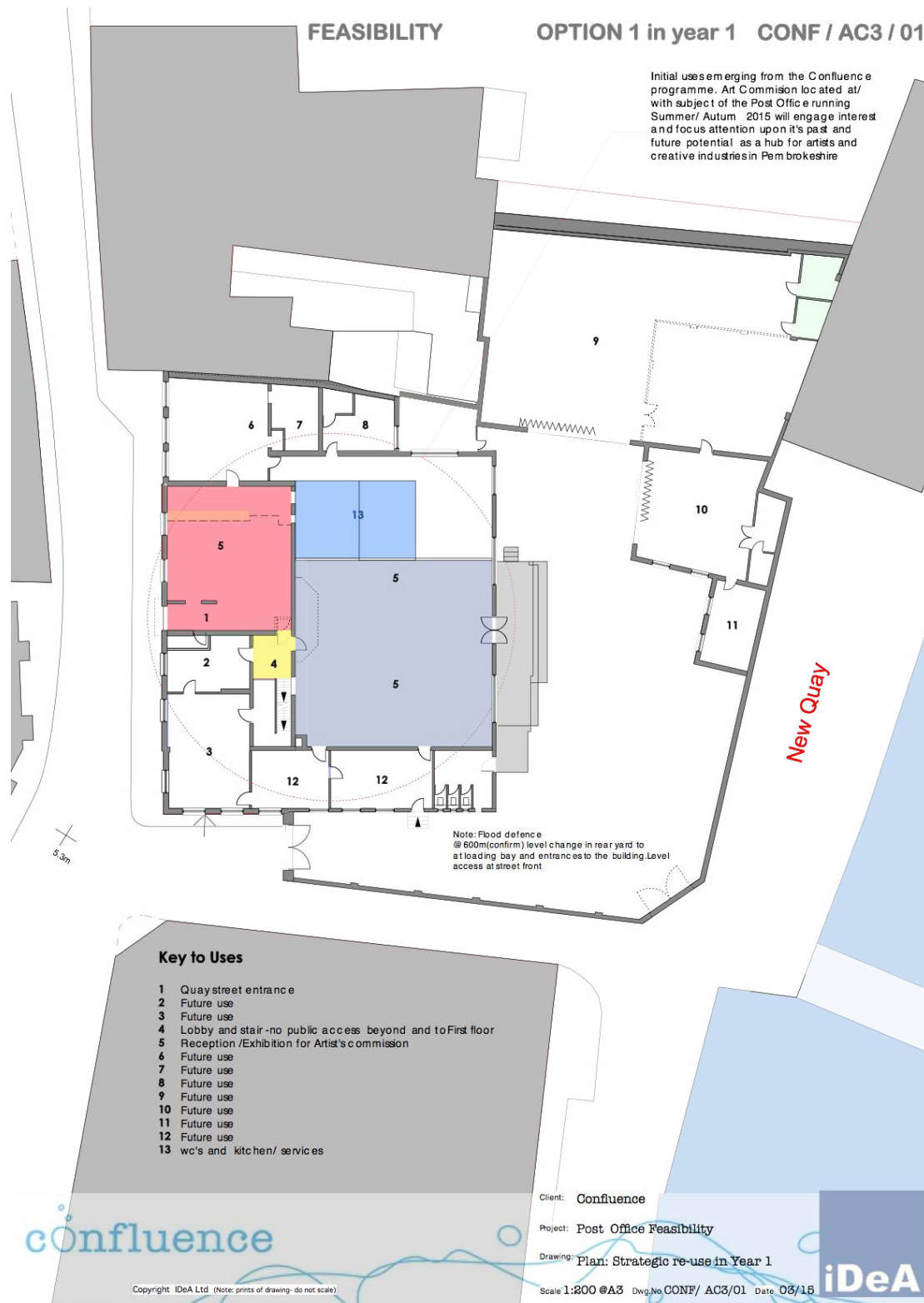
- A Youth club building – Picton Centre/ Warehouse on the Quay/
- Gaming Centre - in alongside Services club

- Water taxi / restaurant
- #Skatelife. Skatepark –‘good atmosphere, friends are there’.
- Town-meet in the bus station
- County Hall café –open evenings for food for young people
- Weights/Gym in empty warehouse
- Music events in Shire Hall
- Current Local meeting places -Weatherspoons and Eddie’s under 18’s night
- Outdoor cinema in Castle Square

This summary captures the breadth and range ‘of ideas and proposals that came out of the workshops. Some are simpler and easier to achieve, whilst others are major interventions that could only be achieved with major investment and redevelopment.

APPENDIX 4 Art/ Artists in the Post Office

The ground floor plans below illustrate a model for creative re-use of the Post Office. Beginning in year 1 with initial, partial and temporary use of the ground floor as an artist commission to highlight the building as a potential ‘arts hub’, or centre for the arts supported by other mixed uses such as creative industries and tourism



In 5 years time - full occupancy. A user group/ collective/ Community interest company having been formed to share the on-going running costs of the Post Office as an arts-hub serving the creative community in Pembrokeshire,



Post Office Scenario- continued

The CIC formed around a consortium of users obtained funding through a variety of potential routes including crowd funding /shareholders/ local philanthropists and benefactors.

Having a strong vision and business model for the complex, the CIC have worked closely with the local authority, resulting in and ward of European regional grant

funding for the restoration and conversion work to be carried out.

Post Office Building

The Post office complex contains a variety and range of accommodation, with large and small spaces arranged around a private courtyard, making it very adaptable to a range of multifunctional uses including:

- Artist studios
- Covered markets (i.e. craft/ makers and farmers' markets)
- Exhibition/ gallery space.
- Heritage interpretation
- Arts/ cultural tourism
- Independents and creative industries
- Water sports

The building plan lends itself to simple adaptation of the existing with rooms off corridors and open plan space. Only minimal demolition- one new opening is proposed, to adapt the layout as shown.

The courtyard could be opened up to the Quay by demolishing or reducing the height of the surrounding wall, and greened as a riverside garden or 'pocket park' as one of a series that would link up to the linear park.

APPENDIX 5 Planning the West Bank

Re- planning the River frontage behind Bridge Street largely depends on final decisions concerning the site for the new Library. PCC's current proposals are to convert the Riverside Market on the west bank.

Numerous properties along the west bank turn their back on the river. The layout reflects the original mediaeval commercial reach of tidal connected by narrow lanes to Bridge Street. Redevelopment in the 1980's included a river walk and riverside market and new extension to Ocky White's department store facing the river

The riverside Market, constructed on piers in the river and surrounded by service space, is not particularly attractive. The building has a poor relationship to the feeder lanes and Bridge Street, and despite the river walk, there are no clear routes to follow.

Options for change emerging in the workshops:

- Re-plan the 'backs' of properties in Bridge Street as 'fronts'. This would entail the demolition of the Market to create a new building line for facades/ premises and a street facing the river.
- Redevelop and reinstate the lanes to connect with the river / walk and reposition the footbridge crossing to align with a lane
- Remodel and re-plan the Market building and the public space surrounding it so that the public realm is separated from vehicle access/ service yards.
- Re-consider the location/ premises for the new Library / cultural centre in one of two prime locations on town squares:

- Swan Square- Poundland premises
- Castle Square-Pound stretcher

APPENDIX 6 The Riverside Shopping Centre.

The east bank was comprehensively redeveloped in the 1980's with a new shopping centre on the site of the open meadow, by then a car park.

The shopping development has had the effect of urbanising the river edge, enclosing the space, and restricting views across and along the river.

The shopping centre has recently passed into new ownership and there may be an opportunity in the near future to re-visit the design and planning of the riverside parade, with proposals for remodelling the shopping precinct .

Options emerging in the Big Map workshops included:

- Creating a protected 'green/ park' zone along the east bank by extending the conservation area across from the opposite town/ west bank to include the riverside.
- More naturalistic treatment of the river margins with tree planting, waterside reeds and gentle slopes, and/or wide shelves and stepped terraces down to the water's edge
- Selected demolition of shop units where necessary to create space and break up the solid wall effect, especially when seen from the rear.
- Cycle and walking routes linking up areas and features
- Riverside boardwalk /ramps where necessary to overcome obstacles
- Art trail along the river
- Pontoons on the water
- Repositioned/ new footbridge on axis with lane opposite.
- Rowing boats

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