

# **ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE AGENDA**



**Tuesday 26 November 2024**

**at 9.30am**

**in Committee Room B  
at the Civic Centre, Hartlepool**

**MEMBERS:** ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors Bailey-Fleet, Dodds (VC), Hargreaves (C), Lindridge, Male, Scarborough and Young.

Parish Council Co-opted Member:

S Smith (Greatham Parish Council)

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

**3. MINUTES**

- 3.1 To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2024 (*previously circulated and published*).

**4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK**

None.

**5. KEY DECISIONS**

None.

**CIVIC CENTRE EVACUATION AND ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE**

In the event of a fire alarm or a bomb alarm, please leave by the nearest emergency exit as directed by Council Officers. A Fire Alarm is a continuous ringing. A Bomb Alarm is a continuous tone.

The Assembly Point for everyone is Victory Square by the Cenotaph. If the meeting has to be evacuated, please proceed to the Assembly Point so that you can be safely accounted for.

## 6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 6.1 Tides of change – The redevelopment of the Museum of Hartlepool and restoration of the PS Wingfield Castle – *Assistant Director (Preventative and Community Based Services)*

## 7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 7.1 Serviced and Managed Workspace in Hartlepool – *Assistant Director (Development and Growth)*
- 7.2 Presentation - Capital Programme Update – *Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration*

## FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 10 December at 10am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool



# ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

26<sup>th</sup> November 2024



**Subject:** TIDES OF CHANGE – THE REDEVELOPMENT OF  
THE MUSEUM OF HARTLEPOOL AND  
RESTORATION OF THE PS WINGFIELD CASTLE

**Report of:** Assistant Director (Preventative and Community Based  
Services)

**Decision Type:** For decision

## 1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

Hartlepool will be a place:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• of resilient and resourceful communities with opportunities for all.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• that has an inclusive and growing economy.</li></ul>

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To provide members with a progress update on:

- Current plans for the redevelopment of the Museum of Hartlepool and visitor experience for PS Wingfield Castle.
- The Tides of Change funding bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

2.2 To provide members with the information required to endorse the recommendations set out within the report.

## 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 In 2022 the Council's Capital Programme Board approved a mandate to develop the Museum of Hartlepool project supported by Arts Council England and Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) Indigenous Growth Fund (IGF).

- 3.2 TVCA IGF of £1m was identified for the Museum of Hartlepool Project through the Waterfront Regeneration Programme Business Case in 2023 and is included within the current capital programme.
- 3.3 A multi-disciplinary design team was procured in Autumn of 2023 through a two stage open process. The successful bidders were LDN Architects.
- 3.4 In 2023 The Waterfront Board jointly agreed a strategy and timeline for an approach to the National Lottery Heritage Fund
- 3.5 Tricolor Associates were appointed to support the development of a Round 1 Development Phase application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund on behalf of HBC under the title 'Tides of Change'

In August 2024 a £6.8million bid was submitted to develop and deliver the Tides of Change project. This comprised the follow elements:

- Exploring the feasibility of a Maritime Skills Academy;
- Developing a Micro-Masterplan for the Waterfront Regeneration Programme cultural projects;
- Redeveloping the Museum of Hartlepool;
- Conserving, reinterpreting and re-opening the PS Wingfield Castle; and
- Delivering an ambitious activity plan to support engagement with and access to heritage including consultation, volunteer programme, staff training, formal and informal learning delivered in collaboration with partners including Northern Lights Multi Academy Trust, Northern School of Art, Hartlepool College of Further Education, National Museum of the Royal Navy (NMRN) and North East Maritime Trust amongst others.

#### **4. PROPOSALS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 4.1 The Tides of Change project will redevelop the Museum of Hartlepool (MoH) and restore PS Wingfield Castle (PSWC), a unique and important historic vessel as a sustainable, high-quality and accessible heritage destination. The reimagined MoH will showcase the story of the paddlesteamer alongside the museum's collections to engage residents and visitors with the rich history of Hartlepool. Visitors will see:
  - MoH redeveloped on its current footprint into a fully accessible building;
  - new entrances creating improved access from the carpark and quayside and reconfiguration of internal spaces to facilitate accessible visitor flow and facilities;
  - increased and upgraded exhibition space with appropriate environmental controls; renewed interpretation and interactive features reflecting themes in the collection;
  - new community and learning spaces;
  - retail, donation points and accessible stores enabling improved care of collections;



- views of, and improved access to, PSWC;
- PSWC restored and brought back into productive use, with renewed interpretation, event and activity space and food and beverage offer.

4.2 New interpretive content in MoH and PSWC will reflect the following themes:

- The Hart of the Sea - reflecting the human settlement in the area from Mesolithic to Mediaeval period;
- Jackson's Town - the development of West Hartlepool, one of the busiest ports on the East coast, built to provide a centre for trade, fishing and shipbuilding;
- People of the Sea - the story of the ancient and lasting relationship with the sea, and how the people of Hartlepool have grown and changed over the years to become a diverse community;
- Forward Propulsion - how the steamer works, how it was built and what makes it go;
- The Passenger Ferry - the story of the PSWC from inception in the Hartlepool shipyards to working life as a ferry, salvage and restoration;
- Above and Below - the story of the coastal ecology of the North Sea that tethered us to the landscape and the life of the seashore above, below and inside the waves;
- Port Life, Global Influence and Happy Healthy Hartlepool - the stories of Hartlepool as a melting pot of maritime trade, arts, craft and culture, of collectors, carnivals and galas, fairs, festivals and fun.

### **Anticipated Benefits**

- 4.3 The renewal of MoH's facilities will create a dedicated space for temporary and touring exhibitions with reserve collections and spotlight loans to be displayed, a facility not currently available. Education and family activities will resume in a fit for purpose space; previously delivered onboard the PSWC in two classrooms, the programme has been significantly curtailed since the closure of the vessel, with significant impact on MoH's reach and engagement with Hartlepool communities; given the Museum and Gallery Service's aim that every child under 18 in Hartlepool is able to access MoH and its collections to foster civic pride, the reinstatement of learning spaces is crucial.
- 4.4 The project will increase and diversify the number of visitors welcomed to MoH, enabled by reinterpretation of the Museum's unique and diverse collections to tell the stories of Hartlepool. Key to this will be removing barriers to engagement with heritage, arts and culture.
- 4.5 Consultation activities in the Development Phase, such as surveys, interviews and focus groups will shape the direction of the project direction and ensure relevance to community needs. Partnerships with local and regional organisations will be strengthened to facilitate effective delivery and deeper engagement with target audiences. Volunteer recruitment and training initiatives will offer opportunities for hands-on involvement in heritage preservation and education outreach and a focus on co-creation with

communities will enable access to stored artefacts, identification of key objects and testing of narratives to inform interpretation planning.

- 4.6 Activities in the Delivery Phase will focus on interpretation research, oral history projects and training to further develop staff and volunteer capabilities in heritage interpretation and inclusive learning and play practices. A wide range of engaging learning opportunities for visitors of all backgrounds and abilities will enrich the museum experience and attract diverse audiences, reinforcing MoH's role as a vibrant cultural hub within the community.
- 4.7 Training and skills development opportunities will be delivered in heritage maritime skills which will address a current gap in Hartlepool, create jobs and opportunities and enhance the sustainability of Museum assets.
- 4.8 The restoration of PSWC will transform the Quayside, integral to the project's contribution to the visitor economy and placemaking, civic pride, opportunities for job creation, learning, skills and training and increasing residents' and visitors' engagement with heritage and culture, all of which will help MoH build its organisational resilience and secure a sustainable future.

### **Strategic Context for Tides of Change**

- 4.9 Consultation data coupled with high levels of economic inactivity in the town indicate a need for free/ low-cost attractions/activities. There is a lack of high quality affordable experiences for residents; the majority of MoH's 96,453 visitors in 2023/24 were from the immediate local area. A high quality, free/ low cost, accessible museum experience will benefit residents by encouraging family time, social opportunities and connections with local heritage.
- 4.10 PSWC represents nationally significant heritage at risk. Its poor condition puts it at risk of loss. Following Condition Surveys (2017 and 2018), PSWC has been closed to the public due to safety concerns. Deterioration has continued at pace and she was deemed at considerable risk of sinking within twelve months (2023) without urgent restoration works. A dilapidated heritage landmark at the heart of the Waterfront area has severely degraded the surrounding spaces, led to negative perceptions of the area and raised questions about value placed on Hartlepool's heritage.
- 4.11 Limited opportunities for heritage skills development exist in the Tees Valley, particularly for young people to gain the requisite skills/ experience to develop careers/ undertake volunteering opportunities in heritage ship restoration/ marine engineering. Increased and more diverse opportunities for volunteers will support wellbeing, as well as the reintroduction and safeguarding of heritage skills. MoH will collaborate with Hartlepool FE College and Northern School of Art to provide training and skills opportunities.
- 4.12 Both MoH and PSWC are integral to the £52m Waterfront Regeneration which will transform Hartlepool's sense of place and visitor offer. MoH's redevelopment will support the critical mass of the Waterfront's visitor attractions; the reintegration of PSWC to the visitor experience will reconnect

the historic dockland landscape, increase people's connection with Hartlepool and industrial maritime heritage and actively support a sense of place.

## 5. TIMESCALES

Anticipated construction timetables for the component parts are as follows:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
Public Realm	March 2026
Wingfield Castle	Repairs – Autumn 2026  Visitor Experience fit out – Autumn 2028
Museum of Hartlepool	Autumn 2028

It is anticipated that the Museum of Hartlepool will re-open to the public from Spring 2029.

## 6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

<b>RISK IMPLICATIONS</b>	<p>These proposals require investment from external funders to be delivered. If the current funding bid is not successful then proposals will need to be reconsidered.</p> <p>There are ongoing risks of cost inflation related to capital works.</p> <p>There are interdependencies with other current capital projects including Damboard repair, Waterfront Connectivity and NMRN expansion projects</p>
<b>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<p>The funding mix is both capital and revenue. Heritage Fund requires match funding for these grant schemes which has been identified and ring fenced through the allocation of £1million within the current capital programme.</p> <p>The ongoing operational and commercial model for the site is to be developed in the next phase of work and will consider an options based appraisal.</p>

<b>SUBSIDY CONTROL</b>	No issues identified at this time.
<b>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	The ownership of the sites is mixed with a range of leaseholds and freeholds in place.
<b>CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY</b>	The Museum and Wingfield Castle provide a ‘free to access’ amenity for residents across Hartlepool and the wider Tees Valley. Consultation on the proposals, throughout the development phase of works, will ensure that the redevelopment of the site will reflect the needs and requirements of the community. Further to this when considering the impact of change on the site, the principles of social value and poverty proofing will be embedded in all decisions made.
<b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS</b>	On-going consultation with the wider community and local organisations such as the Tees Valley Museums Consortium Access Group, will feed into all aspects of the redevelopment work, to reflect the requirements and needs of all who may wish to visit the site. This will achieve a space which is welcoming, accessible and safe for all visitors.
<b>STAFF CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<p>New staff posts will be funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund to develop and deliver the project. In the Development Phase this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Development Manager</li> <li>• Project Coordinator</li> <li>• Maritime Skills Academy Coordinator</li> </ul> <p>Secondment and development opportunities may be available in the Delivery Phase which will be explored as the project progresses.</p> <p>Existing Museum and Gallery staff will support the development of content and programmes for the delivery of the projects as part of their duties regarding service development.</p>
<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<p>The PS Wingfield Castle is an HBC asset which requires restoration, these proposals ensure that repairs can be completed.</p> <p>The Museum of Hartlepool is leased from the National Museum of the Royal Navy. The investment in this site will provide a long term sustainable future for this element of the property.</p>

	The collections displayed at the museum are the property of HBC and these will be decanted and temporarily stored at an alternative location while works are ongoing.
<b>ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<p>The proposals include new energy efficient heating systems and insulation to reduce energy consumption.</p> <p>The proposed capital works will deliver against Hartlepool Borough Council's (HBC) Net Zero Strategy by refurbishing MoH and PSWC in line with the latest environmental standards, improving energy efficiency and reducing environmental impact, whilst supporting positive action in response to the climate crisis in interpretation, collections and programming.</p>
<b>CONSULTATION</b>	<p>Public consultation has been undertaken through an online survey, in gallery feedback, focus groups with stakeholders and targeted groups, and in person surveys. <b>Appendix 1</b> provides a summary of the responses.</p> <p>Consultation will carry on throughout the development phase of the works.</p>

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 It is recommended that the Committee endorse the development plans for MoH and PSWC as part of the Tides of Change project and note the £6.8 million bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund to support the delivery of the project.

## 8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Endorsing the work undertaken to date will support the continued work on the Tides of Change Project and the restoration of the PS Wingfield Castle, in line with existing funding agreements.
- 8.2 The redevelopment of the Museum of Hartlepool will have a positive benefit for economic growth and regeneration of the town, alongside the opportunity to continue providing access to leisure and cultural facilities.
- 8.3 The success of the Waterfront Regeneration Scheme relies on the momentum of a critical mass of culture and leisure led regeneration projects, of which the museum and the PS Wingfield Castle are a key element.

## 9. CONTACT OFFICERS

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# Museum of Hartlepool

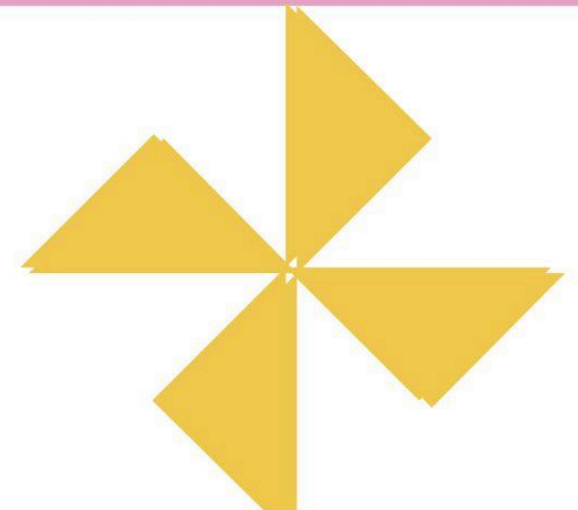


## Museum of Hartlepool Consultation Report

14th August 2024

**For** National Lottery  
Heritage Fund

**By** The Tricolor Collective





# **TIDES OF CHANGE**

## **CONSULTATION REPORT**

**JULY 2024**





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## CONTENTS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5	6.3 VOLUNTEER DROP-IN	23
2. INTRODUCTION	6	6.4 COMMUNITY GROUPS	27
3. PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH & APPROACH	6	Arts and Cultural Consultation	27
4. AUDIENCES	9	Hart Gables 1-2-1 Call	28
4.1 LOCAL DEMOGRAPHICS	9	Other Community Groups	30
Audience Agency Report	9	6.5 SURVEYS	33
Key Points	9	General Public	33
Museum of Hartlepool Audience Agency Visitor Report	10	Teachers' Survey	34
4.2 AUDIENCE AGENCY PROFILING	11	Student Survey	35
5. LOCAL CONTEXT / PAST CONSULTATION	12	6.6 KEY STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION CALLS	36
5.1. MEMORIES OF THE GRAY ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM	13	7. ANALYSIS	38
5.2. MUSEUM COMMENT CARDS	13	APPENDIX A - FULL WRITE UPS	42
5.3. FEEDBACK FROM TVMG ACCESSIBILITY ACTION GROUP	14	Consultation Plan	42
5.4. CHILDREN NORTH EAST - POVERTY PROOFING	16	Consultation Output	42
HARTLEPOOL ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM	16	Stakeholder Matrix	42
5.5. REVIEW OF LEARNING PROVISION	17	Visioning Workshop Presentation	42
5.6. HARTLEPOOL WATERFRONT DESTINATION	18	Stakeholder Workshops	42
MANAGEMENT PLAN	18	Creative and Cultural Partnership	42
5.6. THE BIG CONVERSATION	18	Volunteer Drop In	42
6. CONSULTATION FINDINGS	18	Family Consultation	42
6.1 STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS	19	COMMUNITY GROUPS - Cultural Togetherness	42
Vision Workshop	19	Hartgables - Andrew Towers	42
Stakeholder Workshop	19	LGBTQ+ Project Worker	42
Creative and Cultural Partnership Handouts	21	Access Group Workshop Feedback	42
6.2 FAMILY CONSULTATION	22	Transformers	42
		Disability Access	42
		FOCUS GROUPS	42



Home Educators Focus Group MAY 2024	42
SURVEYS	42
General Public Survey	42
Teachers Survey	42
Student Survey	42
STORYTELLING PROMPTS	42
Memories from Sir William Gray House	43
Museum Comment Cards	43
REPORTS & ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS	43
Audience Agency Report 2022/2024	43
Access Group Visit May 2022	43
Hartlepool Waterfront Destination Management Plan (Full Report)	43
Hartlepool Waterfront Destination Management Plan (Public leaflet)	43
Poverty Proofing Hartlepool Nov 2023	43
Restoration Survey PS Wingfield Castle	43
Big Conversation ( due XX/XXXX)	43



## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 'Tides of Change' project aims to renovate and revitalise the Museum of Hartlepool and PS Wingfield Castle, enhancing visitor experience, improving accessibility, and expanding educational offerings. This £52 million initiative is part of Hartlepool's Waterfront Regeneration Programme, with a £6.8 million bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund planned for August 2024.

### Consultation Process

Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) undertook considerable visitor and key stakeholder consultation throughout 2022-2023 to develop the Tides of Change project.

More extensive stakeholder engagement was conducted, including workshops, surveys, and interviews with local residents, families, volunteers, community groups, educators, and key stakeholders in 2024. This consultation aimed to further define Tides of Change by understanding community needs, preferences, and aspirations for the museum's redevelopment.

### Key Findings

The key findings reveal high community awareness and appreciation for the museum, with strong support for maintaining free entry. There is a clear desire for more interactive, engaging experiences, including family-friendly activities and diverse programming. The consultation highlighted the need for improved accessibility, signage, and wayfinding throughout the museum complex. Teachers and students expressed strong interest in curriculum-linked educational resources and

activities. Enthusiasm for the restoration of PS Wingfield Castle as a key attraction was evident across all stakeholder groups. The findings also indicate opportunities for expanded volunteer roles and community partnerships, as well as the potential for the museum to play a central role in local economic development and cultural heritage preservation.

### Challenges

Several challenges were identified, including the need to balance diverse improvement desires with available resources, address accessibility issues, and manage shared spaces effectively. Overcoming community scepticism and misconceptions about the museum's status, as well as integrating modern technology while preserving historical authenticity, were also noted as important considerations.

### Recommendations

Based on these findings, key recommendations include enhancing accessibility and inclusivity across all aspects of the museum, strengthening educational offerings and partnerships with local schools and higher education institutions, and expanding community engagement and volunteer opportunities. Leveraging the PS Wingfield Castle restoration to boost visitor appeal, modernising exhibits and incorporating interactive technologies, improving communication and marketing strategies (particularly through digital channels), and fostering partnerships to enhance the museum's role in local cultural and economic development are also crucial steps for the project's success.



The consultation reveals strong community support for the Museum of Hartlepool redevelopment project. By addressing the identified priorities and challenges, the project has the potential to transform the museum into a vibrant hub for education, culture, and community engagement, contributing significantly to Hartlepool's cultural landscape and economic revitalisation.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The 'Tides of Change' project aims to renovate and revitalise the dockside museum site, with a new entrance, welcome and retail facilities, improving access from the quayside and providing vistas through to the historic landscape of Jackson's Dock. Reconfigured internal spaces will make provision for community and learning facilities, increased exhibition space and an improved visitor offer. The significant heritage of PS Wingfield Castle will be saved and reopened to the public as part of the visitor experience.

The project, a key element of Hartlepool's extensive Waterfront Regeneration Programme, aims to transform the waterfront into a prime visitor destination. This initiative is closely tied to the town's rich industrial and maritime history. At the heart of this transformation is the Museum of Hartlepool and the PS Wingfield, both central to the historic dockyard quays and the area's maritime heritage.

The regeneration effort, a significant £52 million project jointly undertaken by Hartlepool Borough Council and the National Museum of the Royal Navy Hartlepool (NMRN), seeks to rejuvenate the former

dockland site. The Museum of Hartlepool, which shares its location and operational management with the NMRN, is instrumental in this endeavour. In support of these efforts, a £6.8 million Round 1 bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (Heritage Fund) is planned for submission in August 2024.

Tricolor began working with Hartlepool Borough Council in December 2023 to build the National Lottery Heritage Fund application.

## 3. PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH & APPROACH

This report outlines the findings of consultation by Tricolor on behalf of Hartlepool Borough Council into the community's needs and views as relates to Hartlepool's heritage and perceptions of the Museum's redevelopment and restoration of PS Wingfield Castle. It identifies the current situation in the area and the potential impact the project could have.

The purpose of the consultation was to get an understanding of:

### The Museum of Hartlepool and PS Wingfield Castle

- What existing activities are available for visitors at the Museum of Hartlepool and PS Wingfield Castle?
- How can the project address local needs in visitor participation?
- Which activities are expected to be popular and encourage participation from underrepresented audiences?
- What are the primary themes that capture the interest of visitors?



## Staff Needs

- What are the main challenges staff may face during this project?
- How can they and how would they like to support the project? Do they have the capacity and skills to do so?
- What skills would staff like to develop?
- What would the Museum of Hartlepool and PS Wingfield Castle look like with the addition of volunteers? What role/benefit will they have?

## User Experience and Accessibility

- What barriers do visitors encounter, and how is this feedback collected? What factors might deter their attendance or engagement with the Museum of Hartlepool and PS Wingfield Castle?
- What activities would visitors be prepared to pay for?
- In terms of secondary spending:
  - What pricing models can the Museum and PS Wingfield Castle offer visitors, schools, community groups, local residents?
  - What would be a suitable price range for food and beverage sales?
- In what ways will different groups of residents want to participate in the project?

## Audience Development

- What are the motivations of individuals currently involved with the Museum? Why do they engage with it already and through which mechanisms?
- What are the engagement patterns of existing and non-existing audiences?
- Where do the different audiences come from and which groups are under-represented?
- What are people's awareness levels of the Museum of Hartlepool, PS Wingfield Castle and the Waterfront Regeneration itself?
- Which audiences should be prioritised and why?
- What barriers do different potential audiences face and how do we know this? Are there additional barriers due to intersectionality? What might stop them from coming/engaging?
- What potential partnerships with external entities, such as community groups, heritage venues, educational institutions, local authorities, commercial operations, and arts organisations, could enhance the project's value and ensure sustained outcomes beyond the initial funding period?

## Volunteering

- How does the Museum of Hartlepool and PS Wingfield Castle plan to attract volunteers, and what strategies will be employed to reach out to potential volunteers within the community?
- Which specific volunteer roles does the organisation intend to advertise, and how will these roles be tailored to accommodate various skill sets and interests?

- How can the project promote volunteering as a pathway for skill development and enhancing employability to individuals seeking employment?
- Are there existing partnerships with educational institutions to create internship or service-learning opportunities for student volunteers?
- What existing community initiatives and/or groups aimed at supporting diverse groups of volunteers, and in what ways can these initiatives be enhanced or expanded?
- What barriers do different potential volunteers face and how do we know this?

### **Community & Wellness**

- How do stakeholders define wellness?
- How does the Museum currently contribute to local communities?
- What activities would contribute to the personal, mental and physical wellness of locals and visitors?
- What community needs are not currently being met?
- In what ways could community and interest groups engage with the project?
- What provision is there for young people? What gap could the project help fill?
- To what extent are residents aware of the cultural significance of the Museum of Hartlepool and PS Wingfield Castle and its impact on the city's identity?

### **Learning and Participation**

- What gaps in learning and participation can be filled by the project?
- How can the project support National Curriculum delivery in local schools?
- What facilities would benefit education providers to ensure an engaging and safe learning environment?
- What activities or learning materials would be needed to support neurodiverse students and/or those with access needs?
- What ways can the project look to support young adults in their career development?
- How could community and interest groups participate in the project?
- What learning and engagement materials would educators prefer? For example outreach, on-site visits, loan boxes, evening lectures.

### **Training and Skills Development**

- What training can be offered that will be most attractive to target audiences and what new skills can be learnt via the project?
- What training and development opportunities would be interesting to visitors and other stakeholders in the project?
- Who are the key partners/organisations to be engaged with to deliver training and development opportunities?





While consultation findings are summarised in Section 6, full events write ups, analyses and reports can be accessed via the links in Section 6, Appendix A.

## 4. AUDIENCES

The Museum of Hartlepool and PS Wingfield Castle redevelopment project aims to engage various stakeholders to develop a diverse programme, utilise resources effectively, and foster community pride. Stakeholder engagement through the consultation process has included:

- Museum of Hartlepool staff
- Hartlepool Borough Council
- Local Residents and Families
- Students
- Schools and Educators
- Local Community Groups
- Communities with additional access needs.

By using the heritage as a springboard, the project will engage more and different people and in doing so provide support and opportunities that will improve their lives and the community as a whole.

Hartlepool residents and those from surrounding areas, with a particular focus on underrepresented groups and existing heritage audiences, were identified as key audiences for consultation and to develop further engagement with.

### 4.1 LOCAL DEMOGRAPHICS

The population of Hartlepool according to the 2021 census records is 92,300 people. This local population is largely white, with a small number of people from an Asian/Asian British background. The Victoria Ward, where the Museum is situated, stands out with a higher proportion of Black and Ethnic Minority residents compared to the rest of Hartlepool. Moreover it ranks as the fifth most deprived area in Hartlepool.

#### Audience Agency Report

An Audience Agency population profile report was commissioned in 2020 to establish the demographic and cultural profiles of those living in a 0-30 minute and 30-60 minute drive time from the Museum of Hartlepool, the two groups which make up the main potential audience of the museum. The data provides a demographic overview of the catchment areas and the analyses the audiences using Audience Spectrum. The two groups were analysed against a baseline of the population of the rest of England.

#### Key Points

- Around 2,150,000 people live within a 60-minute drivetime of Hartlepool.
- This local population is largely white, with a small number of people from an Asian/Asian British background.
- The data indicates several elements of deprivation: the percentage of people who are economically inactive due to long-term illness or disability is higher than the national





average, and more people than the national average in both drivetime areas have no qualifications and fewer have a qualification of degree level or above. There is also a higher level of unemployment compared to the English baseline. Ten percent of the 0-30 drivetime area are out of work.

- These indicators collectively highlight significant challenges related to economic inactivity, unemployment, and qualification levels within the community.
- The predominant age group within a 30-minute drive from the Museum are those aged 20-29, and 45-49. There are also a high level of children in this area, 35% of the total population are under 19, compared to 16% of people who are over the age of 65.
- People in the local area are generally less culturally engaged - the drivetime populations were less likely than the English average to attend an arts or cultural activity or event - with the exception of the 'Trips and Treats' segment who are more numerous in the 0-30 minute drivetime area.
- The largest audience segment in both areas is 'Facebook Families', followed by 'Trips and Treats' and 'Up our Street'.
  - 'Facebook Families' are a younger, cash-strapped group from suburban and semi-urban areas of high employment with culture generally playing a very small role in their lives.
  - 'Trips and Treats' are a group who enjoy mainstream arts and popular culture, influenced by children, family, and friends.

- 'Up our Street' are a group who are modest in habits and means, for whom value for money and low-risk factors are important in leisure decision making.

### **Museum of Hartlepool Audience Agency Visitor Report**

An Audience Agency visitor report was generated for the Museum of Hartlepool, based on 164 survey responses from April 2022 to March 2023.

- Estimated total visitors numbered 63,952
- Based on postcode data, the audience profile showed a high number of 'Dormitory Dependables' (21%) and 'Frontline Families' (19.5%).
- The highest number of visitors were in the 34-44 age group.
- 97% of the visitors were white, 2% were Asian/Asian British, and 1% were from a mixed ethnic background
- 12% identified as D/deaf or disabled, or had a long-term health condition.
- The highest number of visitors (22%) came from the TS26, TS24 and TS25 postcode areas (those areas covering and immediately surrounding Hartlepool).

The data indicates that most visitors to the Museum of Hartlepool during 2022-23 were from the local area, and shows that there are significant groups and communities in the hyperlocal area who may not currently be engaging with the museum and its heritage.



## 4.2 AUDIENCE AGENCY PROFILING

The 2020 Audience Agency report analysed above gives a breakdown of the cultural profiles of those living in a 0-30 minute and 30-60 minute drive time from the Museum of Hartlepool, compared with a baseline of the population of the whole of England.

The Audience Agency categorises the UK population by their attitudes towards culture – and what they like to see and do in their leisure time. This allows us to understand who lives in the area and their habits and preferences.

The largest segment by far within both drivetime areas is 'Frontline Families', with 25% of the 0-30 minute catchment fitting into this category and 18% of the 30-60 minute catchment. The second largest segment in 0-30 minutes is Trips and Treats (15%) and in the 30-60 catchment it is 'Up our Street' (16%) followed by 'Dormitory Dependables' (14%).

### Overview of the Segments

#### **'Frontline Families'**

- Younger, cash-strapped families from suburban and semi-urban areas with culture generally playing a very small role in their lives.
- 'Frontline Families' are families often on a low salary and with basic qualifications or low educational attainment. Many people in this group claim benefits to make ends meet. The cost of living crisis will have hit them hard.

- Often in council rented housing and spending most of their free time enjoying at home entertainment. This group has a high use of digital media, including social media, video games and online video streaming. This group is the least likely to feel that culture makes a difference to their area or benefits them. 67% of this group have dependent children in the household.
- Involvement In Culture and Arts
  - Preference for mainstream and popular artforms especially if these are family orientated such as circuses, pantomimes and live music.
  - Free activities and offers are the most popular, especially those outdoors.
  - This group may visit a museum once or twice a year if it is free.
  - Holidays and leisure activities are likely to be budget and local, such as visiting the seaside or free activity days out.

#### **'Trips and Treats'**

- Comfortably living group who mainstream arts and popular culture, influenced by children, family, and friends.
- The 'Trips and Treats' group tend to be living comfortable but modest lifestyles, close to relatives and where they grew up.
- They may not view culture as a passion but are reasonably culturally active and have a wide range of leisure interests which they share with family and friends. Leisure pursuits reflect busy households who enjoy playing and watching sports, 'days out' in town, and plenty of family time for TV and games.

- This group has an average level of education and are employed in mid-level professions and management. 50% of this group have children which influence their leisure decisions.
- Involvement In Culture and Arts
  - Cultural Engagement is part of this group's lives with above average attendance at museums, galleries and heritage sites.
  - They also enjoy musicals, film, carnivals and circuses, often making planned efforts to attend events.
  - At home there is a focus on in-house entertainment such as computer games, television and sports.

#### ***'Up our Street'***

- Older adults who are modest in habits and means, value for money and low-risk factors are important in leisure decision making.
- The 'Up Our Street' group are likely to live outside towns and smaller cities in former industrial areas. Many rely on lower to middle incomes and enjoy a modest lifestyle, inexpensive hobbies and occasional treats. Soon-to-be, or already, retirees from skilled professional, White working class backgrounds, who enjoy sofa time, social clubs and fishing trips on modest pensions.
- Usually made up of single adults or those with grown-up children and grandchildren, this group is interested in what is happening in their local area.
- Less likely than average to own a car, they may be restricted in the places they can travel to independently, so easily accessed community events are key.

- Involvement In Culture and Arts
  - Preference for mainstream and popular artforms which are 'tried and tested' such as musicals, pantomimes, carnivals, and pop music.
  - Occasionally enjoy day trips which are local and easily accessible. Wildlife and History often provide a focus for days out – particularly with grandchildren.
  - Eating out, spending time meeting friends in pubs, bar, sports and social clubs is a frequent pastime for many.

Key drivers for the identified local audience segments, then, are likely to be:

- Free entry - many are on a low household income.
- Free or low-cost activities which will make it possible for families to enjoy a day out.
- A family-friendly focus to cultural provision.
- Opportunities to learn about and share experiences of the local history and heritage.
- Social activities which build a sense of connection.

## **5. LOCAL CONTEXT / PAST CONSULTATION**

Further to project specific consultation activity, there are a number of additional reports and findings from early activities which provide some relevant insights, giving a broader sense of the wider context locally.

This section provides analysis of various consultation activities and feedback related to Hartlepool's cultural and heritage assets, considering information from a range of sources, including





comment cards at the Museum of Hartlepool, feedback at the Gray Art Gallery and Museum, feedback from TVMG Accessibility Action Group, a Poverty Proofing report for Hartlepool Art Gallery and the Museum of Hartlepool, a review of learning provision at the Museum of Hartlepool and Hartlepool Art Gallery, the Hartlepool 'Big Conversation', the Hartlepool Waterfront Destination Management Plan, Tall Ships Race 2023 evaluation and Historic England Historic Places Panel review. Emerging themes and key learnings may be summarised as follows:

### **Nostalgia and Community Attachment**

A consistent theme throughout the feedback is the profound community attachment to Hartlepool's cultural institutions. Residents and visitors alike hold fond memories of exhibits and educational experiences, highlighting the intergenerational importance of these spaces in preserving and showcasing local history.

### **Educational Role of Museums and Galleries**

The educational significance of these institutions is consistently highlighted across various feedback sources. From childhood museum clubs to school visits, the museums and galleries are perceived as essential resources for learning about local history, maritime heritage, and broader cultural topics. However, the review of educational provision revealed challenges in maintaining school engagement, particularly due to issues such as transport costs and limited space for activities.

### **Accessibility and Inclusivity**

Accessibility and inclusivity emerge as critical areas requiring improvement. Feedback from the TVMG Accessibility Action Group identified various issues, including inadequate signage, problems with exhibit layout and lighting, and the need for more sensory elements to accommodate visitors with diverse abilities. The Poverty Proofing review also emphasised the importance of ensuring these cultural spaces are welcoming and affordable for all community members, regardless of their economic circumstances.

### **Interactive and Engaging Exhibits**

Interactive and engaging exhibits are highly valued by visitors, particularly for children and young people. Numerous suggestions focused on increasing hands-on activities, creating more immersive experiences, and incorporating a broader range of historical and cultural topics. Additionally, there was a noted desire for a more cohesive and chronological presentation of exhibits.

### **Maritime Heritage and Waterfront Development**

Hartlepool's maritime heritage emerges as a central asset and opportunity for the town's development. The Historic England Places Panel review underscores the waterfront's potential as a significant development opportunity, noting it as the largest dockside site between Leith and Hull. The panel expresses concern that past regeneration efforts have not fully capitalised on this potential, resulting in



developments that lack character and fail to create a strong sense of place.

The Museum of Hartlepool and the National Museum of the Royal Navy are recognised as key assets that provide immersive historical context and contribute to the maritime character of the town. Both institutions are looking to invest in their offerings and improve access to the waterfront, which could serve as a catalyst for further development in the area.

### **Tall Ships Legacy Planning**

The Tall Ships Races 2023 event is seen as a significant opportunity to create a lasting legacy for Hartlepool. The legacy plan focuses on several key themes, including strategic visioning, heritage and culture, securing future investment for high-profile events, and reinforcing Hartlepool's identity as a destination. The plan also emphasises developing pathways into maritime industries and creating new job opportunities, potentially through the incorporation of a Maritime Skills Academy within the Museum redevelopment project.

### **Community Engagement and Local Pride**

Community engagement and local pride are central themes in the feedback. The Big Conversation initiative revealed that residents view Hartlepool's heritage and cultural assets as underutilised resources that could be better promoted to boost tourism, create jobs, and foster a stronger sense of civic pride. There is a clear call for more festivals, events, and activities that celebrate local history and culture.

### **Challenges Facing Cultural Institutions**

Challenges facing these cultural institutions include limited staff capacity, reduced visitor numbers due to the COVID-19 pandemic, space constraints, and the need for improved marketing and communication strategies. Aligning museum offerings with curriculum needs and Ofsted requirements is highlighted as essential to better support schools and justify the educational value of museum visits.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

In conclusion, cultural institutions in Hartlepool are deeply valued by the community but face significant challenges. There is a strong desire for these spaces to evolve, becoming more accessible, interactive, and relevant to a diverse audience while maintaining their crucial role in preserving and showcasing local heritage. The feedback and recommendations provided offer a roadmap for future development, emphasising the need for continued community engagement, improved facilities, and strategic alignment with broader waterfront and town development goals.

Each of the source documents are explored in greater detail below and included in full amongst the appendices in Section 7 of this report.

## **5.1. MEMORIES OF THE GRAY ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM**

Hartlepool's Gray Art Gallery and Museum (housed in Sir William Gray House and closed to the public in 1994 being superseded by the



Museum of Hartlepool on Jackson's Dock and the Hartlepool Art Gallery in Church Square), is fondly remembered as a place of wonder, education, and community, with exhibits that left a lasting impression on its visitors. Engagement work undertaken to develop *Museum: Past, Present, Future* exhibition facilitated sharing of memories and stories from local visitors to the old Gray Art Gallery and Museum which highlights several common themes, topics, and observations:

### **Nostalgia and Fond Memories**

Many visitors recall their childhood visits to the museum with warmth and fondness. These memories often involve family members, particularly parents or grandparents, who took them to the museum. It is remembered as a cherished part of their childhood and a place of exploration and wonder.

### **Exhibits and Displays**

Several exhibits left a lasting impression, such as the stuffed animals (including a lion and tiger), the Samurai armour, and the Sleeping Beauty painting. Other notable mentions include the penny farthing, the alarm clock from the bombardment, and various models of ships and aircraft. The taxidermy exhibits, while memorable, were not universally liked.

### **Oriental and Historical Artefacts**

There is strong appreciation for the oriental pieces, such as Samurai armour, and historical items like the clock damaged during the

bombardment. The exhibits related to local history, like the paintings of Hartlepool, also received special attention.

### **Museum Club and Educational Role**

The museum played a significant educational role, with activities like the museum club being fondly remembered. The gallery also served as a space for learning and curiosity, with some participants mentioning the educational experiences they had as children.

### **Atmosphere and Environment**

The museum is remembered as a peaceful, timeless place with a distinctive atmosphere, often described as quiet and detached from the hustle and bustle of daily life. The conservatory or greenhouse with exotic plants was also a highlight for some.

### **Personal Connections**

A few visitors had personal or familial connections to the museum, such as living on the grounds, working there, or having relatives who were caretakers or involved in the museum's operations. These connections deepened their attachment to the place.

### **Desire for Cultural Community Hub**

There is a clear sense of loss and a strong desire among local residents regarding the closure of the old Gray Art Gallery and Museum. Many expressed nostalgia for the days when the Gray was a central part of

the community, and they wish for the successor cultural facilities to achieve this hub status and to share their experiences with future generations.

## 5.2. MUSEUM COMMENT CARDS

Feedback left on the comment cards at the Museum of Hartlepool reveals several recurring themes, topics, and observations highlighting a strong appreciation for the Museum of Hartlepool's role in preserving and presenting local history, with a clear interest in expanding and enhancing the interactive and educational aspects of the museum.

Visitors have shared personal memories tied to the museum, such as visiting with family members or specific exhibits that have left a lasting impression. The ship models and the experience of exploring the museum are fondly remembered by many.

There is a strong interest in Hartlepool's local history, with requests for more information about old shops, theatres, and historical attractions such as Ward Jackson Park, as well as the town's shipbuilding heritage. The story of the bombardment of the Hartlepoons and other local tales are considered important narratives to include.

Maritime history, particularly the PS Wingfield Castle, is a major attraction. The on gallery fishing coble *Three Brothers Grantt* and HMS Trincomalee (part of the NMRN offer) are also mentioned as favourites, with visitors expressing a desire for more maritime-themed exhibits and activities.

There is a clear demand for more interactive exhibits, particularly for children. Suggestions include drawing competitions, more hands-on activities, and areas where children can engage with the displays, such as dressing up or playing on models. The importance of making the museum engaging for younger visitors is highlighted, with requests for chalk drawings, interactive displays, and play areas.

Some visitors expressed a desire for the museum to cover more historical topics, such as the Black Death, dinosaurs, and ancient artefacts. There are also suggestions for including more information on different centuries, archaeological finds, and even extra-terrestrial themes.

Many visitors have left positive comments about their overall experience, appreciating the variety of exhibits and the engaging atmosphere. The coble and the dressing-up areas were particularly well-received, with some visitors describing their visit as exciting and enjoyable.

There are numerous suggestions for new exhibits, including a section on the Titanic, a fashion show runway, more spooky or haunted attractions, and areas dedicated to dinosaurs or animals. Visitors also requested practical additions like an audible tour, more boats, and information on specific historical houses.

Some visitors offered constructive criticism, such as the need for clearer storytelling throughout the museum, more detailed information on certain exhibits (like the cobbles and PS Wingfield), and a desire for more cohesive educational experiences.





### **5.3. FEEDBACK FROM TEES VALLEY MUSEUM GROUP'S ACCESSIBILITY ACTION GROUP**

The report summarises feedback from a diverse group of museum visitors, including individuals with various disabilities such as chronic pain, wheelchair users, cerebral palsy, and visual impairments. The visit, which took place on a weekday morning, involved assessing different aspects of the museum experience, followed by a discussion on areas for improvement.

#### **Pre-arrival, Welcome, and Orientation**

Visitors appreciated the museum's easy navigation and the welcoming atmosphere of spaces like the book nook and sea animals area. However, there was significant confusion regarding the museum's location and entrance due to inadequate signage, both around the town and at the museum itself. Some visitors were unsure which museum they were at, leading to potential confusion with other nearby museums. Suggestions for improvement included better pre-arrival information, such as a 360-degree tour and clearer signage, especially for those arriving by train.

#### **Atmosphere**

The ceiling and book nooks were noted as particularly appealing, adding a cosy and accessible feel to the museum. However, the overall layout was perceived as disjointed, with some exhibits seemingly placed out of chronological order. The lighting was another concern, with bright spotlights causing discomfort for some visitors. Additionally, the

museum's temperature was too chilly for those with mobility issues, making it difficult for them to stay comfortable during the visit.

#### **Noise**

Noise levels in the museum were problematic, with sound from certain exhibits bleeding into other areas, making it difficult for visitors to hear guides. This issue was particularly concerning for those with hearing impairments and raised concerns about how noisy the museum would become if it were more crowded, such as during school visits.

#### **Interpretation**

Visitors found the exhibits engaging and appreciated the chronological layout and colour-coded sections, which helped with navigation. However, there were issues with the visibility and readability of labels, especially for those in wheelchairs or with visual impairments. The font size on labels was too small, and some labels were poorly positioned or difficult to distinguish against their backgrounds. Suggestions for improvement included larger print, more descriptive labels, and incorporating sensory elements like smells to enhance the experience for visually impaired visitors.

#### **Outside Space Exploration**

The quayside area was highlighted as a quiet and accessible space, particularly beneficial for visitors with sensory sensitivities. However, access to certain exhibits, such as the PS Wingfield Castle, was limited,





and some visitors expressed concerns about the safety and appearance of exhibits and stored items in the outside area.

## **Facilities**

Visitors appreciated the availability of accessible toilets and the ample seating throughout the museum, which made it easier for those with mobility issues to enjoy their visit. However, the accessible toilet layout was problematic, with a bin obstructing access and cleaning equipment being stored in the small space. The lack of a café was also noted as a drawback, especially for visitors with specific dietary needs or those who require a place to rest and take medication.

## **General**

While the museum was generally considered physically accessible due to its single-level layout, visitors noted that different disabilities require different accommodations. The absence of on-site staff was a significant concern, as there was no one to assist with questions or emergencies. Visitors suggested introducing a volunteer programme to provide front-of-house support and ensure there is always someone available to help. Additionally, a direct phone line to a staffed number was recommended for emergency situations.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, the museum offers a physically accessible experience, but improvements are needed to better accommodate visitors with various disabilities. Key suggestions include enhanced signage, improved

lighting and layout, audio descriptions, additional sensory elements, and the presence of on-site staff or volunteers to assist visitors. These changes would benefit both disabled and non-disabled visitors, making the museum a more inclusive and enjoyable destination.

## **5.4. CHILDREN NORTH EAST - POVERTY PROOFING HARTLEPOOL ART GALLERY AND MUSEUM OF HARTLEPOOL**

This report summarises the review stage of the Poverty Proofing process conducted for The Museum of Hartlepool (MOH) from October 2022 to March 2023. The process aimed to understand and address barriers to engagement for individuals and families living in poverty. The review assessed progress made since the initial recommendations in 2023, focusing on themes such as Access, Welcome & Sense of Belonging, Affordability & Value, Community Partnerships & Engagement, and Content & Exhibits.

### **Positive Changes**

MOH has made several positive strides in improving accessibility and creating a more welcoming environment. The entrance area of the museum has been redesigned to be more interactive, with new additions such as showcases displaying objects, a reading area, new toys, and a giant tiger, all contributing to a more engaging experience for visitors. Additionally, the quayside has been opened to the public, with new bench formations that offer families a space to bring and enjoy their own food. The museum has also incorporated ongoing consultation with visitors into its programme planning, using illustrated postcards to gather feedback on what matters most to the community.

This approach has ensured that the museum remains attuned to the needs and interests of its audience.

### **Persistent Challenges**

Despite these improvements, certain challenges remain. One of the key issues is the ongoing struggle with visibility and advertising. There are significant challenges in effectively promoting MOH as a free-entry site, especially when compared to the neighbouring National Museum of the Royal Navy. This lack of visibility may be limiting the museum's ability to attract a wider audience. Furthermore, the museum has encountered difficulties in re-engaging schools in the post-COVID landscape. Increased transport costs have made school trips less feasible for some educational institutions, creating a barrier to participation for students.

### **Additional Considerations for Improvement**

Based on the feedback gathered during this review, it is clear that further attention is needed in several areas. Pedestrian access to the museum remains a significant challenge. Visitors have reported that the walk to the museum is off-putting due to difficult road crossings, unclear sightlines, and insufficient signage. The museum is perceived as being cut off from the town by roads and train tracks, making it particularly challenging for those with young children or older adults to access the museum on foot. Public transport also poses a challenge. The intersectionality of poverty, disability, and transport poverty continues to impact negatively on access to both the gallery and the museum. Public transport in Hartlepool, particularly buses, was described by visitors as expensive, unreliable, and unavailable after 6 pm. This lack of

reliable transport options further exacerbates accessibility issues, particularly for low-income families.

### **Recommendations**

To address these ongoing challenges, several recommendations have been proposed. One key recommendation is to explore ways to improve car parking access for disabled visitors and those with small children. This could include reintroducing disabled access bays near the gallery, which would enhance accessibility for these groups. Additionally, the museum should investigate opportunities to promote existing free transport initiatives, such as those offered by Tees Valley. Raising awareness and promoting these initiatives could be part of a broader TVMG-wide culture pass, which would provide access to holiday activity sessions in both the gallery and the museum. Improving signage and pedestrian access between MOH and the Hartlepool Art Gallery (HAG) is also recommended. Clearer directions and better signage could make the museum more accessible and welcoming to all visitors. Furthermore, it is crucial to clearly communicate the available support for low-income participants in outreach programmes. This includes making it known that students receiving Pupil Premium are eligible to participate in museum activities. Blending participatory projects across different educational providers, drawing on the success of initiatives like the Tall Ships project, could also help to expand engagement and diversify the volunteer pool. Finally, the museum should continue to build on its strengths in family engagement by reaching out to organisations familiar to current families in order to widen participation. Seeking feedback on the affordability and accessibility of activities, particularly following group activities with the youth panel, is also advised.





## 5.5. REVIEW OF LEARNING PROVISION

The Museum of Hartlepool (MOH) and Hartlepool Art Gallery (HAG) recently commissioned a review to revitalise their learning offer for schools. This initiative was prompted by the conclusion of their previous funding in March 2023 and a desire to refresh their educational programmes.

The review highlighted several challenges facing the museums, including limited staff capacity, reduced school visits due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and space constraints at both venues. These issues have affected the museums' ability to provide a diverse range of educational experiences for visiting schools.

To gather insights, the review employed various research methods, including an online teacher survey, consultation sessions, and discussions with local schools. The findings revealed teachers' interest in curriculum-linked workshops, object-handling sessions, loan boxes, and outreach activities. However, teachers also identified several barriers to school visits, such as transport costs, excessive paperwork, and the lack of a dedicated lunch space at the museum.

Communication emerged as a key area for improvement. Teachers expressed a strong preference for more information about available workshops and resources, preferring to receive updates via email newsletters. This feedback underscores the importance of effective marketing and communication strategies in engaging schools and promoting the museums' educational offerings.

The review also revealed interest in projects related to local events, such as the Tall Ships 2023, indicating potential for the museums to align their programmes with community activities. Additionally, the importance of SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) provision was emphasised, not only for specialised schools but also for mainstream institutions.

Based on these findings, the report recommends several actions. In the short term, it suggests improving marketing and communication efforts, developing new workshops and resources, and considering charging for some services to generate income. Long-term recommendations focus on the museums' redevelopment plans, including the creation of larger classroom and workshop spaces, dedicated lunch areas, and improved toilet facilities.

Throughout the report, there is a strong emphasis on aligning the museums' offerings with curriculum needs and Ofsted requirements. This alignment is seen as crucial for better supporting schools and justifying the educational value of museum visits.

In conclusion, the review provides a comprehensive roadmap for MOH and HAG to enhance their educational offerings. By addressing communication issues, developing curriculum-linked resources, and improving facilities, the museums can better serve local schools and strengthen their role as valuable educational partners in the community.

## 5.6. HARTLEPOOL WATERFRONT DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Destination Management Plan for Hartlepool's Waterfront area aims to transform it into one of the Tees Valley's top visitor attractions through a £52 million regeneration programme. The vision is to create an integrated, coherent destination offering unique experiences for both locals and visitors over a 10-year period.

The plan sets out clear objectives to create a distinctive proposition, develop a year-round destination, and increase economic benefits through higher visitor spending. Specific targets are outlined for day visitor spend, visitor numbers, economic impact, and visitor sentiment.

The report provides context on the current situation in Hartlepool, including visitor statistics, planned investments, and a SWOT analysis. It identifies key target markets for growth, including "Fun Families," "Engaged Sightseers," and business travellers. The plan emphasises the need to increase day visits and dwell time in the short to medium term, with a longer-term focus on developing new and enhanced experiences.

Marketing and positioning strategies are outlined, including a proposition that positions Hartlepool's Waterfront as a place to learn, be entertained, have fun, and get active. Key messages are tailored for each target market segment.

The plan identifies five priority areas for experience development: events, active experiences, orientation and animation, food and drink, and accommodation development. Specific actions are proposed for each priority area, along with potential partners and timeframes.

To support implementation, the report recommends establishing a Waterfront DMP Group and Community Consultative Forum, creating a Waterfront DMP Charter, and developing volunteer and community engagement initiatives. It also emphasises the importance of sustainable tourism practices and supporting business and inward investment.

The report concludes with recommendations for resourcing the plan, including estimates for capital and revenue funding needs. It also outlines a comprehensive monitoring framework to track progress in market reach, market development, and product development.

The Destination Management Plan provides a strategic roadmap for transforming Hartlepool's Waterfront into a vibrant, attractive destination that benefits both visitors and the local community.

## 5.6. THE BIG CONVERSATION

The Hartlepool "Big Conversation" was an ambitious engagement exercise conducted by Hartlepool Borough Council over a 12-week period from November 2023 to February 2024. The primary aim was to gather input from residents on their priorities for the town's future, with a particular focus on informing the development of a new Council Plan for 2024-2029. The initiative saw impressive participation, with over 1,600 people contributing through various methods including surveys, postcards, and face-to-face sessions.

One of the key themes that emerged from the Big Conversation was the importance of Hartlepool's heritage and cultural assets. Residents expressed a deep appreciation for the town's museums, art galleries,





historic buildings, and natural assets such as the coastline and surrounding countryside. Many felt that these assets were underutilised and could be better promoted to both residents and visitors. There was a strong desire to see more festivals, events, and activities that could raise the town's profile and provide residents with engaging things to do.

The report highlighted a significant emphasis on the need for more support and opportunities for young people in Hartlepool. This encompassed a range of areas including education, work opportunities, and social activities. Many respondents felt that providing better prospects for youth could help address issues of antisocial behaviour and encourage talented young people to remain in the town rather than seeking opportunities elsewhere.

Fostering a sense of town and civic pride emerged as another important theme. Respondents emphasised the importance of promoting Hartlepool's positive aspects and encouraging residents to take pride in their community. This was closely linked to calls for making the town more welcoming and inclusive for people from diverse backgrounds, reflecting a desire for Hartlepool to be seen as an open and progressive community.

Accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities was another key area of concern raised by many participants. This touched on various aspects of town life, from physical infrastructure to employment opportunities and social inclusion.

The report also delved into economic aspects related to heritage and culture. Many respondents called for more high-quality jobs,

particularly in creative industries, as a way to retain young talent and boost the local economy. There was a recognition that Hartlepool's heritage assets could play a role in economic development, particularly through increased tourism and related businesses.

The findings presented in the report were based on a diverse range of respondents, though the demographic data showed some variations from the overall population. Survey participants were mostly residents aged 36-65, with higher percentages of women and people with disabilities compared to census data. This information provides important context for interpreting the results and identifying any potential gaps in representation.

Overall, the Big Conversation findings related to heritage and culture paint a picture of a community proud of its history and natural assets, but eager to see these leveraged more effectively for the benefit of residents and the local economy. The insights gathered are intended to inform not just the Council's overarching plan, but also more specific strategies related to cultural development, tourism, and economic growth in Hartlepool.

## **5.7. HISTORIC ENGLAND PLACES PANEL**

The Historic England Historic Places Panel Review Report for Hartlepool highlights significant opportunities for the town's historic waterfront, particularly focusing on the potential for development that leverages the area's unique maritime heritage. However, the report expresses concern that past regeneration efforts have not fully capitalised on this potential, resulting in developments that lack character and fail to create a strong sense of place. The loss of historic



buildings and the scattered nature of those that remain have further weakened the townscape.

Central to the report is the recognition of the Museum of Hartlepool and the National Museum of the Royal Navy as key assets that provide immersive historical context and contribute to the maritime character of the town. Both institutions are looking to invest in their offerings and improve access to the waterfront, which could serve as a catalyst for further development in the area. The forthcoming Highlight sports, leisure, and healthcare facility is also noted for its potential to enhance the waterfront's appeal.

The report underscores the waterfront as a significant asset, offering extensive developable land that represents the largest dockside opportunity between Leith and Hull. However, the panel argues that the current development plans for the residential and public realm offerings lack ambition and architectural quality. It calls for a more cohesive urban design approach that prioritises long-term public benefit and addresses Hartlepool's deprivation issues. The report criticises previous developments as opportunistic and poorly designed, advocating for a more contextual approach, especially in housing. The Museum of Hartlepool and PS Wingfield Castle are identified as key assets with potential to drive authentic and sympathetic development that engages with the lost industrial landscapes of the docks.

To unlock the full potential of the waterfront, the report recommends developing a more detailed and ambitious masterplan, with a holistic view of existing and proposed developments. It suggests that a Design Review Panel be established to ensure high-quality design standards and encourages the adoption of successful waterfront developments

from other cities as benchmarks. The report also highlights the potential for innovative sustainability measures, such as using the Marina's water to create a sustainable heat network, which would align with Hartlepool Borough Council's NetZero strategy.

In the short term, the report calls for a clearer, shared vision for the waterfront that involves all stakeholders and emphasises the importance of getting the right development rather than fast development. It suggests setting up a Design Review Panel and promoting public access to the waterfront, while ensuring that the development is pedestrian-friendly and enhances the public realm. The report also recommends closer collaboration between the Museum of Hartlepool and the National Museum of the Royal Navy during their refurbishment efforts to achieve a more integrated and sustainable approach.

In the medium term, the report proposes comprehensive public realm improvements and further exploration of renewable energy options, such as a water-source heat pump in the dock. It also suggests offering free access to the National Museum of the Royal Navy for local residents to increase local engagement.

Finally, in the long term, the report stresses the need to improve connectivity between the waterfront, the town centre, and the Headland by addressing the closed nature of the port's land and enhancing active travel infrastructure. This would ensure that the benefits of the waterfront development are maximised across Hartlepool.



Overall, the report advocates for a more ambitious and cohesive approach to the development of Hartlepool's waterfront, leveraging its historic assets and ensuring that new developments contribute to a vibrant, sustainable, and contextually appropriate urban environment.

Incorporating a strategic masterplan into the Development phase of Tides of Change will ensure that a cohesive approach is achieved in order to unlock the critical mass of the placemaking opportunities on the Waterfront.

### **5.8. TALL SHIPS RACES (2023)**

The Tall Ships Races 2023 in Hartlepool were designed not only as a major event but also with a view to creating a lasting legacy that would benefit the town and its community well into the future. The council and its partners have recognised the importance of capitalising on the success of the event by developing a comprehensive legacy plan. This plan will build on the insights gained from the planning, delivery, and evaluation of the event, ensuring that the positive impacts are sustained.

The legacy plan will focus on several key themes identified through evaluation and debriefing sessions held in the summer of 2023. These include strategic visioning and policy, which encompasses volunteer engagement, the role of the Safety Advisory Group, and a collaborative approach to sustainability. Additionally, the plan will address heritage and culture by linking event programming to capital projects and enhancing awareness of Hartlepool's maritime heritage.

Securing future investment for high-profile events is another important aspect of the legacy. The plan proposes fostering collaboration among stakeholders to deliver such events and exploring opportunities for smaller-scale activities that benefit both residents and visitors. The legacy plan will also focus on learning and employment by developing pathways into maritime industries, supporting local Sail Trainees, and creating new job opportunities.

Another crucial element of the legacy is reinforcing Hartlepool's identity as a destination. The plan aims to use regattas and maritime events to boost the town's profile, in alignment with the recently agreed Destination Management Plan. Key organisations, including PD Ports, Hartlepool Marina, Hartlepool College of Further Education, the Armed Forces, and the National Museum of the Royal Navy, have committed to supporting this legacy work. To facilitate this, it is proposed that appropriate governance arrangements be established.

Incorporating a Maritime Skills Academy within the Museum redevelopment project would align well with these legacy goals. By fostering maritime skills and providing pathways into relevant industries, the academy would not only celebrate the heritage highlighted during the Tall Ships Races but also contribute to the long-term economic and social vitality of Hartlepool.

## **6. CONSULTATION FINDINGS**

This section outlines the different routes through which feedback from stakeholders and audiences has been gathered during the consultation period, along with details of the number of people who took part.



## 6.1 STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS

### Vision Workshop

January 2024

This workshop was organised as an idea generation session to introduce the project to stakeholders and potential partners. The outcomes of the session were the short, medium, and long-term goals, the core audience groups for the project, the barriers these groups face and how to mitigate them, the risks associated with the project, and the environmental impact that should be considered.

Present at the Workshop were representatives from a range of external stakeholders including:

- Hartlepool Marina
- North East Screen
- Hartlepool College of FE
- TVCA
- Tees Valley Museum Group
- Love Hartlepool
- Hartlepool Community Led inclusion Partnership
- Hartlepool Civic Society
- St Hilda's Church
- Heugh Gun Battery
- Tees Archaeology
- Hartlepool Sixth Form College
- North East Maritime Trust

- Northern School of Art
- NMRN

The session findings were compiled into this [presentation](#).

Although this vision workshop was not initially planned as part of the consultation, the ideas and themes formed the basis for creating the research questions as part of the consultation plan.

### Stakeholder Workshop

April 2024

This workshop was intended to provide an opportunity for those who could not attend the vision workshop to understand the scope of the project and contribute to its development and delivery. The outcomes were to delve further into the challenges within the community, the Museum, and its asset of PS Wingfield Castle. By identifying the challenges, it was easier to encourage participants to propose solutions they would like to see implemented, particularly how the museum's activity plan and redesign would address these challenges. Spanning two exercises, the group identified problems, translated them into "how might we" questions, and then came together to explore ways to solve the problems and answer the questions.

From these responses the following themes emerged:

#### Improving the Visitor Experience at the Museum

The group discussed how the museum should continue offering free





admission while also enhancing the quality of visitor experiences, noting that this aspect is currently lacking in Hartlepool.

### **Enhancing Social Media Presence**

It was recommended that the museum increase its visibility on social media to better connect with key demographics such as 'Frontline Families', who primarily learn about events via Facebook. A dedicated marketing officer, as outlined in Tricolor's proposed new organisational structure, should focus on building a robust online community, particularly targeting young adults through various social channels.

### **Engaging Marginalised Communities**

The group emphasised creating opportunities for engagement with marginalised communities to bring forward 'hidden' or 'lesser-known' stories in Hartlepool. Specific attention was called to queer history and the diverse cultures of the World Majority Groups in the area.

### **Cultural Sensitivity in Exhibitions**

The importance of showcasing world cultures was highlighted, with a focus on being sensitive to the origins and histories of collection items. The group recognised the need to be mindful of community reactions to ensure exhibitions are well-received and foster positive learning experiences.

### **Accessibility and Inclusivity**

Creating an accessible space that welcomes individuals with disabilities, those who are D/deaf, and neurodiverse individuals was identified as

crucial. The museum should be viewed as a welcoming place for all, not just those who consider themselves 'cultured'. This inclusivity can be encouraged through specialised programming and co-curated exhibitions.

### **Addressing Space Constraints**

Space constraints in the museum's design plan need addressing to accommodate both small and large groups. This redesign aims to transform the museum into a key cultural and community venue, enhancing local engagement with rich local heritage.

### **Preserving Maritime Heritage**

Preserving maritime heritage and skills was noted as a key component of the museum's strategy. The PS Wingfield Castle presents a significant opportunity to engage diverse audiences in maritime skills development, which could enhance the museum's role as a centre for maritime learning. Developing a robust supply chain for labour and skills is essential for the museum's long-term resilience.

### **Partnerships and Community Skills Development**

The potential for partnerships with local organisations, such as the Sea Cadets and South Shields Marine College, was discussed. The group also highlighted the importance of addressing social skills needs through activities like woodworking, which can help combat social isolation and foster a sense of community and teamwork.

### **Managing Expectations Amid Budget Changes**



The need to manage expectations in light of changing local council budgets was discussed. The group stressed the importance of planning for adequate time, staff, and resources to successfully implement the activity plan and broader project program.

### **Volunteer Engagement and Community Involvement**

Volunteers play a critical role in demonstrating the museum's resilience and inclusivity. The group proposed creating community boards to actively involve locals in testing activities, programs, and events and to ensure broad community engagement.

### **Community Outreach**

Finally, the group addressed the museum's current limitations on outreach capacity, especially during construction closures. Creative solutions are required to maintain an engaging outreach program with schools, community groups, and social clubs, thus preserving the museum's community presence throughout its development.

### **Creative and Cultural Partnership Handouts**

This activity was an additional component of the Creative and Cultural Partnership Meeting on 27th March 2024.

As part of the consultation plan, we aimed to gather insights from local arts and culture organisations to understand how the project can foster long-lasting collaborations that not only benefit the organisational goals but also address community needs. This exercise served as a brief yet insightful exercise to understand current perceptions of the

museum and vessel, identify desired projects, and outline strategies for fostering effective future collaborations with partners and communities.

The outcomes for the sessions were:

### **Perceptions of the Museum and Vessel**

- Mixed views were expressed, with appreciation for collections alongside concerns about outdated displays and neglect of historical significance.
- Specific suggestions were made for refurbishing PS Wingfield Castle to restore its appeal and improve its condition, reflecting its majestic stature and historical importance.
- Respondents also recommended updating the Museum of Hartlepool's exhibits with more interactive displays and multimedia presentations to engage visitors of all ages.

### **Community Engagement and Celebrating Heritage**

- Suggestions included festivals, competitions, and collaborative curation initiatives to empower communities and celebrate local culture.
- Proposed activities such as hosting regular community events like heritage walks, storytelling sessions, and cultural workshops to actively involve residents in preserving and promoting Hartlepool's rich heritage.
- Emphasis was placed on inclusivity and representation in museum programming, with recommendations for exhibitions



and events reflecting the diverse stories and experiences of Hartlepool's communities.

**Projects and Events to Enhance Visitor Experience**

- Recommendations focused on interactive experiences and creative projects to engage visitors and modernise the museum experience.
- Suggestions included incorporating immersive technologies like augmented reality to provide a deeper understanding of historical artefacts, and integrating educational programmes such as hands-on workshops and demonstrations to enhance learning opportunities for visitors of all ages.

**Successful Collaboration with the Museum**

- Equitable partnerships and community-led projects were seen as a key factor to encourage diverse participation and meaningful engagement.
- Recommendations included establishing regular forums for collaboration between the museum and local organisations to ensure ongoing dialogue and co-creation of projects aligned with community interests.

**6.2 FAMILY CONSULTATION**



Tricolor invited visitors to contribute to a 'dream museum' collage during the Museum's Easter half-term activities in April 2024. This initiative provided an opportunity to engage parents and their children, encouraging them to share their ideas for the museum in a creative, interactive space. The arts and crafts activities served as a catalyst for children to draw their favourite museum objects or express what they would like to see in the future.

Over the course of the two-day event, 185 individuals actively participated in the activities.

On April 8th, 32 adults and 41 children took part, while on the 9th, 45 adults and 67 children joined in. Additionally, participants completed hard copies of surveys, which will be manually inputted into the Council's survey platform.

The write-up for the events explores how the ideas translate into the activity plan and wider redevelopment plans for the Museum. See appendix list.



Themes and ideas that emerged from the events:

### **Interactive Experiences**

The importance of providing a range of interactive experiences for visitors, particularly families, to engage them effectively. For instance, the positive response towards arts and crafts activities during the event highlights the value of interactive experiences in engaging visitors.

### **Local History and Culture**

Visitors' interest in engaging with local history and culture, including interactive exhibits focusing on famous individuals and significant events from the area. This is evident in the interest in interactive exhibits about figures like William Gray, Hartlepool's role in building the Angel of the North, and the history of Hartlepool FC.

### **Inclusivity and Accessibility**

Conversations with participants illustrated the need to maintain a family-friendly and inclusive environment where visitors of all ages, abilities, and needs feel welcome and engaged. Suggestions for sensory rooms, autism-friendly exhibits, and designated quiet hours emphasise the importance of ensuring the design and activity plan work to provide a safe, fun, and engaging environment.

### **Educational Content**

Interest in educational content covering a variety of topics, including dinosaurs, vintage toys, environmental issues, and local industry history. A conversation with a local teacher confirmed our current plans

to create themed educational programmes and workshops that incorporate the national curriculum, offering engaging learning experiences.

### **Hands-On Creative Activities**

Both parents and their children enjoy hands-on creative activities inspired by the Easter season. Parents expressed they would like similar activities to be offered more often, not just during half-term or the summer holidays. Also, these events could feed into temporary exhibitions and the museum's collections. Hosting collection-based drawing competitions and setting up craft stations throughout the museum enhances visitor engagement, providing opportunities for immersive experiences.

### **Improvements to Museum Design and Layout**

A key point of feedback was to improve the museum's design and layout to increase accessibility, visibility, and overall visitor experience. Providing tactile maps, improving lighting, and bringing back the reading area address concerns about accessibility and visibility, enhancing the visitor experience.

### **Food and Beverage Offerings**

Parents recalled memories of the café on PS Wingfield Castle, expressing that it should be brought back through the vessel's restoration. Further interest in having an on-site café related to having a variety of food options, including vegetarian choices and healthy snacks, to cater to different dietary preferences.



### Clear Communication and Marketing:

A final observation was the number of parents saying they were not aware of the activities during the half-term and only stumbled upon them or, due to the weather, sought temporary shelter. It was apparent that there needs to be a differentiation between the Museum and Hartlepool Art Gallery, as many parents said they only knew of events hosted at the gallery.

## 6.3 VOLUNTEER DROP-IN

A workshop in April 2024 was dedicated to enhancing the volunteer experience at the Museum of Hartlepool. Participants shared insights into what defines an ideal volunteer experience and the essential measures to attain it. These suggestions were gathered through a 'Sticky Steps' activity, where participants were tasked with jotting down their desired outcomes on handwritten post-it notes and then thinking about the actions to achieve them.

A Miro board which replicates the original physical exercise can be found [here](#).

The suggestions highlighted the following:

- The importance of continuous support and development, advocating for accessible equipment, engaging tasks, and ongoing staff assistance to ensure volunteers feel valued and enthusiastic.

- An emphasis on social engagement and recognition, highlighting the need for opportunities to share ideas, visible acknowledgment of their contributions, and pathways for career progression.
- Inclusivity and accessibility were also key themes, with participants highlighting the importance of creating a welcoming environment for volunteers of all backgrounds and ages.

To implement these suggestions, closer collaboration and feedback mechanisms between volunteers and staff were proposed, along with comprehensive promotion efforts, robust training programmes, and formal recognition processes to formalise volunteer roles and track their contributions effectively.

In addition to the activity above, participants were asked to imagine what volunteer achievements could be featured in local newspaper headlines. Though this activity had less engagement, the responses gathered provide snapshots into the volunteer experience and what they hope it will be in the future. Some headlines suggested:

- *"Museum Volunteers Make Exciting Discovery"*
- *"Collaboration with Volunteers Helps Bring History to Life"*
- *"Hartlepool - Your Town, Your History, Your People"*
- *"Fantastic contribution by the Hartlepool volunteer army to the culture and history tellings of the town"*
- *William Gray Goes Technicolour"*



Further details of the activity can be found in the write-up (see appendix list)

From the imagined headlines, several key insights emerged about what volunteers are interested in and what to include in a volunteer programme:

- Volunteers want to actively participate in uncovering new historical findings, they seek hands-on involvement and meaningful contributions to the museum's interpretation goals..
- They value teamwork and shared ownership of the museum's narrative, preferring collaborative efforts to engage with and interpret history.
- Volunteers prioritise initiatives that connect the museum with the local community and its identity, demonstrating pride in representing their community's heritage.
- They seek acknowledgment of their contributions to preserving and sharing the town's culture and history, requiring validation and encouragement to continue their volunteer work.
- Volunteers appreciate creative approaches to presenting historical figures and narratives, desiring dynamic storytelling methods that captivate audiences and spark curiosity.

Finally, the session included a general Q&A with the volunteers. The questions aimed to:

- Understand how potential volunteers learn about opportunities at the Museum of Hartlepool
- Identify volunteer interests and how these align with available/potential roles

- Address concerns and provide support, engage with the community
- Gather feedback for improvement

Though only 8 people engaged with the Q&A, the responses prove a starting point for developing an engaging volunteer programme:

### **Volunteer Engagement**

- Currently, volunteer engagement primarily occurs through informal channels like word of mouth, email updates from the local council and participating in related activities.
  - Advocacy of groups such as the Friends of the Library provide a network to showcase various volunteer opportunities
  - Social media posts, particularly on Facebook, promoting opportunities for potential volunteers
- Volunteers noted the confusion between volunteer roles at the Museum of Hartlepool and at the National Museum of the Royal Navy (NMRN). They called for better distinctions between the two to ensure the Museum of Hartlepool's unique opportunities are properly highlighted to potential volunteers.

### **Potential Roles**

Volunteers were asked which specific roles appealed to them:

- Tour Guide: 25% (2 individuals)
- Assisting with after-hour events (exhibition launches, evening events): 37% (3 individuals)

- Research/Interpretation: 100% (8 individuals)
- Education Outreach: 62% (5 individuals)
- Family Activities: 25% (2 individuals)
- Collection Documentation: 100% (8 individuals)
- Conservation: 87% (7 individuals)

The responses show that there's widespread enthusiasm for roles involving research/interpretation and collection documentation, with everyone on board for these tasks.

Micro volunteering opportunities for students and young people offer a solution for those interested in delivering to a short term goal or being part of something bigger as opposed to longer term / less visible outputs.

There's also notable interest in education outreach and conservation, suggesting a strong dedication to engaging the public and preserving museum resources. However, it's worth noting that this interest might vary depending on whether 'education' refers to school groups and children or adults/students.

However, roles such as tour guiding and helping with family activities were not as popular, indicating areas where the museum might need to offer extra incentives to attract volunteers interested in communicating with diverse audiences.

### **Upskilling and Training Opportunities**

Respondents expressed a desire for upskilling and training opportunities to broaden their horizons and diversify their skill sets. While they have preferences, they are open to exploring new areas of

interest, indicating a proactive approach to personal and professional development.

### **Potential Barriers to Volunteering**

Potential barriers to volunteering at the Museum of Hartlepool include unclear expectations, time pressures, and negative perceptions of service delivery by the council. To address these concerns, volunteers suggested:

- Providing clear SMART goals
- Offering flexible opportunities to allow volunteers to contribute within their capacity
- Showcasing the impact of volunteers' contributions
- Host open days targeted at individuals unfamiliar with the museum to tackle misconceptions and generate interest

### **Community Engagement**

Participants also provided suggestions as to how the Museum of Hartlepool could further support the community and demonstrate its value to a wider audience:

- Use social media platforms to highlight ongoing projects, upcoming events and the significance of collections to address criticisms and perceptions of disinvestment.
- Organise volunteering open days for interested individuals to observe and understand various opportunities, bridging the gap between the museum and the community
- Utilise community spaces like libraries to advertise, host sessions, exhibitions, and drop-ins, expanding reach and accessibility





- Take collections into the community through pop-up exhibitions and outreach programmes to foster a sense of ownership among residents.
- Recognise the contributions to local history research by private individuals by showcasing work in temporary exhibitions or through talks.
- Develop educational programmes that create an immersive experience to make learning about Hartlepool's history engaging and relevant to students.

### **Suggestions for Improvement**

Suggestions for improvement included:

- Provide visible support systems for volunteers, especially for recruits
- Improve communication and promotion efforts- utilise print media, social media channels, notice boards and newsletters to connect with a wider audience
- Ensure that equipment such as scanners and computers are up-to-date and in proper working condition
- Improve lighting in workspaces, particularly for tasks involving old documents or detailed research - this would enhance their comfort levels and support volunteers with visual impairments or older eyes.
- Having accommodations made to support and encourage individuals with additional needs
- Clearly define roles and expectations to prevent misunderstandings and ensure volunteers feel valued and appropriately utilised

- For example, one contributor understood the task requirements but not softer obligations like additional support and general requests.

## **6.4 COMMUNITY GROUPS**

### **Arts and Cultural Consultation**

This activity was an additional component of the Creative and Cultural Partnership Meeting on 27th March 2024.

As part of the wider consultation plan, the aim is to gather insights from local arts and culture organisations to understand how the project can foster long-lasting collaborations that not only benefit the organisational goals but also address community needs. This exercise served as a brief yet insightful exercise to understand current perceptions of the museum and vessel, identify desired projects, and outline strategies for fostering effective future collaborations with partners and communities. The outcomes for the sessions were:

- To gather insights from local arts and culture organisations, to understand the needs and preferences of the community regarding cultural initiatives and collaborations.
- To identify current perceptions of the Museum and Wingfield Castle.
- To explore engaging projects related to Hartlepool's heritage into the redevelopment plans, preserving and celebrating the community's history.







8 attendees shared their views during this activity. The key learnings and responses from the sessions are presented below.

### **Perceptions of the Museum and Wingfield Castle:**

Museum of Hartlepool:

- Respondents noted both positive and negative aspects. They appreciated the museum's interesting collections but expressed concerns about dated displays, describing the atmosphere as "tired" and "dark."

PS Wingfield Castle

- Despite its historical significance and unique appeal, PS Wingfield Castle was described as "needing some love", with phrases such as "majestic" and "wasted".

### **Community Engagement and Celebrating Heritage:**

- Respondents suggested various ways to engage the community and celebrate local culture and heritage. Ideas such as festivals, maritime events, and collaborations with artists and historians emphasise the importance of community involvement and cultural celebration.
- Activities such as competitions, live music events, and dress-up days can attract diverse audiences, fostering a sense of belonging and pride in local identity.
- Collaborative curation and self-archiving initiatives to empower communities to take ownership of their heritage, ensuring

representation, inclusivity and renewed engagement in museum programming.

### **Projects and Events to Enhance Visitor Experience:**

- Respondents highlighted the importance of interactive and engaging experiences to enhance visitor satisfaction. Talks, tours, and object spotlight activities can provide insights into the museum's collections and bring history to life.
- Creative projects inspired by museum objects, such as writing, art, and drama, offer opportunities for art students from local colleges to engage with the museum through their interests.
- Introducing innovative technology like VR and greenscreen to modernise the museum experience, appealing to younger audiences and revitalising older collections.

### **Successful Collaboration with the Museum:**

- Equitable partnerships and community-led models are essential for ensuring diverse representation and meaningful engagement. This involves actively involving communities in decision-making processes and programme development.
- Measuring the impact of collaboration through soft skills development, research skills, and mental well-being initiatives demonstrates the museum's commitment to fostering positive outcomes for participants.
- By putting Hartlepool on the map as a cultural hub through innovative programming and digital initiatives, the museum can

attract visitors from far and wide, contributing to placemaking and enhancing the town's identity.

### **Hart Gables 1-2-1 Call**

The consultation process aimed to understand how the museum could foster relationships, develop interests, and establish partnerships with marginalised groups, particularly the LGBTQ+ community and asylum seekers. As part of this objective, a call was arranged with Andrew Towers, Project Support Worker at Hart Gables, a charity providing support and training opportunities for LGBTQ+ communities across Teesside and East Durham. Their work also expands to migrant communities, particularly asylum seekers. An overview of the questions and responses is included in the write-up (see Appendix).

The following themes and points emerged from our discussion:

#### **Community Perspectives on the Museum**

Feedback highlighted the museum's role as a great tourist attraction and a centre point for local communities. Andrew noted the museum's location on the marina, surrounded by bars and cafes, enhancing its appeal to visitors and locals alike.

#### **Identified Community Needs**

The LGBTQ+ community faces various challenges, including social isolation, employment issues, and barriers to accessing gender-affirming care. Feedback from the discussion highlighted specific needs, such as support for individuals on long waiting lists for

gender-affirming care and victims of hate crimes, including transphobia, homophobia, and biphobia.

Andrew emphasised the importance of building confidence among community members, especially transgender individuals subject to transphobia, and addressing the impact of negative public discourse on people's confidence in public spaces.

#### **Barriers to Access**

Travel expenses, particularly for low-income households or asylum seekers, pose a significant barrier to accessing museums and other public spaces, particularly as they are often on limited budgets or restricted spend cards.

Andrew highlighted how the lack of confidence and comfort in engaging in public spaces often serves as a significant barrier, leading individuals to opt to stay at home. Additionally, he noted that certain community members may feel excluded from spaces like the museum, possibly due to programming choices or issues like the absence of single-sex toilets, as we previously discussed.

To address these challenges, suggested strategies include organising facilitated group sessions, hosting community conversations, and developing programming centred on LGBTQ+ history and experiences. Andrew praised the museum for its efforts in establishing a partnership with Hart Gables and stressed the importance of forging connections with local LGBTQ organisations and individuals who are typically harder to reach, such as asylum seekers.





## Programming Opportunities

Andrew confirmed the group's interest in museum collaborations, talks, object spotlights, and archival research, indicating a desire for diverse programming that reflects the community member's history and experiences.

Hart Gables and Teesside Archives recently collaborated with the museum and gallery team to create an exhibit showcasing British newspaper archives that, amidst negative rhetoric around LGBTQ+ individuals, revealed past support groups for the community in Hartlepool. Feedback from this project indicated that some members expressed interest in further archival research, volunteering opportunities, and hosting talks with community members at the museum.

## Interest in Partnerships

Community members are eager to collaborate with the museum to create workshops, projects, and educational activities. They aim to utilise the museum's collection to research and highlight its role as a welcoming space, dedicated to representing the diverse stories and heritages of the Hartlepool community.

Andrew mentioned ongoing collaborations with the Hartlepool LGBT youth group "Born 2 Be" facilitated by Hartlepool Borough Council Youth Services, underscoring the potential for similar projects involving adult service users.

The consultation process aimed to understand how the museum could foster relationships, develop interests, and establish partnerships with marginalised groups, particularly the LGBTQ+ community, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and asylum seekers.

## Other Community Groups

Additional community groups consulted with included the following:

## Home Educators

### Exhibit Topics

The home educators expressed interest in a wide range of exhibit topics for the Museum of Hartlepool. They suggested including local themes such as the power station, local wildlife, and sea creatures, as well as broader educational content not necessarily tied to Hartlepool. This includes subjects like Ancient Greece, Shakespeare, space, and science. Additionally, they proposed showcasing the history of film and TV productions in Hartlepool and specific historical periods such as the Anglo-Saxon and Stone Age eras in the area. They also highlighted the value of personal stories from Hartlepool residents, particularly those from wartime, to add a more personal and engaging dimension to the museum's offerings.

## Workshop and Learning Sessions

Home educators recommended a variety of workshop and learning session types to enhance the educational experience. They emphasised the importance of practical life skills and art-based skills such as



watercolour and charcoal. They also suggested incorporating science fairs and interactive sessions like Horrible Histories and re-enactments to make learning more engaging. For different age groups, especially those aged 11+ and KS2/KS3, they advocated for workshops tailored to specific needs. Sensory, tactile, and hands-on activities were highlighted as crucial for maintaining interest and fostering a deeper understanding of the subjects.

### **Session Structure and Logistics**

In terms of session structure and logistics, the home educators preferred shorter sessions of about 1.5 hours due to attention span considerations, while also valuing full-day sessions that include time for free exploration of the museum. They suggested flexible scheduling, with a preference for sessions on Mondays and Fridays and a starting time of around 10 am. To facilitate easier organisation, they recommended using Eventbrite for booking sessions, which could streamline the registration process and improve overall accessibility.

### **Facilities and Environment**

Improving the museum's physical environment and facilities was another key area of feedback. The educators noted that better lighting is needed to address the museum's current gloominess and suggested enhanced staffing to improve the visitor experience. They proposed having a separate entrance to allow for a 7-day operation and the addition of a café to make visits more comfortable. They also pointed out that while access is generally fine, the museum could benefit from additional support to manage visitor flow and engagement.

### **Technology and Modernisation**

There was a strong interest in incorporating modern technology into the museum's exhibits. Home educators were particularly keen on using VR technology to enhance learning experiences. They also requested more visual and interactive materials to cater to different learning styles and make the exhibits more engaging and effective.

### **General Feedback**

Overall, the home educators expressed a desire for new and varied exhibits to keep the museum experience dynamic and engaging. While they were satisfied with the current access, they felt there was a need for more staff support and fresh content. They stressed the importance of making learning fun and interactive, with a variety of topics and seasonal themes to keep the museum experience stimulating and enjoyable.

### **Transformers HPL**

Transformers HPL was established in 2021 with the primary goal of integrating ethnic minority groups with the local community in Hartlepool. The group aims to foster mutual understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures and traditions through fun and engaging activities. Their initiatives include organising family-friendly events, promoting diverse collections, and creating volunteer and job opportunities for marginalised groups to ensure broader community involvement and excitement.



The Transformers group provided several insightful recommendations for the redevelopment of the Museum of Hartlepool. They emphasised the importance of creating an immersive experience for visitors, suggesting that exhibits should make people feel as though they are truly present within the display. They also recommended increasing the range of family-friendly activities, proposing that the museum offer a broader array of engaging events to appeal to various audiences.

Additionally, the group highlighted the need for more diverse collections that can resonate with different communities and create excitement. They suggested incorporating more temporary exhibitions and hosting a greater variety of events, including those that spotlight local stories and notable figures from the town's history. This approach could help in drawing in a wider audience and generating increased interest.

The Transformers group also stressed the importance of involving marginalised groups by offering more volunteer and job opportunities, thus enhancing community involvement. Engaging young people was another key point, with the suggestion to make the museum's offerings more exciting and appealing to children to avoid a perception of boredom.

Overall, the feedback underscores a desire for the museum to be more inclusive, dynamic, and engaging, aiming to spark curiosity and foster a stronger sense of community connection.

### **Access User Group Onsite Visit**

Members of the Hartlepool Access Group were invited to site to give their thoughts and feedback on the proposals for the building, with the following themes highlighted by attendees:

#### **General Access Issues**

Accessing the museum is challenging due to a lack of disabled access toilets. This requires allowing significant buffer time for preparation.

#### **Pedestrian Access**

The nearest car park is a considerable distance from the museum. While the car park facilities are good, the journey to the museum is inconvenient and lacks visibility for pedestrians.

#### **Signage and Wayfinding**

The council needs to consider investing in signage (including railway signs). Although there is an interest in improving highways and wayfinding, there is no coordinated approach yet due to cost implications.

#### **Events and Space Utilisation**

The quayside space between the museum and PS Wingfield is currently closed off in the evening to prevent vandalism. This space could be utilised for events like cocktail nights to keep it active and reduce the risk of vandalism.



Monthly markets are held in the car park spaces, which are owned by the council but leased to NMRN. The proposal is to bring these spaces back under council operation.

### **Facility Improvements**

Consider creating an island in the middle of the new entrance foyer to service both entrances and potentially combine it with retail space.

### **Inclusive Experiences**

Explore ways to create experiences for visually impaired visitors who cannot access the wing field, such as multimedia presentations showing the renovation process.

### **Space and Comfort**

Further consultation with parents is needed to determine whether a dedicated nursing/feeding space is required or if parents prefer using appropriate existing spaces like the café or children's area.

### **Access and Inclusion**

Access and inclusion must be considered together, ensuring the museum is welcoming for everyone, including transgender individuals. This goes beyond in person visits, with accessibility and inclusion woven into the stories we tell, the way they are delivered to meet a diverse range of learning, sensory and accessible needs.

### **Website and Social Media**

Google currently directs visitors to the navy museum instead of the intended museum.

The museum ranking on search engines causes some confusion and misdirection.

Once at the museum's website and their social media channels are well received, however as a visually intense offering it appeared to lack appropriate 'alt text' and image captions.

## **6.5 SURVEYS**

### **General Public**

(297 responses)

### **Demographics**

- Participants spanned various age groups, with the majority falling between 31-60 years old.
- Female respondents outnumbered males.
- Most identified as White.
- A significant portion reported having physical or mental conditions, though most said these conditions didn't greatly impact day-to-day activities.

### **Engagement and Awareness**

- Many respondents had visited the Museum of Hartlepool, primarily for relaxation, local interest, or family outings.
- There's a high level of awareness of the Museum's existence, primarily through word of mouth.
- Most respondents were aware of the difference between the Museum of Hartlepool and the National Museum of the Royal Navy.

### Visit Experience and Satisfaction

- The vast majority were satisfied with their visit, with satisfaction levels particularly high among those who visited regularly.
- Many expressed willingness to donate to keep the museum free.

### Willingness to Pay

- For activities or events at the Museum of Hartlepool or onboard PS Wingfield Castle, respondents showed varying levels of willingness to pay. The most common ranges were:
  - For admission to activities or events, the most common range was £4.01-£5, with 26 respondents.
  - For beverages, the most common range was £2.01-£3, chosen by 52 respondents.
  - For light snacks or meals, the most common range was £5.01-£10, selected by 39 respondents.
  - For souvenirs, the most common range was £1.01-£5, chosen by 42 respondents.

- The museum's free entry was highly appreciated, with a majority willing to donate to keep it free. The most common donation range was £1.01-£3, selected by 34 respondents.

### Barriers and Improvements:

- Cost was not a significant barrier to visiting.
- Desired improvements included more family-friendly activities, a greater variety of events, and more frequent temporary exhibitions
- Lack of awareness and unclear signage were noted as potential barriers.

### Future Interest and Engagement:

- There's significant interest in visiting the museum if the PS Wingfield Castle were restored and reopened as an onboard attraction.
- Even if the PS Wingfield Castle remained closed, a majority of respondents would still consider visiting the Museum of Hartlepool.
- Accessibility and inclusivity were important considerations for encouraging future visits.

### Teachers' Survey

(18 responses)

### Demographics



- The majority of respondents were in the age range of 46-55, followed by 56-65.
- Female teachers outnumbered male teachers by a significant margin.
- The ethnic composition of respondents was predominantly White.

### **Educational Engagement**

- Around half of the teachers had previously taken students to visit the Museum of Hartlepool.
- Among further and higher education teachers, there was considerable interest in collaborating with the museum to create educational content.
- Similarly, most teachers were interested in having the project team speak to their students, with a significant interest in topics such as local heritage and creative careers.

### **Support Needs for Visits**

- Teachers expressed a need for pre-visit information packs, full or half-day activities, and on-site staff support during visits.
- Affordability of visits was also highlighted as an important factor.

### **Workshops and Activities**

- Interactive activities and workshops linked to the curriculum were particularly popular among respondents.

- Object handling and self-guided follow-up activities were also of interest.
- Accessibility features such as coach drop-off sites and accessible parking were deemed important for planning visits.

### **Barriers to Visits**

- Cost and transport were identified as key barriers preventing visits to the museum.
- Limited staff capacity and lack of curriculum-based workshops were also mentioned as potential barriers.

### **Preferred Student Activities**

- Object handling, storytelling, and group tasks were among the preferred activities for students.
- Longer-term project work and trails around the museum were also highly favoured.

### **Preferred Resources and Content**

- Teachers expressed interest in online resources, downloadable content, and longer-term project work for their students.
- Outreach workshops in schools and online workshops were also mentioned as preferred options.

### **Conclusion**







The survey highlights a strong interest among teachers in further and higher education, in engaging with the Museum for educational purposes. Addressing barriers such as cost and transportation, as well as enhancing the range of curriculum-based workshops and activities, will be crucial in maximising participation and educational impact. Additionally, providing comprehensive support and resources to teachers, including pre-visit information packs and on-site staff assistance, can enhance the overall experience for both teachers and students.

### Student Survey

(19 responses)

#### Demographics

- All respondents were in the age range of 18-25 and identified as female.
- All respondents identified as White.
- Two of the students were pursuing undergraduate degrees, with one student enrolled in a postgraduate programme.

#### Engagement with the Museum

- All students reported visiting the Museum of Hartlepool and PS Wingfield Castle from time to time.
- There was moderate interest in the project team hosting lectures or talks, with two students expressing definite interest.

#### Interest in Lecture Topics and Locations

- A variety of topics were of interest to students, including local heritage, art, conservation, and creative careers.
- The preferred location for these talks was the Museum of Hartlepool's Education Centre.

#### Interest in Activities and Workshops

- Students showed strong interest in work experience opportunities, co-producing temporary exhibitions, and micro-volunteer opportunities in visitor services, collections and event work.
- Heritage skills workshops and heritage days garnered moderate interest, while career development workshops in maritime fields received less enthusiasm.
- There was mixed interest in activities related to traditional skills in shipbuilding and environmental sustainability initiatives.
- STEM-based activities linked to PS Wingfield Castle were met with relatively low interest.

#### Conclusion

Findings demonstrate a moderate level of engagement and interest among students in educational opportunities offered by the Museum of Hartlepool. While there is interest in lectures, talks, and workshops covering a range of topics, including local heritage and conservation, preferences for certain activities vary. The museum could leverage the strong interest in work experience, micro-volunteer opportunities, and co-producing exhibitions and events to engage students more actively.



Additionally, offering a diverse range of activities that cater to different interests and skill sets could enhance student participation and enrich their educational experience at the museum.

## **6.6 KEY STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION CALLS**

The redevelopment of Hartlepool Museum represents a significant opportunity to revitalise the cultural and historical assets of the area, enhancing both local heritage and visitor engagement. Following consultations with key stakeholders, several common observations and findings have emerged, outlining shared objectives, anticipated benefits, and the challenges to be addressed.

### **Common Objectives and Goals**

The primary objectives for the redevelopment project are to increase tourism and enhance cultural offerings. Stakeholders are focused on revitalising the museum and associated sites, such as PS Wingfield Castle, to boost the area's appeal. They aim to create a more engaging and educational space that caters to local schools, young adults, and families. This involves improving educational facilities, accessibility, and community outreach, ensuring that the museum not only attracts visitors but also serves as a valuable educational resource for the local community.

### **Importance of PS Wingfield Castle and Museum Space**

PS Wingfield Castle is recognised as a significant historical asset, the preservation and restoration of which is deemed crucial. Its local historical connections and potential to attract interest make it a priority for the redevelopment project. Concurrently, there is a consensus on

the need to modernise the museum building to enhance the storytelling of local history and improve the overall visitor experience. Upgrades are required to address issues such as access, signage, and facilities, making the museum more welcoming and informative.

### **Success Indicators**

Success for the project will be measured through increased visitor numbers, enhanced community pride, and improved educational outcomes. Key indicators include the successful restoration of PS Wingfield Castle and the revitalisation of the museum's exhibits and facilities. Additionally, success will be reflected in the museum's better integration with local businesses and educational institutions, and improvements in accessibility and modernisation of educational spaces.

### **Main Benefits**

The redevelopment project is expected to bring significant economic and cultural benefits. By increasing tourism and attracting investment, the project aims to stimulate economic growth in the area. Culturally, it will enrich the community by fostering a sense of pride and enhancing local heritage. Improved educational facilities and outreach programmes will also provide better learning experiences and promote broader community engagement, further strengthening the museum's role in the region.

### **Challenges**

Several challenges must be addressed to ensure the project's success. Managing the budget effectively while maintaining high-quality outcomes is a primary concern. There is also a need to resolve



accessibility issues and effectively manage shared spaces between different parts of the museum sites. Additionally, overcoming community scepticism and correcting misconceptions about the museum's status will be important. Practical implementation challenges include ensuring adequate classroom space, improving transport facilities for schools, and integrating modern technology within the museum.

### **Collaboration and Community Engagement**

Engaging with local businesses, educational institutions, and community groups is seen as essential for the project's success. Collaborations with marine engineering students, local artists, and historical organisations are expected to contribute positively. Expanding volunteer opportunities and community involvement through advisory boards, museum clubs, and outreach programmes will enhance the museum's role and impact. Strong partnerships with local stakeholders will be crucial for achieving the project's goals and ensuring long-term success.

### **Museum's Role and Further Collaboration**

The museum is envisioned as a central cultural and educational hub, providing a space for local history and community engagement. To maximise the impact of the redevelopment, it is essential that the project aligns with broader waterfront and cultural regeneration efforts. Collaboration between Hartlepool Museum and Gallery Service and the National Museum of the Royal Navy Hartlepool is seen as beneficial for achieving economies of scale and creating a unified

visitor experience. Ensuring that all aspects of the project work together seamlessly will be key to its overall success and effectiveness.

Overall, the redevelopment of the Museum of Hartlepool is anticipated to be a transformative project that will enhance local heritage, boost tourism, and provide a more engaging and educational experience for the community. Successful implementation will require careful management of resources, effective communication, and strong collaboration with local partners.

## **7. ANALYSIS**

The consultation process for the Museum of Hartlepool redevelopment project encompassed a wide range of stakeholders, including the general public, families, volunteers, community groups, teachers, students, and key stakeholders. This comprehensive approach has yielded rich insights into the community's needs, preferences, and aspirations for the museum. The following analysis synthesises the key themes and patterns that emerged across these diverse groups.

The aim has been to better understand various aspects of the Museum of Hartlepool and PS Wingfield Castle, including the nature of existing visitor activities, local needs for increased participation, and themes which attract interest. Insights were sought into visitor barriers, engagement patterns, and the effectiveness of current offerings. Additionally, the challenges and support needs of staff, the potential role of volunteers, and the impact of these factors on the overall visitor experience were all explored.



Understanding the motivations and engagement levels of different audience segments, including underrepresented groups, and assessing community awareness of the museum's cultural significance was of key importance. Significant areas include evaluating barriers to engagement, the potential for secondary spending, and how various groups, including young people, can be better served. Furthermore, current gaps in learning and participation, the suitability of educational activities, and opportunities for skill development and training are all under investigation.

Key findings are set out below:

### **Existing Activities at the Museum of Hartlepool and PS Wingfield Castle**

The Museum of Hartlepool currently offers a variety of family-friendly activities, particularly during holiday periods such as Easter. The offerings include temporary exhibitions and a range of themed events. The museum is committed to preserving maritime heritage and providing interactive experiences. Popular activities include hands-on creative projects and educational content covering diverse topics such as dinosaurs, local history, and environmental issues. Key themes of interest for visitors are local history, maritime heritage, and cultural diversity, suggesting that these areas could be further developed in future programming.

### **Addressing Local Needs in Visitor Participation**

To address local needs, the museum and PS Wingfield Castle can focus on enhancing interactive and hands-on experiences, which have been highlighted as particularly engaging for visitors. Expanding the variety of events and exhibitions can also cater to different interests. It is crucial to involve the community in the development of new programmes by creating community boards and seeking local input on testing activities. Collecting feedback through surveys and community forums will provide valuable insights into visitor preferences and needs, enabling the museum to tailor its offerings more effectively.

### **Popular Activities and Encouraging Participation**

Interactive and hands-on activities are expected to be among the most popular, as they provide engaging and educational experiences. Collaborative curation, where visitors are involved in creating exhibits or events, is likely to attract diverse participation. The museum should also consider designing programmes specifically for marginalised groups, such as LGBTQ+ youth and asylum seekers, to encourage their involvement. By offering inclusive and accessible events, the museum can foster a more welcoming environment for underrepresented audiences.

### **Primary Themes of Interest**

Visitors to the museum are most interested in themes related to local history, maritime heritage, and cultural diversity. These themes not only capture the interest of current visitors but also provide a foundation for future programming and exhibitions.



## **Staff Needs**

Staff members have identified space constraints and budget management as significant challenges in their roles. Despite these obstacles, there is a clear interest in developing new skills, particularly in maritime skills and community engagement. Staff view volunteers as essential for enhancing the museum's operations and community involvement. The inclusion of volunteers can help manage space limitations and support various roles, contributing to a more dynamic and resilient museum environment. Staff members have expressed a desire for training in maritime skills and techniques for effective community engagement, which could enhance their professional development.

## **User Experience and Accessibility**

Visitors face several barriers, including a lack of awareness about the museum's offerings, unclear signage, and accessibility issues. While cost is not a major barrier, other challenges such as travel expenses and a lack of confidence in public spaces can deter some groups from visiting. To address these issues, the museum should consider implementing clear signage and improving accessibility features. Additionally, developing pricing strategies that reflect visitors' willingness to pay, including affordable options for admission, food, and beverages, can help increase engagement. Offering diverse participation options, such as interactive exhibits and collaborative projects, will cater to different groups' interests.

## **Audience Development**

Current visitors are motivated by relaxation, local interest, and family outings. Engagement patterns vary, with some individuals visiting regularly while others come for specific events. Most visitors are local, and awareness of the museum is primarily spread through word of mouth. Families, schools, young adults, and marginalised communities such as LGBTQ+ individuals and asylum seekers are identified as key audiences to engage. Barriers for potential audiences include a lack of confidence, travel expenses, and feeling excluded. To enhance outreach, the museum should consider partnerships with local organisations, educational institutions, and community groups.

## **Volunteering**

The museum plans to attract volunteers through word of mouth, social media, and community networks. Volunteer roles that are expected to be popular include research, interpretation, collection documentation, and conservation. Promoting the impact of volunteering and hosting open days can help attract and retain volunteers. Collaborating with educational institutions to create placement opportunities and working with community initiatives that support diverse groups can enhance volunteer engagement. Addressing potential barriers, such as unclear expectations and time constraints, will be crucial for developing a successful volunteer programme.

## **Community & Wellness**

Wellness is generally defined by social engagement, mental well-being, and the creation of inclusive spaces. The museum currently serves as a



tourist attraction and a focal point for local communities. To contribute to personal, mental, and physical wellness, the museum could offer interactive experiences, creative projects, and community-led initiatives. There is a need for more diverse representation and engagement opportunities, particularly for marginalised groups. Providing engaging programmes for children and young adults, including educational and career development opportunities, can help address existing gaps. Enhancing understanding of the museum's impact on the city's identity can also foster a greater appreciation of its cultural significance.

### **Learning and Participation**

The project has the potential to address gaps in learning by offering more curriculum-based workshops and interactive experiences. Teachers have expressed interest in pre-visit information packs, curriculum-linked activities, and on-site support. To support education providers, the museum should ensure facilities include accessible parking, coach drop-off areas, and improved classroom spaces. Sensory-friendly exhibits and activities are needed to support neurodiverse students. Providing work experience opportunities, co-producing exhibitions, and career development workshops for young adults are also important. Community and interest groups could participate through collaborative projects and research initiatives. Educators prefer online resources, downloadable content, outreach workshops, and hands-on activities.








### **Training and Skills Development**

The museum should offer training opportunities that appeal to target audiences, such as maritime skills, conservation techniques, and community engagement. These training programmes can attract visitors and stakeholders interested in developing new skills. Key partners for delivering training and development opportunities include local educational institutions, community organisations, and arts groups. Engaging these partners can help create targeted programmes that meet the needs of various stakeholders and enhance the museum's educational impact.





## APPENDIX A - FULL WRITE UPS

Consultation Plan	 Hartlepool Consultatio...
Consultation Output	 Hartlepool Consultatio...
Stakeholder Matrix	 Hartlepool Stakeholde...
Visioning Workshop Presentation	 Hartlepool Tides of Ch...
Stakeholder One to One Calls	 Overview Stakeholder ...
Creative and Cultural Partnership	 Hartlepool - Arts and C...
Volunteer Drop In	 Hartlepool - Sticky Ste...  Hartlepool - Volunteer ... <a href="#">Miro Board for Sticky Notes</a>
Family Consultation	 Hartlepool - Family Co...
<b>COMMUNITY GROUPS - Cultural Togetherness</b>	

Hartgables - Andrew Towers LGBTQ+ Project Worker	 Hartlepool 1-2-1 Com...
Access Group Workshop Feedback	 Notes from Access Gr...
Transformers	 Transformers Suggesti...
<b>FOCUS GROUPS</b>	
Home Educators Focus Group MAY 2024	 Home Educator Sugge...
<b>SURVEYS</b>	
General Public Survey	 Public Survey - 1_Proje...
Teachers Survey	 Teachers Survey - 1_Pr...
Student Survey	 Student Survey - 1_Pro...
<b>STORYTELLING PROMPTS</b>	



Memories from Sir William Gray House	 Memories of the Gray ...
Museum Comment Cards	 Appx 8 Redevelopment...
<b>REPORTS &amp; ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS</b>	
Audience Agency Report 2022/2024	 Appx 11 - Audience Ag...
Access Group Visit May 2022	 MOH Feedback from T...
Hartlepool Waterfront Destination Management Plan (Full Report)	 Appx 05 Hartlepool W...
Hartlepool Waterfront Destination Management Plan (Public leaflet)	 HARTLEPOOL DMP L...
Poverty Proofing Hartlepool Nov 2023	 Review Report HAG an...

Restoration Survey PS Wingfield Castle	 Appx 10 – Restoration ...
Big Conversation	 Findings Report - HERI...
Social Model of Disability	<a href="#">Overview from Sense</a>



# ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

26<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2024



**Subject:** SERVICED AND MANAGED WORKSPACE IN  
HARTLEPOOL

**Report of:** Assistant Director (Development & Growth)

**Decision Type:** For information

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## 1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

Hartlepool will be a place:
-----------------------------

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- that has an inclusive and growing economy.</li></ul> |
|--|

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of the report is to inform Committee of the findings of the current serviced and managed workspace business accommodation provision in Hartlepool and to review the anticipated future demand for service and managed workspace accommodation.

## 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In 2019, TVCA commissioned an Office and Industrial Premises Availability Study to ensure that office and industrial property is provided to meet the needs of business and respond to any opportunities for development across the Tees Valley.
- 3.2 Since the study was completed, the economic landscape has changed significantly and in recognition of this, the Tees Valley Combined Authority, supported by Hartlepool Borough Council, commissioned Aspinall Verdi to undertake an updated study for Hartlepool in 2023.
- 3.3 The consultants were asked to undertake an analysis of supply, demand, gap analysis and identification of priorities taking into consideration the current workspace market and the changing patterns of demand and supply.

- 3.4 The report found that vacancy rates are generally low and this has resulted in rental increases, but very little new speculative development has come forward. resulting in a stagnant market with very little churn.
- 3.5 The hybrid working unit has risen in popularity since the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as ongoing trends for new starter workspace.
- 3.6 Since 2019 it is noted that the provision of managed workspace has significantly increased in Hartlepool and there have been several new serviced and managed workspace facilities developed that are now operational offering flexible office and workshop solutions for new starter and existing businesses in Hartlepool.
- 3.7 It is also noted that both the older serviced and managed workspace facilities and the newer facilities are very popular with generally high levels of occupancy. This is backed up by the Council owned facilities such as the Hartlepool Enterprise Centre showing 85-90% occupancy and the BIS consistently over 70% occupied.
- 3.8 In recognising the increasing popularity of serviced and managed workspaces in the Borough, Tees Valley Combined Authority in partnership with Hartlepool Borough Council commissioned a study to identify the following:
- A. **Current Provision** – What is the provision of current serviced and managed workspace in Hartlepool?
  - B. **Demand Analysis** – What is the past, current and likely future demand for serviced and managed workspace in Hartlepool?
  - C. **Gap Analysis** – Can the current and projected demand be met by current provision in Hartlepool? If not can the future demand be met by private investment or is public intervention required to stimulate development?
- 3.9 The work was competitively procured by Tees Valley Combined Authority with Newcastle based Aspinall Verdi successful in being appointed to undertake the study.
- 3.10 The methodology included both desk research analysing secondary data and primary research through consultation with providers of service and managed workspace in Hartlepool and the wider North East.
- 3.11 The findings and recommendations of this research are detailed in the ‘study to determine the current and future demand for serviced and managed workspace in Hartlepool’ report (**Appendix 1**).

#### 4. KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- 4.1 There are currently five serviced and managed workspace facilities operating in Hartlepool that provide business accommodation and associated services predominantly for new business start-ups and small businesses.

Facility	Number of units
Hartlepool Enterprise Centre, Brougham Terrace	47
The BIS, Whitby Street	28
Innovation Centre, Queens Meadow Business Park	95
Hartlepower Hubs, Stranton	40
Bovis House, Victoria Road	28

All the Centres offer similar basic facilities such as high speed internet connectivity, telephony, meeting rooms, kitchen areas with some offering onsite cafés and even gym facilities. Car parking also varies depending on location.

The centres all offer flexible tenancy terms with easy in, easy out options, with only one month notice period. The differences mainly are in the age and quality of the individual facility and their respective locations.

The most established facility in the Borough is the Council owned Hartlepool Enterprise Centre located in the north on Brougham Terrace.

The Centre is an old Victorian Primary School that has been converted and adapted to provide 47 workshop and office units for primarily new start businesses to set up, grow and expand.

The UKSE owned Innovation Centre is located on Queens Meadow Business Park and was developed in two quick building phases as result of demand and hence why they offer the highest number of predominantly office units of all the facilities in Hartlepool.

The BIS is the Council's award winning managed workspace for the creative industries that opened in 2019 after a conversion of the old GPO building on Whitby Street.

The Hartlepower Hubs occupy converted office premises in Stranton and are run by Hartlepower CIC with their ethos and focus on community development.

Similarly Bovis House was converted from an empty town centre office building in 2020 and is owned and operated by the Big League CIC with its focus on developing small independent businesses.

- 4.2 These facilities can be categorised into two tiers of managed workspace within Hartlepool. There are the more modern centres (the BIS and the Innovation Centre at Queens Meadow Business Park), which are in excellent condition, and will appeal to companies looking to bring inward investment to the area, as well as those start-ups and local SMEs who are looking to present a very professional image to potential clients.

Then there are the more dated centres (the Hartlepool Enterprise Centre, Hartlepower and Bovis House) that are targeted at the lower end of the market, namely local SMEs and start-ups, for whom the modern workspace is not an essential requirement, and a lower price is a more important factor.

- 4.3 In both categories of the managed workspace market, occupancy was high, and there is confidence that additional space is needed and there is sufficient demand for further managed workspace within Hartlepool.

- 4.4 As part of the study, consultation was undertaken with managed workspace providers not operating in Hartlepool, to assess their views on Hartlepool as a potential investment location, and what would encourage them to invest in Hartlepool. Areas highlighted included support from the Council (both financially and politically), and clear evidence of current and planned investment and regeneration within the Borough.

The Screen Industries Production Village in particular is a key opportunity that should generate inward investment and demand for space.

The workspace providers also identified a number of key themes that new workspaces should consider and provide, including:

- The importance of a location that is near to public transport or with good parking facilities.
  - Access to amenities, both within the centre itself, and nearby facilities within the town centre in particular to attract talented staff.
  - The benefits of clustering amongst business sectors to foster collaboration.
  - A robust pricing strategy that is right for the area and the target businesses, while still remaining viable as a commercial business.
  - The impact of working from home and how that has changed the nature of the workplace.
- 4.5 The engagement showed that there are a number of regional managed workspace providers that see Hartlepool as a potential expansion and investment opportunity, subject to support from the Council. It appears unlikely that large national managed workspace providers would look to open a facility in Hartlepool at this time.

4.6 The study also looks at case studies from Newcastle Helix, Huddersfield Media Centre, Media City Salford, and Kingsway Swansea.

4.7 Future demand was ascertained by undertaking an assessment of potential demand for managed workspaces in Hartlepool through analysing employment growth drivers and translating this into office space needs.

Historic data shows a net job loss from 2015 to 2022, through sectors like Information and Communication. Future projections, including those from the Hartlepool Office and Industrial Workspace Availability Study, forecast significant job growth in advanced manufacturing, new energy, and creative sectors. While these sectors are expected to drive demand for office space, the need for managed workspaces (ideal for small businesses) will vary, with some businesses opting for traditional or serviced offices instead.

4.8 The gap identified key findings from the quality assessment of managed workspaces in Hartlepool, highlighting the need for additional space. Current projections indicate that around 4,400 to 11,000+ sqm of new workspace is required, as most growth sectors consist largely of small companies that typically seek managed workspace.

4.9 The analysis highlights significant gaps in Hartlepool's managed workspace sector, particularly insufficient modern facilities. To address these issues and encourage economic growth, the Council should explore ways to invest in or support new managed workspaces and consider possible partnership with private sector operators.

4.10 Potential locations for new managed workspaces could include the former Binns/Wilko store, the former Corporation Club site, Queens Meadow Business Park, and possibly Oakesway Industrial Estate. These sites offer potential to address both lower-cost and high-specification workspace needs, crucial for accommodating projected job growth and attracting investment.

## 5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

<b>RISK IMPLICATIONS</b>	<p>The availability of suitable business accommodation in Hartlepool for local businesses is vital for growing the economy and creating job opportunities for local residents.</p> <p>Not addressing this issue will result in local businesses and jobs relocating to areas outside of Hartlepool.</p>
<b>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No material implications

<b>SUBSIDY CONTROL</b>	No material implications
<b>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No material implications
<b>CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY</b>	No material implications
<b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No material implications
<b>STAFF CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No material implications
<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No material implications
<b>ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS</b>	No material implications
<b>CONSULTATION</b>	Consultation has been undertaken with all serviced and managed workspace providers in Hartlepool as outlined in this report.

## 6. CONCLUSION

6.1 In summary the key recommendations and next steps of the study are to:

- a) Engage in wider market testing with established workspace providers;
- b) Undertake more detailed feasibility assessments of potential sites for development of a managed workspace facility;
- c) Explore potential funding opportunities from both private sector and public sector organisations;
- d) Raise investor confidence in ongoing regeneration projects like the Screen Industries Production Village; and
- e) Consider ways of offering further additional support and training for start-ups to help them scale up.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 Committee is asked to note the findings of the study and consider any actions or recommendations they deem appropriate.

## **8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 To ensure new business start-ups and existing smaller businesses in Hartlepool have provision for serviced and managed workspace facilities available in the Borough.

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 9.1 None

## **10. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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Research study to determine the current and future demand for managed workspace in Hartlepool



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Tees Valley Combined Authority

Hartlepool Borough Council



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November 2024

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Private and Confidential



## Quality Assurance

Date of Report	November 2024
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Prepared by	Neil Kohli, Consultant  Amy Bennett, Consultant
Checked by	Brett Devenish, Director
Date	November 2024
Authorised by	Brett Devenish, Director
Date	November 2024

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# Contents

## Executive Summary

## Report

1	Introduction	4
2	Hartlepool Economic & Policy Context & Key Projects	7
	Key Projects	27
	Towns Fund Projects	28
	Church Street – Heritage Regeneration Project	32
	Hartlepool FC / Mill House Leisure Centre	33
	Seal Sands – ‘Blue’ Hydrogen Project	33
	A19 Elwick Bypass	34
3	Managed Workspace – Characteristics	35
	National Market Trends	35
	Benefits of Managed Workspace	36
4	Hartlepool Existing Managed Workspace	39
	Public Sector Managed Workspace	39
	Hartlepool Private Sector Managed Workspaces	47
	Managed Workspace in the Wider Tees Valley Region	54
5	Case Studies	56
6	External Consultation	60
	Key Themes	63
7	Future Demand	70
	Historic Employment Change by Sector	70
	Future Drivers of Growth	70
	Workspace Needs	72
8	Gap Analysis	75
	Projected Job Growth	75
	Quality of Existing Stock	76
	Proposed Accommodation Needs	78
	Proposed Locations	78
9	Conclusion and Recommendations	83
	Next Steps	89

## Tables & Figures

Figure 2.1 - SEP - 'What Success Looks Like'	8
Figure 2.2 - Tees Valley Economic Assessment Infographic	15
Figure 2.3 - HDC Boundary Plan, town centre and Oakesway	22
Figure 2.4 - HDC Boundary Plan, Queens Meadow	23
Figure 2.5 - Town centre and Oakesway growth focus areas	25
Figure 2.6 - Queens Meadow focus area	25

Figure 2.7 - Screen Industries Production Village Map	27
Figure 2.8 - Middleton Grange Shopping Centre Artist's Impression	30
Figure 2.9 - Church Street	32
Figure 2.10 - New Highlight Leisure Centre	33
Figure 3.1 - One Strawberry Lane, Newcastle	38
Figure 4.1 - Hartlepool Managed Workspace Location Map	39
Figure 4.2 - Ground Floor Plans and Unit Sizes	40
Figure 4.3 - First and Second Floor Plans	41
Table 4.1 - Attributes of the HEC	42
Table 4.2 - Attributes of the BIS	45
Table 4.3 - Attributes of Queens Meadow Innovation Centre	48
Table 4.4 - Attributes of Bovis House	50
Table 4.5 - Attributes of HartlePower	52
Figure 4.4 - Private Sector Managed Workspace in Tees Valley Location Map	54
Table 7.1 - Employment Change by Sector (2015 to 2022)	70
Table 7.2 - Projected Workforce Job Growth (2022 to 2032)	71
Table 7.3 - Office Floorspace Needs by Sector (2022 to 2032)	72
Figure 7.1 - Growth Sectors by Business Size Band	74
Figure 8.1 - Former Binns / Wilko department store	79
Figure 8.2 - Advanced House external view	81

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## Executive Summary

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- ES 1 AspinallVerdi, supported by Lichfields, was commissioned by the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) and Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) to undertake a study to inform Hartlepool's managed workspace programme. The study, based on research, data analysis, and consultations in May 2024, aims to identify and prioritise investment opportunities in managed workspaces to drive economic growth.
- ES 2 The study was conducted in the context of existing policy and previous studies, in particularly the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan, the Hartlepool Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022 – 2025, the Hartlepool Investment Plan 2022 – 2024, the Tees Valley Office and Industrial Workspace Availability Study 2020, and the Ortus Economic Research Report: Business Starts on Tees Valley 2023.
- ES 3 Five managed workspaces were identified in Hartlepool: The BIS, Hartlepool Enterprise Centre, Hartlepower, Bovis House, and Queens Meadow Innovation Centre. Meetings were conducted with the managed workspace providers to assess both current and future occupancy and demand for these facilities. The study also considers the availability of managed workspace options outside of Hartlepool.
- ES 4 This baseline established that there are two tiers of managed workspace within Hartlepool. There are the more modern centres (the BIS and Queens Meadow Innovation Centre), which are in excellent condition, and will appeal to companies looking to bring inward investment to the area, as well as those start-ups and local SMEs who are looking to present a very professional image to potential clients. The more dated centres (the HEC, Hartlepower and Bovis House) were targeted at the lower end of the market – local SMEs and start-ups for whom the modern workspace is not an essential requirement, and a lower price is a more important factor.
- ES 5 In both sectors of the managed workspace market, occupancy was high, and there is confidence that additional space is needed and there is sufficient demand for further managed workspace within Hartlepool.
- ES 6 As part of the study, we met with managed workspace providers not operating in Hartlepool, to assess their views on Hartlepool as potential investment opportunities, and what would encourage them to invest in Hartlepool – particularly support from the Council (both financially and politically), and clear evidence of current and planned investment and regeneration within the town. The Hartlepool Production Village is a key opportunity that should generate inward investment and demand for space.

- ES 7 The workspace providers identified a number of key themes that new workspaces should consider and provide, including:
- The importance of a location that is near to public transport or with good parking facilities.
  - Access to amenities – both facilities within the centre, and nearby facilities within the town centre – to attract talented staff.
  - The benefits of clustering amongst business sectors to foster collaboration
  - A robust pricing strategy that is right for the area and the target businesses, whilst still remaining viable as a commercial business.
  - The impact of working from home and how that has changed the nature of the workplace.
- ES 8 This engagement showed that there are a number of regional managed workspace providers that see Hartlepool as a potential expansion and investment opportunity, subject to support from the Council. It appears unlikely that large national managed workspace providers would look to open a facility in Hartlepool at this time.
- ES 9 The study also looks at case studies from Swans Centre for Innovation, Blyth Workspace, Newcastle Helix, Huddersfield Media Centre, and Media City Salford were analysed.
- ES 10 Lichfield's ascertained the future demand by assessing potential demand for managed workspaces in Hartlepool by analysing employment growth drivers and translating this into office space needs. Historic data shows a net job loss from 2015 to 2022, though sectors like Information and Communication. Future projections, including those from the Hartlepool Office and Industrial Workspace Availability Study, forecast significant job growth in advanced manufacturing, new energy, and creative sectors. While these sectors are expected to drive demand for office space, the need for managed workspaces (ideal for small businesses) will vary, with some businesses opting for traditional or serviced offices instead.
- ES 11 The gap identified key findings from the quality assessment of managed workspaces in Hartlepool, highlighting the need for additional space. Current projections indicate that a minimum of 4,400 sqm is required up to 2032, as most growth sectors consist largely of small companies that typically seek managed workspace. The projected range goes as high as 11,000 sqm, however this higher end of the range is perhaps over-ambitious at this stage.
- ES 12 We review how the recommendations would contribute towards the key strategic policies affecting Hartlepool, including supporting the Production Village and business growth as set out in the Inclusive Growth Strategy, Hartlepool Town Investment Plan, and the objectives of the Investment Zone.

- ES 13 The analysis highlights significant gaps in Hartlepool's managed workspace sector, particularly insufficient modern facilities. To address these issues and encourage economic growth, the Council should explore ways to invest in or support new managed workspaces and consider partnering with private operators.
- ES 14 Potential locations for new managed workspaces include the former Binns/Wilko store, the former Corporation Club site, Middleton Grange Shopping Centre, Advanced House, Teesport, Port of Hartlepool, Queens Meadow Business Park, and possibly Oakesway Industrial Estate. These sites offer potential to address both lower-cost and high-specification workspace needs, crucial for accommodating projected job growth and attracting investment.
- ES 15 The key recommendations and next steps of the study are to:
- Engage with TVCA and central government to make the case for investment in managed workspace in the Borough
  - Agree internally what level of involvement the Council wish to have in future delivery
  - Commission the more detailed options appraisal and undertake detailed feasibility work on potential sites for new managed workspace.
  - Engage with a wider range of potential managed workspace providers (including those spoken to in the course of this report) to generate further interest in the town, and explore delivery strategies for these spaces.
  - Develop additional softer business support initiatives to foster enhanced business growth.

# 1 Introduction

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- 1.1 AspinallVerdi, supported by Lichfields, have been commissioned by the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA), working with Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC), to undertake a study to inform Hartlepool's managed workspace programme. As part of its remit to drive economic growth, the Combined Authority aims to ensure that managed workspace is provided to meet business needs and respond to opportunities.
- 1.2 The contents of this report reflect the findings of desk top research, analysis of economic and real estate databases and external consultations held in May 2024.
- 1.3 The purpose of the study is to strengthen the prioritisation of investment in managed workspaces.
- 1.4 In recognising the significant economic growth that managed workspace developments could bring to Hartlepool, we have agreed the following methodology:
- Provide a robust baseline of existing managed workspace provision in Hartlepool.
  - Identify the demand requirements for managed workspace in Hartlepool.
    - The analysis takes into account the changing economic profile of both Hartlepool and the wider Tees Valley region, as well as macro-economic factors and identify, the detailed nature of current and expected workspace demand.
  - Gap analysis, including the position meeting future needs for the development of managed workspaces in Hartlepool to meet future demand.
    - The analysis should include high level information only on any suitable additional sites identified, projected job growth, proposed accommodation and quality of existing stock.
    - Analysis should consider current and past market failure, with evidence of any barriers to private investment where public intervention is needed to stimulate development.
  - Provide a list of suggested interventions to address gap analysis findings in c) above, aligned to the vision for Hartlepool, as set out in the Council Plan 2021/22 – 2023/24 and wider Tees Valley aspirations for growth in both business counts and jobs.
  - Considering the current managed workspace market, changing patterns of demand and supply constraints.

## Hartlepool Economic Analysis

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- 1.5 Across a variety of indicators, the Hartlepool economy is performing below expectations, including:
- A small number of businesses relative to its population (and declining)

- Very low levels of productivity per worker (due to a concentration of employment in sectors where GVA per head is especially low)
  - Relatively low levels of educational attainment
  - A lower-than-average employment rate
  - Relatively high levels of economic inactivity and particularly of the number of people classified as long-term sick
  - Although the negative impacts of COVID were noted, a survey of businesses struck a more optimistic note
  - Over the past three years, employment, turnover and profit were all slightly positive, with a significant increase in investments in capital goods and in training.
  - Over the next 12 months: 80 per cent expect turnover to grow; 64 per cent expect job numbers to grow and 67 per cent expect profits to grow.
- 1.6 In general, there has been strong desire for more and better business support, especially in respect of business development and the recruitment and training of staff. In addition, many businesses would feel supported by more effective promotion of Hartlepool to outside audiences.<sup>1</sup>

## Structure of the Report

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- 1.7 The following provides an overview of the contents of each chapter:
- Chapter 2 - Hartlepool Economic & Policy Context: sets the context for the study, looking at the area's economic performance and the strategies and policies that aim to improve that performance.
  - Chapter 3 – Managed Workspace: review of managed workspace characteristics, national market trends and the overall benefits of managed workspace for small to medium sized businesses.
  - Chapter 4 - Hartlepool Existing Managed Workspace: Current overview of existing managed workspace both public and private sector involving descriptive narrative of what each managed workspace offers.
  - Chapter 5 – Case Studies: Examples of similar regeneration managed workspace schemes throughout the nation, analysing the impact and scale it has had on the local and wider economy.

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<sup>1</sup> Hartlepool Borough Council. 2024 Hartlepool Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022-25



- Chapter 6 - External Consultations: Review and analysis of consultations with local managed workspace providers and their opinions about managed workspace within Hartlepool and the impact on the local economy.
- Chapter 7 - Future Demand: This section of the report seeks to provide an understanding of the likely sources of demand for managed workspace in Hartlepool. It draws upon a range of data sets to: identify future drivers of employment growth; consider the extent to which growth could translate to a requirement for office space generally; and assess the size profile of relevant sectors to estimate the proportion of growth that could translate to a need for managed workspace specifically.
- Chapter 8 - Gap Analysis: This section provides a summary of the key findings from the sectoral and quality analysis of managed workspace accommodation in Hartlepool and projected floorspace requirements. We have also analysed proposed locations and the quality of existing stock
- Chapter 9 - Conclusion and Recommendations: a range of considerations and recommendations for managed workspace intervention.

## 2 Hartlepool Economic & Policy Context & Key Projects

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2.1 In this section we briefly review the recent economic policy and strategies developed to guide the performance of the Tees Valley and Hartlepool economy, A desk-based review of key information sources is provided including but not limited to the following documents:

- Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan 2016 – 2026
- Tees Valley Investment Plan 2019 – 2029 (January 2020)
- Ortus Economic Research Report: Business Starts on Tees Valley 2023
- Tees Valley Office and Industrial Workspace Availability Study 2020
- Tees Valley Investment Zone
- Tees Valley Economic Assessment
- Hartlepool Council Plan 2021/22 – 2023/24
- Hartlepool Local Plan
- Hartlepool Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022-25
- Hartlepool Investment Plan 2022-24
- Hartlepool Employment Land Review (2015)
- Hartlepool Mayoral Development Corporation proposals
- Hartlepool Industrial and Office Accommodation Requirements 2023
- Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

### Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan 2016-2026

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2.2 The Tees Valley Combined Authority was created in April 2016. Its purpose is to secure investment and create jobs in the area.

2.3 The strategic economic plan was created by Tees Valley Combined Authority and the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership. The aim is for the region to become a ‘high value, low-carbon, diverse and inclusive economy’ and the plan has identified six main strategic priorities:

- Business Growth – ‘Further increase jobs and business density through targeted support to create and attract new companies and to grow businesses and sectors with high growth potential.’
- Research, Development, Innovation and Energy – ‘Further enhance productivity in all core sectors through the commercialisation of knowledge.’
- Education, Employment and Skill – ‘Ensure a labour market which meets the needs of local business and supports the lifetime opportunities of all our residents.’
- Culture and Tourism – ‘Change the external perceptions of Tees Valley through the arts, cultural and leisure offer, create places that attract and retain businesses and business leaders, and make the area an attractive place to live, work and visit.’

- Transport and Infrastructure – ‘Facilitate local, regional, national and international road, rail and broadband connectivity through collaborative investment in physical infrastructure.’
- 2.4 Regarding the proposed funding sources, £223 million of investment has been secured since 2011, from sources such as the European Structural and Investment Fund. Tees Valley has also secured over £96 million through the first two rounds of the Local Growth Fund. Following detailed negotiations between the Tees Valley Local Authorities and Government, a devolution deal worth £450 million over 30 years was signed in October 2015. Equivalent to an additional £15 million per year. There is further opportunity as part of the Northern Powerhouse, between the government and northern regions which are contributing to the economic growth of the area.
- 2.5 The figure below shows a brief summary of the targets for the region and anticipates ‘what success looks like in 2026.’

**Figure 2.1 - SEP - 'What Success Looks Like'**



Source: Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan, 2016

### Tees Valley Investment Plan January 2019

- 2.6 A Tees Valley Combined Authority Investment Plan was agreed in March 2017 and set out investment priorities for the period till 2021. A refreshed Investment Plan was agreed in January 2019 and sets out the investment strategy for the period 2019-2029. The investment plan will be reviewed annually in order to adapt to changes in the economy and integrate new funding and investment opportunities.
- 2.7 A sum of £588 million is included in this investment plan and will assist in delivering significant benefits to the region. The impact of delivering the investment plan would be 16,475 new jobs and £1.4 billion of addition annual output in the Tees Valley area, with the focus matching the six priority areas as set out in the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan. The overall ambitions of this plan are set out below;

- 'Ensuring that residents, no matter where they live in the Tees Valley, can access all job opportunities.'
  - 'Ensuring we have an appropriately skilled workforce for business needs today and in the future.'
  - 'Ensuring that there is a supportive business environment where businesses can start-up, grow and innovate.'
- 2.8 The Investment Plan prioritises six growth themes with in the document;
- Transport
  - Education, Employment and Skill
  - Business Growth
  - Culture and Tourism
  - Research, Development and Innovation
  - Place

### Ortus Economic Research Report: Business Starts in Tees Valley 2023

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- 2.9 In Autumn 2022, North East Enterprise Agency Ltd (NEEAL) partnered with Tees Valley Combined Authority, Darlington Council, Hartlepool Council, and Redcar and Cleveland Council to commission a study on business start-up rates and demographics across the Tees Valley. This study aimed to provide detailed insights, benchmark against other regions, and identify best practices to enhance support services for start-ups.
- 2.10 The study aimed to develop intelligence on business start-up rates and demographics in Tees Valley and benchmark against other areas to identify unique aspects and best practices. The five supporting objectives were to describe the Tees Valley business base and demographics, detail business start-up rates and demographics over five years, analyse survival rates by type, sector, and size, benchmark Tees Valley business population and start-ups against other areas, and investigate factors contributing to or inhibiting business start-ups and survival, particularly in Hartlepool.
- 2.11 The methodology used a mixed-methods approach, including accessing and analysing secondary data related to the business population, business starts, and other economic characteristics. Additionally, desk research and consultations with partners and stakeholders were conducted to investigate success factors in increasing business starts and survival, inhibitors, and promoters of high business start rates, and best practices in related business support.
- 2.12 Key findings from the data analysis indicated that there are an estimated 38,766 businesses in Tees Valley, with Stockton-on-Tees having the largest business population and Hartlepool the

smallest. Business density in Tees Valley is lower than the national average, and the total business population declined by 6% between 2018 and 2022. The sectoral profile of the business population varies between the five local authorities, with self-employment playing a significant role in the economy.

- 2.13 The desk research and consultation revealed diverse factors influencing start-up rates, including personal attitude, access to markets, human capital, and funding. Cultural factors, economic trends, and legacies of the past also play crucial roles. The impact of Covid-19 on the start-up market was notable, influencing work-life balance, demand for start-up support, and modifications in support delivery.
- 2.14 Factors enhancing or inhibiting business start-up and survival rates include the quality of the business idea, leadership, business model, marketing approach, entrepreneurial team, funding, and timing. Success factors for survival identified in the consultation include engaging new customers, attracting talent, cash flow management, and having a clear business model and routes to market. Challenges in rural communities, access to support, and infrastructure needs were also highlighted.
- 2.15 The research emphasised the importance of segmenting the start-up market, ensuring support is clear and accessible, and addressing gaps in post-start support. The consultation highlighted the value of role models, mentoring, and building networks to enhance start-up and survival rates.
- 2.16 To address the identified issues, the study recommends focusing business support resources on encouraging small, unregistered businesses with suitable ambitions to register through growth or by taking on staff. It suggests continuing to monitor business start-up and survival rates to ensure support is well-targeted. Additionally, business support should be segmented to meet the needs of pre-start, early-stage, and high-ambition businesses.
- 2.17 Embedding start-up support in a broader strategy to enhance entrepreneurial culture, social capital, and other foundational elements of enterprise activity is also recommended. Creating an 'enterprise board' with major stakeholders can ensure that support meets current needs, responds to environmental changes, and facilitates effective communication. Improving selection and targeting techniques to focus resources on sustainable business propositions and entrepreneurs is crucial.
- 2.18 Furthermore, evolving business support to better capture the value of mentoring for early-stage start-ups by maintaining pre-start relationships is advised. Finally, improving access to information, support, and resources through a centralized hub for Tees Valley is essential.

## Tees Valley Office and Industrial Workspace Availability Study 2020

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- 2.19 AspinallVerdi in combination with Peter Brett Associates were commissioned by the Tees Valley Combined Authority (the Combined Authority) to undertake a study to inform its business accommodation programme.
- 2.20 As part of its remit to drive economic growth, the Combined Authority aims to ensure that office and industrial property is provided to meet business needs and respond to opportunities.
- 2.21 The study aligns with the Combined Authority's economic strategy: the 2016 Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) – the Industrial Strategy of the Tees Valley. In particular, the study focuses on the needs of the seven priority sectors (and one cross cutting sector) identified in the SEP. These sectors have been selected as having the greatest potential to deliver economic growth, high productivity and new jobs, including:
- Advanced Manufacturing;
  - Culture & Leisure;
  - Digital;
  - Health & Biologics;
  - Logistics;
  - Process, Chemicals & Energy;
  - Professional & Business Services; and
  - Circular Economy
- 2.22 The reports conclude out of all the priority sectors process, process chemicals and energy have the most opportunities in the area. The region has a number of key assets that can attract largescale inward investment of international and national significance along with supply chain opportunities and other working in the sector.
- 2.23 TVCA should support the promotion of for largescale investment in this sector and help facilitate development of workspace for microbusiness and SMEs on a speculative basis to ensure their accommodation needs are met with good quality purpose-built units. Leading to the displacement of some occupiers in the existing industrial areas. But this should not be seen as negative displacement because the current vacancy is low and allowing the existing space to be used for more general industrial purposes.
- 2.24 In analysis the report has considered a range of different interventions to support the seven priority sectors. The assessment has shown that:
- **Direct joint venture development** – will have the biggest impact for advanced manufacturing, and professional and business services.

- **Direct public sector development** - will have the biggest impact for culture and leisure, creatives and digital and health and biologics.
- **Grant funding** – has a medium impact overall, and should be targeted to support the chemical, process and energy sector.
- **Soft loans** – has a low impact overall, and could only be suitable for advanced manufacturing, process chemicals and energy. But currently there is no precedence of this working in the region.
- **Public sector taking head lease** – will have a medium impact overall, but should be targeted advanced manufacturing, and professional and business services.
- **Securing planning application/ and or site assembly** - has a low impact overall, and given that there are many sites in single ownership and facilitating planning is not a strong enough intervention in the region.
- **Funding Infrastructure** - has a medium impact overall, there is evidence of this occurring in the region e.g. Centre Park at Darlington but a lack of infrastructure has not been identified as being a significant concern across the region.

### Hartlepool Industrial and Office Accommodation Requirements 2023

- 2.25 Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) commissioned AspinallVerdi supported by Lichfields and Dodds Brown to undertake an office and industrial workspace study specifically for Hartlepool, building on the conclusions of the 2020 Tees Valley study. The outcome of the study was to inform the TVCA and Hartlepool Council business accommodation investment programme. As part of its remit to drive economic growth, TVCA aims to ensure that office and industrial property is provided to meet business needs and respond to opportunities.
- 2.26 A thorough review of the office and industrial workspace currently available in Hartlepool was undertaken, categorising by sector, occupancy and quality. The sectors used were:
- New Energy
  - Digital
  - Healthcare
  - Construction
  - Advanced Manufacturing
  - Creative, Cultural & Leisure (CCL)
  - Biologics
  - Chemicals & Process
  - Logistics
  - Professional and Business Services (PBS)
  - Primary Sectors

- Other Manufacturing
  - Other Private Services
  - Other Public Services
  - Other
- 2.27 The report concluded the announcement of the Investment Zone for the Tees Valley is good news for Hartlepool. The Zone will take in the HDC boundary, which is proposed to include Oakesway and Queens Meadow.
- 2.28 The economic levers included within the Investment Zone should be particularly powerful, and enable the Council to target support within the zone at scale.
- 2.29 Of the five priority sectors – Digital and Tech; Green Industries; Life Sciences; Advanced Manufacturing; and Creative Industries – there is good synergy with the sectoral strengths of Hartlepool around digital industries, manufacturing, utilities and health and social care.
- 2.30 The report also concluded the Council/TVCA should commit to a package of policies to catalyse development over the ten-year study period (and potentially beyond).
- 2.31 Funding for owner-occupiers has often been limited. By supporting occupiers to build their own accommodation, funds can be retained in the local area (helping to maximise the retention of indirect and induced economic benefits - which are more likely to 'leak' out of the region where schemes are delivered by national developers). The creation of non-recourse loan options would be a useful incentive for this purpose. The risk of developing as an owner-occupier rather than a speculative developer is significantly reduced.
- 2.32 Potential policy interventions include:
- Grant funding – for viability gaps, abnormal costs etc
  - Loans – bridging loans, low interest non-recourse, etc
  - Funding for infrastructure – wider highway improvements and estate upgrades
  - Tax incentives or grants for landlords and tenants to refurbish existing Grade B stock to meet forthcoming changes to the MEES Regulations

### Tees Valley Investment Zones

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- 2.33 The refocused Investment Zones programme, launched in the 2023 Spring Budget, gives six areas a range of funds and powers catalyse local growth and investment. This includes offering tax reliefs to attract businesses to these Zones, and initial investments in a range of interventions including skills, research and innovation, and infrastructure. Zones will be focused on five priority sectors: Digital and Tech, Green Industries, Life Sciences, Advanced Manufacturing and Creative Industries.

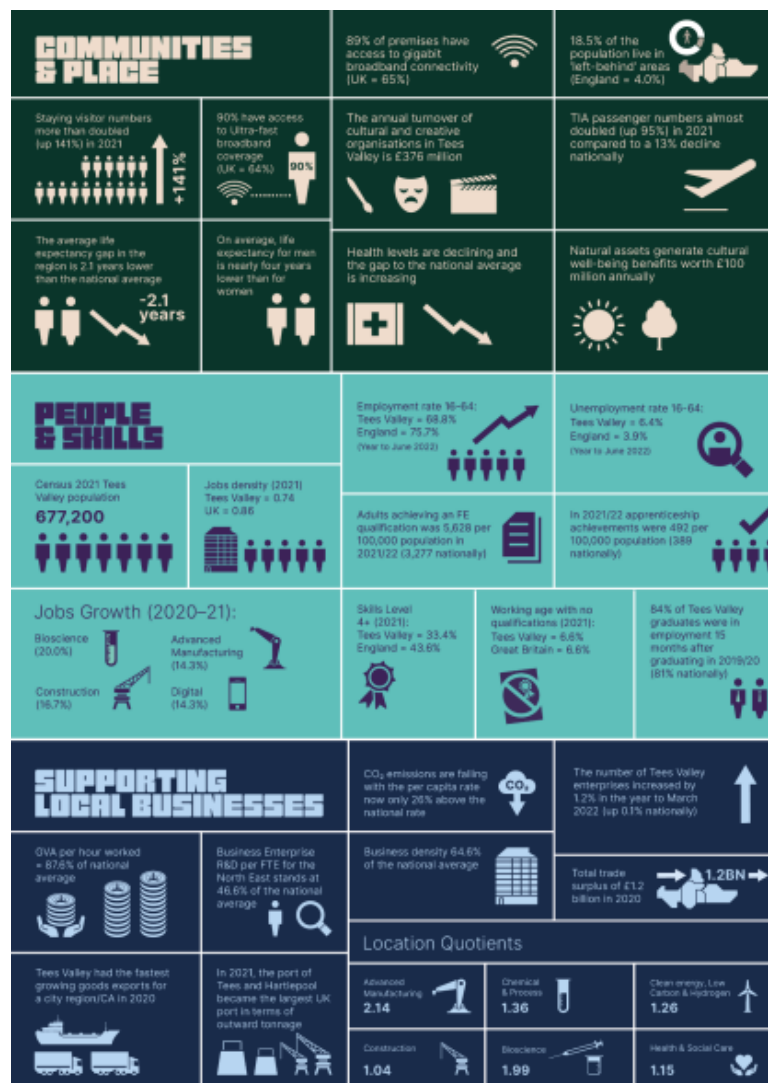


- 2.34 The Tees Valley Investment Zone was formally confirmed in early 2024, with an announcement of £160m to be invested in the zone over a ten-year period. The Tees Valley Investment Zone will focus on the digital and creative sectors, building on the region's existing expertise and strengths in these sectors. Investment in infrastructure, skills and workforce development, business support, planning and research and innovation will boost the strength and economic output of the region through increased productivity, job creation and transformed communities, with a focus on the cluster areas within Hartlepool and Middlesbrough.
- 2.35 Local partners expect the Tees Valley Investment Zone to potentially unlock up to £175 million of additional investment and create more than 2,000 jobs over the next ten years. The initial focus is on agreeing priority development sites and interventions to catalyse the further growth of the existing clusters

## Tees Valley Economic Assessment

2.36 The Economic Assessment is updated annually. It reflects the priorities in the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan (2016-26), the Tees Valley Local Industrial Strategy (locally agreed in 2019) and the Tees Valley Investment Plan (2019-29). It also provides an evidence base to support the achievement of levelling-up, both within Tees Valley and between Tees Valley and the rest of the country.

Figure 2.2 - Tees Valley Economic Assessment Infographic



Source: Tees Valley Combined Authority, 2024

2.37 The infographic in Figure 2.2 shows the key economic figures for the 2022-23 economic assessment and outlines key areas of growth in three specific categories:

- Communities & Place
- People & Skills

- Supporting Local Businesses

## Hartlepool Local Plan

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- 2.38 The Hartlepool Local Plan was adopted in May 2018 and sets out the planning framework for the next 15 years, including policies which are under key theme such as strengthening the local economy and retail and commercial development. The Local Plan seeks to provide a broad range and choice of employment land in locations that support the wider aims and objectives of growing the economy. The ambitions of the Local Plan are set out in the following documents;
- Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan and supporting funding documents including Local Growth Fund and European Structural & Investment Funds Strategy
  - Hartlepool Economic Regeneration Strategy 2011-2021
  - Hartlepool Vision and Regeneration Masterplan
  - Hartlepool Employment Land Review
  - Tees Valley Strategic Infrastructure Plan
  - Tees Valley Enterprise Zone Scheme
  - North and South Tees Industrial Development Framework
  - Hartlepool Southern Business Zone Study
- 2.39 *Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)* includes an ambitious target of creating 25,000 net addition jobs of the next 10 years, and has identified key sectors where there is potential and opportunities for growth.
- 2.40 The *Hartlepool Employment Land Review* has considered employment change through to the end of the plan period. The document looks at growth in the Enterprise Zones (Port Estate, Oakesway, Queens Meadow), along with further growth in sectors such as health, professional/scientific and education and projects the generation of some 1,700 additional jobs by 2031. The SEP notes the need to enhance and expand business accommodation in Hartlepool, especially on Enterprise Zone sites, business parks and strategic sites such as Wynyard Business Park. Hartlepool also has the potential to provide creative industries accommodation as part of an innovation and skills quarter around the Hartlepool College of Further Education and the Cleveland College of Art and Design with the development of a new HQ and Campus.
- 2.41 Policies below set out the future aspirations for the Local Plan in response to the economic growth targets set out in the SEP and the Hartlepool Employment Land Review;
- Policy EMP1: A total of 32.7 hectares of land is available for prestige employment use at Wynyard Business Park.

- Policy EMP2: A total of 65.0 hectares of land is committed for high quality employment use at Queen's Meadow Business Park. Currently 44.7 hectares (110.4 acres) of land is available for development. A total of 33.0 hectares (81.5 acres) is included in the Enterprise Zone Local Development Order.
- Policy EMP3: Land is committed in the following industrial areas for general employment uses: North Hartlepool
- Oakesway: total site area 38.8 hectares; available land 18.6 hectares. All 38.8 hectares of the Oakesway site is included as part of the Enterprise Zone Local Development Order.

#### 2.42 Southern Business Zone

- Longhill/Sandgate: total site area 73.8 hectares; available land 1.0 hectare.
- Usworth Road/Park View West: total site area 33.3 hectares; available land 2.2 hectares.
- Sovereign Park: total site area 20.9 hectares; available land 11.4 hectares.
- Brenda Road: total site area 3.6 hectares; no available land.
- Tofts Farm East/Hunter House: total site area 44.2 hectares; available land 0.6 hectare.
- Tofts Farm West: total site area 34.1 hectares; available land 8.2 hectares.
- Graythorp Industrial Estate: total site area 13.1 hectares; no available land.
- Zinc Works Road: total site area 3.0 hectares; no available land.

### Hartlepool Council Plan 2021/22 - 2023/24

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2.43 The Hartlepool Council Plan has a vision for Hartlepool to be sustainable, clean, safe and green. Where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives, with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community and those who are vulnerable will be safe and protected from harm.

2.44 The Council sets out key principles to deliver this plan:

- Leadership – the Council will fulfil their role as a community leader working to deliver a positive future for our Borough;
- Collaboration – they will work with communities, the community and voluntary sector and partners across the public and private sector to deliver the vision for Hartlepool
- Inclusivity – they will work to ensure equal access to services and opportunities and will take positive action to remove the barriers that people may face;
- Openness and transparency – they be clear about what they are doing and why;
- Commitment – they are committed to delivering the vision and will honour commitments as a community leader, service provider and commissioner;
- Trust – they will work to develop and build on the trust between the Council, communities and partners;

- Understanding – they will work to understand the needs, hopes and views of residents, communities and partners through engagement, consultation and research.

### Hartlepool Employment Land Review (2015)

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- 2.45 This paper assesses the supply, need and demand for employment land and premises (use class B) in Hartlepool. It has been carried out for Hartlepool Borough Council to provide robust evidence to underpin and inform its Local Plan for the period to 2031.
- 2.46 The Employment Land Review is a three-stage process as outlined in the 2004 Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Guidance Note. Stage One, which involves a “comprehensive stock” take of the existing situation, was undertaken inhouse by the Council. BE Group undertook Stages Two and Three during mid-2014. This report outlines the findings from the three stages of the research.
- 2.47 For Stage One the objectives were:
- To devise a brief for Stage One
  - To collate data on land stock and revealed demand
  - To devise and apply site appraisal criteria
  - To undertake preliminary site appraisals
- 2.48 For Stages Two and Three the objectives were:
- To understand market areas and segments within the Borough
  - To understand the Borough’s strengths and weaknesses in relation to predicted future trends/technology drivers etc that are likely to adjust its attractiveness to major employment uses
  - To select and apply a suitable forecast model/demand analysis
  - To provide a breakdown of that analysis in terms of quality and location
  - To test the chosen model for sensitivity against at least three different economic growth scenarios
  - To quantify employment land supply Employment Land Review Hartlepool Borough Council H87(e)/Final Report/December 2014/ BE Group/Tel 01925 822112 2
  - To give an indication of „gaps” in supply.

#### Stage Three

- To undertake a qualitative review of all significant sites (and premises) in the existing employment site portfolio
- To confirm which of them are unsuitable for/unlikely to continue in employment use
- To establish the extent of “gaps” in the portfolio

- To identify (if necessary) additional sites to be allocated or safeguarded
- 2.49 The paper found that Hartlepool has an economically active workforce, however, unemployment is high, both in the context of the Tees Valley and the wider North East.
- 2.50 There were some 2,420 businesses operating in the Borough in 2013. Most of those businesses employ less than 10 employees (78.5%). Business start-up rates in Hartlepool are average for the Tees Valley and North East.
- 2.51 However, the rate of business death is comparatively modest and some 54-55% of local businesses survive into their fourth year, with 47.1% surviving into their fifth year.
- 2.52 In terms of employment, Hartlepool is strongly dependant on the public sector, with 35% of working residents employed in public administration, education and health.
- 2.53 In terms of inward investment, Hartlepool has a number of assets which are of national significance and will draw investment into the Borough.
- 2.54 In terms of employment land supply, at 31st March 2014 there was a local supply of 409.7 ha of available employment land, made up of 29 sites.
- 2.55 Another 93.8 ha comprises land in five sites where a mixture of owner aspirations and site conditions suggest that the land is better suited for alternative uses, primarily retail and housing.

### Hartlepool Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022-2025

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- 2.56 The Hartlepool Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022-2025 sets out an ambitious and deliverable plan for Hartlepool, focusing around three themes, developing people, developing business and developing place. This strategy has developed a ten-point delivery plan for growing Hartlepool's economy, relating to areas such as business survival rates, employment, education, skills and productivity;
- Development of a 'Production Village' creative quarter in in the surrounding area of the new Film and TV Studios an action plan to support creative sector businesses
  - Action plan to support creative businesses
  - Business support strategy
  - Supply and demand for business accommodation to include start up provision in Hartlepool
  - Initiatives to develop learning and skills
  - Increase confidence and aspiration of employees and people
  - Support the development of social enterprises.
  - Initiatives for businesses to support the development of healthy workforces
  - Coherent approach to place promotion and finding Hartlepool's identity
  - Destination Management Plan to support tourism

- 2.57 There is a specific opportunity for the development/re-development of premises in the Church Street area of the town centre in order to create a production village, linked to the new film and TV sound studios.
- 2.58 At the time of this report, details of the Tees Valley Freeport were still to be confirmed. We now know the range of sites which benefit from tax and customs relief and simplified processes. Tax zones offer financial incentives to attract long-term inward investment, such as business rates and employer NI contributions relief. Teesworks, Wilton Centre and Redcar Bulk Terminal are all designated as tax zones. Businesses in customs zones can benefit from reduced import tariffs, and these sites again include Teesworks and Redcar Bulk Terminal, along with ABLE Seaton Port, Teesside Airport, Teesport, Port of Hartlepool, Port of Middlesbrough, LV Logistics and Liberty Steel Hartlepool.
- 2.59 These benefits should attract significant inward investment, and will require supporting infrastructure of businesses across the Freeport area.

### Hartlepool Town Investment Plan 2021

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- 2.60 The Hartlepool Investment Plan, prepared by the Hartlepool Town Deal Board, is focused on growth of the wider economic and spatial plan for Hartlepool. It is directly aimed at priority actions which will have most direct and catalytic impact on the three things to change the town, 'job value gap', 'social mobility and skills constraints' and dysfunctional – disconnected central area'. The job value gap shows only 52 jobs per 100 working age residents which confirms the town's economy still does not sustain enough jobs or higher-value employment and activity
- 2.61 The Hartlepool Investment Plan has listed five priority projects in order to provide economic growth in the town, which have been set out below;
- **Reimagining Middleton Grange Shopping Centre: Phase 1** - regeneration and re-imagination of the shopping centre to create a "clearly defined mixed-use heart for the town centre.
  - **Wesley Chapel Hotel Redevelopment** - new boutique hotel and commercial workspace in a restored and protected Grade II - listed Victorian Methodist Chapel.
  - **Waterfront Circuit Phase 1** - waterfront promenade and new public space.
  - **Civil Engineering Institute** - Expanded and enhanced skills facilities positioning Hartlepool to maximise social and economic benefits of investment in the UK's 5G full fibre infrastructure network.
  - **Heath and Care Academy** - A state-of-the-art health and social care training facility at University Hospital Hartlepool.
- 2.62 The headline outputs from this investment plan are shown below;

- 4,500 sqm of redeveloped flexible mixed-use space
  - 7,000 sqm new public realm
  - High-class training facilities
  - 482 new annual training opportunities
  - 36 new hotel bedspaces
  - Transformation of town centre
  - Improved waterfront access and residential skills
  - Increased attractiveness to investors and number of visitors
- 2.63 Through the Government's Town Fund initiative, Hartlepool was one of 100 towns across England to secure up to £25 million to regenerate the town. The Government, Hartlepool Borough Council and the Town Deal Board are supporting the delivery of a Town Deal, the proposals include further town centre regeneration, including the re-imagining of the Middleton Grange Shopping Centre to create a clearly-defined mixed heart for the town centre; better links between the marina, town centre and railway station; and health and civil engineering training institutes that will help people develop new skills. In addition, Hartlepool has been awarded £1m in accelerated funding from the Towns Fund to bring forward projects that support jobs and economic growth.

### Mayoral Development Corporation – Also referred to as Hartlepool Development Corporation

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- 2.64 In November 2022 it was announced that support had been received for the introduction of a Mayoral Development Corporation in Hartlepool to deliver a masterplan for the future development of the town and attract investment and development.
- 2.65 It will be known as the Hartlepool Development Corporation (HDC). Its aim will be to transform Hartlepool town centre and complement existing activities taking place to make it an even better place to live and do business. The HDC will receive £20million towards kick-starting the project.
- 2.66 The masterplan comprises 3 distinct areas: the town centre, and the Oakesway and Queens Meadow Business Parks which exist to the north and south of the town. These areas have been chosen as they represent areas where the HDC its partners and stakeholders, can accelerate and enhance development which overcomes key spatial, land and use connectivity challenges which currently hinder the town's progress. Moves to set up the HDC for Hartlepool were backed in February 2023 to drive forward investment through reduced regulation for investment. The Masterplan was then published in May 2023.
- 2.67 The masterplan will support the accelerate regeneration of the town by:
- Supercharging development opportunities in the town
  - Stimulating private sector investment and growth



- Creating and growing strategic partnerships to unlock investment opportunities in the town
- Prioritising and increasing resources to support delivery
- Promoting Hartlepool to further attract inward investment to the town

2.68 The HDC boundary can be seen below in Figure 2.3 and 2.4:

**Figure 2.3 - HDC Boundary Plan, town centre and Oakesway**



Source: Supercharging Development in Hartlepool, April 2023

**Figure 2.4 - HDC Boundary Plan, Queens Meadow**



Source: Supercharging Development in Hartlepool, April 2023

2.69 The vision for Hartlepool in the HDC Masterplan is for an imaginative, creative & ambitious 21<sup>st</sup> century maritime town; which is a thriving place to live, work, explore and invest. This vision, developed with stakeholders and partners, is underpinned by four core objectives to drive the HDC's role in the transformation of the town:

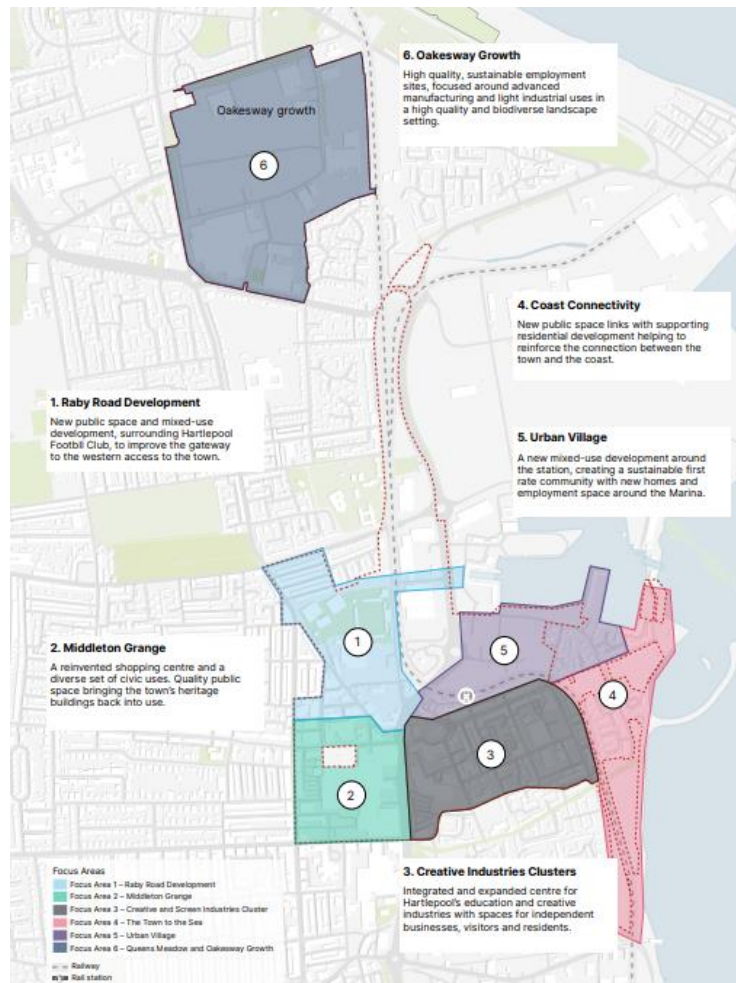
- **Make a vibrant town centre** - Restore, reinvigorate and shape a sustainable town centre, providing residents and visitors with attractive, quality public space, shops, and leisure facilities.
- **Attract 2,000 new and quality jobs** - Attract more and better jobs in manufacturing and creative industries, whilst delivering the skills needed to access them.
- **Renew Hartlepool's waterfront** - Create a thriving maritime economy of culture, business, and leisure around Hartlepool's historic Marina.
- **Build up to 1,300 new homes** - Deliver high quality homes where people choose to live in the heart of the town.

2.70 The HDC will drive the continuing investment in projects programmes and development activities. It will reinforce and extend the impact of existing delivered improvements, support and galvanise ongoing investment and at all stages provide clear additionality to these and other planned investments.

- 2.71 The HDC has a clear delivery strategy which identifies short-, medium- and long-term projects to be implemented. The short-term projects are intended to act as a catalyst for further development. Underpinning these key projects are 10 core principles that have been identified to guide development.
- 2.72 The HDC Masterplan has 3 frameworks that translate the plan's key vision and objectives in spatial terms, these are:
- **Land use** - Work will take place with stakeholders to reinforce the existing, shopping, leisure, Marina and creative clusters and the key employment hubs at Queens Meadow and Oakesway. It will restore and repurpose the anchor heritage buildings as signposts of civic pride.
  - **Open Space** - Activity will build and improve connectivity between each of the places to form a figure of eight of walkable network – from the stadium to the Marina, the shopping centre to the station and the Screen Industries cluster to the college.
  - **Movement** - Activity will establish Hartlepool as a contemporary maritime community through greater connectivity and programming associated by its coastal location. This will be catalysed by the Tall Ships, the expansion of the National Museum of the Royal Navy and the education programmes within the town. New linkages will be created from the town centre to the coastal walk and beaches.
- 2.73 The HDC Masterplan identifies key focus areas which bring together a range of indicative projects that will collectively support transformation. The focus areas build on the existing successful regeneration that has already taken place through investments by Hartlepool Borough Council, Towns Fund, Future High Streets Fund, Tees Valley Combined Authority and other stakeholders. Through the development principles identifies and the supporting design code, regeneration will occur in a strategic, cohesive, and complementary manner accounting for the individual focus areas but ensuring the distinct parts work together more effectively and support one another to create a modern and successful Hartlepool.
- 2.74 An indicative pipeline of projects has been identified within each of the focus area, this will evolve over time as various opportunities are explored. The role of the HDC in these projects will either be to lead on the development and delivery of the projects or to collaborate with partners to facilitate and bring forward these projects.

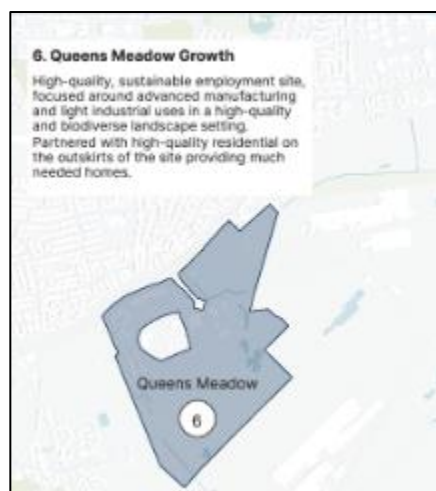
2.75 These focus areas can be seen below in Figure 2.5 and Figure 2.6.

**Figure 2.5 - Town centre and Oakesway growth focus areas**



Source: Supercharging Development in Hartlepool, April 2023

**Figure 2.6 - Queens Meadow focus area**



Source: Supercharging Development in Hartlepool, April 2023

## Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES)

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- 2.76 Energy Performance Certificates (“EPC”) are fundamental for evaluating the energy efficiency of UK buildings. Commercial EPC ratings were established by the UK government in 2008. These ratings, range from A to G, offer a clear indication of a building's energy performance. They provide insights into potential heating and lighting costs and carbon dioxide emissions, aiding decision-making for landlords, tenants, and property managers.
- 2.77 The UK Government predicts a significant expansion in the coverage of commercial properties under EPC requirements, estimating that by 2030, about 85% of rented commercial properties will fall under these regulations. The Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (“MEES”) directive mandates that all commercial properties in England and Wales, whether rented or sold, must have an EPC. MEES has significantly reshaped energy performance standards in real estate, becoming crucial for property leasing and management.
- 2.78 As of April 1st, 2023, all privately rented non-domestic properties must have an EPC rating of E or higher. This applies to both new and existing leases, prohibiting letting properties with ratings below E. Future revisions to MEES will further tighten standards, requiring minimum ratings of C by April 1st, 2027, and B by April 1st, 2030, necessitating potential investments in energy efficiency improvements.
- 2.79 Despite these requirements, exemptions exist under MEES. These include cases where improvements would significantly devalue a property, all possible energy efficiency enhancements have been made, consent for improvements is denied, or the expected payback period for improvements exceeds seven years. Temporary exemptions may also apply for new landlords or properties with protected status, such as listed buildings or those in conservation areas<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.80 As part of this report, we will review the EPC rating of each existing managed workspace, and analyse the impact the MEES regulations may have on the sites.

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<sup>2</sup> Hobart, C., 2023. The Complete Guide to Commercial Energy Certificates (EPC).



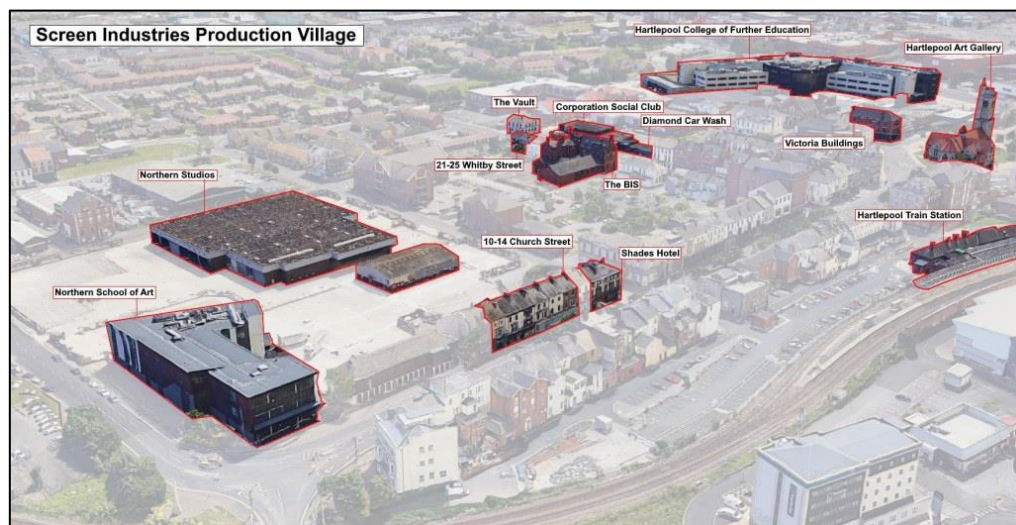
## Key Projects

- 2.81 In this section we highlight the key projects that will have a significant impact on the Hartlepool economy, which in turn may influence demand for managed workspace.

### Screen Industries Production Village

- 2.82 The new Screen Industries Production Village is being delivered in the Church Street area of Hartlepool to act as a catalyst for the further development of Hartlepool's screen industries sector.

**Figure 2.7 - Screen Industries Production Village Map**



Source: Tees Valley Combined Authority, 2024

- 2.83 As part of the second round of the Levelling Up Fund, Hartlepool submitted a bid to boost the established Northern Film and TV Studio and expand to create a production village. This will build on the current high-quality facilities on Lynn Street, the site of the Northern School of Art and at The BIS on Whitby Street, a start-up centre for businesses in the creative sector.
- 2.84 The proposal also aims to transform the urban environment through the purchase, redevelopment and demolition of existing buildings to create new and flexible spaces for areas such as post production, back offices and wider support art services.
- 2.85 The Government announced the results of the second round of Levelling Up Funding in January 2023. Hartlepool secured £16.5 million of funding for this project. This will create over 130 full time job opportunities, in addition to bringing in over 2,600 visitors to local businesses around Church Street which of course aids demand for managed workspace.
- 2.86 Our consultations suggest that there is a need for managed workspace for ancillary uses and post production space. Film services using the production village have back-room staff and teams

which require managed workspace on a flexible basis to carry out desk-based work which includes editing, green screening and behind the scenes admin work.

- 2.87 We understand an element of creative industry culture will aid the demand for managed workspace.
- 2.88 Whilst the quality of space will be more important than its location, if new space can be located in proximity to the Production Village, then this should support the creation of a wider community of creatives in the area.
- 2.89 The area around the Production Village is already seeing new development, with new micro pubs opening in the area.
- 2.90 There has also been large scale renovations and HMO applications with private developers and landlords now offering accommodation for workers coming into the town.
- 2.91 Offering this accommodation allows travelling workers to spend more time within the town contributing to the local economy as well as spending more time working within managed workspace environments.

## Towns Fund Projects

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- 2.92 The Council obtained £25m funding in 2022 for five projects as part of their Town Deal award:
- Civil Engineering Skills Academy – Seymour - £2.25m
  - Health and Social Care Academy - £1.25m
  - Reimagining Middleton Grange - £13.8m
  - Wesley Chapel - £1.4m
  - Hartlepool Waterfront - £6.2m

### Civil Engineering Skills Academy - Seymour

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- 2.93 The Civil Engineering Institute project is the outcome of a strategic partnership between engineering contractors Seymour Civil Engineering and Hartlepool College of Further Education. The project has utilised Towns Fund investment at a new facility that will merge and grow teaching and training capacity at two existing sites and enhance and future-proof the facilities on offer.
- 2.94 The two existing facilities have been brought together as the Civil Engineering Institute – with capacity to support the rapid development of professional skills to rollout 5G full fibre to support full UK coverage by 2033. Work is underway at the Brenda Road premises to create an additional 5,000 sqm of training facilities. On the Exeter Street site, the newly refurbished annex offers

1,500 sqm of state-of-the-art fabrication and welding training facilities, four workshops, 39 welding booths, a “clean lab” for weld testing and five classrooms.

- 2.95 These facilities should make Hartlepool a hub for construction and civil engineering. With high-quality education facilities, it is hoped that there will be more private sector investment in these sectors, and with that there is potentially a need for more managed workspace to support the sector.

### Health & Social Care Academy

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- 2.96 The Health and Social Care Academy will be a state-of-the-art health and social care training facility at University Hospital Hartlepool. This is a partnership between the future operator North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust and with Hartlepool Collage of Further Education. The facility will be one of a handful in the country with purpose built medical simulation suites, also have the ability to house a 6-bed training bay, two ICT suites, a trainee common room and several other flexible training and class rooms. It will be located in the currently underutilised Ward 10 of the hospital, which requires an internal refit. Completion is expected in September 2024.

### Middleton Grange Shopping Centre

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- 2.97 Hartlepool Development Corporation agreed the purchase of the long leasehold interest in Middleton Grange Shopping Centre at the end of 2023, to kick-start the regeneration and re-imagining of the shopping centre, to create a clearly defined mixed-use heart for the town centre.
- 2.98 This transformational project is designed to change the image of the shopping centre from a large-scale, inward-looking shopping mall to a well-connected mixed-use area which contributes to the character of Hartlepool as a waterfront market town. This will be achieved by attracting a new mix of uses, addressing vacant retail space and improving the character of the town centre.
- 2.99 This includes the refurbishment of the adjacent former Binns department store, which was included in the acquisition and will be returned to a shell condition with the objective to provide flexible, mixed-use space.



2.100 This project was given Government approval in November 2022.

**Figure 2.8 - Middleton Grange Shopping Centre Artist's Impression**



Source: Hartlepool Council, 2022

### Wesley Chapel – Heritage Restoration Project

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- 2.101 The current proposal is to transform the prominent Grade II listed Chapel into a 36-bedroom boutique hotel with a bar-restaurant and four other commercial units to situated on the ground floor. Planning consent was received in 2019 and the building is currently owned by Jomast, who are a regional property developer.
- 2.102 Due to a fire in 2017 the building was badly damaged and is considered to be in heritage deficit, the cost of restoration in keeping with the building's heritage listed status is more than the developer's estimate of the commercial end value of the hotel. It is hoped that the works will be completed by August 2025.
- 2.103 Specific overall investment requirements include:
- New roof with conservation-style roof lights
  - External building repairs to heritage facade including masonry, making good and cleaning
  - Comprehensive reglazing
  - Terraced external areas
  - DDA-compliant ramp access and repairs to heritage stepped building entrance

### Waterfront Mixed-Use Development

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- 2.104 The Waterfront project looks to enhance the public realm and connectiveness around the marina in order to improve and provide new opportunities for leisure/commercial development, while increase links between the waterfront, town centre and train station.

- 2.105 The new leisure centre proposed by Hartlepool Council and an expanded National Museum of the Royal Navy have been confirmed to be in development and proposed within the waterfront area. The Council's new leisure centre looks to bring leisure and water-based activities, café, spill-out area and events space, as well as parking to the area. The Museum of the Royal Navy proposes a new atrium and galleries, exhibition hall, STEM apprenticeship centre, leisure uses such as food and drink outlets and associated car parking.
- 2.106 The vision for the Waterfront is to link these two projects and create further opportunities through improved and a high-quality public realm. The proposal includes 'a co-ordinated approach to railings/ fencing, lighting, signage and street furniture the various component parts of Navigation Point, the museum, the proposed leisure centre and existing housing sites can be unified through a consistent treatment.'

## Church Street – Heritage Regeneration Project

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2.107 Church Street Revival is a small heritage grant scheme focused on retention and reinstatement of historic architectural details to buildings as well as supporting repairs and renewal to buildings in the conservation area to ensure the sustainable future use of these premises and the enhancement of the historic environment. The focus is on bringing vacant buildings back into use, ensuring that they are structurally sound and watertight, and repairing and restoring traditional details such as windows, doors and shop fronts.

**Figure 2.9 - Church Street**



Source, Invest Hartlepool, 2023

## Hartlepool FC / Mill House Leisure Centre

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- 2.108 Hartlepool Football Club is located on Clarence Road and nearby to the neighbouring Mill House Leisure Centre and Hartlepool Marina. Hartlepool FC are working closely with the Council to develop a masterplan for the soon to be demolished, Mill House Leisure Centre. This development comes as the aging Mill House Leisure Centre is due to be relocated to the Waterfront and comes as part of a multi-million-pound investment in the town leisure facilities, as illustrated in the artist impression of the new leisure centre below.

**Figure 2.10 - New Highlight Leisure Centre**



Source: Hartlepool Council, 2021

- 2.109 The new site will feature three swimming pools, a health suite, fitness studios, gym, family play area, café and function rooms. The development is targeting to open in 2024. The existing site next to the Hartlepool's football ground will be incorporated into a new masterplan for the area, however the end use is yet to be decided.

## Seal Sands – 'Blue' Hydrogen Project

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- 2.110 Seal Sands is located to the south of Hartlepool and neighbouring the Teesmouth National Nature Reserve, and hosts a chemical plant. H2NorthEast, developed by energy infrastructure firm Kellas Midstream, are looking to produce up to 1GW of low carbon 'blue' hydrogen using gas already imported through the company's CATS Terminal at Seal Sands. This is the second 'blue' hydrogen project being developed in the region, following an announcement in March that BP will establish a facility in the region, also targeting 1GW of hydrogen production by 2030.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/19633178.1-000-jobs-created-new-teesside-hydrogen-project/>

## A19 Elwick Bypass

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- 2.111 The scheme aims to improve access to Hartlepool and safety on the A19, while reducing traffic flow through the village of Elwick. At present, Hartlepool is highly reliant on the A689 and A179 to provide access from the A19 into the town, causing a noticeable increase in traffic congestion over the past decade. The other access points via Elwick and Dalton Piercy contribute to what some describe as a "rat run" in the rural areas. Owing to these ongoing problems, a funding strategy for the bypass and a grade separated junction on the A19 was approved by councillors in 2018. The project is forecast to cost a total of £18.5m, £4.172m of which was secured by the Council from the Tees Valley Combined Authority.

### 3 Managed Workspace – Characteristics

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- 3.1 This section provides some national context to the demand for managed workspace and definitions of the types of space and facilities typically provided by managed workspace providers.
- 3.2 The traditional office market sees occupiers have self-contained space, either in their own building, or as a tenant within a larger office building, but which is still largely self-contained, with their own responsibility for facilities management and running costs.
- 3.3 Managed workspaces are typically offices (which may be traditional desk-based offices, or with a light workshop use) within a larger facility, where day-to-day building matters are managed by the building operator. Occupiers will have their own suite, but may be one of many occupiers in the building, who have shared access to the building and common facilities. They often include services such as IT, cleaning, and utilities in one monthly contract. Most will come with shared facilities such as kitchens, meeting rooms, break-out space etc, which are managed by the operator as part of the monthly fee. Some managed workspaces may provide furniture within the suites – furnished offices are often referred to as ‘serviced offices’, but often the terms serviced and managed are interchangeable. This mode of working is usually suited to small/medium businesses and typically housing 1-50 employees.
- 3.4 A more recent trend seen from some managed workspace providers is the introduction of “hot desking” which allows people to rent a desk on an ad-hoc basis, usually at a set price per day.

### National Market Trends

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- 3.5 In recent years there has been an evolution of hybrid working, with an increasing number of office employers gravitating towards the ease, flexibility and cost-effectiveness of flexible offices.
- 3.6 Flexible office space was popularised by national providers like WeWork, TOG and Regus. Offering on-trend, ready-to-go workspaces, networking events and stocked kitchenettes, they paved the way for a new world of work; one that celebrates the productivity power of a breakout space – and an opportunity for informal networking, collaboration and events.<sup>4</sup>
- 3.7 Flexible working operators are benefiting from strong occupancy and desk rate growth on the back of the exceptional rise in demand. The average price per private office desk in the UK H1 2023 was up 15% on the first half of last year and surpasses the desk price pre-Covid by 30%. UK enquiries are up 12% year-on-year, which is an increase of 173% on pre-Covid levels, and providers have reported that this year occupancy levels in London are at 88% while the rest of the UK’s contract occupancy was at 86%.

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<sup>4</sup> Knight Frank, 2024. A Tonic for Uncertainty? The Post-Lockdown Demand for Flexible Office Space.

- 3.8 The increase in demand for flexible office space has resulted in an uptick in requirements for new sites from operators. There are currently 14 flexible operators looking for space greater than 20,000 sqft across the UK, with 93% of these seeking a management agreement structure. The demand is predominantly focused in London or the Big Six regional cities.
- 3.9 A trend that has accelerated post-Covid-19 is the greater desire for flexibility from office occupiers. This was evident from Savills 2022 Landlord Flexible Office Survey, where 72% of landlords expect tenants to require more flexible lease terms.
- 3.10 The general market sentiment for managed workspace does provide an opportunity for Hartlepool to cater for this increasing demand and generate local employment opportunities, however it must be noted that trends seen in big cities on a national level may not be replicated in smaller towns such as Hartlepool.

## Benefits of Managed Workspace

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- 3.11 There is a wide range of benefits of managed workspaces to support business and create a vibrant community asset. Some of the key benefits to businesses that drive demand are listed below.

### Flexible Contracts

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- 3.12 Flexible contracts are increasingly becoming a key driver for many businesses as they look to operate efficiently and carefully manage their financial outgoings. Managed workspace tends to offer flexible terms which are highly attractive to businesses of all shapes and sizes, especially during times of economic uncertainty. Managed workspace offices allow you to move straight in and easily shrink or grow your space quickly depending upon the number of people employed. This also allows small businesses to budget accordingly with all-inclusive costs and much shorter contracts (licences) than a typical office lease. With flexible contracts companies only pay for the space they need.
- 3.13 Managed workspace is now widely regarded as a very cost-effective solution with all-inclusive rates providing reassurance and consistency for those running, costing and budgeting for an office-based business. It provides access to amenities that would otherwise be costly and time-consuming to set up in a traditional office such as WiFi networks.
- 3.14 All of these typical aspects of facilities management such as IT, managing maintenance and cleaning etc can be very time-consuming. For businesses with only a small number of employees, this can be a significant time burden that reduces their ability to manage their business and focus on sales and productivity. With managed workspaces, companies can focus on their business rather than facilities matters.



## Networking, Collaboration and Development Opportunities

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- 3.15 Co-working spaces such as hot-desking and break-out spaces bring people together on a much larger scale than a traditional office. This provides the opportunity to network with a range of business types who may complement and support each other as they share the same space. Types of space that support networking opportunities include:
- Shared communal kitchens
  - Breakout areas
  - Casual meeting spaces
  - Quiet focus areas
  - Gyms and fitness studios
  - Lounges
  - Conference space
  - Event spaces
- 3.16 Often these opportunities can occur through chance encounters in these informal spaces, particularly where there are clusters of businesses operating in the same sector.
- 3.17 Some managed workspace operators play a crucial role in supporting businesses by offering a comprehensive range of services that extend beyond just providing physical office space. Council owned and not-for profit providers often provide access to essential business support services such as accounting.
- 3.18 These operators also tend to facilitate business operations by providing training and resources to enhance skills and knowledge in areas such as marketing, sales, and customer service. This holistic support helps businesses streamline their operations, stay compliant with legal standards, and build a strong foundation for sustainable growth.

## Distinctive spaces that support employee wellbeing

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- 3.19 The quality of office space is a key motive for businesses, helping them to attract and retain talent in an increasingly competitive recruitment environment. A distinctive and amenity-rich office environment encourages office attendance for those who are working in a hybrid manner and tends to improve productivity and collaboration.
- 3.20 Due to the level of flexibility afforded workspace providers need to be mindful of the need to retain occupiers for as long as possible through providing spaces that are inviting and promote wellbeing.



- 3.21 Access to wellbeing services that promote wellbeing are a driver such as the inclusion of yoga classes and gyms. Consideration of encouragement of local providers of these services to use the space would therefore be mutually beneficial.

## Amenities

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- 3.22 Occupiers will expect a basic level of amenities from managed workspaces. Secure superfast broadband is a non-negotiable for businesses in 2024. Most managed workspace providers also offer front desk reception service for their tenants, with on-site staff to manage the building.
- 3.23 24/7 access to workspace is also a strong factor in the modern work environment. Many businesses work and collaborate with other businesses overseas, so it is important to allow access to office resources around the clock to foster international relationships and business growth.
- 3.24 Workspace providers are increasingly having to provide more amenities to meet business expectations and stay ahead of the competition. Such additional amenities provided in flexible office space may include:
- Bike storage, showers and drying rooms
  - Business-class printers and franking service
  - Unique spaces for collaboration and private booths for online meetings/calls (see Figure 3.1).
  - Fruit/water stations, speciality tea/roasted coffee etc
  - Work, networking and social events

**Figure 3.1 - One Strawberry Lane, Newcastle**



Source: Home Group, 2023

## 4 Hartlepool Existing Managed Workspace

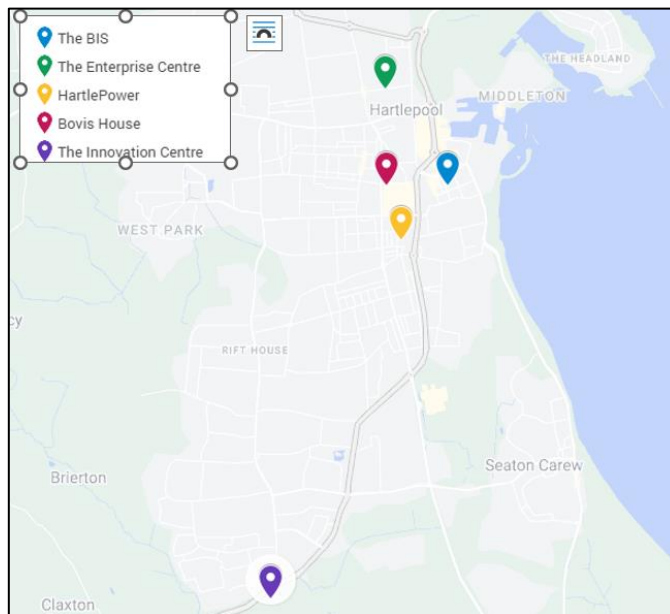
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4.1 This section provides an overview of the managed workspace facilities within Hartlepool and the wider Tees Valley area, both privately and publicly owned.

4.2 There are five managed workspaces within Hartlepool at present, as shown on in Figure 4.1 - Hartlepool Managed Workspace Location Map:

- The BIS
- Hartlepool Enterprise Centre
- Hartlepower
- Bovis House
- Queens Meadow Innovation Centre

**Figure 4.1 - Hartlepool Managed Workspace Location Map**



Source: Google MyMaps, 2024

### Public Sector Managed Workspace

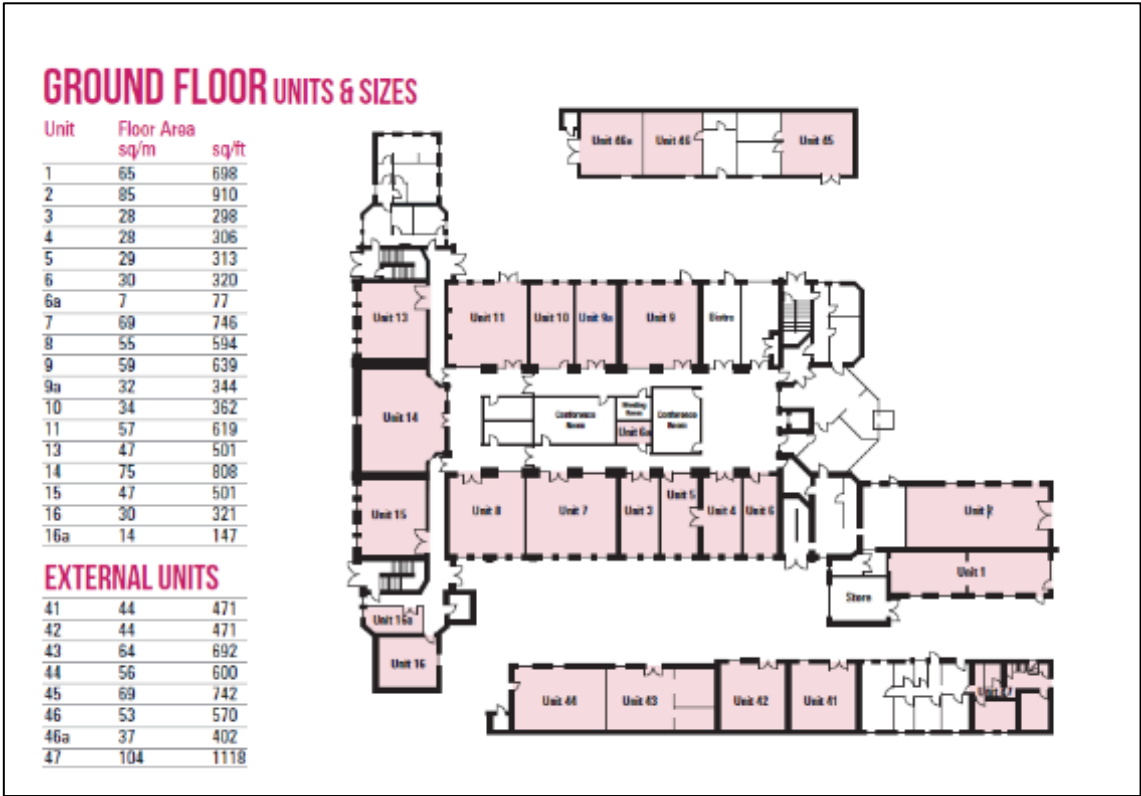
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4.3 There are two managed workspace sites owned and managed by Hartlepool Borough Council. Occupancy data has been provided by the Council.

Hartlepool Enterprise Centre (HEC)

- 4.4 Hartlepool Enterprise Centre is a converted Victorian School close to the centre of town, owned and managed by Hartlepool Borough Council.
- 4.5 The Centre has 50 business units available on flexible terms in a choice of offices and workshops ranging in size from 10sqm to 85sqm that would suit a variety of uses. Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3 show the floor plans and unit sizes within HEC.

Figure 4.2 - Ground Floor Plans and Unit Sizes



Source: Hartlepool Council, 2024


Figure 4.3 - First and Second Floor Plans



Source: HEC, 2024

- 4.6 The site is primarily aimed at start-up businesses and SME's, to allow them to set-up at a relatively low cost, as reflected within the rental prices.
- 4.7 For the first 6 months of the contract, the prices range from £73 to £559 per month depending on size of unit (£6 psf). It then gradually increases reaching £12 psf after 24 months. The HEC is equipped with 1x meeting room and 1x conference room available to tenants.
- 4.8 All tenants are obliged to enter it into a personal licence agreement with Hartlepool Council rather than in their company name to ensure that they can be pursued for missed payments.
- 4.9 The occupancy rate has remained around 80-85% occupancy for the past 10 years. Before then, there was a waiting list for prospective tenants.
- 4.10 The property was generally in a medium state of repair, appearing tired in places and given its age and prior use there are some maintenance issues, for example the lift was out of use when we visited.
- 4.11 Table 4.1 outlines the managed workspace amenities, EPC rating and occupancy by sector:

**Table 4.1 - Attributes of the HEC**

The HEC		
		
Facilities	24/7 Access For Tenants	✓
	24/7 Security Systems	✓
	Reception Assistance	✓
	Meeting/Conference Rooms	✓
	Communal W/C	✓
	Communal Kitchen	✓
	Shower Rooms	✓
	Drying Rooms	x
	Disabled Access	✓
	Social Areas	✓
	Gym Area	x
	Café	✓
	Fibre Optic Broadband	✓
	Business Support Network	✓
	Bicycle Storage	x
	Parking Areas	✓
EPC Rating	Grade A	-
	Grade B	-
	Grade C	-
	Grade D	-
	Grade E	100%
Occupancy by Sector	Advance Manufacturing	-
	Digital	-
	Creative Cultural & Leisure	7%
	Retail	7%
	Logistics	7%
	Healthcare	16%
	Biologics	-
	Professional & Business services	30%
	Construction	-
	Primary Sector	-
	Other Manufacturing	16%
	Other Public Services	16%

Source: AspinallVerdi, 2024

- 4.12 There is business support and a dedicated relationship between the Council and all business owners within the building. The council have enterprise liaison officers based on the premises who offer support and help to each of the businesses.
- 4.13 Shower rooms are located within the property but these are very old and reflect the condition of the previous school use of the building. The building is fully compliant with disabled regulations. Lift access throughout and the external area of the property is flat to allow wheelchair access.
- 4.14 The car park at the front of the building works on a first come first served basis. There is also ample free on street parking available if the car park becomes full.

- 4.15 The building currently has an EPC rating of E, which complies with the current MEES. However, work will be required to meet the regulatory requirements of an EPC rating of C by 1st April 2027 and an EPC rating of B by 1st April 2030.
- 4.16 The occupancy by sector data reveals a diverse occupancy base. Professional and business services is the most prevalent sector at 30%, with healthcare, other manufacturing, and public services each at 16%. The creative, retail, and logistics sectors maintain a modest but crucial presence at 7%, while advanced and emerging industries appear underrepresented – which may be reflective of the standard of accommodation

## The BIS

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- 4.17 Formerly the General Post Office, this grade II Listed building, owned by Hartlepool Borough Council, was part of a regeneration project comprising the part-demolition, refurbishment and alteration of the building together with a rear two-storey new-build extension complete with associated car parking, new services, drainage and landscaping works. The building opened in 2019. It is located on Whitby Street, in the heart of the Screen Industries Production Village.
- 4.18 It remains in a good condition as at the date of our inspection.
- 4.19 Pricing starts at £8 psf depending on size of the studio. As with the HEC, all tenants are obliged to enter into a personal licence agreement with Hartlepool Council to ensure that they are personally liable for rental payments.
- 4.20 Table 4.2 outlines the managed workspace amenities, EPC rating and occupancy by sector:

**Table 4.2 - Attributes of the BIS**

The Bis		
Facilities	24/7 Access For Tenants	✓
	24/7 Security Systems	✓
	Reception Assistance	✓
	Meeting/Conference Rooms	✓
	Communal W/C	✓
	Communal Kitchen	✓
	Shower Rooms	✓
	Drying Rooms	x
	Disabled Access	✓
	Social Areas	✓
	Gym Area	x
	Café	x
	Fibre Optic Broadband	✓
	Business Support Network	✓
	Bicycle Storage	✓
	Parking Areas	✓
EPC Rating	Grade A	-
	Grade B	-
	Grade C	-
	Grade D	-
	Grade E	100%
Occupancy by Sector	Advance Manufacturing	-
	Digital	27%
	Creative Cultural & Leisure	18%
	Retail	18%
	Logistics	-
	Healthcare	-
	Biologics	-
	Professional & Business services	23%
	Construction	-
	Primary Sector	-
	Other Manufacturing	14%
	Other Public Services	-

Source: AspinallVerdi, 2024

- 4.22 The 28-unit centre is equipped with 24/7 security and reception service offering a range of studio, office and workshop space and welcomes businesses in the creative industries, working in both the commercial and community arts sectors.
- 4.23 The BIS also offers 2x board room style meeting rooms. These are priced at £80 per day for the smallest room, up to £240 per day for the largest. Existing tenants get 50% off the booking fee.



- 4.24 The Council have retained one studio and launched its new “Desk for a Day” initiative. Based in the centre’s Studio 3, the concept offers members of the public access to a fully-equipped flexible workspace. The Council reported they have seen strong levels of demand for the hot desking initiative with occupancy rates at 70% since introducing the scheme.
- 4.25 For £15 a day, individuals get access during the hours of 8.30am-5pm Monday-Thursday and 8.30am-4.30pm on Fridays to a furnished working space, ground-floor accessibility, wi-fi access, a reception service (during office hours), a 50% reduction on meeting room hire charges and use of the Atrium social space within the building.
- 4.26 The property is equipped with modern facilities such as shower rooms, kitchens with access to water and cooking facilities. There is a communal lunch and collaborative working area outside of the studios within the main ground floor foyer area, tenants are free to access this area at any point throughout the day.
- 4.27 There is business support and a dedicated relationship between the Council and all business owners within the building. The council have enterprise liaison officers whom offer support and help to each of the businesses.
- 4.28 The building currently has an EPC rating of E, which complies with the current MEES. However, work will be required to meet the regulatory requirements of an EPC rating of C by 1st April 2027 and an EPC rating of B by 1st April 2030.
- 4.29 The occupancy by sector data reveals a diverse range of occupiers, with the most prevalent sector being the digital sector at 27%, with a number of professional business services at 23% and creative culture & leisure and retail services each at 18%. Other manufacturing sectors maintain a modest but crucial presence at 14%.

## Hartlepool Private Sector Managed Workspaces

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- 4.30 There are three privately owned managed workspace within Hartlepool.

### Queens Meadow Innovation Centre

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- 4.31 Queens Meadow Innovation Centre is a business park located in Hartlepool; England owned and managed by UKSE. It's designed to support innovation and entrepreneurship by providing office spaces, laboratories, and facilities for startups, SMEs, and larger businesses.
- 4.32 The centre aims to foster collaboration, creativity, and growth within the local business community. It often hosts events, workshops, and networking opportunities to facilitate knowledge exchange and business development.
- 4.33 The managed workspace facility offers over 26,902 sqft of floor space equipped with 24/7 security and access.
- 4.34 Table 4.6 outlines the managed workspace amenities, EPC rating and occupancy by sector:

**Table 4.3 - Attributes of Queens Meadow Innovation Centre**

Queens Meadow Innovation Centre		
		
Facilities	24/7 Access For Tenants	✓
	24/7 Security Systems	✓
	Reception Assistance	✓
	Meeting/Conference Rooms	✓
	Demised W/C	✓
	Demised Kitchen	✓
	Shower Rooms	✓
	Drying Rooms	x
	Disabled Access	✓
	Social Areas	✓
	Gym Area	✓
	Café	x
	Fibre Optic Broadband	✓
	Business Support Network	x
	Bicycle Storage	✓
	Parking Areas	✓
EPC Rating	Grade A	-
	Grade B	33%
	Grade C	67%
	Grade D	-
	Grade E	-
Occupancy by Sector	Advance Manufacturing	7%
	Digital	19%
	Creative Cultural & Leisure	2%
	Logistics	7%
	Healthcare	5%
	Biologics	-
	Professional & Business services	40%
	Construction	12%
	Primary Sector	-
	Other Public Services	9%

Source: AspinallVerdi, 2024

- 4.35 The property performs well and is modern design, featuring two main hubs (Hub 1 and Hub 2). Tenants have expressed a desire for more socialising opportunities and actively contribute to maintaining the business. The property is also focusing on environmental goals, aiming for net zero and emphasising ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) considerations.
- 4.36 The total property size is 26,902 square feet (2,499 square meters), featuring multiple meeting rooms, including breakout meeting rooms. These rooms are discounted for tenants and must be

booked in advance. They are available for both internal and external use, making them versatile for different meeting requirements.


- 4.37 The office building provides several essential facilities to ensure a comfortable and functional working environment. Reception assistance, communal W/Cs, and kitchens are available on each floor. Shower rooms are accessible, particularly for those who cycle to work, although drying rooms are not specified. There is disabled access.
- 4.38 A comprehensive business support network is available, especially beneficial for startups. The property is located in a regeneration area, with landlords who offer support to their tenants. Parking is free, with electric car charging available only in specific areas.
- 4.39 The building currently has an EPC rating of C and above, which complies with the current MEES and 2027 EPC compliance. However, work will be required to meet the regulatory requirements of an EPC rating of B by April 1, 2030.
- 4.40 The property has, maintained a high occupancy rate of 86% at the end of last year. The current occupiers include a mix of startups and established businesses, with professional services businesses (primarily solicitors and accountants) constituting 40% of the tenants. This is followed by the digital sector at 19%, while advanced manufacturing, logistics, construction, creative, cultural & leisure, healthcare, and other public services maintain a modest but crucial presence.

### Bovis House

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- 4.41 Bovis House owned and managed by The Big League Community Interest Company in Hartlepool provides managed workspace and services to various businesses, offering a convenient and cost-effective solution for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) or startups.
- 4.42 The managed workspace offering works on a minimum 6 months tenancy allowing businesses to enter into flexible short-term contracts. There are also conference rooms available free of charge to tenants and new meeting rooms are in the process of development.
- 4.43 Having visited the site, the owners stressed the importance of support and business development for the SMEs and startups that they provide as a CIC. This is fostered through offering information on business growth and digital content to help the marketing of small businesses. The property is dated in parts, but is undergoing a refresh in phases.
- 4.44 With the strong performance of their managed workspace, the Big League CIC is opening a second site on Church Street, Hartlepool which includes hot desking, meeting rooms, content areas and removable walls for larger conferences further targeting the creative sector.
- 4.45 Table 4.4 outlines the managed workspace amenities and EPC rating:

**Table 4.4 - Attributes of Bovis House**

Bovis House		
		
Facilities	24/7 Access For Tenants	✓
	24/7 Security Systems	✓
	Reception Assistance	x
	Meeting/Conference Rooms	✓
	Demised W/C	x
	Demised Kitchen	x
	Shower Rooms	✓
	Drying Rooms	x
	Disabled Access	✓
	Social Areas	✓
	Gym Area	✓
	Café	✓
	Fibre Optic Broadband	✓
	Business Support Network	✓
	Bicycle Storage	x
	Parking Areas	x
EPC Rating	Grade A	-
	Grade B	-
	Grade C	-
	Grade D	100%
	Grade E	-
Occupancy by Sector	Advance Manufacturing	0%
	Digital	0%
	Creative Cultural & Leisure	0%
	Retail	47%
	Logistics	0%
	Healthcare	13%
	Biologics	0%
	Professional & Business services	20%
	Construction	0%
	Primary Sector	0%
	Other Manufacturing	0%
	Other Public Services	20%

Source: AspinallVerdi, 2024

- 4.46 The building currently has an EPC rating of D, which complies with the current MEES. However, work will be required to meet the regulatory requirements of an EPC rating of C by 1st April 2027 and an EPC rating of B by 1st April 2030.
- 4.47 Whilst Bovis House operates as a managed workspace, it is unique in that a number of the units operate in a hybrid manner with a retail presence within the centre, which can be accessed by

the public. This is not the traditional use for managed workspace, and consequently the occupier use by sector is skewed towards retail. There are also a number of miscellaneous uses that don't seem to fit in any specific category, which have been classified as 'other public services'.


## HartlePower

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- 4.48 HartlePower, a not-for-profit community interest company with affordable room rental and hire, coupled with business incubation service.
- 4.49 The property consists of two buildings: the main building, Greenbank House, and the adjacent building, which is part of Cameron Brewery.
- 4.50 HartlePower was not in a good state of repair, for example we saw holes in the windows and a dated interior. Some areas had seen some limited refurbishment. This condition is reflected in the price, making it a cost-effective managed workspace. The lower rates allow businesses to allocate more resources to growth and development. The site also offers a sense of community with neighbouring tenants, fostering connections and networking opportunities.
- 4.51 This collaborative environment enhances chances of growth through shared experiences and building connections.

4.52 Table 4.5 outlines the managed workspace amenities and EPC rating:

**Table 4.5 - Attributes of HartlePower**

Hartlepower		
Facilities		
	24/7 Access For Tenants	✓
	24/7 Security Systems	✓
	Reception Assistance	✓
	Meeting/Conference Rooms	✓
	Demised W/C	✓
	Demised Kitchen	✓
	Shower Rooms	✓
	Drying Rooms	✓
	Disabled Access	x
	Social Areas	x
	Gym Area	x
	Café	x
	Fibre Optic Broadband	x
	Business Support Network	✓
	Bicycle Storage	x
	Parking Areas	✓
	Electric Charging	✓
EPC Rating	Grade A	-
	Grade B	-
	Grade C	-
	Grade D	100%
	Grade E	-
Occupancy by Sector	Advance Manufacturing	0%
	Digital	0%
	Creative Cultural & Leisure	14%
	Retail	8%
	Logistics	0%
	Healthcare	22%
	Biologics	0%
	Professional & Business services	19%
	Construction	3%
	Primary Sector	0%
	Other Manufacturing	0%
	Other Public Services	35%

Source: AspinallVerdi, 2024

4.53 HartlePower offers longer term flexible contracts and also ad-hoc casual hotdesking throughout the week. The site offers 24/7 access and security, utilities included, free broadband and social media promotion.

4.54 Out of 67 rooms, there are only 3 vacancies at the moment (96% occupied).

- 4.55 As with Bovis House, there are a number of miscellaneous uses that don't neatly fit into any other category, which is why 'other public service' is most prevalent. Other than that, healthcare, professional/business services and creative, culture and leisure businesses have a relatively equal presence in the building, with no single sector emerging as a cluster.
- 4.56 There is also an ethos of business development from the centre managers, with tenants gaining access to support services, providing guidance and assistance.
- 4.57 The building currently has an EPC rating of D, which complies with the current MEES. However, work will be required to meet the regulatory requirements of an EPC rating of C by 1st April 2027 and an EPC rating of B by 1st April 2030.
- 4.58 Having visited representatives from HartlePower, their managed workspace services were formed in 2014 to solve redundancies. Initially, their first site took 3 years to fill with 18 tenants, now HartlePower are looking to acquire further sites due to the increase in demand for managed workspace and start-ups in the region.

### Advanced House

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- 4.59 Until recently Advanced House was a managed workspace in Wesley Square in close proximity to Hartlepool's main shopping centre. The owner of the building made the decision to close down the business due to economic uncertainty after the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 4.60 Land at Orchard House to the rear of Advanced House now has planning permission for residential development.

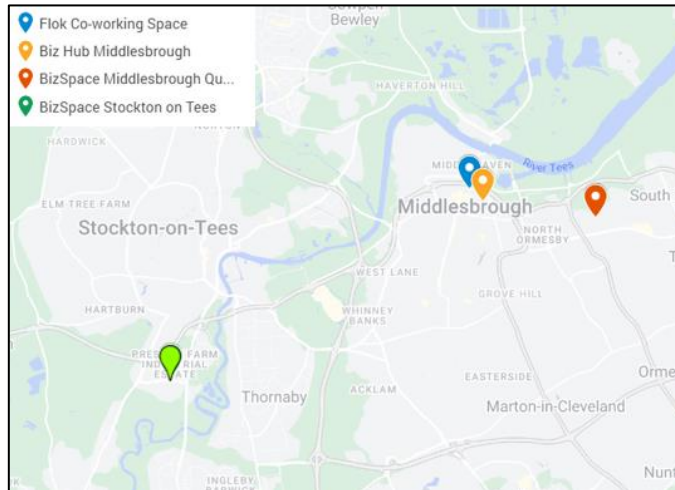


## Managed Workspace in the Wider Tees Valley Region

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- 4.61 This section outlines some of the managed workspace alternatives outside of Hartlepool, within the Tees Valley region, as occupiers considering Hartlepool may look at alternatives outside of Hartlepool's boundaries.
- 4.62 Figure 4.4 shows private managed workspace locations in the wider Tees Valley area.

**Figure 4.4 - Private Sector Managed Workspace in Tees Valley Location Map**



Source: Google MyMaps, 2024

### Flok Co-working space, Middlesbrough

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- 4.63 Located on Albert Road, Middlesbrough, Flok is a versatile co-working space with state-of-the-art facilities including a custom-built auditorium, fully equipped podcast studio and a members-only coffee bar with 5,000 sqft of working space on offer with capacity for 200 people.
- 4.64 This working space is a dedicated desk only but does offer access to other facilities within the building. The company is owned by Flok Space and managed by integrated digital agency Alt Labs, who have a permanent office in the building.

### Bizhub, Cleveland Business Centre, Middlesbrough

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- 4.65 Biz Hub is managed and owned by Seneca Property, they offer office space in Middlesbrough and community for those wanting to build their business. The workspace has an on-site health and leisure gym facility, café and dedicated parking space, the office suits are ideal for businesses of all sizes.

- 4.66 Biz Hub's flexible approach to renting an office space in Middlesbrough offers hot-desking facilities available at hourly and daily rates, as well as short-term, flexi-offices or fully serviced offices in Middlesbrough on offer in a variety of sizes.

### Queensway Business Centre, Middlesbrough

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- 4.67 Bizspace are a national managed workspace provider owned by parent company Sirius Real Estate.
- 4.68 Bizspace in Middlesbrough, Queensway Business Centre, consists of a complex of modern purpose-built commercial units in business premises totalling 25,728 sqft (2,390 sqm). There are 39 business units providing space for lease or commercial space for rent and range in size from 205 sqft to 2,000 sqft (19 sqm to 185 sqm).
- 4.69 The business space offers flexible managed workspace accommodation for companies seeking commercial property to let in office units, workshops, light industrial units, studio space, storage and a series of training, interview and general meeting rooms which enables workspace users to rent business space by the hour or day.

### Preston Farm Business Centre, Stockton-On-Tees

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- 4.70 Bizspace also have a site located on the commercial road of Concorde Way, this Centre has excellent links to Middlesbrough amongst others, the nearest station being Eaglescliffe 1.2 miles away. This building in Stockton-on-Tees is a contemporary business centre offering offices to rent, with some onsite workshops and storage spaces.
- 4.71 The property is split over a number of buildings, with separate units ranging from 173 - 4,420sqft (16 - 410 sqm). In addition, there are breakout areas, service lifts and unloading areas including a large, free car park, with visitor allocated spaces.

## 5 Case Studies

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- 5.1 In assessing the impact and scale of managed workspace across the UK, we have drawn from various case studies. In this section, we consider:
- Swans Centre for Innovation, Wallsend
  - Blyth Workspace, Blyth
  - Newcastle Helix, The Core
  - Huddersfield, Media Centre
  - Media City, Salford
- 5.2 We have looked at formal reports and papers, statistical analysis, and consultation with key figures in the local area where possible.

### Swans Centre for Innovation

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- 5.3 North Tyneside Council identified a specific sectoral strength in offshore and advance manufacturing, and developed a strategy to develop the north bank of the Tyne as a world class facility in these sectors, building on the strength of the historic Swan Hunter site.
- 5.4 As part of this economic strategy, the Council refurbished a dilapidated building on the former Swan Hunter site as a managed workspace to meet demand for the offshore energy and subsea sectors. Its position within the River Tyne North Bank Low Carbon Enterprise Zone on the edge of Wallsend town centre has made it an ideal base for small and medium-sized businesses specialising in the advanced engineering, sub-sea, marine, oil, gas and offshore renewable energy sectors. It has Enterprise Zone Status, meaning firms were able to take advantage of a number of benefits if they locate to the area before March 2018 - including up to five years' business rate relief, a simplified planning scheme and superfast broadband.
- 5.5 The initial stage of the CFI project was part financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), managed by the Department for Communities and Local Government, securing just over £1 million of ERDF investment. Additional funding came from a mix of funding from the European Regional Development Fund, Homes and Communities Agency, North East Local Enterprise Partnership, private sector and council investment.
- 5.6 The project was carried out in two stages. The first phase opened in 2016, and provided c. 760 sqm over the ground and first floors. Following a very successful period after opening, a decision was made to refurbish the three upper floors, adding an additional 940 sqm of space. This allowed the development to provide proof of concept at the first stage, reduce the capital ask from funders, enable additional funds to be identified, and allow lessons to be learned in terms of room sizes, layouts etc for the second phase. The second phase was funded through £1.45m from the Government's Local Growth Deal through the North East Local Enterprise Partnership

(NELEP). The Local Growth Deal supported major capital investments to promote innovation, economic and skills infrastructure and sustainable transport as part of the North East Growth Deal.

- 5.7 The Council also made provision for a 'soft landing' programme, to incentivise inward investment where companies relocating into the north east received six months' rent free.
- 5.8 This case study demonstrates that where a commitment is made to supporting an existing sectoral strength through providing additional workspace, the asset will attract strong interest and demonstrate its long-term viability. The benefits of carrying out the work in two phases meant that the initial funding ask was lower and easier to secure, however the initial popularity meant that businesses had to be turned away due to the lack of available space once the first phase was fully occupied but the second phase had not yet been completed.

### Blyth Workspace, Blyth

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- 5.9 In 2015, Blyth Workspace opened in the town of Blyth, Northumberland. The newly built business centre was constructed on a vacant site, as part of regeneration efforts in the town, and particularly to play a significant part in Blyth's strategic economic ambitions to be a centre of excellence in renewable energy research and manufacturing.
- 5.10 The site was developed by Arch, who at the time were Northumberland Council's development company, and were also leading the regeneration of the Commissioners Quay site. It is located close to the entrance to the Blyth estuary and the Port of Tyne, and was designed to provide workspace linked to the renewable energy sector. At the time, the site was within an Enterprise Zone, meaning businesses would benefit from 5 years' free business rates, subject to certain criteria. It was funded through a range of funders including the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Competitiveness Programme 2007 – 2013, the Homes and Communities Agency, Arch and the North East Local Enterprise Partnership's North East Investment Fund
- 5.11 The site offers c. 1,950 sqm of office space, from 20sqm upwards, with additional space for meeting rooms, a virtual office service, and more recently a hot-desk / co-working space.
- 5.12 Occupancy has been consistently high, and is attributed to its proximity to the Port and the ongoing investment and regeneration of the surrounding area.
- 5.13 As with Swans CFI, the local authority (through its development company) identified a suitable site adjacent to a large regeneration area linked to a key sectoral focus, and provided financial backing and commitment to deliver a significant new managed workspace facility, which has proven popular with tenants and contributed to the growth of that sector and the amount of businesses and jobs within it.

## Newcastle Helix

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- 5.14 Newcastle Helix is the UK's biggest urban development of its kind outside of London, combining prestigious commercial and residential space with first-class research and education facilities. It is delivered through a unique public and private sector partnership between Newcastle City Council, Newcastle University and Legal & General.
- 5.15 Newcastle has an economic focus on the life science sector. The city is home to one of the leading hospital trusts in the UK for clinical research as two universities and a diverse ecosystem of international life sciences companies and a high number of homegrown companies that are now expanding into new markets, including QuantuMDx, AMLo Biosciences, Atelerix and Newcells Biotech. In total, 8,000 people are employed in the £1.7bn health and life sciences sector in the north east<sup>5</sup>.
- 5.16 Newcastle is also recognised as an international centre of excellence in healthy ageing and longevity, boosted by the presence of the UK National Innovation Centre for Ageing (NICA), which is leading on research to extend the healthy lifespan and reduce the impact of ageing societies, alongside VOICE, a global network of citizens who identify unmet needs and opportunities in the field of public health.
- 5.17 The Core was the first flexible workspace to open its doors on the newly developed Newcastle Helix site in 2014, becoming a central hub for this northern innovation community. Designed with new and growing knowledge-based, research-led business in mind, office space at The Core is available to companies addressing 'Future City Challenges' in the centre of Newcastle.
- 5.18 Other specialist buildings focused on sectoral strengths include the Catalyst, which houses UK National Innovation Centre for Ageing (NICA), which is leading on research to extend the healthy lifespan and reduce the impact of ageing societies, and the Biosphere, which offers space with specialist lab facilities for those in the biomedical sector.
- 5.19 The Helix has been successful in creating specialist clusters linked to the universities, focusing on key strengths linked to the region's existing sectoral strengths, and the number of jobs, companies and value of the sector demonstrates the benefits of identifying a specialist sector and providing consistent backing.
- 5.20 The collaborative nature of the estate also has softer benefits with events across the estate taking place to foster communities and business networking opportunities.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://investnewcastle.com/sectors/health-and-life-sciences/>

## Huddersfield, Media Centre

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- 5.21 The Media Centre is run under a non-profit organisation. The building was built in 1995 and has recently undergone a significant refurbishment, signalling a new era for the creative hub. Originally situated on Northumberland Street, only a third of the building was utilised at the opening. However, the recent makeover aims to support ambitious growth plans, attract talent, and provide an adaptable environment for nearly 170 companies and flexible workers who frequent the space.
- 5.22 Spread across two town centre buildings on Northumberland Street and Lord Street, the refurbished spaces now boast new amenities such as breakout areas, reorganised meeting rooms, and a new 'flex space' offering individual desks for monthly rent.
- 5.23 Virtual Office packages and flexible working options cater to diverse needs, from start-ups to established brands. The centre's hybrid model of serviced offices, co-working areas, and meeting spaces has seen significant growth, with a focus on fostering collaboration and networking among tenants and the wider region. Now at over 70% occupancy, The Media Centre offers office spaces for small and large organisations.
- 5.24 The Media Centre prides itself on supporting business growth, employment opportunities, and talent development within Huddersfield's creative and digital industries. Welcoming over 500 individuals daily, it provides workspace and support services to over 200 SMEs. However, it distinguishes itself from ordinary business centres by being a social enterprise committed to reinvesting in the region's creative and digital talent.
- 5.25 More than just a workspace provider, The Media Centre is deeply ingrained in the local community, reinvesting all profits into nurturing start-ups, young people, and the region's arts and culture scene. With its rich history and commitment to creating a collaborative environment, it serves as a vibrant hub where talent can thrive, innovative minds exchange ideas, and new ventures find their footing.
- 5.26 As a social enterprise reinvesting profits in the local creative and digital sector, this has similarities to the likes of Hartlepower and Bovis House, which cater for the private and third sectors, and again demonstrates the impact of focusing on a town or region's sectoral strengths and contributing to a thriving business ecosystem which offers space for all.

## 6 External Consultation

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- 6.1 We have conducted external consultations for our managed workspace study to gain a comprehensive understanding of the diverse needs and expectations of potential users and stakeholders. By engaging with external experts and current operators of similar workspaces, we are able to gather a wide range of insights and best practices that inform our study.
- 6.2 This approach helps us to identify emerging trends, innovative solutions, and potential challenges.

### Time + Space

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- 6.3 Time+Space have partnered with Hartlepool Borough Council to provide a social and economic report in relation to the Production Village. They provided us with a summary of their conclusions, although we have not had sight of the full report.
- 6.4 There is a clear delineation in the nature of the workspace required within the Production Village, and the potential additional requirement for managed workspace to support ancillary businesses arising from the success of the Production Village. Those within the village will be let on more traditional leases, and those specific to the productions on site – e.g. film props, costumes etc – will need to be
- 6.5 They believe that there is demand for managed workspaces within the vicinity of the Production Village which will be directly used by those in the creative industry.
- 6.6 However, the setup of workspaces must be diversified from that of The BIS. The creative industry requires somewhat specialist equipment, spaces and rehearsal areas. So, in conjunction with typical workspaces there is a need for diversification in order to meet industry standards.
- 6.7 This provides companies with confidence creating a clustering effect which aids connectivity between the production village and managed workspaces sites.
- 6.8 Time+Space also found Hartlepool must have the correct means to accommodate workers arriving from outside of the region to use the Production Village as a place of work.
- 6.9 This includes an increase in alternative accommodation space, at the moment there is a lack of hotel accommodation and it is reported many people that work in the Hartlepool region prefer to stay elsewhere in Teesside due to the lack of nearby hotel space. However, we understand private developers are now working with the Council to increase the flexible accommodation offering (such as the Wesley Chapel refurbishment). This includes short-term HMOs and serviced accommodation (the British e-sports Federation campus in Sunderland is a great example of this, with three 'gaming houses' attached to the site in Sunnyside).

- 6.10 Food and beverage offering are also said to be an important factor for people moving into the town for work within creative industry and film sectors. There is a need to create an attractive place people to enjoy after working hours which will make people want to stay within the town thus contributing to the local economy and occupying managed workspaces throughout their time in the town.

### Adavo Workspace

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- 6.11 Adavo Workspace is a small independent real estate company based out of The Town Hall, High Street East, Wallsend, United Kingdom. The company has grown year-on-year for 10 years and has 220+ offices suites rented to various businesses across the North East.
- 6.12 They have sites at Wallsend Town Hall, The Clervaux Exchange Jarrow, The Commissioners Building Sunderland and were recently appointed to refurbish and manage the Northern Echo building in Darlington. The Darlington appointment shows managed workspace providers are willing to invest into the Tees Valley should there be a significant change in the region - in this case, the proposed relocation of the Treasury into the town.
- 6.13 Adavo state the market is inelastic and smaller independent business centres are all similarly priced. However, there is a need for a pragmatic pricing strategy which depends upon levels of demand and the area of operation.
- 6.14 All tenancies are on the basis of a licence with a 1 month notice period. They offer a sense of collaboration within the business centres through break out space and support for smaller growing businesses.

### Wizu Workspace

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- 6.15 Wizu Workspace is a large independent flexible office space provider offering serviced offices, coworking spaces, and meeting rooms. They cater to a variety of businesses, from freelancers and startups to established companies, providing tailored solutions to meet different workspace needs.
- 6.16 Wizu have 11 buildings in UK located from Scotland to the Midlands, predominately based within city centres.
- 6.17 They offer serviced offices, hot desking and daily packages with meeting room hire for internal tenants and external members of the public. Tenancies are based on a licence agreement and on flexible contracts but with a 1 month notice period.

### Floe

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- 6.18 Floe is a relatively new small independent managed workspace provider, whom have experienced a great deal organic growth in a short period of time.
- 6.19 They now have taken over Maybrook House in Newcastle offering over 40,000 sqft of managed workspace and hot desking, increasing their current offering of 240 spaces to over 400.
- 6.20 Tenancies are based on a licence agreement and on flexible contracts but with a 1 month notice period
- 6.21 Floe has a passion for regeneration and building communities through managed workspace and provide collaboration and a sense of community through their carefully designed breakout spaces, and work events internally and externally. They also offer mental wellbeing, mediation and yoga classes.

## Key Themes

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- 6.22 This section outlines and analyses the key themes that have emerged from our research and consultations with managed workspace providers.

### Demand

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- 6.23 It's clear from our baseline work that the existing workspaces in Hartlepool are doing well, despite the current challenging economic landscape. The HEC and the BIS are both between 80 – 85% occupied at the time of this study, Queens Meadow Innovation Centre is c. 86%, and Hartlepower is at approximately 96% occupancy.
- 6.24 These are all very healthy occupancy figures. It's almost impossible to run at 100% for any length of time as the nature of managed workspace is that tenants grow and move on – hopefully to space in the same building, but any move to larger premises is considered a success. If properties were fully occupied, there would be no room for mobility – this was a concern highlighted in our 2023 Office study, in that there were very limited accommodation options for growing businesses, therefore there was a risk of losing them from the Borough.

### Location

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- 6.25 All workspace providers discussed the importance of location for a managed workspace site. Workspaces should have a desirable location and be in close proximity to transport links to allow accessibility for travelling employees. If not, then there must be good parking facilities available.
- 6.26 Being close to clients or industry-specific clusters are also important to foster a sense of community and collaboration. Clustering effect is particularly important within cultural, design, arts and digital sector.
- 6.27 The Hartlepool Production Village is a great catalyst for this, managed workspace within the area will help the creative and cultural sector share ideas. This collaboration may help start-ups in the town centre and increase business confidence therefore aiding economic development within Hartlepool.
- 6.28 Lifestyle amenities are also an important factor within a town centre location. Access to cafes, restaurants, gyms, and retail stores contributes to the overall well-being and productivity of employees, which therefore makes a managed workspace site more attractive to a company.
- 6.29 This also helps attract talent for companies - a managed workspace community-based working ethos combined with close proximity to transport and vibrant lifestyle amenities is attractive to helping companies attract talent within the area but also retain current talent, which allows the company to grow further continuing to invest in the local economy.

- 6.30 The location of a managed workspace significantly impacts its convenience, professional appeal, operational efficiency, and overall success in attracting and retaining talent, clients, and business opportunities.
- 6.31 Current managed workspace providers in Hartlepool recognize the critical importance of location and proximity to amenities in their offerings. . Being close to transport links, dining options, retail outlets, and other essential services enhances the appeal of these workspaces, makes managed workspace attractive to potential tenants.

## Occupation Sectors

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- 6.32 Whilst there is a variety of industries that utilise managed workspace, there is a natural cluster effect.
- 6.33 Our interviews suggest the creative, arts and digital industries form clusters within managed workspaces due to the nature of their work. The community style industries adopt these spaces in order to grow and share ideas with one another. There is already a degree of clustering in the existing workspaces, although these are primarily the Professional and Business Services Industries, and Digital – both common sectors to be based in managed workspace. It may be that the limited options for workspace in Hartlepool constrain the natural clustering effect that can occur – occupiers are taking what they can get due to lack of supply.
- 6.34 All consultees state there are a large number of start-up business that use managed workspaces in order to grow their network and business. Both providers offer support to this sector allowing them to increase their workforce and help grow financially and operationally.
- 6.35 One of our consultees proclaimed “when start-ups come through the door as one person, some move out as a team of 30 plus to a traditional office, this means we have then done our job correctly”.
- 6.36 This suggests fostering a community of people with similar views and industry knowledge will help organic growth and therefore help aid economic development within the town centre.
- 6.37 Another one of our consultees also discussed the Hartlepool Production Village as a key catalyst to bring different creative industries together and a managed workspace facility to help the industry grow but also offering aid for start-ups that can learn from more experienced companies thus bringing growth to Hartlepool which also develops the local area.

## Pricing Strategy & Flexible Contracts

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- 6.38 It is clear pricing strategy is an important driver for managed workspace owners, increasing revenue and profit allows the company to grow further.

- 6.39 Larger corporate workspace providers have to make an appropriate financial return. Therefore, there is no leeway on pricing and they must stick to a pricing strategy to allow them to make this minimum return. Given high maintenance costs, they can only achieve the income needed for this from high value – city centre locations and more affluent towns than Hartlepool.
- 6.40 In contrast, regional providers take a pragmatic approach to their pricing strategy taking into account the value within the area. To be viable in low value areas they will lower their prices to be affordable by a focus on cost management, providing managed workspace accommodation can be bought at a lower value allowing independent providers to reduce managed workspace rents. As independent organisations, they are not beholden to supplier frameworks and are able to use local and smaller contractors to ensure that every contract awarded offers excellent value for money. This is certainly an advantage over many corporate organisations, who are able to pass on higher costs to their more affluent occupiers. Similarly, local authorities often have restrictions on the suppliers they can use – often to achieve procurement savings on an authority wide level, or chosen due to a focus on larger maintenance roles e.g. the housing stock – but on a site-specific basis may not offer the same value for money. Similarly, they will be shrewder on the staffing resources made available on site to minimise costs.
- 6.41 Meeting rooms are also provided within the cost of flexible workspace, allowing further collaboration for businesses.
- 6.42 It is a common theme throughout our interviews that managed workspaces contracts are short term and flexible in comparison to traditional office accommodation whereby companies have a long-lease agreement.
- 6.43 With a large proportion of managed workspace occupiers being start-up businesses it is important they have a sense of flexibility to help their cash flow over the early stages of trading.

### Working From Home Culture

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- 6.44 The rise of working-from-home (WFH) culture has significantly influenced the concept and utilisation of managed workspaces.
- 6.45 As employees increasingly split their time between home and the office, businesses are seeking flexible workspace solutions that accommodate these new work patterns and also save costs for larger firms whilst still fostering collaborative working.
- 6.46 We have found the WFH culture was not felt to have harmed independent managed workspaces throughout our conversations with providers.
- 6.47 The pandemic has shaped the way in which companies operate and productivity levels have increased as a whole offering flexible working and a balanced approach.

- 6.48 Providers stated this model of working is experiencing high levels of demand in city/town centre locations as people can collaborate and meet on an ad-hoc basis whilst also having the option to work from home when suited. In the early days of post-covid working, providers received some limited requests from companies who wanted to rent space for say 2-3 days per week. These were resisted and they have managed to keep occupancy high, demonstrating that a physical workspace is still valued, even if it isn't utilised 5 days per week. Particularly in smaller businesses, this collaboration from being in the office together is invaluable.

### Additional Facilities

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- 6.49 Current managed workspace operators in Hartlepool and North East incorporate a variety of additional features and services to make their services more attractive to prospective tenants.
- 6.50 These enhancements not only improve the functionality of the workspaces but also contribute to a positive and productive work environment.
- 6.51 Our external consultations suggest WiFi, meeting rooms and on-site amenities are important resources for businesses and now expected as standard. These facilities were once a luxury, however, with the technological advancement, high speed WiFi is particularly important.
- 6.52 Additional facilities such as gym access, games room and free tea and coffee are attractive to a prospective tenant and larger managed workspace operators can afford to offer this. However, smaller managed workspace operators we have contacted suggest there is no need for additional luxury facilities. Instead, providing an affordable product which fosters a sense of community and productive workspace is the most important factor.
- 6.53 This is evident as existing managed workspace providers offer WiFi, meeting rooms and breakout space as additional facilities but do not include further facilities such as gym access, games room and free beverage/food.

### Funding

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- 6.54 Funding is a threat to independent workspace providers. Post COVID-19 securing loans for offices from banks and private lenders was difficult as the office industry was seen as having no future after work from home culture was adopted by many firms.
- 6.55 However, lenders did not take into account that flexible office space actually aided work from home firms allowing a flexible approach. All offices were viewed with the same risk profile and there was no sense of division between traditional office asset class and flexible managed workspace.
- 6.56 One of our consultees believe this lending is now becoming available to providers but the processes are more stringent making it harder to secure loans for development in this sector.

- 6.57 All providers we interviewed have a keen interest in expanding their services but also highlighted funding is a barrier and government intervention and Council support would help unlock further sites.

### Rent a Desk / Hot Desking

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- 6.58 Hot desking is a flexible workspace strategy that involves multiple people using a single physical workstation or desk at different times.
- 6.59 This approach can be particularly attractive to potential tenants and is currently used by some of the managed workspace operators we have contacted throughout the external consultation period.
- 6.60 Hot desking is not a new concept, with organisations having implemented this even before the pandemic as they looked to rationalise their workspace.
- 6.61 Hot desking reduces the need for individual workstations for every employee, which can significantly lower overhead costs related to office space and equipment. Employees can choose where they want to work each day, which can enhance their satisfaction and productivity by allowing them to select the most suitable environment for their tasks.
- 6.62 This model maximizes the use of office space, accommodating more employees in a smaller area and ensuring that desks are not left unused. Hot desking fosters a dynamic and interactive environment, encouraging employees from different departments or teams to interact and collaborate more frequently.
- 6.63 For businesses with a significant number of remote or part-time workers, hot desking allows for integration of these employees when they come into the office, without the need for dedicated desks.
- 6.64 What has become more prevalent in more recent times is the emergence of professionally managed hot-desking workspaces that are not exclusively occupied by one company, but are available to rent to anyone on a daily basis.
- 6.65 These spaces may be used by entrepreneurs with start-up companies, remote workers, short-term visitors to the local area, or SMEs with a small number of employees.
- 6.66 The benefits are that they can be rented on an ad-hoc basis with no commitment, meaning people can try before they buy, and pay only when they have a business requirement. They can offer a professional setting to meet clients, and also offer social interaction for lone workers, and consequently the potential for business generation and sales, particularly where the premises have a reputation for being sectoral hubs.

- 6.67 Hot desking can attract younger, tech-savvy professionals who appreciate modern and flexible work environments that reflect contemporary work culture trends. This ties in with the creative industry clusters which can be formed within managed workspaces and contribute to business growth and collaboration.
- 6.68 However, management of these spaces can be intensive. There also needs to be a sufficient demand for the space. Occupation needs to build up quickly, as if people visit them and there is nobody else there, then they don't get any communal benefits and next time will just stay at home or try an alternative. This then puts the financial viability of the venture at risk.

### Production Village

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- 6.69 It is clear from our consultations that Hartlepool Production Village will play a crucial role in fostering growth by providing a dynamic and supportive environment for creative/production industries. As a hub for innovation, there will be a need for state-of-the-art facilities, resources, and collaborative spaces that enable businesses to thrive.
- 6.70 The increase in business footfall within the Hartlepool area will ultimately lead to production companies and associated creatives needing additional workspaces and therefore an increase in take-up and demand for managed workspace areas.
- 6.71 This will aid the cluster effect whereby like-minded businesses within the creative and production sector can use managed workspaces to collaborate and share ideas that can be implemented throughout the local economy. This also allows start-ups to gain experience from more established businesses, also contributing to local economic growth.
- 6.72 The Village's strategic location, coupled with access to local talent and educational institutions, enhances its appeal as a prime destination for production companies. By facilitating networking opportunities, partnerships, and knowledge exchange, Hartlepool Production Village helps stimulate economic development and attract investment and additional managed workspace areas.
- 6.73 Additionally, it supports job creation and skills development, contributing to the overall growth and prosperity of the local community. This vibrant ecosystem not only nurtures existing businesses but also attracts new ventures, positioning Hartlepool as a key player in the creative and production sectors.

### Future Expansion/Interest in Hartlepool

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- 6.74 It is unlikely that Hartlepool at the present time is going to attract large national managed workspace providers such as Wizu, Cubo and Regus. Their existing operations are primarily focused in major cities – Newcastle, Leeds, Sheffield, Manchester, Edinburgh, Glasgow etc.

Even the remote Harrogate location that Wizu have has the advantage of being based in an affluent spa town.

- 6.75 The likely investors are going to be regional operators with experience of delivering managed workspace in similar towns to Hartlepool. Two of the operators we interviewed – Adavo and Floe – explicitly stated they would be interested in discussing with the Council the opportunity to develop new managed workspace facilities in Hartlepool. There may of course be other regional providers that would have an interest too. We would recommend that the Council have conversations with additional providers, informally at first, highlighting the upcoming investment projects such as the Production Village, to start generating interest in the town.



## 7 Future Demand

- 7.1 This section of the report seeks to provide an understanding of the likely sources of demand for managed workspace in Hartlepool. It draws upon a range of data sets to: identify future drivers of employment growth; consider the extent to which growth could translate to a requirement for office space generally; and assess the size profile of relevant sectors to estimate the proportion of growth that could translate to a need for managed workspace specifically.

### Historic Employment Change by Sector

- 7.2 Data from the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), published by the Office for National Statistics, provides an overview of employment change by sector in Hartlepool from 2015 to 2022. This shows that, across nineteen industrial sectors, just six experienced an increase in employment numbers during this period. Of these six sectors, just two (listed below) could reasonably be expected to have any material impact on demand for office premises:
- 7.3 Information and communication: 450 additional jobs; and
- 7.4 Public administration and defence: 250 additional jobs.
- 7.5 It can also be seen from the table that the total number of jobs in Hartlepool contracted by 585 (from 29,820 to 29,235) during this period.

**Table 7.1 - Employment Change by Sector (2015 to 2022)**

Industry	2015	2022	Change
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	50	40	-10
Mining and quarrying	20	20	0
Manufacturing	3,500	3,500	0
Electricity, gas and air conditioning supply	600	800	200
Water supply and waste management activities	450	700	250
Construction	1,500	1,750	250
Wholesale and retail trade	4,500	4,500	0
Transportation and storage	900	1,000	100
Accommodation and food service activities	2,500	2,500	0
Information and communication	250	700	450
Financial and insurance activities	200	125	-75
Real estate activities	450	250	-200
Professional, scientific and technical activities	2,000	1,000	-1,000
Administrative and support service activities	1,500	1,500	0
Public administration and defence	1,500	1,750	250
Education	3,500	3,000	-500
Human health and social work activities	5,000	5,000	0
Arts, entertainment and recreation	800	600	-200
Other services	600	500	-100
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,820</b>	<b>29,235</b>	<b>-585</b>

Source: Business Register and Employment Survey / Lichfields, 2024

### Future Drivers of Growth

- 7.6 Whilst past trends can be a useful indicator of those sectors expected to drive employment growth, it is also helpful to consider future projections. The Hartlepool Office and Industrial

Workspace Availability Study (HOIWAS), published in 2023, was underpinned by a series of employment forecasts and the same data has been used to inform this exercise.

- 7.7 The three scenarios developed as part of the HOIWAS can be summarised as follows. Further detail on each can be found in the source document:
- 7.8 **Scenario 1:** policy-neutral baseline forecast produced by Experian in Mach 2022;
- 7.9 **Scenario 2:** moderated Experian baseline forecast, which assumed that projected contractions in employment (for individual sectors) would have no impact on future space needs; and
- 7.10 **Scenario 3:** policy-on scenario which sought to model the potential economic impact in Hartlepool of successfully delivering a number of TVCA priority projects.
- 7.11 For employment forecasting purposes, Scenarios 1 and 2 are essentially the same dataset. Indeed, the only differences between the two relate to the process of translating job change into floorspace need. As a result, Scenario 2 is omitted from Table 1.2.
- 7.12 The employment forecasts contained within the HOIWAS were presented on the basis of a series of bespoke sectors, defined to align with the Tees Valley Office and Industrial Workspace Availability Study (2019). As such, they do not provide a consistent read across with those considered in Table 7.1 above.

**Table 7.2 - Projected Workforce Job Growth (2022 to 2032)**

	Scenario 1	Scenario 3
New energy	100	720
Digital	0	0
Healthcare	255	0
Construction	100	0
Advanced manufacturing	95	1,905
CCL	410	105
Biologics	0	0
Chemicals and process	0	130
Logistics	-55	960
PBS	130	0
Primary sectors	0	0
Other manufacturing	-95	705
Other private services	50	110
Other public services	45	0
Other	65	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,100</b>	<b>4,635</b>

Source: HOIWAS / Lichfield's analysis, 2024

- 7.13 It can be seen from the table that both scenarios 1 and 3 forecast that the following sectors would experience an increase in employment between 2022 and 2032:
- 7.14 New energy: up to 720 workforce jobs;

- 7.15 Advanced manufacturing: up to 1,905 workforce jobs;
- 7.16 Creative, cultural and leisure (CCL): up to 410 workforce jobs; and
- 7.17 Other private services: up to 110 workforce jobs.
- 7.18 In addition, the healthcare, construction, chemicals and process, logistics, professional and business services (PBS), other manufacturing, other public services and other sectors are forecast to grow by one of the scenarios considered in the HOIWAS.

## Workspace Needs

- 7.19 It is important to recognise, however, that not all of the potential drivers of future employment growth would translate to a need for managed workspace provision. To help in understanding the latter, it has been necessary to allocate the employment forecasts considered above according to use class. This exercise has been informed by an analysis of a detailed, 5-digit SIC breakdown of BRES data in Hartlepool, which was used to apportion jobs by use class (i.e. office (E(g)(i)/(ii)), light industrial (E(g)(iii)), general industrial (B2) and distribution/warehousing (B8)).
- 7.20 The results of this analysis suggest that employment growth in advanced manufacturing, creative, cultural and leisure, professional and business services and 'other sectors' could influence future demand for office premises<sup>6</sup>. Taking the results of this disaggregation by use class into account and applying an employment density of 14.7sq.m<sup>7</sup> per workforce job for office uses, it is possible to arrive at an estimate of the total office floorspace requirement that could be generated by each of these key drivers of demand. As summarised in Table 1.3, the sectors considered most likely to drive demand for office space in Hartlepool over the period to 2032 are advanced manufacturing and professional and business services.

**Table 7.3 - Office Floorspace Needs by Sector (2022 to 2032)**

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
Advanced manufacturing	1,525sq.m	1,525sq.m	11,215sq.m
CCL	145sq.m	145sq.m	35sq.m
PBS	2,015sq.m	2,015sq.m	-
Other	1,000sq.m	1,000sq.m	-

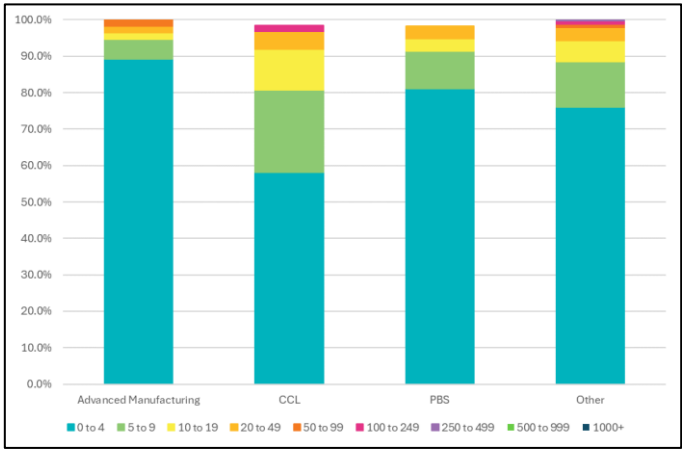
Source: HOIWAS / Lichfields, 2024

<sup>6</sup> NB a very small number of jobs in the new energy sector (5) were assumed to align with office premises needs under Scenario 3. This is not considered likely to have any material influence on future office or managed workspace needs in Hartlepool and has therefore been excluded from any subsequent analysis.

<sup>7</sup> NB Applied in the HOIWAS at the request of HBC and TVCA to ensure consistency with previous, Tees Valley-wide analysis. This density differs from that typically applied by Lichfields.

- 7.21 For the avoidance of doubt, the 'advanced manufacturing' jobs and workspace relate only to the requirement for those that can take place in a smaller office/workspace setting – it does not include more traditional industrial space.
- 7.22 Clearly, however, not all of the future demand identified in the table will require managed workspace. Rather, some occupiers are likely to favour traditional offices when considering new premises. For the purposes of this report, we have defined managed workspace as offices typically suited to small businesses (1 to 50 employees) with a layout that allows for collaborative hubs.
- 7.23 Based upon the size criteria applied, the proportion of occupiers favouring managed workspace property solutions appears unlikely to vary significantly across the four growth sectors identified in Table 1.3. Data for Hartlepool indicates that the share of businesses employing between 1 and 49 people ranges from:
- Advanced manufacturing: 98.2% of all businesses employ 1 to 49 people (rising to 100% of all businesses employing up to 250 workers);
  - Creative, cultural and leisure: 96.8% of all businesses employ 1 to 49 people;
  - Professional and Business Services: 98.3% of all businesses employ 1 to 49 people; to
  - Other: 97.9% of all businesses employ 1 to 49 people.
- 7.24 It is also important to recognise, however, that the type and format of workspace provision that would best meet the needs of a business with 1 employee is unlikely to be the same as it would be for a business with 50 (or 250) workers. As such, it is helpful to understand in more detail the breakdown of businesses by size (number of employees) and how this differs between the growth sectors. This is summarised in Figure 7.1 and highlights a much greater degree of difference between the four growth sectors.
- 7.25 Within the advanced manufacturing sector, for instance, 89.3% of businesses employ less than 5 people and 94.6% less than 10. In contrast, just 58.1% of businesses in the creative, cultural and leisure sector employ fewer than 5 people (and 80.6% employer fewer than 10).

Figure 7.1 - Growth Sectors by Business Size Band



Source: UK Business Count data / analysis, 2024

## 8 Gap Analysis

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- 8.1 This section provides a summary of the key findings from the sectoral and quality analysis of managed workspace accommodation in Hartlepool and projected floorspace requirements. We have also analysed proposed locations and the quality of existing stock.

### Projected Job Growth

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- 8.2 The work undertaken on future employment forecasts is particularly relevant to the future workspace requirements.
- 8.3 The evidence overwhelmingly suggests that companies in the 0-10 employee range – those that traditionally will start off in managed workspace – make up the largest proportion of companies in the key growth sectors identified. At least 80% of companies in the growth sectors have less than 10 employees – ideally looking for managed workspace.
- 8.4 The forecasts translate to somewhere in the region of 4,400 sqm to 11,000+ sqm of workspace required. For context the BIS offers 1,173sqm – so a considerable amount of new space is required to meet even the lower expectations.
- 8.5 There's a clear linkage between the forecast job growth in creative, culture and leisure and the opportunities presented by the Production Village. However, there is an unexpected anomaly in the data that we feel underplays the forecasts in this sector. Whilst creative, cultural and leisure does include some elements of the filming industry, much of it is also captured in the digital sector (production activities, post-production activities, distribution activities, projection activities, and TV programming and broadcasting). This is based on the sector definitions that were agreed with HBC and TVCA when the Hartlepool Industrial and Office Accommodation Requirements 2023 Study was prepared last year.
- 8.6 We were initially surprised at the lack of growth forecast in the digital sector (and the consequent small amount of additional space required). Again, we think on the face of it that this could potentially be underplayed, however further discussions with the Council have suggested that these figures are not unexpected, and that the sector will also be covered within the crossover with other SIC codes.
- 8.7 The SIC codes used to establish the jobs forecasts in advanced manufacturing relate specifically to those that *could* be delivered in managed office/workshop locations, rather than more traditional industrial space. For example, the following uses may be delivered in offices, labs or workshops such as those in the BIS:
- Engineering activities and **related technical consultancy** (our emphasis)
  - Technical testing and analysis

- Other research and experimental development on natural sciences and engineering
  - Other professional, scientific and technical activities n.e.c.
- 8.8 That is not to say that all of these will locate to managed workspace. Some may go to the more traditional industrial units, some larger organisations (such as engineering consultants) may choose traditional self-contained office space, and some may be at such a small scale (1-2 employees) that staff work from home and don't take commercial premises.
- 8.9 Therefore we don't believe the Council should be aiming for the top end of this forecast.
- 8.10 Given the potentially underplayed creative, cultural and leisure, and professional business services figures, we believe that the Council should be planning for a number within the range of Scenario 2 and Scenario 3. One of the benefits of managed workspaces is that they can be expanded incrementally more efficiently than larger floorplates (see Swans CFI case study).
- 8.11 We would also highlight that these forecasts are until 2032 – on a per annum basis these floorspace figures are not undeliverable.
- 8.12 Whilst Hartlepool has both the smallest population and smallest number of businesses in the Tees Valley, there has to be an ambition to grow the Borough's proportion, and outperform those statistics. Significant projects such as those contained in the HDC Masterplan give the opportunity to boost the Borough's growth projections. If this can be achieved, SMEs will be the bedrock of this growth, and appropriate workspace must be provided for them.

## Quality of Existing Stock

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- 8.13 There are five current workspaces in Hartlepool that we have assessed. Hartlepower, the HEC and Bovis House are all located in older buildings. They are managed and maintained by their owners, but they are constrained by the existing physical assets. The dated layouts and condition are reflected in the quality and the price of the accommodation on offer. The BIS and the Innovation Centre are the only two modern managed workspaces in Hartlepool.
- 8.14 There is clearly demand and a market for this second tier of workspace, particularly for those local entrepreneurs looking to start out their business on a trial basis. Hartlepower have successfully grown and are keen to continue on that trajectory. However those companies who are looking to invest in the region – particularly those from outside the region who are looking to invest in new hubs or satellite offices, will be looking for grade A quality accommodation. This will particularly be the case for those who are looking to provide office space in support of other facilities at the Production Village. We know that the Big League CIC are looking to open a second site at Church Street, which may satisfy some of the demand created by the Production Village.

- 8.15 Demand for this higher quality (Grade A) of office space will also come from local start-ups for whom first impressions are key in growing a new business and want to move from their spare room to a more professional workspace. It will also be an option for those local start-up businesses who have initially started out in the likes of the HEC and have grown successfully and are ready to grow their business and move to the next level.
- 8.16 Given that the Innovation Centre is out of town at Queens Meadow, the BIS is the only modern workspace in the town centre that fulfils this need. If the Production Village is to be a success, and the job growth is to meet expectations, then further modern space will be required.
- 8.17 As is evident for traditional offices, the current lack of flexible office options available in Hartlepool could see the town ignored during premises searches.
- 8.18 The MEES regulations are also something that the Council should be mindful of. Only one centre (Queens Meadow Innovation Centre) currently meets the EPC requirements effective from 2027, and this will need further investment to be compliant from 2030 (assuming the MEES regulations remain as they are). To confirm, the minimum of 4,400 sqm of managed workspace required is the minimum *net* amount required. If any of the existing centres are not able to be brought up to a compliant standard, then this space will need to be replaced.
- 8.19 There are two key occupiers of managed workspaces, that the MEES may affect in different ways:
- Start-up companies may not be as concerned about EPC ratings; however, the general public are becoming more socially and environmentally conscious, and this could be a differentiator when choosing a suitable workspace.
  - Larger companies setting up a satellite office in Hartlepool – larger corporations are putting increasing emphasis on Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG), making commitments to investors and shareholders to operate in a sustainable manner, and becoming a much more important consideration when choosing office space. Even small satellite offices will have strict requirements in this regard.
- 8.20 Any new workspace developed must be designed to be as sustainable as possible, to benefit both the occupier's ESG objectives, but also to minimise energy costs, which is an important consideration given the recent energy price rises and the effect this has had on SMEs.
- 8.21 The 'Space for a Day' initiative at the BIS is still in its infancy. Until that is regularly operating close to capacity, we don't foresee the need for a significant expansion of this in a new facility. If demand does reach the point where expansion is justified, then the cost for doing so should be minimal – there would be the loss of income from a suite (which would hopefully be outweighed by the daily income), and then just the cost of furnishing the space.



## Proposed Accommodation Needs

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- 8.22 More space is needed for growth – as with larger office floorplates (see Hartlepool Office and Industrial Workspace Requirements Study 2023), there are limited alternative options for businesses to consider when they outgrow their current space.
- 8.23 This needs to be provided across both secondary and grade A quality accommodation. Both Hartlepower and the Big League CIC are keen to take on additional space, which could support the demand at the lower-cost end of the market – subject to suitable space being identified and funding to do so. This is likely to be within an existing building ripe for conversion.
- 8.24 Conversely, additional space must be identified for the creation of new high-specification space, similar in specification and offer to that provided at the BIS.

## Proposed Locations

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- 8.25 Suitable locations for new managed workspace should be located in areas with strong transport links i.e. the town centre, or if not based in the town, be easily accessible by car with sufficient on-site car parking.
- 8.26 There are a number of sites in the town centre that may have strong potential as locations for new Grade A managed workspace facilities.

## Former Binns / Wilko store & Middleton Grange Shopping Centre

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- 8.27 The former Binns/Wilko store at the junction of Victoria Road and Stockton Road, has been vacant since the collapse of Wilko in 2023, and is now in the ownership of Hartlepool Development Corporation. It is well located for access to the railway station, the production village and the town centre. We understand that funding is allocated within the Town Deal to refurbish the building to a shell condition, but no end use has been identified. At over 3,500 sqm, this would make a significant contribution to the flexible office floorspace requirements. If no other uses have been identified, the it could be developed in phases, with the lower floors converted initially, and then subject to positive take-up, the upper floors could be converted at a later date. This would reduce the initial up-front expenditure and capital ask, and reduce risk to the developer.
- 8.28 The ground floor may offer commercial opportunities for a café facility given its prominent location, offering a space for collaboration and networking for the occupiers, and non-occupiers alike – Flok in Middlesbrough offers a good example of the quality of space that can be provided on a similar prominent high street location. The building has many similarities with the Northern Echo building in Darlington, which is being converted to office space by Adavo – who have expressed an interest in working with Hartlepool Council to explore opportunities.

**Figure 8.1 - Former Binns / Wilko department store**



Source: britishlistedbuildings.co.uk, 2014

- 8.29 The adjacent Middleton Grange Shopping Centre was also purchased by Hartlepool Development Corporation, with one of the objectives of the purchase being to open the centre up to a wider range of uses beyond retail. Provision of managed workspace in the centre would immediately increase footfall and vibrancy, and the potential of any vacant units or space within the centre should be explored.
- 8.30 These sites would deliver towards the Hartlepool Inclusive Growth Strategy, and in particular the Hartlepool Town Investment Plan, for which bringing a wider range of uses to the shopping centre was a key criteria for the public sector intervention and purchase of the site. Workspace in a shopping centre isn't something that has traditionally been delivered, but owners are increasingly looking at a wider range of uses to diversify away from typical retail. For instance, we understand that Regus are preparing to open a new managed workspace in the Metrocentre in Gateshead – clearly a different market proposition to Hartlepool, but a demonstration of that diversification.

### Former Corporation Club site / Screen Industries Production Village

- 8.31 We already know that the Big League CIC are looking to develop new space at premises on Church Street, specifically targeted at the creative sector. The location of The BIS within the Screen Industries Production Village is undoubtedly a success factor, and given its occupancy, there is a clear need for additional space in that area. Proximity to the train station is also a valuable attribute.
- 8.32 We understand that the Council own the former Corporation Club and car wash site on Whitby Street opposite the BIS, which is identified for public realm improvements to link the town centre

and the creative industry sector spearheaded by the Production Village. Given its proximity to the BIS, it ideally lends itself to some of the site being used for the “BIS 2”. This adjacency could create cost efficiencies by being able to share management and maintenance resources across the two sites, and offer a greater array of space options for growing businesses without them having to be lost to the private sector – or worse case outside of the Borough.

- 8.33 The benefits of a new build option on this site over a conversion elsewhere are that the building can be designed from a clean slate, with the layout and space designed with the target clientele in mind. It can also be designed with the latest construction and sustainable technologies to future-proof the building and demonstrate strong ESG credentials. The risk is that a new-build may require a higher capital outlay up-front, with less opportunity to phase the development as take-up increases.
- 8.34 As shown in Figure 2.7, the Screen Industries Production Village covers a wide area, and there may be further opportunities within that zone for a new-build and / or conversion to create managed workspace. A more detailed review of potential sites in this area should be carried out as part of the full options appraisal. Sites in the Production Village could also provide a more specialist workspace design aimed specifically at businesses in the production sector, as per the Time+Space recommendations.

### Advanced House

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- 8.35 Advanced House was recently used as a business centre, so will already have infrastructure in place to continue in that use. Offering c. 3,000 sqm of workspace, it does provide an opportunity for refurbishment, although we do not know what the internal condition is like. We understand the owner is looking to sell it for residential or student accommodation, and therefore may be holding out for a higher value than its value as office space. Given that the Council have potential sites already in their ownership (Binns, former Corporation Club), then they may offer better value for money than purchasing a new site, if the Council are to take the lead on development of new workspace. However, Advanced House should not be ruled out until a full options appraisal and value for money exercise has been undertaken.

**Figure 8.2 - Advanced House external view**



Source: Investhartlepool.co.uk, 2024

### Port of Hartlepool & Teesport

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- 8.36 Both of these sites may be suitable for managed workspace to support businesses linked to the port and maritime industries. It may also suit those in the chemicals, new energy and logistics sectors, although these jobs may not be suited to managed workspace, instead sitting alongside more industrial workspace, as explained in 7.19.
- 8.37 New managed workspace may not be suitable on the Hartlepool side of Teesport, with Queens Meadow or the Middlesbrough side of the Port having more established business operations in place more suitable for managed workspace. However Hartlepool Port may be more suited, to capture both the manufacturing focused businesses, but also close enough to the town centre that it may also be attractive to businesses in other sectors too. There is a good supply of vacant land in and around the Port which could be developed.

### Queens Meadow Business Park

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- 8.38 We're confident that the future expansion of Queens Meadow Business Park for employment uses, as recommended in our 2023 report, will create opportunities to provide a range of office spaces, including smaller space suited to SME's, perhaps as a sister venue to the Innovation Centre. This area could support the projected office workspace growth requirements that are linked to manufacturing businesses, leaving town centre sites to focus on digital, creative and professional sectors.

## Oakesway Industrial Estate

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- 8.39 We also see a potential opportunity at Oakesway Industrial Estate. BizSpace manage a number of workshops, warehouses and storage units on the site. The units, some in particular, appear very dated, and may be ready for redevelopment. Their website describes these units as a 'business centre', which implies a more office-based setting, but in reality, it is very much a traditional light industrial estate. BizSpace do however operate managed workspace across the country, so given the age and condition of the units, and their experience in delivering managed workspace, Oakesway could be a suitable location to provide new managed workspace, particularly linked to the businesses located at Oakesway – which are primarily manufacturing and advanced manufacturing<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> AspinallVerdi, 2023, 'Hartlepool Office and Industrial Workspace Availability Study,'

## 9 Conclusion and Recommendations

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- 9.1 The purpose of this report was to determine if there is a need for additional serviced and managed workspace provision in Hartlepool.
- 9.2 The analysis of the current status of managed workspaces in Hartlepool reveals significant gaps in availability, infrastructure, and support services.
- 9.3 The town currently lacks a sufficient number of modern, well-equipped managed workspaces, which impedes its ability to attract and retain businesses. Some of the existing facilities do not meet the technological and operational needs of contemporary businesses. All existing centres are operating consistently above 80% occupancy.
- 9.4 In this respect, the evidence suggests definitively that ***there is a need for additional serviced and managed workspace provision in Hartlepool.*** Our qualitative analysis suggests there is a need and anticipated demand for at least 4,400 sqm of new managed workspace over the period to 2032.
- 9.5 The projected demand will come from the following sectors:
- Advanced Manufacturing (suitable for an office/workshop workspace)
  - Creative cultural and leisure services
  - Professional business services
  - Other private services
- 9.6 For the avoidance of doubt, there will be jobs within the digital sector, one of the key focuses of the Tees Valley Investment Zone, that fall within the above categories.
- 9.7 At least 80% of companies in the growth sectors have less than 10 employees, and over 96% of businesses within the above categories have between 1 – 50 employees, and are likely to be suited to managed workspace.
- 9.8 If the Council want to address these gaps, it will be necessary for Hartlepool Council and Tees Valley Combined Authority / Hartlepool Development Corporation to facilitate investment and development in new managed workspaces either directly, or working closely with private sector small independent managed workspace operators.

### Addressing Strategic Objectives

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- 9.9 In Section 2, we considered the policy landscape and the sectoral priorities in Hartlepool.
- 9.10 Through our study and the implementation of our recommendations, we can demonstrate how these objectives and policies have been addressed:



- Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan – the increase in managed workspace will contribute towards business growth, job growth, and make Hartlepool an attractive area that people want to work in with a variety of accommodation and business support.
- Tees Valley Investment Plan – ensures that there is a supportive business environment where businesses can start-up, grow and innovate.
- Business Starts in Tees Valley – appropriate accommodation for SMEs will support Hartlepool in increasing its share of start-up businesses in the Tees Valley.
- Hartlepool Office and Industrial Accommodation Requirements – support for the managed workspace sector will support the digital and creative industries and form part of the package of properties to catalyse development over the next 10 years.
- Inclusive Growth Strategy - Hartlepool can make significant progress in delivering against the priorities identified in the Inclusive Growth Strategy, by ‘providing attractive workspace for businesses, which will foster further economic growth and innovation’.
- Investment Zones – the development of new managed workspace will make a significant contribution to the priority sector growth within the Investment Zone.
- Tees Valley Economic Assessment – development of a wider choice of workspace will contribute to the three key themes:
  - Communities and Place – support the emerging Production Village and increasing the growth of the cultural and creative sector, in particular ‘create the conditions for cultural industry cluster growth – enabling a mature and sustainable cultural offering, resulting in wider reach, relevance and impact’
  - People & Skills – increase employment further in creative, cultural and leisure sector, increase training and apprenticeship opportunities, increase support to start-ups and SMEs.
  - Supporting local businesses – increase GVA, GDP, business enterprise and business density towards the UK national average.
- Hartlepool Local Plan – deliver on employment sites to grow the Hartlepool economy.
- Hartlepool Council Plan – contributes to the prosperity of Hartlepool as an ambitious Council and place to live and work.
- Hartlepool Employment Land Review – increases the amount of employment space in the Borough, increasing the rate of business start-ups to be above average in the Tees Valley, and diversify away from the public sector as the primary employer.
- Hartlepool Inclusive Growth Strategy – the proposals to increase the managed workspace accommodation make significant contributions to many elements of this strategy, which will require bold and ambitious decisions to deliver significant economic growth:

- Development of a 'Production Village' creative quarter in the surrounding area of the new Film and TV Studios an action plan to support creative sector businesses – we have identified the Production Village as a key driver of SME and employment requirements, as well as a key location for the delivery of further workspace.
  - Action plan to support creative businesses – Creative, cultural and leisure is one of the key industries that has driven the workspace demand considered in this study, with recommendations on capital investments
  - Business support strategy – we have noted the successful way in which the Council currently support businesses, and we have suggested other soft interventions moving forwards.
  - Supply and demand for business accommodation to include start up provision in Hartlepool – this study provides the evidence to support the demand for managed workspace accommodation.
  - Support the development of social enterprises – space is provided for the community and voluntary sector, with both a requirement for further space and an ambition from existing providers to expand.
  - Initiatives for businesses to support the development of healthy workforces – modern workspace designed with appropriate break-out and collaboration spaces can contribute to a healthier and happier workforce,
  - Coherent approach to place promotion and finding Hartlepool's identity – linking directly with the priority sectors and the unique attraction of the Production Village, the provision of further workspace can help define Hartlepool's identity and place promotion.
- Hartlepool Town Investment Plan – the report outlines the potential for managed workspace at the Middleton Grange Shopping Centre to create a more mixed-use town centre.
  - Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards – provision of new space will provide space that is fit-for-purpose and meets future environmental and sustainable requirements. It will also future-proof the town, as previously highlighted the

## Recommendations & Key Decisions Required

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9.11 This report has identified the need for more managed workspace accommodation in the Borough. We believe the next step is to make two key decisions, which go hand-in-hand:

- How new managed workspace will be delivered and funded.
- Where the new workspace will be delivered.

## Delivery and Funding

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- 9.12 The Council and the Combined Authority need to carefully consider their role in the delivery and ongoing management of new managed workspace. If the private sector can bring forward development without intervention, they should be encouraged to do so, and the role of the local authority should be to support development where there is market failure. Our research indicates that there will be a need for public sector investment at the development stage. However this does not necessarily have to mean that the local authority retains ownership / management responsibilities in the long term. Local authorities are often constricted by procurement regulations and internal processes and budgets, meaning they can't respond as pro-actively or cost-effectively as they would like or that tenants expect. This may be accepted in those centres aimed at local start-ups – but national and international occupiers in modern workspaces looking to attract inward investment, and paying higher rents for the more modern space, will expect a much more responsive service.
- 9.13 This can also mean that local authorities struggle to cover the running costs or make them profitable. However, one of the roles of a local authority is to stimulate economic growth. It can therefore be argued that local authorities can justify subsidising workspaces supporting start-up businesses where it can be evidenced that the benefits outweigh the costs (by calculating the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR)). Hartlepower offer a trial basis, where if tenants decide after 3 months that the workspace, or indeed their business idea, is not working as intended, they can walk away without penalty. North Tyneside Council offered a six-month rent-free period at Swans CFI if the business was relocating from outside of the north east. Offering a rent-free incentive on this basis could bolster the number of entrepreneurs willing to take on their first commercial space and provide proof of concept for their business idea.
- 9.14 We would recommend that more formal soft-market testing should be undertaken with a wider range of workspace providers to promote the opportunity and establish the private sector's aspirations for the town and the delivery methods they would consider. Within this study, we have spoken to a small sample of operators – Adavo and Floe both expressed interest in having further discussions on future possibilities. We have no doubt that there will be others who would be interested in having an initial discussion.
- 9.15 What was clear from those discussions was that confidence is needed in the future regeneration of the town. The ambitious projects such as the Production Village, the Wesley Chapel, the Civil Engineering and Health & Social Care Academies are attractive propositions, but investors must have confidence that these will come to fruition – and indeed there has been significant progress on these projects during the course of the preparation of this report. This could create a wave of momentum in all priority sectors.
- 9.16 Some of the delivery models the Council could consider involvement in are:

- Direct Council delivery – on Council-owned sites/buildings, funded through capital budgets, borrowings or grant funding – with ongoing management, or bringing in a workspace provider to manage the property on their behalf.
  - Sale of Council-owned sites at Market Value direct to developers / managed workspace providers
  - A lease-wrap arrangement where the workspace is brought forward by a private developer, and then the Council take a lease of the property.
  - There are a range of partnership scenarios that could be explored further, for instance, the Council could contribute land/building assets into a partnership for an equitable return, or the Council could provide borrowing at a below-commercial rate through PWLB
- 9.17 Once the public sector's aspirations are decided and the level of private sector interest has been assessed, further decisions can be made as to the next stage of delivery and the public sector's involvement.

### Site Options Appraisal

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- 9.18 As we have only highlighted key sites and areas at this stage, a more detailed options appraisal of potential development sites should be undertaken, assuming that the Council wish to take a lead role in delivering more space, either directly or in partnership with the private sector.
- 9.19 Within the scope of this study, we have undertaken a high-level review of potential locations, including the former Binns department store, Middleton Grange Shopping Centre, former Corporation Club, the wider Screen Industries Production Village, Advanced House, Port of Hartlepool, Teesport, Queens Meadow Business Park, and Oakesway Industrial Estate. This is not an exhaustive list, and further sites may be identified at the next stage.
- 9.20 To move forward, the Council should undertake further work to assess the feasibility of sites for developing new workspace. This should include the following considerations inter-alia:
- Ownership and owner aspirations
  - Title restrictions
  - Planning use considerations
  - Access / parking
  - Amount of workspace that could be delivered / jobs created
  - Development / conversion costs and potential income
  - Availability of facilities
  - Wider benefits and alignment with strategic policies
- 9.21 The options should be assessed against an agreed list of objectives, to determine the most suitable location(s). The sites that best meet the objectives can then be short-listed.

- 9.22 The preferred option(s) can then be assessed in more detail, with architects and cost consultants commissioned to move through the design and delivery stages.
- 9.23 If the potential new workspace is to be publicly funded, then a Business Case should be prepared using the Treasury Five Cases format to demonstrate value for money and a positive Benefit Cost Ratio of investing in a new centre.

## Soft Interventions

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- 9.24 It appears Hartlepool Council already work well with the business sector through the Economic Development team, helped by the co-location at the HEC. This is a prime role that the Council should continue to focus on, with providing space directly a secondary consideration to this. However, the Council must not ignore the external providers, where regional providers with local links and a more philanthropic mindset than the national corporations will also be keen to support the businesses to grow. They should look to support the expansion of Hartlepower and the Big League CIC.
- 9.25 The recommendations of Ortus to support ambitious unregistered companies should be encouraged. Scaling up businesses who can outgrow the traditional managed workspace accommodation into larger self-contained space should be the end-goal for small business support. Those who operated business centres in the region were acutely aware of this, and considered it a sign of success when businesses were able to leave them and stand on their own in larger premises. We know from discussions with the Tees Valley Business Board that there are many businesses in the Tees Valley with the potential to grow significantly, but they don't have the aspiration or the skills to do so. The Board have identified approximately 200 businesses as having strong potential for growth, and there is a strategy in place to support these businesses to scale up. The availability of high-quality space of varying sizes that they can move to rapidly as they grow would be one less concern for these businesses to worry about.
- 9.26 The Council may wish to consider ongoing statistical support such as that provided by Ortus in their report, perhaps in the form of some Key Performance Indicators, which will demonstrate the success of proposed interventions.
- 9.27 The Council may want to consider further ways they can offer softer skills to start-ups to aid their future growth – training in business management, facilities management and property law, website design etc. These are already offered by the operators at Bovis House and Hartlepower. Collaboration amongst the managed workspaces on this issue should be fostered with a pooling of resources such as training courses for new businesses, no matter which workspace they're based in – the growth of businesses within Hartlepool will be of benefit to all, generating further growth. This could be a good use of the Shared Prosperity Fund for instance, and the Tees Valley Investment Zone funding. Collaboration with local colleges and universities should also

be strengthened, to increase the volume of graduates having the skills and confidence to start their own businesses on completion of their studies.

- 9.28 There may be public funding available that can support the development of new workspace. Funding sources should be investigated in further detail, particularly following the recent re-election of the Combined Authority Mayor. Some of this funding can be constrained to a specific occupier sector – this may not be a bad thing, as for instance if those businesses linked to the digital sector cluster in a new building, then it allows space for back-filling and other clusters to emerge in existing centres.
- 9.29 Offering tax breaks, subsidies, and grants to attract managed workspace providers will reduce their operational costs and make the investment in new space viable. Unlocking funding programmes will support the managed workspace operators fostering growth of managed workspaces and the businesses within them.
- 9.30 The Council must continue to support the regeneration of the town centre to increase the quality of the food and beverage offering - this includes the development and renovation of the Middleton Grange Shopping Centre, cafes, bars, restaurants, leisure and activities to attract prospective tenants to the area.
- 9.31 A marketing and comms strategy for Hartlepool should include specific marketing aimed at attracting and retaining SMEs in the Borough. The local authority should ensure that it recognises its successes by logging success stories and obtaining testimonials to strengthen the Borough's reputation.
- 9.32 Whilst outside of the scope of this study, we did note the lack of suitable hotel accommodation – as we did in our previous study – which should be considered along with the wider regeneration objectives in Hartlepool to accommodate workers from outside the region. There seems to be an uptick in planning applications for housing, which can only be a good thing for increasing the number of residents and consequently the number of people employed by SMEs requiring managed workspace.

## Next Steps

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- 9.33 The Council should focus on the following immediate priorities:
- Engage with TVCA and central government to make the case for investment in managed workspace in the Borough
  - Agree internally what level of involvement the Council wish to have in future delivery
  - Commission the more detailed options appraisal and undertake detailed feasibility work on potential sites for new managed workspace.

- Engage with a wider range of potential managed workspace providers (including those spoken to in the course of this report) to generate further interest in the town, and explore delivery strategies for these spaces.
- Develop additional softer business support initiatives to foster enhanced business growth.