



the green blue heart

A key element of the Stockton
Middlesbrough Initiative

SMi

Stockton-Middlesbrough Initiative

autumn 2009

The Tees Valley is an area undergoing massive change. The economy is being restructured, town centres regenerated and expanded, new quality housing provided and the area's natural assets promoted to attract investment and tourism.



Because of its history and geography the area has a number of communities served by their own centres. No one centre however has achieved the scale of a 'city centre' which you would expect to find in an area of 650,000 population but with the potential to serve over 1 million people.



Our ambition is for Stockton and Middlesbrough to work together to create this urban centre for the Tees Valley.

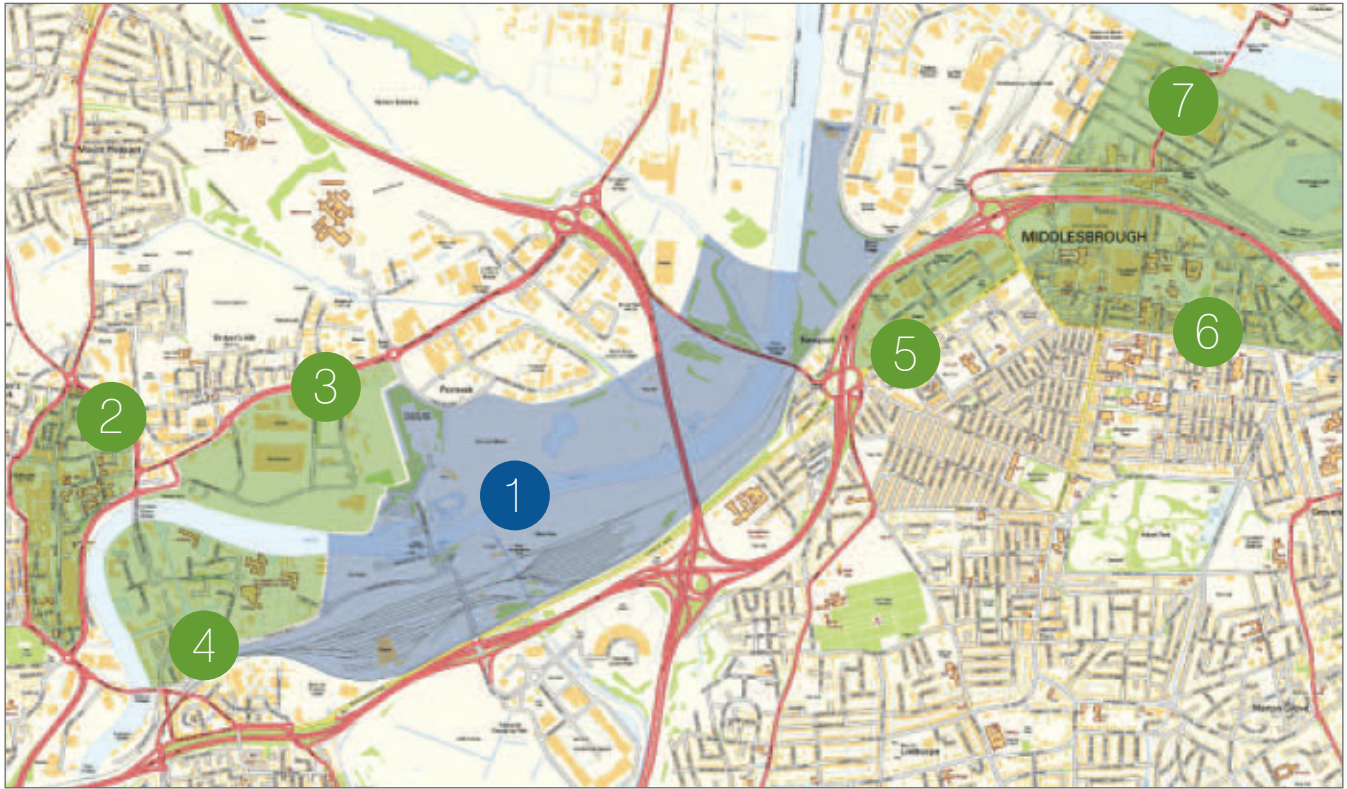


Cllr Ken Lupton,
Leader of Stockton on
Tees Borough Council.



Ray Mallon,
Elected Mayor of
Middlesbrough





Successful regions have thriving regional centres.

To create a successful retail, commercial, leisure and civic 'heart' to the region the towns of Stockton and Middlesbrough have agreed to work in partnership to create a genuine 'urban core'.

The **Stockton Middlesbrough Initiative (SMI)** has been set up as a focus for that work.

The SMI strategic plan has three key elements:

- Improving both town centres.
- Expanding both town centres – By embracing development at North Shore in Stockton and at Middlehaven in Middlesbrough.
- Improving the facilities and activities along the intervening river corridor.

This central linking area has been termed the **Green Blue Heart** given its open character alongside either bank of the River Tees.

- 1 The Green Blue Heart
- 2 Stockton Town Centre
- 3 North Shore
- 4 Teesdale, Thornaby
- 5 Cannon Park
- 6 Middlesbrough Town Centre
- 7 Greater Middlehaven



The strategy for the Green Blue Heart has five key elements:

- A** Creating a visitor destination around the barrage by creating a world class white water course and attracting other sports, leisure and recreation facilities to the river corridor.
- B** Opening up the Tees Marshalling Yard for a new residential community.
- C** Improving access and use of facilities within the river corridor to give an excellent footpath / cycleway network linking Stockton and Middlesbrough and the wildlife refuges at Portrack Marsh, Maze Park and Billingham Beck.
- D** Improving secondary road access.
- E** Encouraging use of the potential development sites comprising the land on which the former incinerator stood in Stockton and the South West Ironmasters site in Middlesbrough.



Progress so far



The Barrage.

- The Tees White Water Course is to be upgraded to be one of the best in the world. It will be the world's first sustainable course using large Archimedes Screws to pump the course while generating electricity for use on the site at other states of the tide.
- A developer has been selected to deliver additional food and drink, hotel, small scale retailing and additional leisure facilities on the south bank of the river adjacent to the navigation lock.
- Work is underway to see how the North Tower at the Barrage can be occupied.

Tees Yard.

- A development framework is in place to demonstrate how the site could be opened up for over 1,300 homes.
- Agreement has been reached with Network Rail on how the rail infrastructure on site needs to be amended to allow the land to be developed.
- The line through the site is to be re-signalled by 2018 and so housing development cannot start until then.
- In the meantime work is progressing to ensure that this use of the site fits within the planning regimes in both Stockton and Middlesbrough and current site conditions are fully understood.
- It is proposed that the site will also be served by one of the new stations on the Tees Valley Metro which will pass through the site.

Improving the river corridor.

- A scheme has been prepared to link all of the current footpaths and cycleways in the river corridor together, provide better signage, interpretation and elements of public art.
- These improvements will link to the current wildlife areas at Portrack Marsh, Maze Park and Billingham Beck managed by the Tees Valley Wildlife Trust.



New road infrastructure.

- The Councils and Highways Agency agree that additional secondary road infrastructure is required to successfully open up development of the Green Blue Heart.
- A scheme has been prepared to create a new road system which will link Portrack Lane to the Newport Bridge approach road and connect south to the A66.
- This project is in a regional programme but still requires funding approval.



Development sites.

- Completion of the North Middlesbrough Accessibility works will improve access to the north of the town and open up the prospect of further commercial development on the South West Ironmasters site.
- Investigations of the ground and environmental conditions on the site of the former incinerator at Portrack have established that it is a difficult site to use for many purposes. It will be retained until a suitable use comes along but in the meantime managed as part of the green infrastructure in the river corridor.



Long term vision.

- While some of these projects will take several years to deliver the Councils in Stockton and Middlesbrough believe that their successful delivery will:
 - Link the key regeneration projects in both towns.
 - Create an attractive riverside corridor containing new leisure, housing and commercial facilities.
 - Establish a true 'urban core' for the Tees Valley.



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