

## Ards and North Down Borough Council's Pickie Fun Park Redevelopment

### Overview

Ards and North Down Borough Council (ANDBC) is located in the east of Northern Ireland and combines an attractive coastline. Bangor is the one of the main tourism areas and was awarded city status in 2022.

Pickie Funpark redevelopment project is linked to a wider ANDBC project for Bangor Waterfront area. ANDBC is part of the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) with six other councils, two universities, and four regional colleges, working with the UK Government and the NI Executive to drive inclusive economic growth in the region. BRCD has four objectives for each project:

- Tourism and regeneration
- Employability and skills
- Innovation and digital considerations
- Infrastructure

Sitting under tourism and regeneration, there are twenty projects linked to the scheme that are in line with the governance procedures to secure the funding through BRCD. ANDBC has successfully completed an outline business case to secure £40m of funding to redevelop the waterfront area in Bangor.





# Ards and North Down Borough Council's Pickie Fun Park Redevelopment

## The Challenge

The Pickie Funpark enhancement scheme is one element of a complex multi-dimensional development programme which will be delivered in phases over 10 years, with the final delivery date requirement ultimately being determined by the funding conditions applicable to the BRCD.

Based on the Outline Business case (September 2021) it was anticipated that an integrated Design Team would be appointed to further develop the existing Bangor Waterfront concept design masterplan and prepare a coordinated strategy for the overall redevelopment of the five constituent projects including Pickie Funpark. Subject to completion and approval of the Full Business Cases for each of the five projects, and subsequent financial and planning approvals, it was anticipated that the projects would be delivered over an 8–10-year period.

Within the BRCD funding objectives and criteria the ultimate goal is 'to accelerate inclusive economic growth for the whole region and deliver more and better jobs, accessible to people from all communities'. These criteria included:

- Support increase in jobs
- Increase the overnight trips to the area
- Increase the regional Gross Value Added per head in the Ards and North Down area
- To provide opportunities for commercial business growth in Bangor
- Support Programme for Government (PfG) environmental sustainable objectives and ANDBC Community Plan outcome.

Pickie Funpark is an iconic family fun park on the Bangor waterfront and is highly recognised across Northern Ireland. The park hosts a range of facilities, best known for Pickie Puffer train and the giant Pickie pedal swans. Pre-Covid, it attracted around 390,000 visitors per year making it a top-ten NI attraction.

The park has operated on a concession contract basis by a private operator since 2019, and the contract was due to expire in March 2023, capable of extension by mutual agreement. The operator has continually refreshed the various rides and activities over the period of the contract.

With the concession contract coming up for renewal/extension and the opportunity presented by the BRCD funding, ANDBC issued a tender to secure the services of a leisure consultant to support them in developing options for Pickie Funpark in terms of:

- redesigning the park to maximise opportunities to expand the customer base and extend the season
- to advise on the most advantageous operating model for future operation
- advice and options of maximising private sector investment and
- provide estimates of costs for options to achieve their objectives.

V4 were successfully awarded a tender in November 2021 and, together with our associates, Space & Place (S&P) commenced work with ANDBC.



To find out how V4 Services can help you with your next project, please get in touch.



0161 537 8200



[contactus@v4services.com](mailto:contactus@v4services.com)



[www.v4services.com](http://www.v4services.com)



# Ards and North Down Borough Council's Pickie Fun Park Redevelopment

## The Solution

V4 worked through the project with regular meetings with ANDBC's project team. The project moved through the following stages to arrive at the completed concept plan and final report:

### Discovery

- Review of current information, including financial data, issues with the site and equipment
- Setting of objectives for the project, including its strategic fit, high-level requirements, affordability, and deliverability
- Establishing the level of ANDBC's ambition in terms of vision, budget, and constraints

### Options Development

- Initial 'free thinking' concept drawing for discussion
- Refining ideas and completion of the final concept drawing
- Engagement with key stakeholders, including
  - Users of Pickie Funpark (via an online survey)
  - The current concessionaire
  - Queens Parade developer
  - Disability NI
  - Tourism NI
  - Park Activities experts

### Reporting

- Drafting of report with technical addendum which described how the scheme could be delivered, also covered risks and costs.
- S&P provided the concept drawings to demonstrate the potential of the activities mix and layout of the park, which were well-received by the Council.

## The Outcomes

The project was completed in a timely manner but the service or financial benefits won't be realised until the Pickie Funpark redevelopment moves to the Final Business Case and ultimately is redeveloped. At this point, the current operator's contract has been extended to allow time for other projects within the overall Bangor Waterfront project to progress to the same stage. Work is continuing in the background to progress the project.



To find out how V4 Services can help you with your next project, please get in touch.



0161 537 8200



[contactus@v4services.com](mailto:contactus@v4services.com)



[www.v4services.com](http://www.v4services.com)