

### **Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area**

#### **Draft Conservation Area Appraisal – summary of consultation responses**

##### **Proposed extensions to Dumbarton Conservation Area**

###### **Dumbarton Bridge**

All 17 respondents, including Historic Environment Scotland, supported the inclusion of Dumbarton Bridge within a revised conservation area boundary.

###### **Castle Street car park**

Twelve respondents supported the inclusion of Castle Street car park within a revised conservation area boundary, whilst 5, including Historic Environment Scotland did not support.

###### **Denny Ship Model Experiment Tank**

Fifteen respondents supported the inclusion of the Denny Ship Model Experiment Tank within a revised conservation area boundary, whilst 2, including Historic Environment Scotland did not support.

With regard to the Castle Street car park and Denny Ship Model Experiment Tank Historic Environment Scotland commented that:

“The townscape character changes beyond the Riverside Parish Church, which is the current edge of the conservation area. The area along Castle Street to the east of the church is now occupied by new housing, a supermarket and carpark to the south and further car parks to the north. This space has been well-landscaped and we agree that the rail tracks add historic interest, but the Denny Ship Tank and adjacent housing are isolated beyond this and have minimal connection with the rest of the conservation area.

The Denny Ship Tank is listed at category A and forms part of the National Maritime Museum. It therefore already benefits from the highest degree of statutory protection. The adjacent housing dates to the second half of the nineteenth century. While we agree that it contributes to the historic character of the town and is worth preserving, we consider that it would be difficult to argue that it is worthy of more protection than, for example, similar housing further east in the vicinity of Wallace St, Victoria St and Knoxland Square.”

###### **Other comments on conservation area boundary**

A question was asked about how the Council is dealing with the Artizan Centre given its location in proximity to the conservation area.

A request was made for the town centre underpasses to be included in the conservation area, and also for the properties on Castle Street next to the Denny Ship Model Experiment Tank.

Another comment requested that changes to the conservation area should mean an improvement for the area or the structures.

### **Proposed listed buildings**

<b>Proposal listed building</b>	<b>Support</b>	<b>No support</b>
Dumbarton public library	15	1
Former Hiram Walker HQ (3 High Street)	13	3
Former Bank of Scotland (22 High Street)	13	3
Church Street/Castle Street tenements	13	3
Station Road/College Street tenements - proposed change from 'C' to B listed	14	2

\* Historic Environment Scotland did not offer a view of the proposed listed buildings

The following buildings were also suggested as candidates for listing through the consultation exercise. Some were already included within the appraisal suggestions, whilst others are additional suggestions, some of which sit outwith the Conservation Area Appraisal boundary.

- The new harbourside development and harbour
- Old Keil School building should be retained as a listed building
- Tenements at 84-92 High Street
- Former Glasgow Savings Bank (No 12 High Street)
- Tenements at 1-17 Castle Street
- TSB building (16 High Street)
- Flats at 35 High Street
- 4-10 Castle Street
- Risk Street housing complexes
- United Reform Church, Leven Street – upgrade to B listed
- 119-133 High Street
- Levenford House, Lodge and Stables and wall
- Original slipways at Leven Quay

## **Key challenges**

Respondents were asked to rank identified key challenges by importance, with 1 being very important and 5 very unimportant.

<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Average score</b>
Loss of original architectural detail	1.3
Use of inappropriate materials & repair techniques	1.7
Inappropriate modern additions to buildings	1.4
Gap sites	2.6
Shop frontages	2.1
Exposed gables	2.2
Exposed and open backlands	2.4
Vacancy	2.3
Connectivity	2.6

## **Management Plan**

Fourteen respondents agreed or strongly agreed that a management plan should be prepared for the conservation area. Two respondents were neutral on this issue.

Comments included:

“(the report)... must not be allowed to gather dust...It must be used to ensure further and continuing improvement to the town centre.”

“cannot and must not rely on funding - has to be a mechanism for self-preservation, and self-reliance, focus on local economy.”

“Comprehensive management plan will be required for cost effective implementation and longer term sustainability”

“flooding is a huge issue as is general degradation of so many of these buildings due to poor work practices, poor drainage (surface run off issues as well as shared drainage systems), poor repairs, poor knowledge in what materials should be used etc – we need a major effort to preserve and provide the tools and money to people to save what is at risk and help make meaningful improvement instead of fire fighting (constantly fighting water damage).”

## **Opportunities**

Nine respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the six general opportunities set in out in the draft conservation area appraisal. Seven respondents were neutral and none disagreed.

Comments included:

“Transparent procurement with local jobs being created for projects - included in procurement briefs.”

Who should the proposed guidance on the economic and aesthetic benefits of good practice in building repair should be circulated to?

Who should the importance of routine building maintenance should be emphasised to and by whom?

Energy efficiency measures should be beneficial for the people and the building, and is balanced and considered.

“Routine building maintenance should be lawfully enforced - too many housing factors do not take this role seriously at all - look at helping and intervening in tenement housing at Station Road and Meadowbank Street. Reports of damp and other issues go ignored.”

### **Recommendations**

Eleven respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the 17 specific recommendations identified in the draft conservation area appraisal. Five respondents were neutral and none disagreed.

Comments included:

“All these recommendations are important, and I strongly agree that the Appraisal is regularly reviewed and updated...”

“There should be a presumption against demolition – the most sustainable building is one that already exists.”

“Sensitive and imaginative proposals for the re-use of vacant buildings and gap sites should be encouraged - i want imagination beyond 'retail' and 'cafes' - what about making use of the water? what about a floating sauna? what about walkways that don't flood? what about public spaces where you don't have to spend money to enjoy them?”

“Owners must be held accountable for contribution to bringing back to life.”

All of the conservation area should be targeted for improvement (not just its thresholds.

“Lets not solely go down the road of this active travel narrative in a country with the weather that we have.”

Create jobs and skills in the area (through ensuring new developments are of high quality)

Consult with local people

“Not at the expense of parking – trying to encourage people into town, not out. Common sense over oppressive ‘green’ policies• 14 - I’m paying attention to the 20 minute neighbourhoods, the LTNs in London, and this drivel to stop the movement of people.”

Need to attract a wider audience (to Dumbarton town centre) than heritage focused.

Clean up river.

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### **Any other comments?**

“A first class report from one of Scotland's most respected conservation architects.”

“Ongoing meaningful public engagement is essential, Delivery of quality outcomes must be assured.”

“Dumbarton has so much beautiful old architecture that makes it so special. I don't think the modern type of buildings have much benefit to the town at all. For tourism as well; I've had people visit Dumbarton from overseas and they were very impressed by the old buildings.”

“I really want to see sustainable development that is tasteful! Too often new developments immediately suffer from surface rain water flooding, are not in keeping with the style of the area or just look like cheap knockoff versions of some older style. I want to see walkways made of something other than tarmac.”

“There are listed buildings all over the country that are falling down because the well meaning intention to preserve them costs too much. Dumbarton is not a wealthy area so cost has to be considered when improving these lovely buildings. The aesthetic of these old (buildings) should be improved but not without modernisation - to move forward we need to preserve some of the old but also embrace the new.”