

# Agenda



## Planning Committee

**Date:** Wednesday, 19 April 2023

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**Time:** 10.00 a.m.

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**Venue:** Civic Space, First Floor, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton, G82 1QL

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**Contact:** Email: [Committee.admin@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:Committee.admin@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)

Dear Member

Please attend a meeting of the **Planning Committee** as detailed above.

The business is shown on the attached agenda.

Yours faithfully

**PETER HESSETT**

Chief Executive

Distribution:-

Councillor Lawrence O'Neill (Chair)  
Councillor Gurpreet Singh Johal (Vice Chair)  
Councillor Karen Conaghan  
Councillor Ian Dickson  
Councillor Daniel Lennie  
Provost Douglas McAllister  
Councillor June McKay  
Councillor Chris Pollock  
Councillor Hazel Sorrell  
Councillor Sophie Traynor

All other Councillors for information

Date of Issue: 3 April 2023

**PLANNING COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY, 19 APRIL 2023**

**AGENDA**

**1 APOLOGIES**

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members are invited to declare if they have any interests in the items of business on this agenda and the reasons for such declarations.

**3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING 5 - 8**

Submit for approval as a correct record, the following Minutes of Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 15 March 2023.

**4 OPEN FORUM**

The Committee is asked to note that no open forum questions have been submitted by members of the public.

**5 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

Submit reports by the Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager – in respect of the following Planning applications:-

- (a) DC22/222/FUL** – Glencairn House, 95 High Street, Dumbarton, **9 - 25**  
G82 1LF. Formation of new public library and museum, external alterations including replacement shop windows, demolition of the rear existing extension, construction of a three storey new rear extension and construction of a separate single storey children's library at the end of Quay Pend.
- (b) DC22/129/FUL** – Store at Dumbuck Old Quarry, Strowanswell **27 - 41**  
Road, Dumbarton, G82 2QN. Proposed redevelopment of site of former quarry and garages / workshops to allow the introduction of three holiday letting lodges (with ancillary car parking).
- (c) DC22/185/FUL** - Former Maryland Water Pumping Station, **43 - 57**  
Garshake Road, Dumbarton. Change of use of ground for the siting of three holiday lodges including a waste water treatment plant and ancillary car parking (being a revised design from that approved under Planning Permission ref. DC21/096/FUL).

**6      DUMBARTON TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA      59 - 137**  
**APPRAISAL**

Submit report by the Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager seeking approval of the finalised Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal.

**7      LEGAL OPINION REGARDING APPEAL DECISION      139 - 141**  
**DC22/049/MSC, FARM ROAD, DUNTOCHER**

Submit report by the Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager advising the Committee of legal advice received in respect of the appeal decision for the erection of 99 dwelling houses, formation of access, landscaping, open space, SUDS and associated infrastructure at Farm Road, Duntocher, Clydebank.

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**PLANNING COMMITTEE**

At a Meeting of the Planning Committee held in Civic Space, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton, on Wednesday, 15 March 2023 at 10.00 a.m.

**Present:** Councillors Karen Conaghan, Ian Dickson, Gurpreet Singh Johal, Daniel Lennie, June McKay, Lawrence O'Neill, Chris Pollock and Sophie Traynor.

**Attending:** Pamela Clifford, Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager; Alan Williamson, Team Leader, Development Planning and Place; James McColl, Development Management Team Leader; Nigel Ettles, Section Head – Litigation (Legal Officer) and Nicola Moorcroft, Committee Officer.

**Apologies:** Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Provost Douglas McAllister and Councillor Hazel Sorrell

**Councillor Lawrence O'Neill in the Chair**

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest in any of the items of business on the agenda.

**OPEN FORUM**

The Committee noted that no open forum questions had been submitted by members of the public.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 8 February 2023 were submitted and approved as a correct record, subject to the reversing of the order of the conditions set out in Section 9 of the report titled DC22/184/FUL - Erection of double garage at 3 Kirkton Grove, Dumbarton G82 4BF, by Mr J Lafferty. As now set out in Appendix 2 of said Minutes.

## **NOTE OF VISITATION**

A Note of Visitation carried out on 6 February 2023, a copy of which forms Appendix 1 hereto, was submitted and noted.

## **DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE**

A report was submitted by the Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager, advising of the changes to the status of development plan Documents.

After discussion and having heard the Team Leader, Development Planning and Place in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) the Proposed Local Development Plan (LDP2) (as amended by the Examination Report and Scottish Ministers' Direction) is not adopted and remains a material consideration in the determination of planning applications; and
- (2) that supplementary guidance prepared in association with LDP2 now be referred to as LDP2 Planning Guidance.

## **DC22/049/MSC: PLANNING APPEAL DECISION – APPROVAL OF MATTERS SPECIFIED IN CONDITIONS 1,3,5 AND 7 OF PPIp APPROVAL DC19/203 APPROVAL FOR THE ERECTION OF 99 DWELLING HOUSES, FORMATION OF ACCESS, LANDSCAPING, OPEN SPACE, SUDS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE AT FARM ROAD, DUNTOCHER, CLYDEBANK**

A report was submitted by the Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager, advising of the outcome of the appeal and associated partial award of expenses to the appellant.

After discussion and having heard the Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager and Section Head – Litigation, in further explanation and in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the outcome of the appeal and associated partial award of expenses to the appellant; and
- (2) to seek opinion from Counsel, as soon as possible, as to the merits of any further appeal.

The meeting closed at 10.28 a.m.

**PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**NOTE OF VISITATION – 6 FEBRUARY 2023**

**Present:** Councillors Conaghan, O'Neill, Pollock, Singh Johal, and Traynor.

**Attending:** James McColl - Acting Development Management Team Leader

**SITE VISIT**

A site visit was undertaken in connection with the undernoted planning application:-

**3 Kirkton Grove, Dumbarton G82 4BF**

DC22/184/FUL - Erection of double garage at 3 Kirkton Grove, Dumbarton by Mr J Lafferty



## WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

### Report by Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager

Planning Committee: 19 April 2023

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**DC22/222/FUL:** Formation of new public library and museum, external alterations including replacement shop windows, demolition of the rear existing extension, construction of a three storey new rear extension and construction of a separate single storey children's library at the end of Quay Pend

**DC22/223/LBC:** Formation of new public library and museum, external alterations including replacement shop windows and entrance door, demolition of the rear existing 20th century extension, construction of a three storey rear extension, removal of some sections of internal floors, new slappings and internal arrangement

**At Glencairn House, 95 High Street, Dumbarton by West Dunbartonshire Council**

#### 1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The planning application raises new or significant issues and under the terms of the approved Scheme of Delegation, it therefore requires to be determined by the Planning Committee. The application for listed building consent is linked to the planning application and additionally considers the internal works to the listed building and is therefore also being presented for consideration.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **Grant** planning permission subject to the conditions set out in Section 9.
- 2.2 **Grant** listed building consent subject to the conditions set out in Section 9.

#### 3. DEVELOPMENT DETAILS

- 3.1 The applications relate to the Category B listed Glencairn House situated on the southern side of High Street, Dumbarton, together with a small grassed area at the end of Quay Pend opening onto Riverside Lane. Glencairn House sits in the heart of Dumbarton Town Centre and is the oldest building in Dumbarton. The site is also located within the Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area. The site is bounded to the north by High Street, the main shopping street in Dumbarton. To the south is Riverside Lane beyond which there is an area of car parking, the riverside walkway leading to Dumbarton Rock and the River Leven. To the east is the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Burtons building which is occupied at ground floor level by three shop units. To the west the Captain James Lang public house with associated beer garden wraps

around the rear extension of Glencairn House, separating it from Riverside Lane. Quay Pend is a pedestrian route connecting High Street to Riverside Lane. The grassed area currently houses an electrical substation and informal parking as well as a mature tree. Previously there were public toilets on this site.

- 3.2** The “Earl of Glencairn’s Greit House” was built in 1623. It was built as a three-storey town house for James Cunningham, the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Glencairn. Glencairn House was an important building within the High Street where the most desirable plots for houses and trades within the High Street would have been on the south side near the river, with direct access to water and had several owners throughout this time. By 1918 the building had become derelict and was sold to the Town Council in 1923. Glencairn House was refurbished in the 1920s and converted into the Dumbarton Gas Corporation’s showroom for domestic gas appliances. The letters DGC were inlaid into a mosaic tiled floor at the entrance and remain today. Today the building stands empty having been last occupied by the Dumbarton Credit Union. Extensive fabric repair works were carried out in 2017 to consolidate the fabric and prevent further deterioration to the building.
- 3.3** Full planning permission and listed building consent are sought for the refurbishment, alteration and extension of the existing building to house a new combined public lending library and museum. In addition, a standalone children’s library pavilion is proposed at the end of Quay Pend opening out onto a library garden centered on the existing tree which will become the garden’s ‘storytelling tree’. The new library and museum will be operated by the Council and is likely to be open 6 days a week and in the evenings. Full details of opening hours are not available at this stage.
- 3.4** The proposals involve the existing rear extension will be demolished and replaced with a new three storey extension. The extension will provide 455 square meters of new floor space. It will measure 17.6m at its highest point and approximately 9 meters at the widest point where it cantilevers over the Pend. The architecture of the new extension takes inspiration from the town of Dumbarton and its illustrious history of industry, manufacturing and innovation. In the eighteenth century the townscape was dominated on one side by the tall conical forms of the glasswork chimneys, and on the other side by the distinctive volcanic forms of Dumbarton Rock. Both of these structures, manmade and natural, symbolise important aspects of Dumbarton’s story. A visually striking feature of the new additions to Glencairn House is the proposed jade green cladding. It is proposed to clad the extension and children’s library in bespoke ceramic tiles, designed in collaboration with artist Helen Kellock. The design and colour palette has been drawn from Dumbarton itself as well as the museum collections which will be exhibited in the new Glencairn House.
- 3.5** At ground floor, the first space off High Street is a tall space with library shelving and comfortable seating in the front windows. This is designed to engage passersby and activate the street frontage. The existing single glazed front windows on the ground floor are to be replaced with new double glazed modern windows. Within the three existing large openings in the central spine wall, museum displays are proposed. Large, bespoke museum display cases are to be integrated into the openings creating a dramatic statement as you enter the building. The original stone walls would be exposed on two sides, showing the history of the space. Beyond this space, named Room 01 on the floor plans is a circulation space where a new

staircase and lift are to be added. Also at ground floor level, but moving into the new extension is the reception desk and toilets. A new glazed entrance in the extension would open out onto Quay Pend to encourage movement through the building, down the pend and onto the river walkway beyond. The existing Quay Pend route from the High Street to the riverfront is unaffected by the extension.

- 3.6** At first floor level within the existing building there is a mezzanine floor. The ceiling height in this area is low and as such has been allocated as a plant space which serves all three floors of the existing building. The location of the services (on the mezzanine and a separate room within the extension on the ground floor) allows the spaces to be served independently but also enables the number of openings on the rear wall of Glencairn House to be kept to a minimum. Other spaces within the existing building at first floor level are the stairway, lift and cleaners store. Within the extension area at first floor level is the second museum display. The extension turns and cantilevers out over the pend to provide a large window with a view over to Dumbarton Rock. This space would include digital access points as well as shelving and comfortable seating.
- 3.7** The existing second floor room within Glencairn House has a domestic quality which has led to its proposed use being a reading room. It is proposed to contain shelving and comfortable seating as well as digital access points and space for a photocopier/printer/scanner. On the third floor there is further reading rooms in the existing building and with the reading room in the new extension contains a large windows looking to Levensgrove Park and Dumbarton Rock. It will also have a tall conical ceiling crowned by a roof light. Also within the existing building on the third floor is a staff room and meeting room.
- 3.8** The Children's library is proposed to sit at the end of Quay Pend. The entrance is through a garden space with a large existing mature tree. The layout of the Children's library is simple in form with a total floor space of approximately 161m<sup>2</sup>. A large single space with a tall conical roof sitting at approximately 7.4m in height, forms the core of the library with supporting space such as toilets and the desk area housed in the most northern part of the building under a flat roof. Three big picture windows framing views to the garden, the river and Dumbarton Rock also are proposed.

#### **4. CONSULTATIONS**

- 4.1** Scottish Environmental Protection Agency have no objections to the proposed development.
- 4.2** West Dunbartonshire Council Environmental Health Service have no objections subject to conditions relating to contaminated land, hours of work, dust control and piling.
- 4.3** West Dunbartonshire Council Roads Service have no objections in relation to both roads and flooding matters.
- 4.4** West of Scotland Archaeological Service (WoSAS) advise that a condition requiring a written scheme of investigation in relation to a programme of archaeological works

to be submitted and approved prior to any development on site should be attached to any planning permission granted.

- 4.5** Historic Environment Scotland have no objections and recommend changes to the design of the proposed replacement glazing for the ground floor arched windows and advise that the historic roll-mounded chimneypiece to the existing 1<sup>st</sup> floor should be retained.
- 4.6** West Dunbartonshire Council Citizen, Culture and Facilities Service support the proposal noting that it capitalises on the rich history and heritage of the area, providing access to objects which have never previously been displayed, promoting a sense of place for our residents and highlighting the area's fascinating past to new generations. The project has been subject to extensive consultation with communities and is a key element of the Levelling Up project which will regenerate Dumbarton town centre through the development of the Artizan Centre and completion of the Connecting Dumbarton project, enhancing active travel connections between the river, rock and railway.

## **5. REPRESENTATIONS**

- 5.1** None received.

## **6. ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### National Planning Policy 4

- 6.1** National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) was adopted by the Scottish Ministers on 13<sup>th</sup> of February 2023 and now forms part of the Development Plan.
- 6.2** Policy 1 relates to tackling the climate and nature crises and states that when considering all development proposals significant weight will be given to the global climate and nature crises. Policy 2 also relates to the climate in the form of climate mitigation and adaptation and states development proposals will be sited and designed to minimise lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions as far as possible and development proposals will be sited and designed to adapt to current and future risks from climate change. Policy 3 states that proposals for local development will include appropriate measures to conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, in accordance with national and local guidance. The proposal re-uses an existing building and as such the embodied carbon of the building remains. Flood risk from climate has been assessed as part of the proposal. The flat roof section of the children's library is proposed to have a green roof, which will add biodiversity value, and there are also air source heat pumps proposed as part of the development which enables significant emissions savings over a conventional gas boiler heating system. Passive measures will be employed to achieve a continuous, well insulated and airtight envelope for each building. The development has been designed to maximise the availability of natural daylight with the addition of large new windows as well as rooflights which aids in reducing energy consumption from artificial lighting. An existing mature tree has been incorporated within the design of the proposal. As such the proposal has considered both climate change and biodiversity in accordance with the policies.



- 6.3** Policy 7 addresses proposals affecting historic assets and places. Development proposals with a potentially significant impact on historic assets or places will be accompanied by an assessment which is based on an understanding of the cultural significance of the historic asset and/or place. Development proposals for the reuse, alteration or extension of a listed building will only be supported where they will preserve its character, special architectural or historic interest and setting. Also, development proposals in or affecting conservation areas will only be supported where the character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting is preserved or enhanced. The listed building as well as the conservation area are at the core of the design for the new proposals. This is highlighted throughout the Design and Access statement which accompanied the submissions. The striking new additions demonstrate the cultural and historic significance of the building and the area, whilst safeguarding the future listed building with new uses and activity, all to enhance and benefit the Conservation Area and Dumbarton Town Centre. As such the proposal is in accordance with the policies.
- 6.4** Development proposals that will result in the sustainable reuse of brownfield land including vacant and derelict land and buildings, whether permanent or temporary, will be supported in accordance with Policy 9 of NPF4. Also in accordance with Policy 9 where land is known or suspected to be unstable or contaminated, development proposals will demonstrate that the land is, or can be made, safe and suitable for the proposed new use. Glencairn House is currently sitting empty. The land on which the proposed children's library is proposed was previously the site of a public toilet which has since been demolished. As such the site has both vacant buildings and brownfield land and the proposal will bring these spaces back into use as supported by the policy.
- 6.5** Policy 14 advises that development proposals will be supported where they are consistent with the six qualities of successful places. The development proposal is designed to improve the visual quality and activity of the area in that the design provides attractive new internal and external spaces. The design as well as the chosen external materials is particularly distinctive, creative and innovative as well as a nod to the historic past of Dumbarton. As such the proposal is in accordance with the policy.
- 6.6** Policy 15 states that development proposals will contribute to local living including, where relevant, 20 minute neighbourhoods. Access to lifelong learning opportunities is highlighted as part of the policy. The provision of a library and museum within an accessible town centre area provides an opportunity for lifelong learning and as such contributes to local living in accordance with the policy. The Council's 20 minute neighbourhood tool indicates there are approximately 1050 residences within a 10 minute walk (800 metres) of the Glencairn House site.
- 6.7** Flood risk and water management is covered in Policy 22. Development proposals at risk of flooding or in a flood risk area will only be supported under certain circumstances including redevelopment of an existing building or site for an equal or less vulnerable use. A flood risk assessment has been provided which demonstrates that whilst there is the potential for flooding this has been taken into consideration throughout the design. SEPA does not consider the proposed use to increase vulnerability to flooding. As such the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the policy. This is addressed further in Section 7.25 below.

- 6.8** Development proposals that are likely to raise unacceptable noise issues will not be supported in accordance with Policy 23. Whilst the immediate surrounding area comprises a busy town centre which is not predominantly residential, the construction phase of the development has the potential to cause noise issues. Subject to appropriate conditions the proposal complies with the policy.
- 6.9** Policy 27 relates to city, town, local and commercial centres. Development proposals that enhance and improve the vitality and viability of city, town and local centres, including proposals that increase the mix of uses, will be supported. The proposal provides a new museum and library which will encourage users into the town centre and provide a more mixed use town centre. The proposal is in accordance with a Town Centre First approach. The addition of a new facility will enhance the vitality and viability of Dumbarton town centre in accordance with the policy.
- 6.10** Policy 30 sets out criteria for the assessment of tourism related development. The proposed development is considered to accord with these. Policy 31 states that proposals involving a significant change to existing or creation of new public open spaces will make provision for public art. The proposal integrates an existing mature tree into the garden of the children's library to become a story-telling tree, and proposed new extension is considered to be a nod to the rich history of the area and the proposal is considered to accord with this policy.
- 6.11** Overall, it is considered that the proposal is supported by and presents no conflict with the policies set out within NPF4 and is assessed fully in Section 7 below.

West Dunbartonshire Adopted Local Plan 2010

- 6.12** Policy UR1 of the Local Plan (LP) promotes the re-use of land and buildings in the urban area that become vacant, derelict or underused in order to stimulate the process of urban renewal. Policy GD2 has a similar purpose in that it encourages the redevelopment of underused, vacant and/or derelict land and buildings for appropriate uses. As stated above, the development re-uses Glencairn House – a vacant listed building as well as a grassed area.
- 6.13** Policy GD1 requires all new development to be of a high quality of design and to respect the character and amenity of the area in which it is located. The new development is of high quality and particularly respects the character of the building, local history and wider area.
- 6.14** Policy BE1 seeks to ensure that no works adversely affect the appearance and character of the Conservation Areas and Policy BE2 ensures that in relation to any works affecting a listed building or its setting, its appearance, character and setting is not adversely affected. The building is currently lying empty, the proposal will protect this building and the Conservation Area by bringing it back into use. The alterations proposed arise from a high quality proposal which respects the listed building and its features.
- 6.15** The site is located within the Dumbarton Town Centre and as such Policy RET1 applies where new retail, commercial leisure, cultural and public service developments and other key town centre uses should adopt a sequential approach to site selection.

Policy RET5 also applies in the town centre. Policy RET5 seeks to improve the environment of the town centres. The proposal for a new museum and children's library within the town centre is both a cultural and public service and will encourage footfall in the town centre, all to the benefit of the vitality of Dumbarton town centre.

- 6.16** There is a large tree on the site and as such Policy E5 applies. Development proposals should take account of trees at the beginning of the design process. The proposed design not only takes account of the tree on site but centres the development on that part of the site around it. Policies F1 and F3 relate to flood prevention and standards of flood prevention. A flood risk assessment has been submitted as part of the development which demonstrates the risks involved and the potential for flooding has been taken into account with the design of the proposal.
- 6.17** The proposal complies with the policies of the adopted Local Plan and is assessed fully in Section 7 below.

## **7. ASSESSMENT AGAINST MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan (LDP2) Proposed Plan

- 7.1** On 15 March 2023, the Planning Committee took a decision that the Council would not adopt Local Development Plan 2. The Proposed Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2), incorporating the recommended modifications of the Examination Report received on 22 April 2020, which were accepted by the Planning Committee of 19 August 2020, remains the Council's most up to date spatial strategy and is therefore afforded significant weight in the assessment and determination of planning applications, subject to compatibility with NPF4. The Scottish Ministers' Direction relating to the adoption of LDP2, dated 18 December 2020, is also a material consideration.
- 7.2** Dumbarton Policy 1 supports a more diverse and vibrant Town Centre and encourages a range of uses within the Core Town Centre area where they accord with Policy SC2. Policy SC2 states that within the core Town Centre areas, the Council will support a range of different uses where they help to improve the vibrancy of the Town Centre. Although Class 10 uses (Assembly and Leisure, such as a library and museum) are not listed in Table 5 of the Plan, which identifies appropriate town centre uses, this does not mean it is an inappropriate use for the town centre, and is considered to meet all of the assessment criteria set out in Policy SC2. Policy E6 supports and encourages the development of new and existing tourist facilities where there would be no adverse effect on built and natural resources.
- 7.3** Policy BE2 relates to listed buildings and Policy BE3 relates to conservation areas. Development that would adversely affect the special interest, character or setting of a listed building will not be permitted and development that would harm the character or appearance of a conservation area. As stated the proposal is not considered to have an adverse impact upon the listed building or conservation area.
- 7.4** Development which would have a significant probability of being affected by flooding or would increase the probability of flooding elsewhere will not be supported in accordance with Policy ENV6. All new development must ensure that significant adverse noise impacts on surrounding properties and uses are avoided as stated in

Policy ENV8. Developers will be required to establish the nature of any contamination on any potential development site in accordance with Policy ENV9. Suitable conditions can be applied to ensure accordance with these policies.

- 7.5** Policy CP1 requires new development to take a design led approach to creating sustainable places which puts the needs of people first. The design of the development has evolved through a number of detailed discussions and meetings and this is discussed further below.
- 7.6** It is considered that the proposal presents no conflict the relevant policies of the proposed LDP2.

#### Historic Environment Scotland's Policy and Guidance

- 7.7** Historic Environment Policy for Scotland seeks to ensure that changes to specific assets and their context are managed in a way that protects the historic environment.
- 7.8** Historic Environment Scotland's Managing Change in the Historic Environment Guidance Note series provides advice and guidance to Planning Authorities determining applications which affect the historic environment. Guidance Note subjects relevant to this proposal include setting, accessibility, extensions, external walls, interiors, roofs, shopfronts and windows.
- 7.9** The guidance note on 'Setting' advises that setting can be important to the way in which historic structures or places are understood, appreciated and experienced, and provides guidance on factors to be considered in assessing the impact of a change on the setting of a historic asset or place. Overall, it is considered that the principle of the new build children's library will enhance the setting of the listed building and the full proposal will enhance the setting of the Dumbarton Conservation Area to the benefit of the wider area.
- 7.10** The guidance on 'Accessibility' sets out the principles that apply to developments for improving physical access to the historic environment. The guidance on 'Extensions' notes that most historic buildings can be extended sensitively. Extensions must protect the character and appearance of the building; be subordinate in form, be located on a secondary elevation and designed in a high quality manner using high quality materials. The guidance on 'External Walls' highlights the importance of their role in defining the character of a listed buildings and that maintenance and appropriate repair are the best means of safeguarding the historic character of a wall. In regard to internals and roofs the guidance notes also highlights their importance in defining a building's character and special interest. Shopfronts are highlighted as contributing to the architectural quality of a building and to the character of a place. In regard to windows, the guidance states that maintenance and appropriate repair is the preferred means of safeguarding the character of a historic window.
- 7.11** Whilst the guidance on windows states that maintenance and repair is the preferred means of safeguarding, Historic Environment Scotland has confirmed that the principle of replacing the shop windows is acceptable given the condition of the existing fabric. The re-use of the existing building as well as the extension and addition of a new building has no conflicts with the aims of the policy and guidance

of Historic Environment Scotland which seek to preserve and enhance the historic environment.

#### **7.12 Draft Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal**

Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area was designated on 11 October 2019. The draft Conservation Area Appraisal notes that the architecture of Dumbarton town centre falls into a number of distinct eras which can be easily identified by the styles and materials employed. This creates interest and relieves potential monotony. The sole survivor from the (late) mediaeval period is Glencairn House, a landmark building due to its age. The appraisal also notes that originally the main street was linked to the riverside by a series of vennels one of these survives beneath Glencairn House. The proposal retains this landmark building, as well as the vennel of Quay Pend. The draft appraisal also notes that given the various periods of development evident in the Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area, there is a wide range of building materials used, not all of which fall under the category of “traditional”. The addition of a new, bold material will enhance the conservation area, adding to the large range of existing materials.

#### **Principle of Development**

- 7.13** The site is located within the defined Dumbarton Town Centre area. NPF4, the adopted Local Plan and the proposed LDP2 all promote developments within town centres which increase viability and vitality of the town centre. The location at the very heart of the town centre is therefore an appropriate location for a new cultural and educational building. The re-use of a vacant building and use of grassed area site within the town centre will only further the case that the proposal will add vitality to the town centre.
- 7.14** The proposal will support long term town centre regeneration plans for Dumbarton Town Centre. It will complement the proposals for the regeneration of the Artizan Centre by providing new town centre uses and a striking modern extension facing the river and linking Glencairn House to Dumbarton Rock. The new “Arc of attraction” tourist route, described in West Dunbartonshire Council’s “Dumbarton Visitor Gateway Strategy and Action Plan”, will link Dumbarton train station, through Glencairn House onto the developed riverside walkway, past the Maritime Museum terminating at Dumbarton Rock. The proposal recognises Glencairn House’s role within this town centre development plan with the proposed design responding to the broader town context.
- 7.15** The development will benefit the local community and also bring economic benefit to the area in terms of creating jobs for local people and providing health and wellbeing and cultural facilities. Local people will benefit from the proposal which will also attract visitors and tourists to the Town Centre. Bringing this building back into use will remove a dead frontage within the town centre and have a positive impact on the appearance of the High Street, whilst safeguarding the long term future of the oldest building in Dumbarton. The new uses will also have a positive benefit to the vitality of the town centre by bringing people into the area and increasing pedestrian activity including into the evening. Whilst in the area, visitors to the library/museum may also visit other shops and services within the town centre. The provision of a library and museum within this accessible town centre location would also provide an opportunity for lifelong learning and as such contributes to local living.

#### Design and Appearance

- 7.16** The concept for the extension to Glencairn House takes inspiration from the town of Dumbarton and its illustrious history of industry and manufacturing. The architect for the project looked to the past for inspiration and uses the architecture of the proposal as a form of heritage interpretation to tell part of the historic story of Dumbarton. Visual and physical connection to Dumbarton Rock underpin the planning of the proposed extension and children's library pavilion, with the form of each building shaped to open up towards the Rock, linking these two structure together.
- 7.17** The main visual changes to the external appearance of Glencairn House are the demolition of the existing 1930s extension and its replacement with a three storey extension of contemporary design as well as the new complementary children's library building at the end of Quay Pend. Whilst the new extension is three storey in height, the window configuration over the floors give the impression of two levels. Large elongated windows feature in order to give views over the river and to Dumbarton Rock. The extension is cantilevered over Quay Pend, further extending the enclosed section under the building. The children's library itself has a large conical roof inspired by tall conical form of the glasswork chimneys as well as the Skellet Bell, a key object in the museum collection to be displayed with a conical form and faceted sides.
- 7.18** The proposed cladding for the extension and children's library is a bespoke ceramic tile. The Project Team has been working with artist Helen Kellock to develop a unique colour and texture for the tiles. In designing the ceramic surface, it was important to achieve an effect that is both visually striking as well as in keeping with the town of Dumbarton. The artist spent time in Dumbarton researching the town and museum collection in order to develop a colour palette and range of textures that would inform the ceramic design as well as complement the existing stonework. A cohesive colour palette of aqua, turquoise and lime green emerged from the River Leven, Dumbarton Rock and the museum collection. Each ceramic tile that is to clad the extension and children's library is to be hand crafted and have its own unique fluid texture. The tile is considered to be uniquely of Dumbarton and will result in a high quality and unique development.
- 7.19** The redevelopment of Glencairn House, will add a modern contemporary feel to the listed building and the Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area with its distinctive and exemplary design.

#### Impact on the Listed Building

- 7.20** As noted, Glencairn House is category B listed. The listing covers the whole building including the interior and exterior. The main comments of Historic Environment Scotland (HES) center on the chimney piece and arched windows. Historic Environment Scotland believe that the existing glazing pattern harmonises with the 1920s alterations and should be retained. Revisions were made by the agent with the chimney retained and notes that final window design details are to be submitted at a later stage. It is considered that an appropriate condition requiring the final design of the windows will ensure that the design is appropriate as the principle of replacing the windows is acceptable.
- 7.21** In terms of internal alterations to Glencairn House, excluding the demolition of the more modern extension to the rear, much of the internal floor space remains the

same. A new staircase is to be created however none of the internal walls have been removed to do so. As part of the design, two plant rooms have been created. One in the extension and one in Glencairn House itself. This has ensured that the new openings made to the rear wall of Glencairn house have been kept to a minimum in accordance with the guidance given by HES at pre-application stage.

- 7.22** Aside from the comments relating to the chimney piece and the windows which have been addressed, no objections have been raised by Historic Environment Scotland who welcome the refurbishment of the building. Whilst there are bold, new additions to the listed building, the principle elevation of Glencairn House which fronts onto High Street remains largely unaltered from its existing visual appearance with new uses within to energise it.

#### Natural Environment

- 7.23** The children's library pavilion would sit at the end of Quay Pend. The entrance is through a garden space with a large existing mature tree (referenced as the story telling tree). The flat roof section of the library would have a wildflower roof providing habitat to encourage biodiversity. The wildflowers selected would be native Scottish plants and in time will be seen from the garden peaking over the parapet. Whilst some grass will be lost due to the construction of the library the addition of the wildflower roof is considered to be an improvement in biodiversity due to the increase in provision of habitat. The retention of the mature tree, and its integral role within the design is welcomed.

#### Accessibility and Parking

- 7.24** The town centre location means the site is highly accessible with good connections to the surrounding area including footpath network and nearby bus stops and the train station. The site is approximately 0.5 miles or a 10 minute walk from Dumbarton train station, and connectivity between the locations is scheduled to be improved through the Connecting Dumbarton project. From Dumbarton train station there are regular trains to other stations in West Dunbartonshire and to Glasgow, Edinburgh and Helensburgh. National cycling route 7 runs through Dumbarton town centre, within 100 metres of Glencairn House. Route 7 connects Sunderland to Inverness, but more locally connects Glasgow to Loch Lomond and is a busy cycle route. There are a number of local bus routes that run along the High Street with a bus stop just outside Glencairn House. There is sufficient car parking in the vicinity, and due to the town centre location, proximity to access routes and existing town centre parking provision, it is considered that no additional or dedicated parking is justified. The Council's Roads Service is supportive of this position.

#### Flooding

- 7.25** The River Leven flows to the south of the site and, as noted in the applicant's Flood Risk Assessment submitted in support of the development, it is tidally influenced at this location. It is identified on the SEPA flood maps that site is fully within the river/coastal flood extent of the River. Accordingly, it is acknowledged that the application site is at risk of flooding. SEPA advise that having considered the application submission the proposal is for the re-development of an established site which does not result in a significant increase in building footprint. Accordingly, SEPA consider that the proposal should not have a significant, detrimental effect on floodplain storage or conveyance. In further considering the proposal, SEPA note that site access and egress may not be available during certain flooding events.

However, as this is the redevelopment of an existing site which is classed as a 'least vulnerable use' with no overnight accommodation, SEPA do not consider this to be grounds for objection. Accordingly, having fully considered the proposal, SEPA offer no objection on flood risk grounds. The application proposal has also been considered by the Council's Roads Service in its capacity as local flooding authority and it also offers no objections to the proposal. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment goes on to identify various flood resilience measures that will be incorporated into the development, designed to minimise and mitigate the effects of a flood event. Procedures will also be put in place to ensure the safe vacation of the building should a flooding event occur. Despite the location of the site within the floodplain, no objections have been received from consultees and there are no considerations which would render the proposal unacceptable on flooding grounds.

#### Residential amenity

- 7.26** Whilst the immediate surrounding area is a busy town centre which is not predominantly residential, it is recognised that residential properties do exist within the town centre. Whilst residents choosing to reside within the town centre may benefit from the proximity of local shops, services and transport links, the same degree of residential amenity as would be experienced within a primarily residential area cannot be expected. The library and museum is likely to be opened 6 days a week with one later (8pm) evening a week. The redevelopment of this building may bring additional activity, however this is in the context of a busy town centre location and it is considered that any impact on residential amenity within the town centre would be minimal. The construction phase of the development has the potential to cause noise issues, however this will be short term in nature. Subject to appropriate conditions the proposal complies with the policy.

#### Technical Issues

- 7.27** As part of the consultations for this application Environmental Health recommended conditions relating to contaminated land, hours of work during construction, dust control and piling. The addition of these conditions will ensure that the proposal is in accordance with the relevant policies.
- 7.28** The West of Scotland Archeology Service comments relate to the elements of the proposal that would require ground disturbance as they would have the potential to encounter and remove sub-surface features, deposits and artefacts associated with the early development of the town. In order to address this a condition has been attached.

#### Pre-application consultation

- 7.29** An elected members briefing was held on 28 June 2022. The briefing gave Members opportunity to highlight any issues which they considered any future planning application or listed building application ought to address. Members were generally supportive of the proposal and its aesthetic. Some members noted that the proposed ceramic tile was perhaps too bold, however this has been fully justified as part of the application.
- 7.30** The Citizen, Culture and Facilities Service of the Council undertook numerous consultations as the proposals for the Glencairn House library/ museum were developed. Consultation methods included an online survey, staffed drop-in sessions and a fixed display in the existing Dumbarton Library. A report setting out



the findings of the most intensive period of consultation was considered by the IRED Committee on 21 August 2019. Consultation continued after this period as detailed drawings for the proposal were developed.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1** The proposed development is a welcome and an important addition to the oldest building in Dumbarton Town Centre. The use as a museum and library will bring vitality to the town centre and provide positive new uses for the currently disused listed building, securing its long term future. The striking new additions of the rear extension and children's library designs and material finishes are heavily influenced by the rich history of the building and the town of Dumbarton itself and add an additional layer to the story of the use of this building and is a contemporary addition to Dumbarton Conservation Area. The proposal is considered acceptable with reference NPF4, the adopted West Dunbartonshire Local Plan and the proposed West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan 2.

## **9. CONDITIONS**

### Planning application DC22/222/FUL

1. The bespoke, artist designed, turquoise/green glaze ceramic tile detailed as part of this application and submitted to the Planning Authority shall be used for the cladding of the extension and children's library as detailed on the approved drawings. Samples of all other new external materials to be used on site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works on site. Works shall then proceed as approved.
2. No development shall take place within the development site as outlined in red on the approved Proposed Site Plan GLC-PPA-XX-R1-DR-A-1001 until the developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant, and approved by the Planning Authority in consultation with the West of Scotland Archaeology Service. Thereafter the developer shall ensure that the programme of archaeological works is fully implemented and that all recording and recover of archaeological resources within the development site is undertake in agreement with the West of Scotland Archaeology Service.
3. No development (other than investigative works) shall commence on site until such time as a detailed remediation scheme for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The scheme shall be prepared by a suitably qualified person and shall detail the measures necessary to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to human health, buildings and other property, and the natural and historical environment. The scheme shall include details of all works to be undertaken, the remediation objectives and criteria, a timetable of works and/or details of the phasing of works relative to the rest of the development, and site management procedures. The scheme shall ensure that upon completion of the remediation works the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Environmental Protection Act 1990 Part IIA in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

4. The approved remediation scheme shall be carried out in accordance with its terms prior to the commencement of development other than that required to carry out remediation, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority. The Planning Authority shall be notified in writing of the intended commencement of remediation works not less than 14 days before these works commence on site.

Upon completion of the remediation works and prior to the site being occupied, a verification report which demonstrates the effectiveness of the completed remediation works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

5. The presence of any previously unexpected contamination that becomes evident during the development of the site shall be reported to the Planning Authority in writing within one week, and work on the site shall cease. At this stage, if requested by the Planning Authority, an appropriate investigation and risk assessment shall be undertaken and a remediation scheme shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority prior to the recommencement of site works. The approved details shall be implemented as approved.
6. If there is a requirement to either re-use site won material or to import material then the assessment criteria and sampling frequency that would adequately demonstrate its suitability for use shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority prior to any material being re-used or imported. In addition to this and in accordance with BS3882:2015 and BS8601:2013, material to be used in the top 300mm shall also be free from metals, plastic, wood, glass, tarmac, paper and odours.

On completion of the works and at a time and or phasing agreed by the Planning Authority, the developer shall submit a validation report containing details of the source of the material and associated test results to demonstrate its suitability for use.

7. Unless otherwise approved in writing by this Authority, no development shall commence on site until such time as a scheme for the control and mitigation of dust has been submitted to and approved in writing by this Authority. The scheme shall identify likely sources of dust arising from the development or its construction, and shall identify measures to prevent or limit the occurrence and impact of such dust. The approved scheme shall thereafter be implemented fully prior to any of the identified dust generating activities commencing on site and shall be maintained thereafter, unless otherwise approved by this Authority.
8. No piling works shall be carried out until a method statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. This statement shall include an assessment of the impact of the piling on surrounding properties, taking into account the guidance contained in BS 6472: 1984 'Evaluation of Human Response to Vibration in Buildings'. It shall detail any procedures which are proposed to minimise the impact of noise and vibration on the occupants of surrounding properties. This statement shall be prepared by a suitably qualified person, and the piling works shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved method statement.

9. During the period of construction, all works and ancillary operations which are audible at the site boundary (or at such other place(s) as may first be agreed in writing with the Planning Authority), shall be carried out between the following hours unless otherwise approved in writing by the Planning Authority:

Mondays to Fridays: 0800-1800  
Saturdays: 0800-1300  
Sundays and public holidays: No working

10. Notwithstanding the approved plans, prior to the replacement of the front shop windows being fitted, a final design which retains the existing glazing pattern shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with Historic Environment Scotland and implemented prior to the building being brought into use.

Listed building consent DC22/223/LBC

1. The bespoke, artist designed, turquoise/green glaze ceramic tile detailed as part of this application and submitted to the Planning Authority shall be used for the cladding of the extension as detailed on the approved drawings. Samples of all other new external materials to be used on site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works on site. Works shall then proceed as approved.
2. Notwithstanding the approved plans, prior to the replacement of the front shop windows being fitted, a final design which retains the existing glazing pattern shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with Historic Environment Scotland and implemented prior to the building being brought into use.

**Pamela Clifford**  
**Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager**  
**Date: 19 April 2023**

**Person to Contact:** Pamela Clifford, Planning & Building Standards Manager  
**Email:** [Pamela.Clifford@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:Pamela.Clifford@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)

**Appendix:** Location Plan

**Background Papers:**

1. Application forms and plans
2. National Planning Framework 4
3. West Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2010

4. Proposed West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan 2 2020, as amended
5. Historic Environment Scotland's Historic Environment Policy for Scotland
6. Draft Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal
7. Historic Environment Scotland's Managing Change in the Historic Environment Guidance Note Series
8. Consultation responses

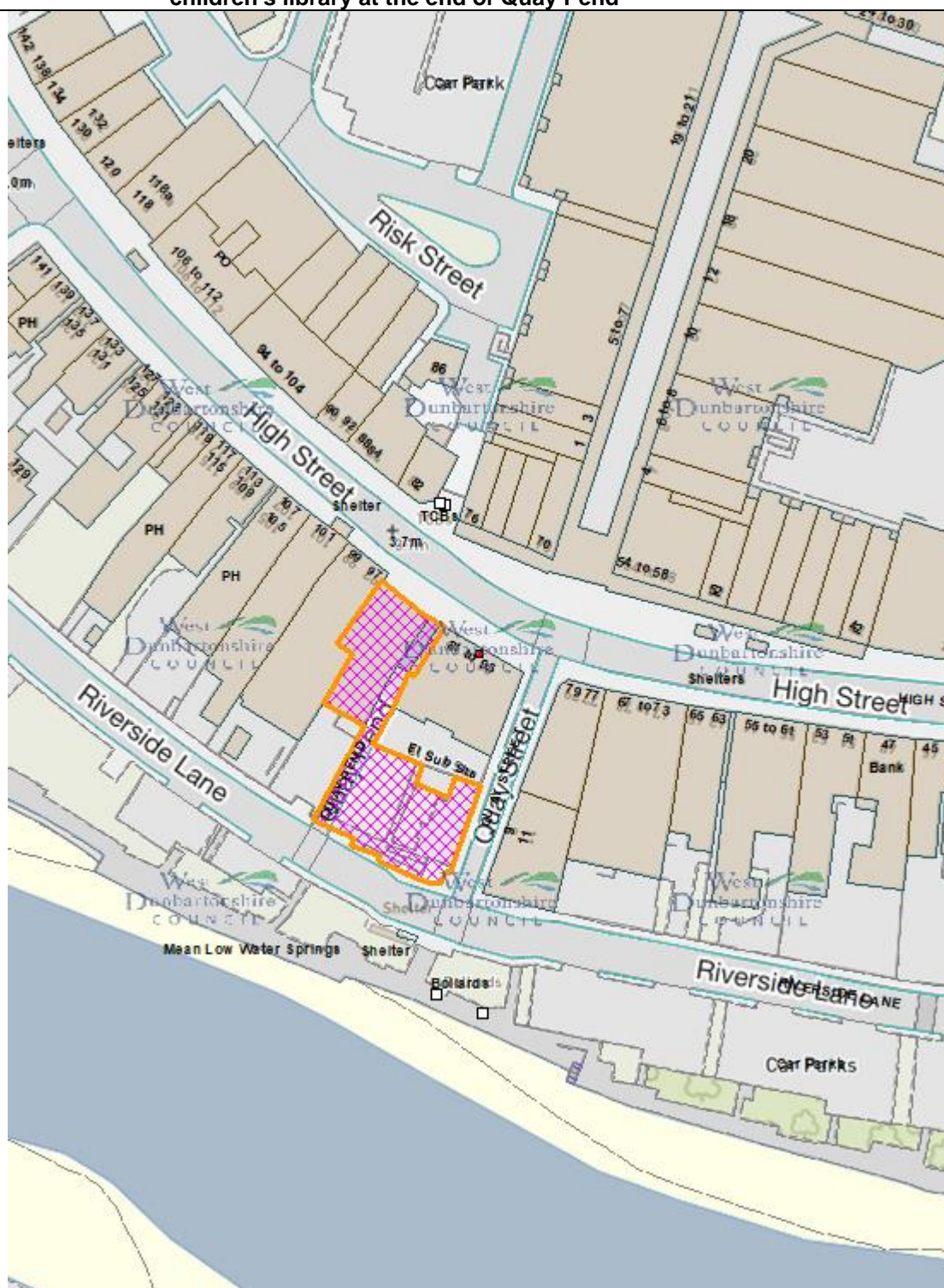
**Wards affected:** Ward 3 – Dumbarton

Map Register No: HQ676  
Date: 3 April 2023

**DC22/222/FUL**

Formation of new public library and museum, external alterations including replacement shop windows, demolition of the rear existing extension, construction of a three storey new rear extension and construction of a separate single storey children's library at the end of Quay Pend

Glencairn House  
95 High Street  
Dumbarton  
G82 1LF





## WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

### Report by Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager

Planning Committee: 19 April 2023

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**DC22/129/FUL:      Proposed redevelopment of site of former quarry and garages / workshops to allow the introduction of three holiday letting lodges (with ancillary car parking) at Dumbuck Old Quarry, Strowanswell Road, Dumbarton by Mr K McVey**

#### 1.      **REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1**      An elected member has requested the application to be determined by the Planning Committee and this has been agreed in conjunction with the Convenor of the Committee and the appointed Officer. Under the terms of the approved Scheme of Delegation, it therefore requires to be determined by the Planning Committee.

#### 2.      **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1**      **Grant** planning permission subject to the conditions set out in Section 9 below.

#### 3.      **DEVELOPMENT DETAILS**

- 3.1**      The application site is located at the head of Strowanswell Road which is situated on the northern outskirts of Dumbarton and accessed from the A82 trunk road (Stirling Road). Whilst the adjacent built-up area is predominantly residential in character with a mix of residential properties, there is also a limited non-residential element in the form of a used vehicle dealership in Glenpath. A further used vehicle sales site together with a hotel also lie to the southern side of the A82. The site is accessed via a privately-owned, short, unsurfaced part of Strowanswell Road, which also serves two residential properties known as Glenpath Cottages, including one inhabited by the applicant. The northern perimeter of the site is delineated by the footpath which follows the course of Gruggies Burn through the adjacent wooded area, and leads to the historic Strowan's Well which the road the site is accessed from is named after; the path also leads further through the woodland into the areas of and surrounding Barnhill, Overton House and Milton Brae.
- 3.2**      The site which measures just under 8,000sqm in footprint and has a longitudinal shape, has varied and diverse history. Recorded in the Gazateer as Dumbuck Old Quarry, the site is also known as the former High Mains Quarry. Originally used as a quarry, it was then used as a shooting range by the local police force. Thereafter, the site

accommodated garages/storage and vehicle workshops before falling into disuse and becoming overgrown. More recently, a variety of groundworks and other development has been undertaken. The former quarry has been cleared of waste, cleared of vegetation overgrowth, including that affecting the aforementioned Gruggies Burn path, and some groundworks undertaken in preparation of the development of the plot. Secure fencing has been installed along the northern perimeter of the site. Moreover, the sole remaining original structure in the form of an old storage/garage building, has been in use as shelter for a small herd of farm animals, mostly llamas, which graze on the site.

**3.3** The development proposed through this application would consist of three holiday letting lodges, all to be located towards the western edge of the site leading onto Strowanswell Rd. They are of a mobile and prefabricated variety as follows:

- Two single-bedroom units, with a rectangular footprint of 26.7sqm each. The structures are of 3.6m in height, 2.5m in eaves, with a pitched roof. One of the gable elevations features a side door with full height glazing providing access to the internal lounge, while the other gable has a small window serving the bedroom. The front elevation features a smaller window on the left hand side when facing this elevation, a full height window on the right and a decorative door with full height glazing on either side, found in the central part of the elevation. The rear elevation is blank. Internally, each unit consists of a combined kitchen/lounge, a shower room and a bedroom. No information has been provided on the materials and finishes.
- One two-bedroom unit, with a mostly rectangular footprint of 77sqm, including the porch. The structure is of 5.6m in height, 3m in eaves, with a pitched roof. The gable elevations are blank, while the front elevation features five windows and a door in one of the gable elevations of the porch. The rear elevation features three windows and a set of French doors with small steps for access. The front porch is served by a ramp, enabling access for guests using wheelchairs and experiencing other mobility challenges. Internally, the unit consists of a combined kitchen/lounge with a small storage unit, a shared bathroom, a master bedroom with an en-suite and another bedroom with no dedicated bathroom facilities. In terms of materials and finishes, the unit walls is made of painted larch cladding, the windows and doors are made of timber, while the roof cover is painted corrugated steel roof.

**3.4** The lodges are described by the applicant as being rated as having high thermal and energy efficiency, potentially enabling full-year use, including in the winter weather conditions. There is ancillary parking in the form of two spaces for the larger lodge and one parking space per



each smaller lodge (no. four spaces in total) would be provided, along with soft landscaping to provide a degree of separation between the lodges.

- 3.5** The business plan submitted with the application states that the site and the structures within it would become a small-scale tourism and leisure destination to offer short term stay holiday accommodation for families, groups and individuals. The maximum number of guests would be capped at 8-10 at full occupancy, which is consistent with the number of the lodges and bedrooms proposed in the application. The aim is to additionally provide guided walks in the nearby forest tracks, llama trekking and electric cycle hire along with respite programmes utilising the natural environment in the area would be offered to visitors. The submitted application solely relates to the provision of the three lodges on site. Any further development beyond these lodges and associated works would necessitate a further planning application in the future. This will include any permanent, future arrangements for the livestock currently on site which are understood to be housed temporarily within the forward part of the site, pending the outcome of this planning application.

#### **4. CONSULTATIONS**

- 4.1** West Dunbartonshire Council Environmental Health Service have no objection subject to condition on a land contamination desktop study and site investigation works report to be carried out and submitted prior to the site becoming operational.
- 4.2** West Dunbartonshire Council Roads Service have no objection on highway safety and parking. No objection in relation to flooding risk or impact on Gruggies Burn.
- 4.3** Transport Scotland have no objections to the proposed development.
- 4.4** West Dunbartonshire Council Biodiversity Officer has no objection subject to the recommendations made in Section 5.2 of the Preliminary Ecological Report are conditioned.

#### **5. REPRESENTATIONS**

- 5.1** Objections were received from two neighbouring householders in connection with the proposal. A further representation was received in which it is indicated that the proposal is supported although concerns on specific aspects are highlighted. The full details are contained within the planning file and are available for public viewing. However, for the purposes of this report, the material planning points raised can be summarised as follows:

- Concern over the presence of the invasive species of Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed within the site and near the Barnhill

Road right of way and possible contamination of the nearby land due by the guests.

- Change in noise levels from the nearby trunk road due to the clearance of trees and concern over the noise generated by the proposed use, specifically guest activity and the llama trekking aspect.
- Smell from the animals kept at the site during warm weather.
- Flooding.
- Impact on traffic on the A82 trunk road.
- Details of what soil assessment has been carried out.
- Details of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.
- Concern over impact on wildlife.
- Concern over the impact of traffic generated by the use and impact of parking on Strowanswell Rd.
- Concern over noise, in particular in relation to the dogs present at the residential site directly adjacent to the site of the lodge business.
- Concern over the appropriateness of the site location and its proposed layout, landscaping, design and visual impact.
- Concern over the proposal having a negative effect on the nearby Local Nature Conservation Site.
- Concern over the proposal failing to meet the criteria of the relevant planning policies in relation to Green Networks and Green Belt.
- Access to Strowan's Well via Strowanswell Road.
- Boundaries and land ownerships.
- Possible future expansion of the business to operate from the site.
- Use of Core Path running through the objector's garden and the possible impact of the proposal on it.
- Construction of garden building on land adjacent to the site for use in connection with a business.

## **6. ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### National Planning Framework 4

**6.1** National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) was adopted by the Scottish Ministers on 13th of February 2023 and now forms part of the Development Plan.

**6.2** Policy 1 relates to tackling the climate and nature crises. When considering all development proposals significant weight will be given to the global climate and nature crises. Policy 2 also relates to the climate in the form of climate mitigation and adaptation. Policy 3 seeks to protect biodiversity, reverse biodiversity loss, and deliver positive effects from development and strengthen nature networks. Criterion (c) states that proposals for local development will include appropriate measures to conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, in accordance with national and local guidance. Measures should be proportionate to the nature and scale of development. This small scale tourism proposal is not considered to raise any issues in respect of policies 1 and 2. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal considers biodiversity and sets out

various recommendations and enhancements and the proposal is thus supported by Policy 3.

- 6.3** Policy 8 seeks to promote and facilitate compact urban growth and only supports development in the Green Belt in certain circumstances. This includes tourism developments. Proposals are also required to meet additional criteria, including the need for development to be compatible with the surrounding established countryside and landscape character; be designed to an appropriate scale, massing and external appearance; use materials that minimise visual impact on the green belt as far as possible; and have no significant long-term impacts on the environmental quality of the Green Belt. Following a full assessment of the detail of the proposal as set out in Section 7 below, the proposal presents no conflict with Policy 8.
- 6.4** Policy 14 aims to promote and facilitate well designed development that makes successful places by taking a design-led approach and applying the place principle. The policy supports proposals which are consistent with the six qualities of successful places; healthy, pleasant, connected, distinctive, sustainable and adaptable and it is considered that this is achieved. Flood risk and water management is addressed in Policy 22. The proposal is not at risk of flooding or considered to add to flood risk.
- 6.5** Development proposals that are likely to raise unacceptable noise issues will not be supported, in accordance with Policy 23. Following a full assessment, it is considered that any noise impact would be acceptable with the imposition of appropriate conditions and no adverse issues have been raised by the Environmental Health Service. Tourism proposals are addressed by Policy 30, which sets out a range of criteria to be taken into account. This tourism proposal is considered supportable.
- 6.6** Overall, it is considered that the proposal is supported by and presents no conflict with the policies set out within NPF4 and is assessed fully in Section 7 below.

#### West Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2010

- 6.7** Policy GD1 seeks to ensure that all new development enhances the Plan area and environmental quality in general through an emphasis on high quality design. Proposals are required to meet a number of criteria and it is considered that the small scale tourism proposal is acceptable in this respect. Policy LE8 supports applications for tourist industry development, subject to a range of criteria and it is considered this tourism development can be supported. Policy F1 addresses flooding and the proposal raises no concerns in this respect. Matters relating to Biodiversity are fully addressed with reference to Policy E1. Finally, the impact on residential amenity is considered acceptable and there is no conflict with Policy H5.

- 6.8** The proposal complies with the policies of the adopted Local Plan and is assessed fully in Section 7 below.

## **7. ASSESSMENT AGAINST MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan 2

- 7.1** On 15 March 2023, the Planning Committee took a decision that the Council would not adopt Local Development Plan 2. The Proposed Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2), incorporating the recommended modifications of the Examination Report received on 22 April 2020, which were accepted by the Planning Committee of 19 August 2020, remains the Council's most up to date spatial strategy and is therefore afforded significant weight in the assessment and determination of planning applications, subject to compatibility with NPF4. The Scottish Ministers' Direction relating to the adoption of LDP2, dated 18 December 2020, is also a material consideration.
- 7.2** Policy GB1 seeks to direct new development towards the urban area in order to support regeneration and maintain the attractiveness and character of the Green Belt, whilst also supporting economic development and diversification in the Green Belt, under certain circumstances. This support is subject to a number of additional requirements being met, including the need for proposals to be fully compatible with surrounding established countryside character, and avoid unacceptable impacts on the environmental quality and landscape character of the Green Belt. A small scale tourism development is supported within the Green Belt. The layout and design is considered to be compatible with the surrounding landscape character and avoid any significant adverse effects on the landscape and surrounding environmental quality.
- 7.3** Policy CP1 requires new development to take a design-led approach to creating sustainable places, which put the needs of people first and demonstrate the six qualities of successful places. It is considered that the proposal complies with the policy. Matters relating to ecology and biodiversity are also satisfactorily addressed with reference to Policy ENV1.
- 7.4** Policy E6 supports tourist facilities where there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site and they avoid adverse impacts on the green network and built heritage. There is no conflicts with this policy.
- 7.5** Policy ENV6 addresses flooding and the proposal raises no concerns in this respect. Matters relating to Biodiversity are fully addressed with reference to Policy ENV1. Finally, the impact on residential amenity is considered acceptable, there is no conflict with Policy H4 and no unacceptable noise pollution would occur as required by Policy ENV8.

- 7.6** It is considered that the proposal being assessed presents no conflict the relevant policies of the proposed LDP2.

Principle of development

- 7.7** The site is located within the Green Belt as defined by proposed Local Development Plan 2 which represents the Council's most up to date policy position. Policy 8 of NPF4 and Policy GB1 of proposed Local Development Plan 2 set out the uses which will be supported within the Green Belt. This includes tourism uses which are appropriate for and require a location within the Green Belt. It remains that any such proposals require to have no unacceptable impact on the Green Belt, landscape character, does not undermine the purpose of the Green Belt and are of an appropriate scale and design. The principle of the establishment of three tourism lodges at the site is in accordance with these overriding policies but further regard is needed to their setting and design in terms of landscape character. A condition is considered appropriate to limit the occupancy period of the units to ensure that they do not become permanent residential dwellings which contribute to an expansion of the settlement into the Green Belt, as this would undermine the purpose of the Green Belt and associated policies. A supporting statement has also been submitted by the agent. While a financial appraisal has not been provided, the statistical information presented in the business plan discusses rising tourism levels in Scotland and the area, as well as current trends in holidaymaking, with greater interest in UK-based stays and outdoor leisure. Alongside the outdoor activities to be offered to the visitors using the proposed accommodation, which utilise both the setting of the application site as well as the areas of nature in Barnhill and beyond, the intended business model is considered realistic and appropriate in principle.

- 7.8** It is considered that the Green Belt location is also justified as being required as the enclosed and tranquil setting would form a key attraction point for the use that could not readily be achieved within the heart of an urban area. Tourism developments are also supported in principle by NPF4 and the Local Development Plan subject to a full assessment of all relevant policies and considerations.

Design, layout and visual impact

- 7.9** The application site is located at the head of the privately owned part of Strowanswell Rd. Directly north of it, an area of woodland with the Gruggies Burn can be found; the watercourse can be followed on a path parallel to it and leading to the areas of forest and countryside in Barnhill as well as the Overtoun House and trails leading to Kilpatrick Hills further east.
- 7.10** In terms of the design and landscape character the lodges are of a modest scale, with their total footprint slightly over 131sqm. The lodges are to be clad in timber with a metal roofs. The larger unit has a small porch and a low-rise access ramp associated with it also so it can be used by people with mobility issues. The siting of the three modest

lodges, along with the clearance of waste, overgrown vegetation and installation of new fencing is a marked improvement on the previous condition of the site. The site remains well screened with the topography and vegetation along the boundaries of the site. The very contained nature of the former Quarry results in the visibility of the site also being contained to adjacent vantage points. Having regard to the modest scale of the lodges, the wider setting and backdrop it is considered that the visual impact will be minimal and will not have a discernible adverse impact of the wider countryside extending east of the site, nor would it have any excessive impact on the existing neighbourhood. The development is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of existing neighbourhood and landscape character.

#### Residential amenity

- 7.11** Whilst within a Green Belt location, the site is adjacent to nearby residential properties. The potential impact on adjacent residential amenity therefore requires careful consideration. Undoubtedly the lodges will bring an element of activity to the former Quarry. However, it is considered that the introduction of three holiday lodges of a modest scale is unlikely to give rise to a substantial loss of residential amenity to the neighbouring homes. The wider locality does also feature non-residential uses, with a garage and a second hand car dealership located to the south of the application site. The siting of three self-contained tourism units is not considered to be incompatible with these surrounding land uses. Concerns with respect to noise has been raised in the representations. There is no objection to the proposal from the Environmental Health Service in relation to noise generated by the proposed use. The applicant has indicated that the site would be managed and monitored by the owner directly from his place of residence which is adjacent to the application site. Management of the site from either within or adjacent to the site is key to the acceptability of the proposal to ensure that in the event that disturbance was to occur from patrons, this could be immediately addressed. A site management plan based on this arrangement is thus considered to be important to controlling this development and is therefore included as a planning condition.
- 7.12** In further assessing residential amenity, the mutual overlooking of the application site and the adjacent residential properties is limited, with the former quarry site being situated significantly lower than the neighbouring houses. This amenity aspect is also softened by the vegetation present in the rear curtilages of the residential plot. There is no overshadowing impact from the development; sunlight access for the application site is reasonable despite the significant change in elevation along the southern boundary.
- 7.13** The principle of tourism accommodation at this location is therefore supported by Local Development Plan policies and consideration of surrounding land uses also supports their siting at this site. The use of this brownfield site will also bring about a positive change to a site which

had lain abandoned for a long time. This is also supported by Local Development Plan policies and national planning policies to support sustainable development and reuse of land.

#### Roads, access and parking

- 7.14** With respect to highway safety, the lodges will use Strowanswell Rd and Glenpath for vehicle access, themselves connecting onto the A82 trunk road. Four car parking spaces are shown within the application site. The Roads Service offer no objection to the access via a short section of private road or the parking arrangements within the site. Strowanswell Road joins the A82 Trunk Road at a crossroads with Greenhead Road and additionally, Transport Scotland offer no objections to the proposal.
- 7.15** Concerns are raised in the objections regarding the use of nearby Core Path and the possible impact of the proposal on it. The path in question is remote from Strowanswell Road, outwith the site boundary of the application and is situated at a significantly higher level. The proposal will have no potential to impact upon the Core Path, but continued use of the Core Path is safeguarded by condition.

#### Ecology

- 7.16** The application site is on the edge of the established settlement and is surrounded by developed woodland from the north and the east. Whilst there are no ecological designations covering the site, a Local Nature Conservation Site within the glen through which the Gruggies Burn flows lies in very close proximity. Due to this, ecology is an important aspect to be considered as a part of the appraisal of the proposal. A Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA), was submitted in support of the application and has since been reviewed by the Council's Biodiversity Officer. The PEA identifies various habitats were found within the study area for a range of species including foraging bats, otter, red squirrel, pine marten, badgers, reptiles and nesting birds although no field signs were found. The Biodiversity Officer advised that she is content with the findings of the report. The development will therefore not impact unacceptably on both protected and non-protected species. The PEA goes on to include a number of recommendations and enhancement proposals which would provide further biodiversity benefit if included in the project. The Biodiversity Officer therefore advises that Section 5.2 'Recommendations' of the report are conditioned into any decision permitting the development.
- 7.17** Concerns regarding tree removal, ecology and the PEA are highlighted in the objections. It is acknowledged that the PEA is based on the situation on site at the time of the survey and that vegetation clearance works had been undertaken within the site prior to the submission of the planning application. There was no planning restrictions, however, that prevented the applicant from undertaking this work. No further clearance works or tree removal is proposed as part of this application. However, it is acknowledged that many of the trees around the periphery of the site are growing out of the rock face and likely self-seeded. In terms of tree

management, the correct course of action in the future may be to remove them. Nevertheless, future tree removal can be managed via a condition.

#### Flooding and drainage

- 7.18** Turning to matters relating to with flooding and drainage, the assessment is informed by the consultation response from the Council's Roads Service in their capacity as local flooding authority. It is advised in the response that the application site is not within the flood risk area from the nearby Gruggies Burn. No objection was raised in this response on flood risk grounds either in respect of flood risk to the development itself, or contribution to additional flood risk off site. No additional requirements in respect of site drainage were highlighted.

#### Ground conditions

- 7.19** Environmental Health have offered no objection to the proposal but have recommended as a minimum requirement a phase one desktop study, conditioned into any planning decision. The purpose of this qualitative (descriptive) assessment of risk and reconnaissance is to develop an outline conceptual site model and identify all plausible contaminant-pathway-receptor linkages at the site. If the findings of the desktop indicate there is plausible risk to the end users of the site, then a site investigation and risk assessment should be undertaken where the preliminary risk assessment identifies any potential unacceptable risks or to reduce uncertainty in the initial conceptual model.

#### Other matters raised in representations

- 7.20** A wide range of other issues have been raised in the objections received. Concern over the presence of the invasive species of Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed within the site and near the Barnhill Road right of way and possible contamination of the nearby land by the guests are raised. The presence of Japanese Knotweed outwith the site boundary has been noted in the PEA document; no presence of Giant Hogweed has been noted either within or outwith the site. As the former species' presence is outwith the application site boundaries, it is not within the scope of this planning application to control.
- 7.21** Whilst concerns are highlighted in the objections in respect of waste being present on site and pushed towards the rear of the site, it is acknowledged that various items of waste had accumulated within the site over the years and despite the applicant's clearance works, some remnants remain. No evidence was noted during site visits of any recent ground works moving material within the site.
- 7.22** A change in noise levels from the nearby trunk road due to the clearance of trees is noted however any tree clearance was undertaken prior to any planning application and thus not within scope of this application to assess. Concern regarding existing dog barking is highlighted, however this is not a planning matter. Access to Strowan's Well via Strowanswell Road is highlighted as a concern. During site visits, access to the path



leading to Strowan's Well was maintained. Matters relating to boundaries are not relevant to planning and instead are civil matters.

- 7.23** Concerns regarding the possible future expansion of the business to operate from the site are raised. The application assessment is based on the submitted proposal and it would be inappropriate to speculatively appraise possible future development of the site or change or material increase in operations of the planned business. With regard to the timber building situated outwith application site, adjacent to the house, the applicant advises that this is provided for domestic purposes. Any planning requirement is a matter separate from this application. Finally, this application does not include any arrangement for the keeping of livestock on the site and does not assess such. It is understood that the livestock are housed temporarily within the forward part of the site pending the outcome of this planning application and the permanent arrangements for housing the livestock will require to be subject of a separate planning application in the near future.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1** Overall, subject to the conditions below, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable. The design and layout is acceptable both visually and in respect of neighbouring amenity and the proposal will not have any significant or adverse effects on the locality. The proposal is therefore in accordance with reference to NPF4, the adopted West Dunbartonshire Local Plan and the proposed West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan 2. Whilst the submitted objections are acknowledged, there are no material planning considerations that suggest that planning permission should not be granted subject to the conditions below.

## **9. CONDITIONS**

- 1) No individual shall reside in the approved tourist accommodation for more than 28 consecutive days. In addition, no individuals shall reside in the approved tourist accommodation for more than 60 days in the calendar year. To this effect, a permanent log book shall be kept of all visitors who stay at the tourist accommodation for the lifetime of the development. This shall note the names and addresses of all of the visitors. The log book shall be made available for the perusal of the Council as Planning Authority if so requested.
- 2) Prior to the lodges hereby approved being first brought into use the lodge operator shall submit a Management Plan to the Planning Authority for their written approval. The Management Plan shall include details of day to day site management and maintenance and how potential noise and guest behaviour issues are to be dealt with should they arise. Thereafter, the site will operate in accordance with the approved Management Plan for the lifetime of the development unless otherwise agreed by the Planning Authority

- 3) Notwithstanding the approved drawing 02 - *One Bedroom Lodge - Plan & Elevations*, details of the materials and finishes of the two single-bedroom lodges shall be submitted for the written approval of the Planning Authority and shall be implemented as approved.
- 4) The proposed car parking and access arrangements as shown on drawing no. 02 rev C shall be formed and available prior to the lodges hereby approved being first brought into use. The spaces and access arrangements shall thereafter be kept available for the lifetime of the development.
- 5) Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the surface and foul drainage shall be provided to the Planning Authority for written approval. Thereafter, the approved arrangements shall be implemented prior to the lodges hereby approved being brought into use. The drainage arrangements shall thereafter be maintained for the lifetime of the development. For the avoidance of doubt, the arrangement will incorporate sustainable drainage arrangements (SuDS).
- 6) Notwithstanding the details shown on drawing no. 02 rev C with respect to boundary planting and prior to the commencement of works on site, full details of both hard and soft landscape works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Where appropriate these details shall include proposed finished and existing ground levels and contours, hard surfacing materials and lighting. Thereafter the approved details shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details within a timescale to be agreed by the Planning Authority. Any trees, shrubs or hedges planted in accordance with this condition which are removed, die, become severely damaged or become seriously diseased within five years of planting shall be replaced within the next planting season by trees, shrubs or hedging plants of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.
- 7) No trees shall be lopped, topped, felled or otherwise removed from the site without the prior written approval of the Planning Authority. The recommendations made in Section 5.2 of the approved Preliminary Ecological Report shall be implemented as approved.
- 8) Notwithstanding the approved plans, public access to the path leading to Strowan's Well accessed from Strowanswell Rd shall be maintained at all times unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.
- 9) (a) No development (other than investigative work) shall take place until such time as a comprehensive site investigation has been carried out to the appropriate Phase level and submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The investigation shall be completed by a suitably qualified and competent person and completed in accordance with advice given in the following:

- Planning Advice Note 33 (2000) and Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (as inserted by section 57 of the Environment Act 1995)
- BS 10175:2011+A1:2013 – British Standards institution ‘The Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Sites – Code of Practice’.
- Land Contamination and Development Management - Guidance.  
[https://www.ep-scotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/ConLanDevGuide\\_12-Aug19-FINAL.pdf](https://www.ep-scotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/ConLanDevGuide_12-Aug19-FINAL.pdf)

(b) If the Phase 1 investigation indicates any potential pollution linkages, a Conceptual Site Model shall be formulated and these linkages must be subjected to risk assessment. If a Phase 2 investigation is required, then a risk assessment of all relevant pollution linkages will require to be submitted.

(c) If the risk assessment identifies any unacceptable risks then an appraisal of remedial options followed by a detailed remediation scheme will be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. No works other than investigative works shall be carried out on site prior to receipt of the Planning Authority’s written approval of the remediation scheme.

- 10) Remediation of the site shall be carried out in accordance with the approved remediation scheme prior to the proposed development being brought into use. Any amendments to the approved remediation scheme shall not be implemented unless approved in writing by the Planning Authority. On completion of the remediation works, the developer shall submit a verification report to the Planning Authority, confirming that the works have been carried out in accordance with the approved remediation scheme and that the works have successfully reduced the risks to acceptable levels.
- 11) If the remediation plan requires it then a monitoring and maintenance scheme (including the monitoring of the long-term effectiveness of the proposed remediation) shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority. Any actions/measures ongoing shall be implemented within an agreed timescale with the Planning Authority. Following completion of the actions/measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a further report which demonstrates the effectiveness of the monitoring and maintenance measures shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority.
- 12) The presence of any previously un-encountered contamination that becomes evident during the development of the site shall be reported to the Planning Authority in writing within one week, and work on the affected area shall cease. At this stage, if requested by the Planning Authority, an investigation and risk assessment shall be undertaken and an amended remediation scheme shall be submitted to and approved by

the Planning Authority prior to the recommencement of works in the affected area. The approved details shall be implemented as approved.

- 13) If there is a requirement to either re-use site won material or to import material then the assessment criteria and sampling frequency that would adequately demonstrate its suitability for use shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority prior to any material being re-used or imported. In addition to this and in accordance with BS3882:2015 and BS8601:2013, material to be used in the top 300mm shall also be free from metals, plastic, wood, glass, tarmac, paper and odours. On completion of the works and at a time and or phasing agreed by the Planning Authority, the developer shall submit a validation report containing details of the source of the material and associated test results to demonstrate its suitability for use.

**Pamela Clifford**  
**Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager**  
**Date: 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

**Person to Contact:** Pamela Clifford, Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager  
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**Appendix:** Location Plan

**Background Papers:**

1. Application forms and plans
2. National Planning Framework 4
3. West Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2010
4. Proposed West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan 2 2020, as amended
5. Consultation responses
6. Representations

**Wards affected:** Ward 3 – Dumbarton



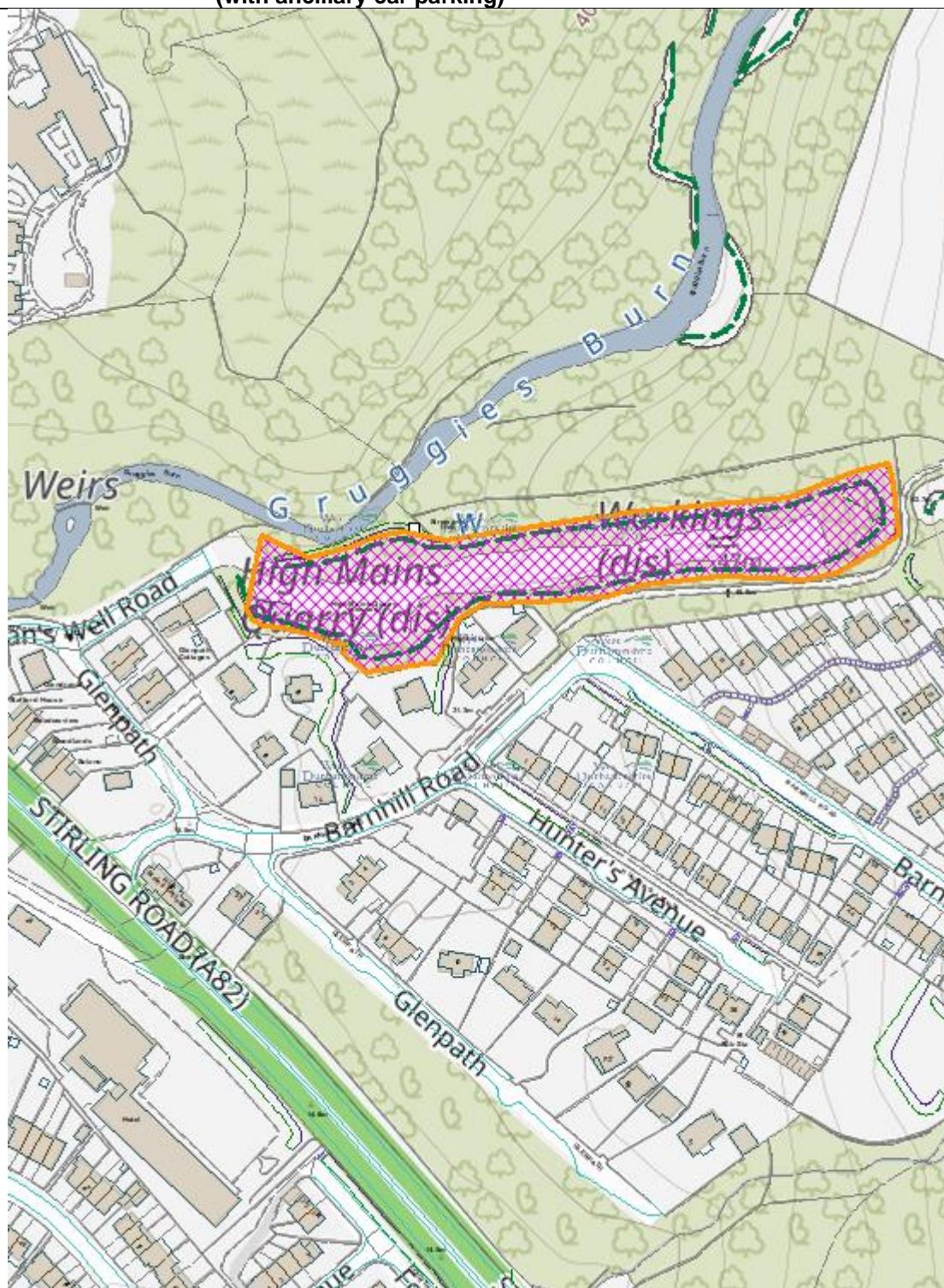
Map Register No: HQ674

Date: 3 April 2023

DC22/129/FUL

Proposed redevelopment  
of site of former quarry and  
garages / workshops to  
allow the introduction of  
three holiday letting lodges  
(with ancillary car parking)

Store At Dumbuck Old Quarry  
Strowanswell Road  
Dumbarton  
G82 2QN





## WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

### Report by Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager

Planning Committee: 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023

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**DC22/185/FUL:      Change of ground for the siting of three holiday lodges, associated waste water treatment plant and ancillary car parking at Former Maryland Water Pumping Station, Garshake Road, Dumbarton by Mrs Mary Gillies**

#### 1.      **REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1      The application has been subject of a number of objections, including one from the Silverton and Overtoun Community Council. Under the terms of the approved Scheme of Delegation, it therefore requires to be determined by the Planning Committee.

#### 2.      **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1      **Grant** planning permission subject to the conditions set out in Section 9.

#### 3.      **DEVELOPMENT DETAILS**

- 3.1      The application relates to a former Scottish Water site located adjacent to a private road approximately 380m northwest of the fork at the top of Garshake Road Dumbarton. The site is 0.2ha in size and split across two distinct levels, with the upper level created by a former water storage tank, which measures approximately 20.4m x 15m. In addition to the storage tank, the site also includes a lower section which provides level access to the private road. The site is bounded by the private road to the east, mature woodland to the west and north, and a narrower strip of trees to the south.
- 3.2      In 2021, planning permission was granted for a change of use of the site for the siting of three holiday lodges, including a waste water treatment area and ancillary car parking (DC21/096/FUL). It was subsequently brought to the Council's attention that the applicant had undertaken works on site which did not follow the planning permission granted. Following discussions with the applicant, an application was submitted in respect of the changes undertaken on site which did not accord with the planning permission granted.
- 3.3      The main amendments to the proposal are as follows:
- The dimensions of all proposed units has been altered, with each unit having a footprint of 55sqm, being 11m L x 5m W, 2.5m to eaves height and 3.2m to the highest point of the roof.
  - In relation to the units previously approved, the proposed footprint of Units 1 and 3 have been reduced by a total of approximately 32.8sqm (16.4sm each),

with the highest point of the proposed roof reduced by 0.2m. The proposed footprint of Unit 2 has increased by 7.7sqm, with the highest point of the proposed roof reduced by 0.7m. Overall, the total footprint proposed represents a decrease of 25.1sqm.

- Number and placement of windows and doors has been altered, with each unit having three double windows on the front elevation, a set of double doors on the gable elevation and one double window on the rear elevation. Previously, Units 1 and 3 had two double windows and a front door on the front elevation, two double windows on Gable 1, two windows on Gable 2 and a double window and set of French doors on the rear elevation. Unit 2 differed in having three windows on Gable 1, one window on Gable 2, with the rear elevation having one window at upper level.
- Unit 2 re-ordinated through 90 degrees.
- Units 1 and 3 moved forward by approximately 3 metres.
- Profile of external staircase between the upper and lower sections, which previously comprised a half-landing before turning and continuing upwards, has been straightened as one.
- Demolition of single storey former valve house, which was previously retained
- Opening of the front elevation of former water tank to allow installation of new double doors measuring 2.1 W x 2.3 H.
- Alterations to the parking layout and associated works, with two car parking spaces to the west of the external staircase removed and two new spaces created to the east of the staircase.
- Timber cladding added to the front elevation of the former water tank, including new door opening.
- Addition of a new 1.6m high timber screen fencing along the gable ends of unit 2, a 1.6m high wall to the north of the gable end of unit 1 and a 1.1m high wall along the front edge of the former water tank

#### **4. CONSULTATIONS**

- 4.1** West Dunbartonshire Council Roads Service have no objections on roads and parking grounds subject to the applicant addressing the requirement for turning space within the site. No objection on flooding grounds.
- 4.2** West Dunbartonshire Council Environmental Health Service have no objection, subject to two conditions relating to re-use of site material and unexpected contamination being attached.
- 4.3** Scottish Water have no objection to the proposed alterations.

#### **5. REPRESENTATIONS**

- 5.1** Nine objections from local residents (some of whom have forwarded multiple submissions), the Woodland Trust, and the Silverton and Overtoun Community Council were received. The detail of each representation is available in the electronic planning file for the application and available for public viewing. The material concerns raised in the objections can be summarised as follows:



### Layout and Design

- Concern that U-shaped layout lends itself to group bookings.
- Lodges have changed significantly in size, design and positioning.
- Design of lodges is cramped to achieve maximum occupancy.
- New 1 metre wall on top of former water tank is obtrusive and dominant.
- External staircase now has a straight profile, with concrete finish not in keeping with rest of the development and surrounding rural area.
- Removal of original valve house has altered front façade.
- Lodges 1 and 3 previously had an outlook to the River Clyde, which has been removed.
- No landscape plan provided.
- Entrance gates not in keeping with surrounding landscape.
- No disabled access.
- Proposal constitutes overdevelopment.

### Landscape and Visual Impact

- Adverse effects on local character and visual amenity.
- Trees removed outwith site, but close to boundary.

### Residential Amenity

- Proposal would result in anti-social behaviour.
- Disturbance to residential amenity, including sheltered housing on Baxter View.
- Believe a hot tub will be built on the terrace area.

### Access and Parking

- Adverse impacts on road safety due to increased traffic generated.
- Lack of adequate parking provision.
- Lack of turning head space within parking area.
- Location of two new car parking spaces will create congestion at entrance and result in cars reversing onto farm track.
- Straightened external staircase will make turning more difficult in the site.
- Adverse safety impacts on use of Core Path no.56.

### Drainage

- No details provided on surface water or foul drainage.
- Concern that a soakaway cannot be supported on the site.
- No servitude rights to access mains water or discharge wastewater to adjacent land.

### Procedure

- Private access should be included in the application site boundary.
- Application DC21/096/FUL not properly assessed.
- Planning conditions attached to DC21/096/FUL disregarded.
- Planning permission for DC21/096/FUL should be invalidated.
- No Building Warrant for the development.
- Site description is inaccurate.
- General lack of detail in application.

### Other Issues

- Contrary to Green Belt Policy.
- Applicant does not own or have full permission to use the private road to access the application site.
- Development will result in adverse impacts on the ancient woodland within Barr Wood.
- Site not suitable for development due to its location between two high voltage pylons.
- Unauthorised works undertaken.
- Opening of the former water tank is a change of use.
- Concern about future use of former water tank and its structural integrity
- Engineer's Report on former water tank not submitted.
- No net environmental gain identified.
- No carbon reduction plan or inclusion of any renewable energy technology.

## **6. ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)

- 6.1** National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) was adopted by the Scottish Ministers on 13th of February 2023 and now forms part of the Development Plan.
- 6.2** Policy 1 relates to tackling the climate and nature crises. When considering all development proposals significant weight will be given to the global climate and nature crises. Policy 2 also relates to the climate in the form of climate mitigation and adaptation. Policy 3 seeks to protect biodiversity, reverse biodiversity loss, and deliver positive effects from development and strengthen nature networks. Criterion (c) states that proposals for local development will include appropriate measures to conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, in accordance with national and local guidance. Measures should be proportionate to the nature and scale of development. Overall, the proposal re-uses an existing structure as part of the development and as such the embodied energy of the structure remains. It is considered that the nature and small scale changes proposed to the design and layout would have a neutral effect in respect of Policies 1, 2 and 3.
- 6.3** Policy 8 seeks to promote and facilitate compact urban growth and only supports development in the Green Belt in certain circumstances. Proposals are also required to meet additional criteria, including the need for development to be compatible with the surrounding established countryside and landscape character; be designed to an appropriate scale, massing and external appearance; use materials that minimise visual impact on the green belt as far as possible; and have no significant long-term impacts on the environmental quality of the Green Belt.
- 6.4** Following the grant of planning permission for DC21/096/FUL, the principle of development in a Green Belt location is established. Following an assessment of the proposed layout, design, impacts on landscape character and visual amenity, set out in section 7 below, it is considered that the proposal, specifically the proposed changes to DC21/096/FUL, complies with the Policy 8.

- 6.5** Policy 14 aims to promote and facilitate well designed development that makes successful places by taking a design-led approach and applying the place principle. The policy supports proposals which are consistent with the six qualities of successful places; healthy, pleasant, connected, distinctive, sustainable and adaptable. It is considered that the small scale nature of the proposed changes to the layout and design do not raise any concerns with regard to six qualities of successful places.
- 6.6** Flood risk and water management is covered in Policy 22. The proposal is not at risk of flooding or considered to add to flood risk. The policy goes on to require proposals to manage all rain and surface water through sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). A SuDS / soakaway arrangement is proposed and final details can be addressed by condition.
- 6.7** Development proposals that are likely to raise unacceptable noise issues will not be supported, in accordance with Policy 23. The site is located some 300 metres from the nearest adjacent properties and in any case, the amendments being considered would not result in any noise concerns beyond the consented position.
- 6.8** Tourism proposals are addressed by Policy 30, which sets out a range of criteria to be taken into account. In this case, the acceptability of the use of the site is already established by the extant planning permission and the amendments under consideration raise no issues that require assessment in respect of this policy.
- 6.9** Overall, it is considered that the proposal is supported by and presents no conflict with the policies set out within NPF4 and is assessed fully in Section 7 below.

West Dunbartonshire Adopted Local Plan 2010

- 6.10** Policy GB1 aims to restrict the types of green belt development which could be accommodated within the urban area by defining the uses and types of development that are acceptable in the green belt. It notes that development which would have an adverse effect on the landscape character of the local area is not supported. The principle of development is established by the previous permission. It is considered that the proposal would not have any significant adverse effects on landscape character, with further assessment set out in section 7 below.
- 6.11** Policy GD1 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that all new development enhances the Plan area and environmental quality in general through an emphasis on high quality design. Proposals are required to meet a number of criteria, including the need to be appropriate to the local area in terms of land use and layout and design; be energy efficient and meet the roads, parking and access requirements of the Council.
- 6.12** The proposed changes to the layout and design are assessed in section 7 below, which concludes that they are appropriate and do not raise any concerns with respect to the six qualities of successful places. Further to the assessment of parking below, it is considered that the proposal meets the Council's parking standards.
- 6.13** Policy F2 requires proposals to satisfy the principles of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and identify maintenance arrangements, where appropriate. The

policy also requires Drainage Impact Assessments (DIA) to be submitted for any proposals which requires waste or surface water to be drained. The principle of private waste water treatment on the site was established through DC21/096/FUL and, subject to the final details being agreed, there is no conflict with this policy.

- 6.14** Policy LE8 supports applications for tourist industry development, subject to there being no adverse environmental, landscape, infrastructure and transport implications; a clear locational need and significant economic benefit. As noted above, the acceptability of the use of the site is already established by the extant planning permission and the amendments under consideration raise no issues that require assessment in respect of this policy.
- 6.15** The proposal complies with the policies of the adopted Local Plan and is assessed fully in Section 7 below.

## **7. ASSESSMENT AGAINST MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### West Dunbartonshire Local Plan (LDP2) Proposed Plan

- 7.1** On 15 March 2023, the Planning Committee took a decision that the Council would not adopt Local Development Plan 2. The Proposed Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2), incorporating the recommended modifications of the Examination Report received on 22 April 2020, which were accepted by the Planning Committee of 19 August 2020, remains the Council's most up to date spatial strategy and is therefore afforded significant weight in the assessment and determination of planning applications, subject to compatibility with NPF4. The Scottish Ministers' Direction relating to the adoption of LDP2, dated 18 December 2020, is also a material consideration.
- 7.2** Policy GB1 seeks to direct new development towards the urban area in order to support regeneration and maintain the attractiveness and character of the Green Belt, whilst also supporting economic development and diversification in the green belt, under certain circumstances. This support is subject to a number of additional requirements being met, including the need for proposals to be fully compatible with surrounding established countryside character, and avoid unacceptable impacts on the environmental quality and landscape character of the Green Belt. In addition to the principle of development having already been established, it is considered that the small scale and type of changes proposed to the layout and design would be compatible with the surrounding landscape character and would avoid any significant adverse effects on the landscape and surrounding environmental quality.
- 7.3** Policy CP1 requires new development to take a design-led approach to creating sustainable places, which put the needs of people first and demonstrate the six qualities of successful places. Further to the assessment of changes proposed to the layout and design, set out in Section 7 below, it is considered that the proposal complies with the policy.
- 7.4** Policy CP2 seeks to promote the role of green infrastructure in creating high quality places. The policy requires proposals to integrate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) features in line with the current Sewers for Scotland Guidance (i.e. v 4.0),

with applicants required to demonstrate how the design and layout of SuDS reflects and responds to the site circumstance and local landscape character.

- 7.5** Policy E6 supports tourist facilities where there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site and they avoid adverse impacts on the green network and built heritage. With the acceptability of the use of the site already established by the extant planning permission and the amendments under consideration raising no issues, further assessment in respect of this policy is not required.
- 7.6** It is considered that the proposal being assessed presents no conflict with the relevant policies of the proposed LDP2.

Principle of Development

- 7.7** The principle of development for the proposed use of the site and erection of three holiday lodges is already established through the grant of planning permission for DC21/096/FUL, which remains extant for the development of the site. The principle of the development does not therefore require to be further assessed as part of this application as this has been agreed by the previous permission.

Design and Appearance of the development

- 7.8** The proposed site is located in a rural area adjacent to a private road approximately 380m northwest of the fork at the top of Garshake Road in Dumbarton. The site is well screened by mature woodland to the west and north, and a narrower strip of trees to the south. As such, the site is only visible when in close proximity to it. The revised design of each lodge does not raise any concerns with regard to their external appearance, outlook or impacts on the wider site. Indeed, each lodge having the same design and dimension delivers a higher level of uniformity and coherence than that previously approved. It is also noted that revised design will result in the lodges having a smaller overall footprint than that originally approved. With regard to layout, it is considered that the re-orientation of Unit 2 by 90 degrees would have a positive effect by creating a more enclosed and defined space that contributes to a greater sense of place within the wider site. Moving Units 1 and 3 forward by approximately 3 metres to be adjacent to the front edge of the former water tank is considered to have a neutral effect. The provision of appropriate landscaping can be addressed through condition. Overall, the design, appearance and visual arrangement of the lodges situated on the former water storage tank is considered acceptable and also improves the overall arrangement on site beyond the consented position.
- 7.9** The amended design to the stairway within the site giving access between the lower and upper sections results in a straight stairway rather than the previous half-landing before turning and continuing upwards arrangement. Whilst this marginally increases the visual impact of the staircase when viewed from outwith the site, the arrangement is considered acceptable as the overall site is well screened and not visually prominent. However, notwithstanding the straightened profile of the external staircase being acceptable, the concrete finish proposed raises concerns visually and is not considered to be compatible with the more natural timber material finishes across the wider site. In light of this, and following discussions with the applicant, it was agreed that either side of the staircase would be clad in timber to match that of the wider site. The removal of the valve house to

allow for a better car parking arrangement does not have any adverse visual impact and in any case, a non-residential building could be demolished without requiring planning permission.

- 7.10** Turning to the amended walling and fencing arrangement within the site, the introduction of 1.6m high timber screen fencing along the gable ends of unit 2, a 1.6m high wall to the north of the gable end of Unit 1 and a 1.1m high wall along the front edge of the former water tank is considered to be proportionate in scale to the wider development, with the timber fencing in keeping with the timber finishes of the lodges. To soften the effect of the proposed walls, a condition requiring a timber clad finish is recommended. The amendment to the entrance gate does not raise any concerns and is acceptable. The opening formed within the front wall of the former water storage tank, which will be fitted with steel double doors with a timber clad finish, is considered compatible with the other parts of the development. The use of gabion baskets along the northern boundary of the parking spaces south of Unit 1, and the timber fencing proposed at the entrance would not have a significant adverse effect on the overall appearance of the wider site. Overall, it is considered that the proposed development is appropriate in terms of the layout and design and that these matters are satisfactorily addressed.

Impacts on Landscape Character and Visual Amenity

- 7.11** The siting of three holiday lodges would not have any significant effects on local landscape character or visual amenity due to the site being well screened by landscaping and not visually prominent. Therefore the nature and small scale changes proposed would have limited visual effect beyond the site. In light of this, it is considered that the proposed changes will not have any significant impacts on the character and visual amenity of the surrounding area.

Flood Risk and Drainage Arrangements

- 7.12** There is no objection to the proposal from the Council's Roads Service in their capacity as local flooding authority on flood risk grounds. The principle of a private waste water drainage system on the site was established through DC21/096/FUL and the final detail can be addressed by condition together with the final drainage arrangements. The proposal is therefore acceptable and Scottish Water have not raised any concerns.

Roads, access and parking

- 7.13** The location of the site and access from the private road was accepted in the originally granted planning permission. Whilst finished with a loose surface and being single track, the traffic associated with three small holiday lodges will be minimal and does not raise concern. The use of a private road to access this type of development is a common situation. It remains the case that the Council's Roads Service raises no objections to the access arrangements.
- 7.14** While the proposal does not alter the number of parking spaces with the site, it does seek to change the parking layout from that previously permitted, specifically the removal of two car parking spaces to the west of the external staircase and the creation of two new spaces to the east of the staircase. The Roads Service have indicated that a turning space within the parking area should be provided. There is sufficient space within the site to provide a suitable turning arrangement and the

final detail of this can be addressed by condition. Subject to the agreement of these final details, the proposed parking arrangement is acceptable.

- 7.15** While it is acknowledged that the private access road is a core path, no changes are proposed to the core path. The core path is currently not exclusively used by walkers nor is it a grass track in which it is proposed to be surfaced in a way that will completely change its character and use. It is an existing loose surfaced private road designed for use by vehicles. As noted above, the traffic associated with three small holiday lodges will be minimal and the proposed development does not adversely impact upon users of the core path. In fact people using the holiday lodges are likely to use the core path to gain access to the Kilpatrick Hills and the wider area. The Council's Access Officer also offered no objections to the original planning application. In any case, this application assesses the design changes beyond the original proposal and the proposed changes have no impact upon the core path.

#### Residential Amenity

- 7.16** Whilst concerns are raised in respect of possible noise disturbance from the use of the site, particularly given the lack of management on site or adjacent to the site, the site is not located near any neighbouring residential properties. It is some 300 metres from the nearest houses in Bellsmyre, 360 metres from Baxter View and 400 metres from Maryland Farm. The amended proposal being considered does not increase the number of lodges nor the potential duration of occupation. The changes being assessed therefore have no impact on residential amenity. Notwithstanding this, the requirement to submit a management plan for the operation of the site is addressed by condition.

#### Other Matters raised in representations

- 7.17** A wide range of other issues have been raised in the objections received which have not already been assessed above. Concern is raised regarding the processing and assessment of the original planning application previously granted for the site (ref: DC21/096/FUL). It is accepted that the report of handling references a site adjacent to the fork at the top of Garshake Road and not the correct application site. However, following a review of the planning decision, it is clear that the submitted application and all associated documentation related to the correct site. The consultation process was also undertaken on the correct site and submitted application proposal. In respect of the planning policy situation, both sites are located within the Green Belt and the policy position is consistent across both sites. The development complied with all relevant policies, nothing arose in the consultation responses which suggested the proposal was unacceptable and there are no material considerations which suggested that the application should not have been granted. Whilst the situation is unfortunate, any concerns require to be considered separately to this application submission and the Council has responded to the submitted complaints via the Council's complaints process.
- 7.18** The retrospective nature of the application is highlighted. Whilst these concerns are shared, this can have no bearing on the assessment of the submitted application. An application being retrospective is not grounds for a decision of refusal. Further concerns were raised about the failure to comply with the conditions attached to planning permission DC21/096/FUL. Whilst this was raised with the applicant, the submission of this application allows a review of all condition

requirements and addresses any breaches of planning conditions. It is noted that those conditions previously attached to the permission for DC21/096/FUL, which remain relevant and appropriate to this proposal, will be attached to a permission, if granted. Issues relating to the requirement for, or absence of, a Building Warrant are not a material planning matter and are addressed through the Building (Scotland) Act and not the Planning Acts.

- 7.19** Concerns relating to the right of access and use of the private road are civil matters that can have no bearing on the assessment of a planning application. Damage to neighbouring land including any tree removal on neighbouring land are also civil matters. The design amendments being considered will not impact on adjacent land or woodland. The right to connect to any water supply is not a matter to be determined via the planning process.
- 7.20** In further considering procedural matters, concern is raised that the application should not have been validated due to the omission of the private road from the application site. The means of access to an application site requires to be clear. In this case the means of access is via the existing, long established road adjacent to the site. It does not follow that because this road is private and unadopted that it requires to be included within the application site. A road outwith the development site itself would only be included if a proposal requires works to be undertaken to the road. This is not the case here. Concern that the application lacks detail is also highlighted. It is considered that the level of detail required to enable a full assessment is provided in the application submission. Noting concern regarding the lack of a business plan and carbon reduction plan, sufficient supporting documentation was considered to have been submitted with the original application for a proposal of this nature within a Green Belt location, and it is not appropriate to revisit this conclusion as part of this application assessment. The concern regarding the site description on the submitted application form is noted. The application site does not have a postal address and in such cases, it is commonplace to find a range of site descriptions used in identifying a site. It is a requirement of any planning application to submit a location plan with the application site clearly outlined in red to ensure an application site is clearly identified. This has been submitted as required and is available on the electronic planning application file. There is no doubt on the site to which this application relates.
- 7.21** In relation to concerns about the opening of the former water tank, specifically its structural integrity and use, while a Site Investigation Report submitted with DC21/096/FUL recommended that the condition of the water tank and supporting columns be assessed by a structural engineer, the structural integrity of buildings is a matter for the building warrant process and not a material planning consideration. In relation to use, the opening of the former tank is not itself a change of use. The applicant has also confirmed there are no proposals to use the void of the former tank. It is noted that a planning application would be required if it is proposed to change the use of the former tank in the future.
- 7.22** With regard to concern raised about a lack of biodiversity gain, no such requirements were considered necessary in originally granting planning permission. This application is considering the design amendments which do not, on their own, justify biodiversity enhancements.



- 7.23** The proximity of the above ground high voltage electricity transmission lines has no bearing on the acceptability of the proposal and while concern is raised about the possible installation and use of a hot tub, this does not form part of the proposal.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

- 8.1** It is considered that the amendments to the detail and design, beyond that previously granted planning permission, will have no significant or adverse effects on the physical appearance of the overall development or significant impacts on the surrounding landscape and visual amenity. The proposed changes are considered acceptable. The revised proposal accords with reference to NPF4, the adopted West Dunbartonshire Local Plan and the proposed West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan 2. Whilst the submitted objections are acknowledged, there are no material planning considerations that suggest that planning permission should not be granted subject to the conditions below.

## **9. CONDITIONS**

1. No individual shall reside in the tourist accommodation for more than 28 consecutive days. In addition, no individuals shall reside in the tourist accommodation for more than 60 days in the calendar year. To this effect, a permanent log book shall be kept of all visitors who stay at the tourist accommodation for the lifetime of the development. This shall note the names and addresses of all visitors. The log book shall be made available for the inspection of the Council as Planning Authority, if requested.
2. Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the parking arrangement will be provided to the Planning Authority for written approval. Thereafter, the approved parking arrangement shall be formed and available prior to the lodges hereby approved being first brought into use. The spaces and access arrangements shall thereafter be kept available for the lifetime of the development.
3. Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the surface and foul drainage shall be provided to the Planning Authority for written approval. Thereafter, the approved arrangements shall be implemented prior to the lodges hereby approved being brought into use. The drainage arrangements shall thereafter be maintained for the lifetime of the development. For the avoidance of doubt, the arrangement will incorporate sustainable drainage arrangements (SuDS).
4. Prior to the lodges hereby approved being first brought into use, the lodges operator shall submit a Management Plan to the Planning Authority for their written approval. The Management Plan shall include details of day to day site management and maintenance and how potential noise and guest behaviour issues are to be dealt with, should they arise. Thereafter, the site will operate in accordance with the approved Management Plan for the lifetime of the development unless otherwise agreed by the Planning Authority.

5. Prior to the commencement of works, full details of both hard and soft landscaping works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Where appropriate, these details shall include proposed finished and existing grounds levels and contours, hard surfacing materials and lighting. Thereafter, the approved details shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to the lodges being brought into use, unless otherwise agreed by the Planning Authority. Any trees, shrubs, or hedges planted in accordance with this condition which are removed, die, become severely damaged or become seriously diseased within five years if planting shall be replaced within the next planting season by trees, shrubs or hedging plants of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.
6. The 1.6m high wall to the north of the gable end of unit 1 and the 1.1m high wall along the front edge of the former water tank shall be finished in timber cladding to match that across the wider site.
7. Prior to the commencement of development on site, the finishing materials to be used shall be submitted to the Planning Authority for written approval. Thereafter, the approved materials shall be implemented as approved.
8. If there is a requirement to either re-use site one material or to import material then the assessment criteria and sampling frequency that would adequately demonstrate its suitability for use shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority prior to any material being used. In addition to this and in accordance with BS3882:2015 and Bs8601:2013 material to be used in the top 300mm shall also be free from metals, plastic, wood, glass, tarmac and odours.

On completion of the works and at a time and/or phasing agreed by the Planning Authority, the developer shall submit a verification report containing details of the source of the material and appropriate test results to demonstrate its suitability for use.

9. The presence of any previously unexpected contamination that becomes evident during the development of the site shall be reported to the Planning Authority in writing within one week, and work on the site shall cease. At this stage, if requested by the Planning Authority an appropriate investigation and risk assessment shall be undertaken and a remediation scheme shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority prior to the recommencement of works. The approved details shall be implemented as approved.

**Pamela Clifford**  
**Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager**  
**Date: 19 April 2023**

**Person to Contact:** Pamela Clifford, Planning & Building Standards Manager  
Email: [Pamela.Clifford@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:Pamela.Clifford@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)

**Appendix:** Location Plan

**Background Papers:**

1. Application form and plans
2. National Planning Framework 4
3. West Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2010
4. Proposed West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan 2 2020, as amended
5. Planning decision DC21/096/FUL
6. Consultation responses
7. Representations

**Wards affected:** Ward 3 - Dumbarton



Map Register No: HQ675  
Date: 3 April 2023

**DC22/185/FUL**

Change of use of ground for the  
siting of three holiday lodges  
including a waste water treatment  
plant and ancillary car parking  
(being a revised design from that  
approved under Planning  
Permission ref. DC21/096/FUL).

Former Maryland Water Pumping  
Station  
Garshake Road  
Dumbarton





## WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

**Report by Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager**

**Planning Committee: 19 April 2023**

**Subject: Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** To seek approval of the finalised Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Committee:
- (a) approves the finalised Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (Appendix 1) and note that it will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications;
  - (b) agrees that the buildings listed in paragraph 4.7-4.9 be suggested to Historic Environment Scotland as suitable for listing, or for alterations to their existing listing;
  - (c) agrees that further consideration be given to amending the Dumbarton Conservation Area boundary as part of the next Local Development Plan process.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1** The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states that conservation areas are 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Local authorities have a statutory duty to identify and designate such areas. They are also required to review existing conservation areas to ensure they are being managed effectively.
- 3.2** Conservation Area Appraisals should be prepared by authorities as a management tool which helps to identify the special interest and changing needs of an area. An appraisal provides the basis for the development of a programme of action that is compatible with the sensitivities of the historic area and enables local authorities to fulfil their statutory duties to protect and enhance conservation areas. Appraisals also inform policy and assist development management, and provide information to inform heritage funding bids.

### **4. Main Issues**

- 4.1** The draft Conservation Area Appraisal for Dumbarton Town Centre was approved for consultation at the 15 September 2022 Planning Committee. It was published on 9 November 2022 with the consultation period running until 16 January 2023. The consultation was promoted via notification of persons/organisations in the Local Development Plan participant database, notification of premises that were affected by suggested changes to the listed building designations included in the draft Conservation Area Appraisal, social media and a press release. There was also a small exhibition in Dumbarton Library, and presentations were given to the Dumbarton Town Centre Forum and Dumbarton East and Central Community

Council.

- 4.2** Seventeen responses were received to the consultation document, sixteen from individuals and one from Historic Environment Scotland. A summary of the consultation responses and the Council's response to these is set out below, with more information on the responses set out in Appendix 2.

#### Changes to the conservation area boundary

- 4.3** The draft Conservation Area Appraisal suggested that the conservation area boundary should be amended to include Dumbarton Bridge to the west, and the Castle Street car park and the Denny Ship Model Experiment Tank to the east.
- 4.4** All seventeen responses supported the inclusion of Dumbarton Bridge in the conservation area. Twelve supported the inclusion of the Castle Street car park, whilst five, including Historic Environment Scotland did not. Fifteen responses supported the inclusion of the Denny Ship Model Experiment Tank, whilst two, including Historic Environment Scotland, did not. Historic Environment Scotland's comments on this matter are set out in Appendix 2.
- 4.5** A comment was received as to how the Artizan centre will be dealt with given its proximity to the conservation area. The impact of any redevelopment of the Artizan Centre on the conservation area would be a consideration in the assessment of any proposals received. One respondent also suggested that the town centre underpasses be included in the conservation area. The underpasses are of a different era and style of the rest of the conservation area, but could be considered to be of architectural/historic environment interest.
- 4.6** There is no need to change the Conservation Area Appraisal in response to these comments. The suggested changes remain valid and their inclusion in the document does not commit the Council to undertake the suggested changes. Any changes to the conservation area boundary would require a separate statutory procedure e.g. through the next review of the Local Development Plan. It would seem appropriate at that time to include Dumbarton Bridge in the conservation area boundary, with further consideration given to whether an eastern extension is appropriate, given the comments of Historic Environment Scotland. Inclusion of the underpasses could also be considered at that time.

#### Listed buildings

- 4.7** The draft Conservation Area Appraisal suggested that the following buildings should be listed:
- Dumbarton public library
  - Former Hiram Walker HQ (3 High Street)
  - Former Bank of Scotland (22 High Street)
  - Church Street/Castle Street tenements
  - Station Road/College Street tenements (suggested change of listing from C to B)
- 4.8** There was majority support from all respondents for these suggested changes to listing, and it is proposed that these suggestions be made to Historic Environment Scotland by the Council. The draft Conservation Area Appraisal also proposed the former Glasgow Savings Bank (12 High Street) and 6-8 High Street. Unfortunately these were left out of the consultation questionnaire, but it is proposed that the Glasgow Savings Bank and the blocks comprising 2-10 High Street are also



suggested to Historic Environment Scotland for listing. If any of these buildings are considered a candidate for listing, a statutory consultation will be undertaken by Historic Environment Scotland.

- 4.9** Additional buildings were suggested for listing through the consultation period. Of these, it is proposed that the suitability of the original slipways at Leven Quay and the Risk Street flat blocks be considered for listing through dialogue with Historic Environment Scotland. In addition, the changing of the listing of the United Reform Church on Leven Street from C to B should be suggested to Historic Environment Scotland. None of the other suggestions were considered suitable for the Council to suggest for listing for the reasons set out in Appendix 3. It is possible for individuals to make their own suggestions for listing directly to Historic Environment Scotland. There is no need to change the Conservation Area Appraisal in response to these comments.

#### Key Challenges

- 4.10** The consultation asked respondents to rank the key challenges for the conservation area that were set out in the appraisal document. Loss of original architectural detail, inappropriate modern additions to buildings, and use of inappropriate materials and repair techniques ranked as the highest challenges. It is considered that these and the other challenges set out in the appraisal document – poor quality shop fronts, unsightly gap sights and backlands, high shop vacancy rates and poor north-south connectivity - remain relevant for inclusion within the appraisal document.

#### Management Plan

- 4.11** There was majority support for the preparation of a management plan for the conservation area. Such a document would assist in the prioritisation and co-ordination of preservation and enhancement initiatives, as well as identifying resources. The recommendation for a management plan should remain in the appraisal document, although it should be recognised that the funding for the preparation of such a document would need to be identified.

#### Opportunities

- 4.12** The draft Conservation Area Appraisal listed general opportunities for preservation and enhancement relating to the provision of information and advice on the conservation area, and the importance and benefits of looking after buildings. Comments received included questions on who this guidance was for, and the wording of the appraisal document has been amended to offer clarification.

#### Recommended Initiatives

- 4.13** The draft Conservation Area Appraisal included a broad set of specific initiatives to improve the town centre, including greater control of changes to unlisted buildings, improvements to backland areas, gap sites and the riverside frontage, comprehensive improvements to shopfronts and reviewing car parking provision to create more useable greenspace in the town centre. Eleven respondents agreed or strongly agreed with these initiatives and none disagreed. The comments received are not considered to require changes to the draft appraisal document.

#### Next steps

- 4.14** On approval by the Planning Committee, the Conservation Area Appraisal will be

finalised and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The document will also inform any funding bids for conservation area enhancement. The Council will contact Historic Environment Scotland to suggest the buildings referred to in paragraphs 4.7-4.9 be listed or have their current listing revised. The suggested amendments to the conservation area boundary will be considered as part of the new Local Development Plan process.

- 4.15** The Conservation Area Appraisal should strengthen the Council's position to seek funding for improvements and enhancements to the Conservation Area, for example from Historic Environment Scotland's Heritage and Place Programme, which can offer grants of between £750k and £1.5m covering up to 50% of costs and its Historic Environment Grants Programme, which can offer grants up to £500k, covering up to 25% of costs. Both schemes can fund repair works, skills and training, community/outreach projects, and maintenance/management plans.

## **5 People Implications**

- 5.1** There are no personnel issues associated with this report.

## **6 Financial and Procurement Implications**

- 6.1** The cost of preparing the Conservation Area Appraisal has been met from existing budgets.
- 6.2** Funding available from Historic Environment Scotland would require match funding to be provided by the Council, building owners or other funding sources.

## **7 Risk Analysis**

- 7.1** It was not considered necessary to carry out a risk assessment on the matters covered by this report.

## **8 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 8.1** The Conservation Area Appraisal has been screened and it is not relevant to any of the impact assessment areas.

## **9 Environmental Sustainability**

- 9.1** A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) pre-screening notification was submitted to the Scottish Government SEA Gateway. It is considered that the Conservation Area Appraisal will not have any significant environmental impact in its own right, and any impacts (e.g. through decision-making) are likely to be positive.

## **10 Consultation**

- 10.1** Details of the consultation undertaken are set out in paragraph 4.1.

## **11 Strategic Assessment**

- 11.1** The Conservation Area Appraisal is considered to support the Council's strategic priorities, and in particular:
- Our Communities – Resilient and Thriving

- Our Environment – A Greener Future

**Pamela Clifford**  
**Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health**  
**Manager Date: 19 April 2023**

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<b>Appendices:</b>	<p>Appendix 1 – Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal.</p> <p>Appendix 2 - Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal – summary of responses to the consultation draft</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Assessment of suggested listed buildings</p>
<b>Background Papers:</b>	<p>Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area Proposal Report b y Austin Smith Lord July 2018</p> <p>Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening.</p> <p>Strategic Environmental Assessment Pre-Screening Report</p>
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<p>Ward 2 – Leven</p> <p>Ward 3 – Dumbarton</p>











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April 2023





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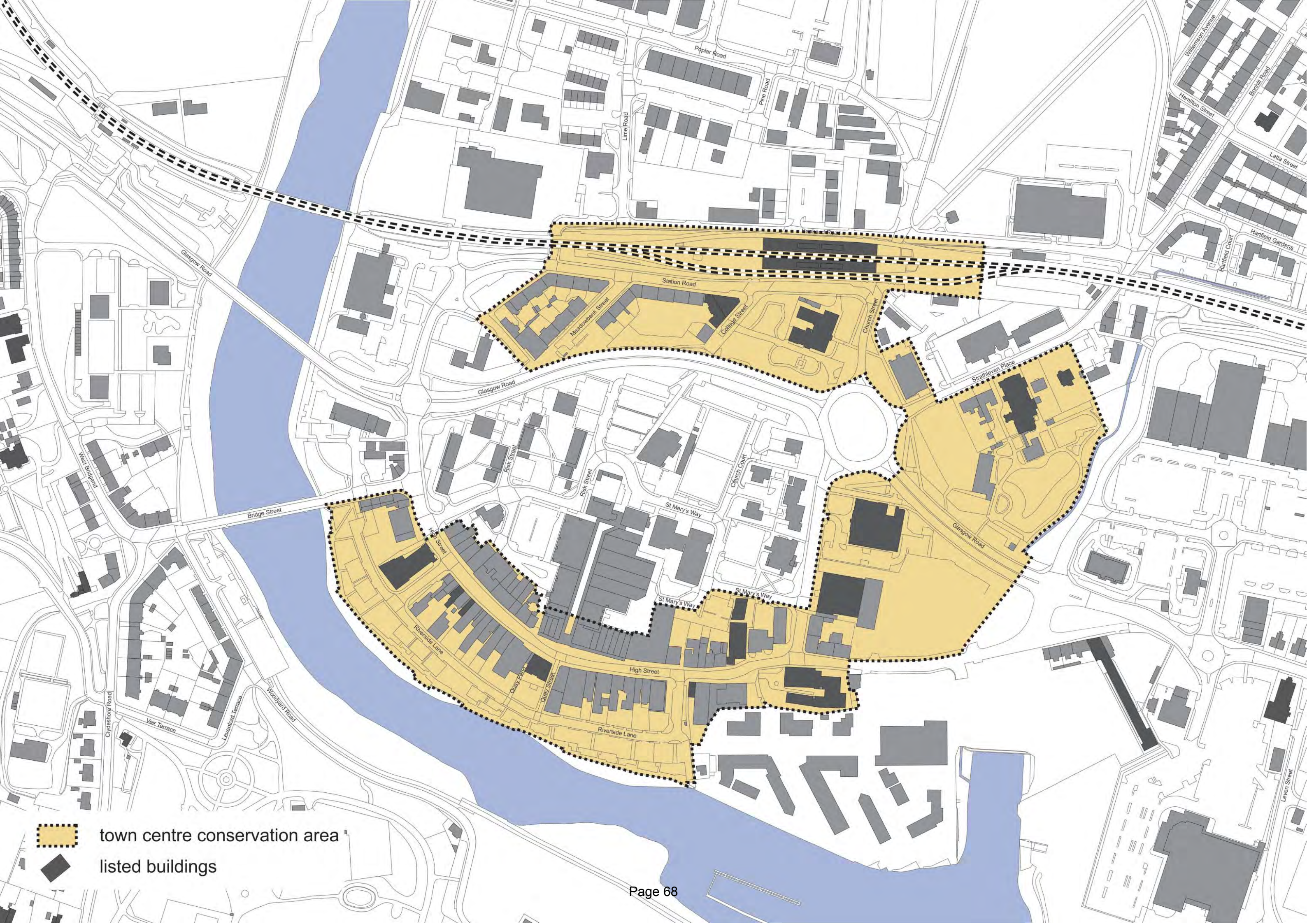
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### BIBLIOGRAPHY



Cover: Aerial view of Dumbarton Town Centre from the west looking towards Dumbarton Rock (© Turkey Red Media); Left: High Street, Dumbarton at its heyday (© author's collection); Above: entrance to the former British Linen Company Bank on High Street on which Dumbarton's coat-of-arms is proudly displayed on the capitals (© author).





town centre conservation area



listed buildings



## INTRODUCTION

### LOCATION AND DESIGNATION

Dumbarton is located approximately fifteen miles north-west of Glasgow and occupies a defensible site on the north bank of the River Clyde at its confluence with the River Leven. South and west of the town centre is Kirktonhill and Levensgrove Park, linked across the River Leven by the old Dumbarton Bridge; east is Knoxland and Dumbuck; and to the north is Townend and Silverton. Both Kirktonhill and Knoxland Square have enjoyed Conservation Area status since 1984.

The town centre is located between Dumbarton Central Station to the north, the River Leven to the west and south, and the A814 dual carriageway (linking Glasgow to Arrochar via Helensburgh) to the east. Excluding most of the 1960s re-development area (which at the time delivered housing, retail, community buildings and improved public realm), the Conservation Area takes the form of a reversed 'C', and includes Dumbarton Central Station and the Station Road tenements to the north, the buildings on either side of High Street to the south (stretching east from Dumbarton Bridge along the riverside as far as the 1811 Parish Church), and - to the east and around the Glasgow Road roundabout - a number of principal municipal and historic buildings and their associated plots.

The youngest of West Dunbartonshire Council's six Conservation Areas, the Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area was designated on 11 October 2019.

### DEFINITION OF A CONSERVATION AREA

Conservation Areas were first introduced under the Civic Amenities Act of 1967, with Carlisle and Skirling in Peeblesshire the earliest in Scotland. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act of 1997 currently provides the legislative framework for the designation of Conservation Areas.

A Conservation Area is defined in the Act as "an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". Conservation Areas in Scotland are many and varied in character, including parts of towns and cities, isolated rural settlements, designed landscapes, battlefields, public parks and railways. Writing in the *Journal of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation* in 2017, Kathryn Davies summarised the simplicity of the concept of Conservation Areas by saying, "people understand what it is, not always perfectly nor entirely comprehensively, but they get the notion. It's *local* and it matters."

All planning authorities are required by the Act to determine which parts of their geographic domain merit Conservation Area status under the criteria set out in Section 61 of the Act and are thereafter required to use appropriate controls over development and demolition. Additionally, planning authorities should formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any Conservation Areas within their local authority region (and present these proposals to a Public Meeting as part of the process).







## THE IMPLICATIONS OF CONSERVATION AREA STATUS

In a Conservation Area it is both the buildings and the spaces between them that are of architectural or historic interest. Planning control is therefore directed at maintaining the integrity of the area in question and taking positive action to enhance its special character by identifying and safeguarding the *sense of place*.

Under current legislation, Conservation Area designation automatically brings the following works under planning control: -

### *Demolition of unlisted buildings and structures –*

Where a building makes a positive contribution to the character of a Conservation Area there is a presumption against demolition. The decision to allow demolition also depends on the intended use of the land afterwards and may require that designs for any new buildings (or other proposals for the site) are prepared and approved before demolition is considered.

### *Removal of (or work to) trees -*

Trees in Conservation Areas have special protection. Proposals to remove branches, fell a tree or carry out work affecting roots must be notified to the local authority to give sufficient time for the impact of the proposed works to be considered. The local authority may decide that a Tree Preservation Order should be placed on the tree or group of trees if it/they make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. In such circumstances, the extent of the proposed works to the trees may be refused or require amendment.

### *Development involving small house extensions, roof alterations, dormers, stone cleaning or painting of the exterior, installation of satellite dishes, replacement windows or solar panels, and provision of hard surfaces –*

Planning decisions will consider the impact of any such proposals on the appearance of the property; the impact on neighbouring properties; and the effect on the character of the Conservation Area as a whole. Attachments to buildings such as satellite dishes and other equipment have more restrictive controls in Conservation Areas since they have the potential to impact negatively on the character of an area.

Notwithstanding all of the above, places, buildings and communities need to adapt and develop to accommodate modern-day pressures and needs. Accordingly, Conservation Area status does not prohibit new development or change, although care must be taken to ensure that any new development does not harm or diminish the character or appearance of the area.

Legislation is designed not to be prohibitive but to preserve and support local and community identity, so when assessing an application for new development in a Conservation Area, a planning authority must consider how the proposal: -

- Affects the historic street pattern, spaces and building lines;
- Affects the distinctive areas, groups of buildings and trees and other features of interest that are an important facet of the character of the area;
- Relates to the scale, proportions, materials and character of adjacent buildings and other features of the area, and
- Will secure the retention or reinstatement of traditional detailing and architectural features.

Where proposed development will impact on a Conservation Area, current Scottish Planning Policy (dated 2014, paragraph 143) expects such impact to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Where the demolition of an unlisted building is proposed through Conservation Area Consent, consideration should be given to the contribution the building makes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Where a building makes a positive contribution, the presumption should be to retain it.

From left: Architect William Leiper's Burgh Academy building on Church Street was almost lost by fire more than once (© author's collection); the future of the building was at last secured when West Dunbartonshire Council established its headquarters there, commissioning a contemporary extension to the rear (© author).





Artisan Shopping Centre wanted to create an art wall that would bring together local artists and display some amazing pieces of art right here in the centre itself. The Community Art Wall is made up of local landmarks, scenic paintings and creative and inspiring art that showcases the true heart and spirit of Dumbarton.

Artists: Sarah Jayne McGlashan  
Kirsteen Brown • Steven Granger  
Ellen Cunningham  
Jenn McKenzie • Tony Neeson  
Anne Marshall • Andrew McKenzie  
Barrie McEwan • Kevin Murney



There is also a growing awareness that the materials and construction techniques of historic (existing) buildings contain an embodied energy that should not be disregarded.

Where in the opinion of a planning authority proposed development would affect the character or appearance of a Conservation Area, the application for Planning Permission must be advertised in the local press providing an opportunity for public comment. Views expressed are taken into consideration by the local planning authority when deciding on the application.

The nature of most Conservation Areas, and the importance of communities enjoying a sense of ownership, means that local residents, businesses and property owners have a major role to play in protecting and enhancing the character and appearance of their Conservation Area. There are economic benefits that come from the historic character of an area being preserved and improved, and at its most basic level, this can be achieved by ensuring that properties and spaces are regularly maintained using appropriate knowledge, skills and materials, and that original architectural features are not lost.

Ultimately, successful management of a Conservation Area is best achieved with the support and input of all local stakeholders.

## PURPOSE OF A CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

The Scottish Government's Planning Advice Note (PAN) 71 notes that "when effectively managed, conservation areas can anchor thriving communities, sustain cultural heritage, generate wealth and prosperity and add to quality of life."

Conservation Area designation brings with it ongoing responsibilities, but also opportunities. Once a Conservation Area has been designated, planning authorities have a duty to formulate proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the protected area, albeit there is no published timescale for this process.

Given that planning authorities are required by law to protect Conservation Areas from development that would be detrimental to their character, it is vital that planning authorities, residents and property owners are aware of the key features that create an area's special character and appearance. The purpose, therefore, of a Conservation Area Appraisal is to identify and evaluate the special architectural or historic interest of an area along with those key features that contribute to its character and appearance. It also provides an opportunity to raise awareness amongst communities about the special needs and characteristics of an area and helps developers prepare proposals against an informed backdrop.

Ultimately, a Conservation Area Appraisal is a management tool which helps to identify the special interest and changing needs of an area. An appraisal provides the basis for the development of a programme of action that is compatible with the sensitivities of the historic area (and its occupants) and enables a local authority to fulfil its statutory duty to protect and enhance its Conservation Areas. Appraisals also inform policy and assist development management.

Research and detailed townscape analysis forms part of the evaluation, but so too does public consultation. It is important to understand an area's changing needs and the activities therein as well as its special characteristics. A Conservation Area Appraisal also provides an opportunity to reconsider area boundaries to ensure that they reflect what is of special interest (and are also logical).

Conservation Area Appraisals typically follow Scottish Government guidance as set out in Planning Advice Note (PAN) 71. Further guidance in respect of historic buildings and Conservation Areas is set out within Scottish Planning Policy. Historic Environment Scotland has also published a suite of documents on Managing Change in the Historic Environment. In respect of Dumbarton Town Centre, any evaluation and recommendations should be considered in conjunction with the planning policy framework set out in the West Dunbartonshire Local Plan (adopted 2010) and the proposed West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan (LDP2).

Left: A mural in the main concourse of the Artizan Centre that captures the spirit of Dumbarton (© author).







## METHODOLOGY

This appraisal has been prepared by a team of heritage consultants who carried out a site survey of Dumbarton Town Centre, studying setting, views and vistas, street pattern, historic townscape, trees and landscaping, vehicular and pedestrian movements, building usage, buildings at risk and negative factors. Historic maps and archive film and photography allowed the development of the town centre to be traced. The team also undertook public consultation with local schools and through a survey entitled “Help us preserve and improve what’s best about Dumbarton Town Centre”, hosted by West Dunbartonshire Council on its website during late 2021, which generated useful responses and observations. The team consisted of Fiona Sinclair (Conservation Architect), Nick Wright (Planner), Janet Benton of Benton Scott-Simmons (Landscape Architect) and Ines Triebel (Landscape Architect).

This appraisal could not have been completed without the assistance and enthusiasm of James Hall, Davina Lavery, Alan Williamson and Jo Sherington (Archivist) of West Dunbartonshire Council. Thanks are also due to Craig Jump of Turkey Red Media and Jeremy Watson of Dumbarton Stations Improvement Trust.

Left: Turn of the century High Street in Dumbarton looking south towards the Riverside Parish Church of 1812 (© West Dunbartonshire Libraries).







## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

### EARLY HISTORY

The twin-headed basalt plug of Dumbarton Rock is the main defining feature of the northern shores of the Firth of Clyde, commanding the confluence with the River Leven and in ancient times controlling passage by water from east to west and also to Loch Lomond and the north. Capital of the ancient and independent British kingdom of Strathclyde, Dumbarton (or *Dun Breatann*) grew rapidly in importance thanks to its strategic location, with political control of the West of Scotland vested in the area during the last century of Roman occupation. During the Dark Ages the rock was occupied as a British stronghold (although it is not clear exactly from when) and was referred to as *Alcluith* (or *Ailecluithe*), meaning “Clyde Rock”. In 1018, Malcolm II set his grandson Duncan (Macbeth’s predecessor) on the throne of Strathclyde, and in 1034 it was integrated with the Scottish kingdom.

### MEDIAEVAL HISTORY

During the Middle Ages Dumbarton ceased to exercise political power, instead reaping the benefits that came from its position as stronghold and principal port of entry in the west. By charter of Alexander II, the town became a royal burgh in 1222 (so entitled to trading privileges and the right to levy tolls on river traffic) and had a royal castle (or fortress) from 1238. Despite the changing fortunes of the castle (which was frequently attacked, twice by James IV), Dumbarton had importance as a harbour, being used by the King as a shipbuilding and outfitting base for his navy as he sought to pacify the Western Isles. In 1609 James VI conferred on the town the right to hold three annual fairs, establishing it as the

principal market town of north Clyde. The street pattern of the town centre, with narrow burgage strips running to the river’s edge, and the main street following the curve of the shore some distance back, was established during this period, and survives to this day in recognisable form. That said, population growth and development was slow and little in the way of architecturally significant buildings from that time remain, the exception being the College Bow (c1453) which is a remnant from the Collegiate Chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

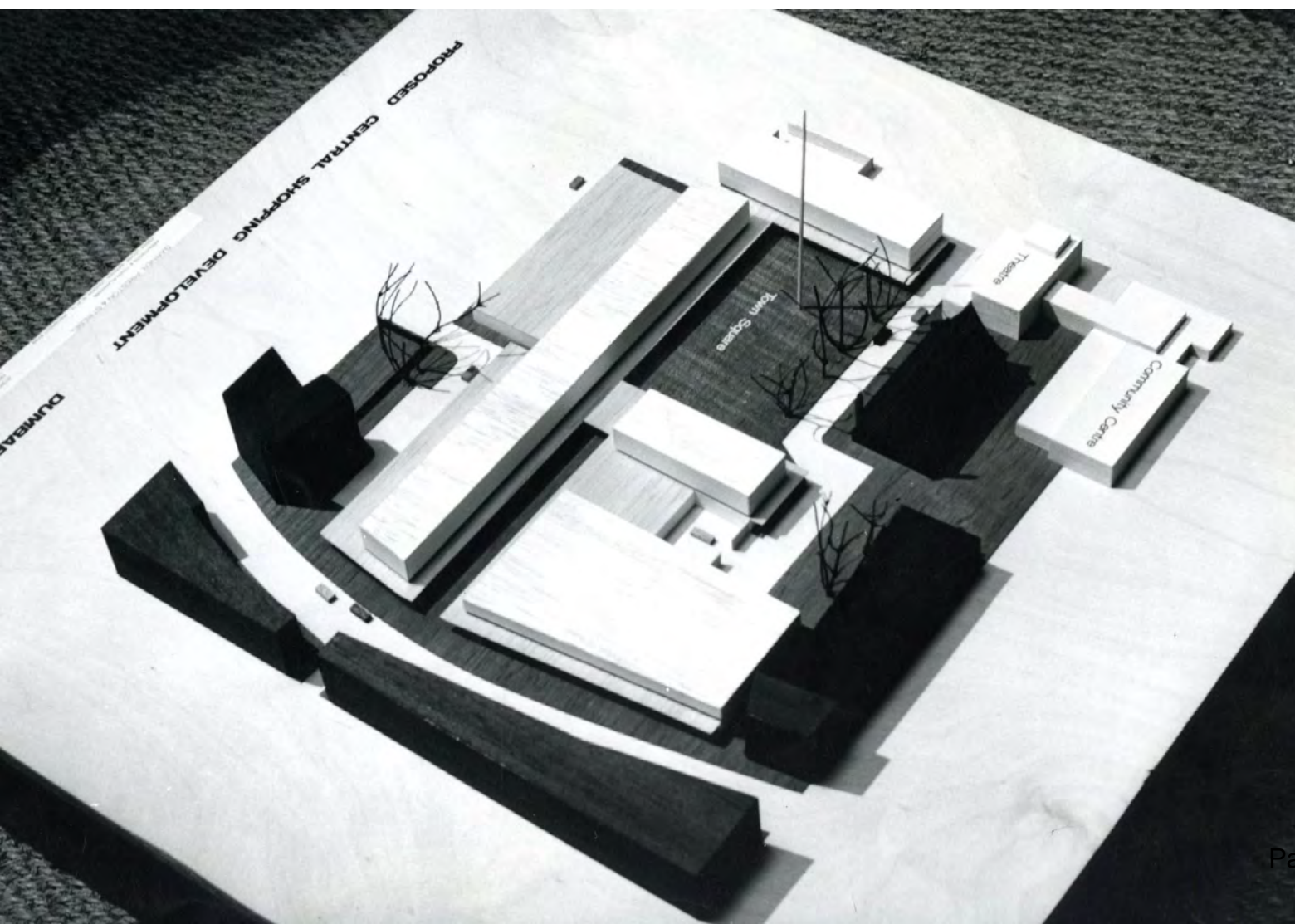
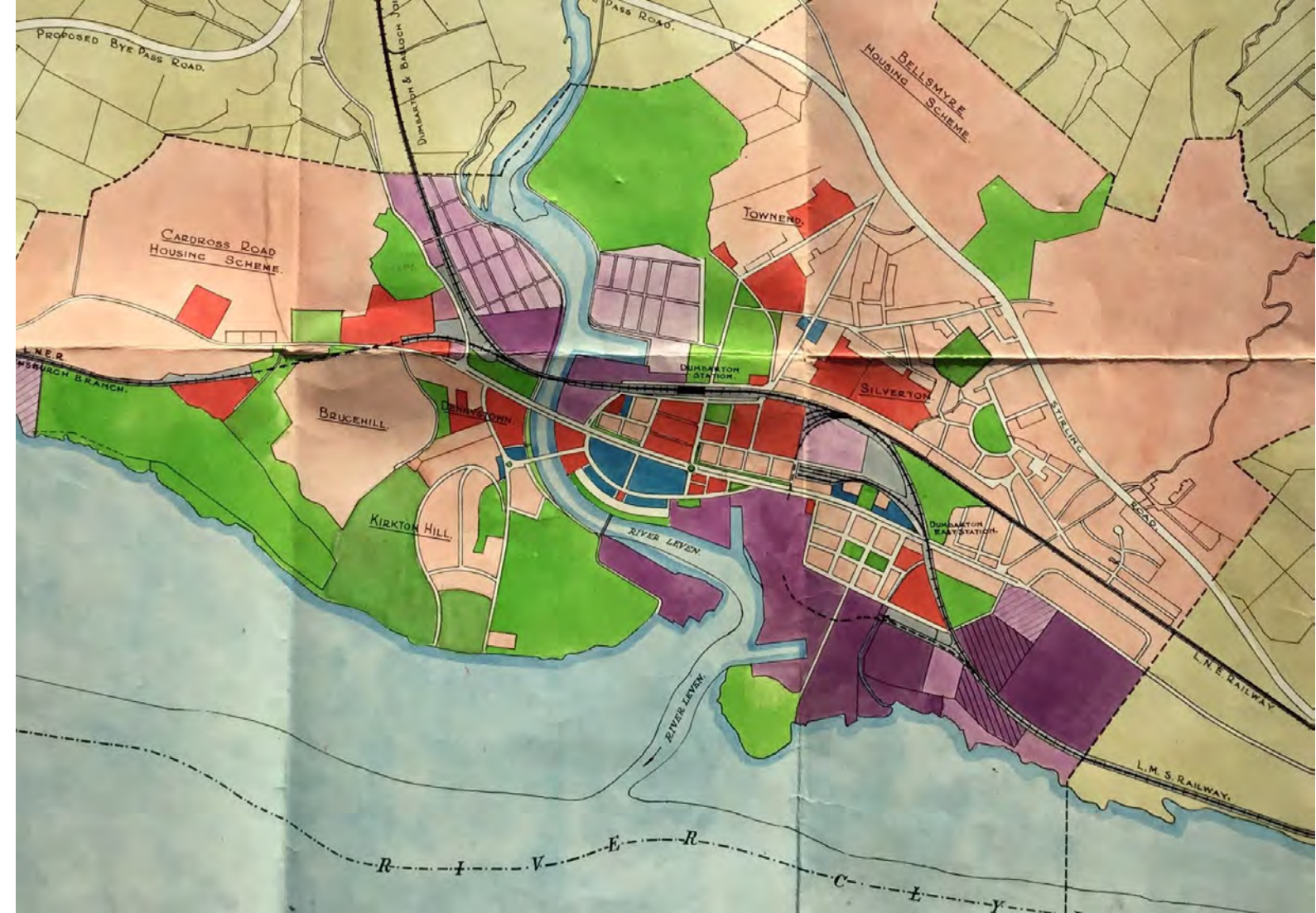
### DEVELOPMENT IN THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES

Following the Act of Union in 1707 Dumbarton became one of four garrisons in Scotland, leading to improvements to the castle and its fortifications. After years of modest trade in salmon, herring, cloth and hides, the town at last derived prosperity from the production of glass, which began around 1776 with the establishment of the Dumbarton Glassworks. For a period, while producing bottles and then window glass (using kelp ash from the Western Isles), the company’s three tall conical kilns located on the east bank of the River Leven were as much a defining feature of the skyline as the Rock. The operation owned five coal works, four tramways, two wharves, two bottle works, a brewery, farm and seven sailing vessels.

With the tacit support of the Duke of Argyll, a five-arched stone bridge across the Leven was built in 1765, so providing access to land to the immediate west of town that was ripe for residential development. Here would settle the Dixon family, owners of the glassworks until 1832, and here too would live members of the prominent Denny shipbuilding family.

Clockwise from top left: Dumbarton Rock as seen from the south bank of the River Clyde (© author); Dumbarton Castle and the River Clyde (© author’s collection); the College Bow while on Church Street (© author’s collection); Dumbarton Glassworks with the Riverside Parish Church and Dumbarton Rock in the background (© author’s collection).







Chief among these was William Denny, who in 1814 built the *Marjory* as a rival to Henry Bell's *Comet*: she would become the first steamship to cross the English Channel. Three of the patriarch's sons formed William Denny and Brothers in 1844, the company building over 1,500 ships (including the tea-clipper *Cutty Sark*), until closing in 1963. In so doing, they secured for themselves a place in history as the best-remembered of the Dumbarton shipbuilders (of which at one time there were around forty). Famed for the manufacture of iron-hulled ships, boilers and engines, the Denny family would also gift Levensgrove Park to the town in 1885, create a model housing suburb at Knoxland Square (in collaboration with the Dumbarton Building Society), build a shipyard workers' community of two-storey flatted houses at Dennystown (now largely gone), and finance a shipmodel experiment tank at the Leven Shipyard (the first of its type built in Britain). Individually, they commissioned at least five of the most significant houses built on the high ground of Kirktonhill west of the town centre.

## 20TH CENTURY TO THE PRESENT DAY

William Denny and Brothers may have been the best known of the town's shipbuilders, but there were other companies of note, including Archibald McMillan and Son, who began building wooden boats in 1832, moved to iron hulls in 1866, and then steel ships in 1881. Launched in 1890, the company's cargo ship *Swanhilda* was a world record holder, and the firm ultimately built 504 ships at James Lang's Dockyard before closing in 1932. The nine-acre riverside site did not lie empty for long: in 1937 the Canadian firm of Hiram Walker and Sons began construction of what was for a time the largest distillery in Europe. In addition to the grain whisky distillery itself, there was a blending and bottling plant and extensive warehousing, with the facility employing almost 2,000 staff in its heyday. Until its demolition in 2017, the still tower (built of hard red Accrington bricks) rivalled the Rock for dramatic impact from afar.

Distilling aside, Dumbarton's economic fortunes declined during the C20 as shipbuilding and heavy engineering reduced in output. In the 1940s the Royal

Burgh of Dumbarton commissioned a town planning scheme that anticipated the Alexandria Bypass; sizeable municipal housing schemes at Bellsmyre and Castlehill; and a new bridge over the River Leven near Dennystown. This formed the basis of an architectural competition to re-develop the town centre, first considered in 1955, but not formally promoted until 1960 with the assistance of the Royal Institute of British Architects. Won by Garner, Preston and Strebel, the scheme proposed an elevated highway, community buildings, housing, offices, and a pedestrian precinct lined with shops, in the delivery of which the Town Council compulsorily purchased and demolished whole swathes of the central part of Dumbarton. For over fifteen years re-development was pursued with determination, leading to inevitable loss of historic character in the name of progress.

Since the turn of the century, West Dunbartonshire Council has seen the regeneration of the town centre as a priority. Public realm improvements and the re-imagining of the derelict Burgh Hall and Academy building (ultimately as the Council's flagship headquarters) have been delivered, the Artizan Centre at the heart of the 1960s re-development was re-modelled in 2004 (not altogether successfully), and the vacated distillery site has been remediated and re-developed for social housing with an attractive riverside walkway.

Clockwise from top left: Shipbuilding at Dumbarton (© author's collection); 1940s Town Planning Scheme by the Royal Burgh of Dumbarton (© author's collection); Hiram Walker And Sons distillery (© Eddie Mackinnon through Creative Commons); model of Garner, Preston and Strebel's competition-winning scheme for Dumbarton Town Centre (© West Dunbartonshire Council).





Maclure, Macdonald & Co., Glas





## TOWNSCAPE APPRAISAL

### GEOLOGY, TOPOGRAPHY AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Dumbarton lies on the alluvial plains of the River Clyde and River Leven, the confluence marked by the volcanic twin peaks of Dumbarton Rock. The area sits on a plateau of carboniferous lava from around 330-340 million years ago, nearby evidence of which can still be seen in the form of the Kilpatrick Hills, Campsie Fells and Renfrewshire Heights. An underlying belt of Old Red Sandstone of the Devonian period stretches across the area, which is south of the Highland Boundary Fault. A large quarry at Dumbuckhill, east of town, produces aggregate but no big building blocks, although there was once a quarry at Dalreoch (and another at Bonhill) from which some of the town's buildings were constructed.

Once surrounded on three sides by the River Leven, the town centre is itself low-lying and relatively flat, elevated sections and underpasses being created by road and rail in the form of Dumbarton Central Station (which is at high level), the approach to the old Dumbarton Bridge (which of necessity rises above river traffic), and short pedestrian walkways that pass beneath the A814 dual carriageway. The 1960 competition-winning elevated section of this main road was not delivered as part of the re-development, and this decision irrevocably split the town in two.

Proximity to the River Leven lends Dumbarton much of its appeal but has also meant that the town centre has long suffered from coastal, fluvial, and surface water flooding, with the greatest risk represented by the combination of coastal and fluvial flooding around the mouth of the river. The town centre has historically suffered damage from flooding during a number of high tide and storm events,

and it is anticipated that more serious flood events could occur. These will require to be addressed in order to eliminate flood risk to the town centre area and unlock regeneration potential.

Courtesy of the re-routed A814 dual carriageway, the centre of town has a peninsular quality, reminiscent of John Wood's 1818 map of Dumbarton which illustrated the town surrounded by water on three sides. From the oval-shaped Glasgow Road roundabout in the east, the historic elements of the central area are reached in three directions: to the north, Dumbarton Central Station and its elevated track acts as a barrier between light industry and the splendidly-restored Municipal Buildings; east is the Public Library (surprisingly un-listed), and the hefty St. Patrick's Church; while south, Church Street, lined by two significant public buildings (formerly four), joins the eastern end of High Street.

Anchored at both ends by tall church spires built fifty years apart, this main shopping street follows a leisurely curve that runs parallel to the riverside, once lined with jetties and now a pleasant promenade. Despite the re-development of the central north side of High Street, there is a charm to the historic route, where buildings in a range of architectural styles jostle for space in their tight mediaeval plots yet co-exist for the most part in harmonious manner. There are standout buildings - more if others were restored - and an unexpectedly good collection of Art Deco frontages. Connections still exist through the occasional vennel or lane to the riverfront, where despite the presentational problems of loading bays and backlands, the walkway is an asset, with ever-improving views downstream and across the water to Levensgrove Park.







There is much of interest in the town centre. Tenements and churches are both varied and of good design, while over the years major banking institutions established branch buildings that were of high architectural quality. The civic buildings are mostly set in landscaped grounds, and the various component parts of the 1960s re-development are not without merit (indeed, are in some instances, classic examples of the period). Dumbarton may not boast the status it once had, but has much to commend it, and the relationship with rock and river has persisted to its benefit. There is significance still in the old town, and support for its regeneration, hence its designation as a Conservation Area in 2019.

### STREET PATTERN, VIEWS, APPROACHES AND LANDMARKS

The very dense pattern of buildings and backlands that occupied the space between High Street, the Municipal Buildings and Dumbarton Central Station has long gone. The *Clyde Valley Regional Plan 1946* said of Dumbarton that “the central area of the town will require to be almost completely redeveloped within a comparatively short time” but the authors are unlikely to have imagined the scale on which this would take place. Homes, businesses, and traditions were lost as the competition-winning re-development scheme was delivered, and then further displaced by the A814. Arguably, the road re-alignment was necessary, since, as further observed in the Regional Plan, “one can hardly imagine worse conditions than obtain in passing through the Burgh of Dumbarton”; but just as the Inner Ring Road destroyed large parts of Glasgow, the new road to Cardross, Helensburgh and beyond fractured connections across the historic town.

Notwithstanding the loss of a significant part of the north side of High Street, (along with the major route through town that was Cross Vennel – its axis re-imagined as part of the construction of the 1960s Artizan Centre), the main street has retained its gentle mediaeval curve and on the south side, its long narrow plots. Originally the street was linked to the riverside by a series of vennels (the broadest of which were Quay Street and Boat Vennel); one of these survives beneath Glencairn Greit House, while the current one-way road layout approximates to the location of

others. Church Street (originally Kirk Vennel) was always a principal thoroughfare to the east, terminating at the south at the Parish Church, while at the western end, the main street swung north-east after the old ferry crossing, and continues to follow this line today, with the ferry now replaced by Dumbarton Bridge.

Church Street and High Street both halt to the north at the A814 Glasgow Road. Given the width of the road, the physical and visual interruption is significant. Pedestrian access to the Public Library and Dumbarton Central Station is by way of an underground walkway (so avoiding the roundabout) and although Station Road, College Street and Strathleven Place (all north of the dual carriageway) have their origins in the historic street pattern, the coherence has been lost: the Municipal Buildings feel marooned, and the handsome Station Road tenements isolated. There is an additional underpass at the south end of College Street.

Of the main gateways into the Conservation Area, only Townhead Road to the north creates a sense of arrival, largely because the low height of the railway bridge frames the south view dramatically. From here, the view of the Municipal Buildings impresses, as does the high bartizan-topped railway retaining wall. In the distance, the spike-topped towers of St. Partick’s Church and the former Burgh Hall and Academy can be seen through trees. The same views are seen more easily from the elevated south platforms of the railway, so creating a sense of arrival by rail.

East of the Glasgow Road roundabout, the vehicular approach into town gives little away: the land is flat, and there are few landmarks here for orientation: the redundant gateway to the Municipal Buildings simply confuses. Further south, the junction of Church Street and High Street is another entry point to the Conservation Area, and it is immediately obvious that the nature of the curve reveals High Street incrementally. Two churches – one the Riverside Parish Church, the other St. Augustine’s Episcopal Church – speak of ongoing investment in the town’s historic fabric, but the sight of the former Hiram Walker head office building in its rapidly deteriorating state is unfortunate.

Clockwise from top left: The Artizan Centre originally included a route through that approximated to the old Cross Vennel (© Turkey Red Media); pond below Glencairn Greit House (© author); present day riverside with views of Dumbarton Rock (© author); the Municipal Buildings represent one of the gateways into town (© author).







The least convincing of the approaches into the Conservation Area lies to the west of High Street. Here, the Risk Street Housing by Garner, Preston and Strebel, for all its stepped sections and generously-glazed balconies, ignores the street pattern. The buildings turning onto Bridge Street (including the former Cosy Corner Café on the curve) have all been significantly altered, and even the former High Church (now the Bell Centre) looks tired and unloved. The streetscape generally lacks interest until the western leg of Riverside Lane has been passed.

Lastly, from the waterfront and landscaped car parks, there is a short connection up to High Street by way of Quay Street, which hints at an important crossing, and until recent re-modelling of the Artizan Centre, led through to a modern town square with a pool in which sat the engine of the paddle steamer *Leven*.

The absence of contours across the town centre ensures the dominance of those buildings with steeples – there are four churches in the Conservation Area, three with spires, and the former Burgh Hall has a very fine belfry which, despite the loss of its roof in a fire, still rises above the surrounding buildings. These are all landmark buildings, as is Glencairn Greit House (due to its great age), Dumbarton Central Station and the Municipal Buildings. The flatness of the area also restricts potential for dramatic views and vistas, but High Street has an intimacy and sense of enclosure which is attractive (and reveals its character slowly due to the curve), and the Station Road tenements create good street scenery and sense of place.

Otherwise, too many views are of backlands and outbuildings, serving as a reminder of the scale of 1960s interventions, where new roads, loading bays and car parks were created along with new buildings. There is an especially unresolved area where the western leg of Riverside Lane meets the waterfront (the Leven Embankment) where the space seems to spill out uncontrollably.

Some of the views out of the Conservation Area are on the other hand, attractive: the town centre benefits from its proximity to the river, and from the waterfront there are fine views across to Levensgrove Park and downstream to Dumbarton

Rock. Furthermore, the new housing development on the old distillery site sets up views and vistas to St. Augustine's Church and east to Dumbuckhill.

## PLOT PATTERN, CIRCULATION AND PERMEABILITY

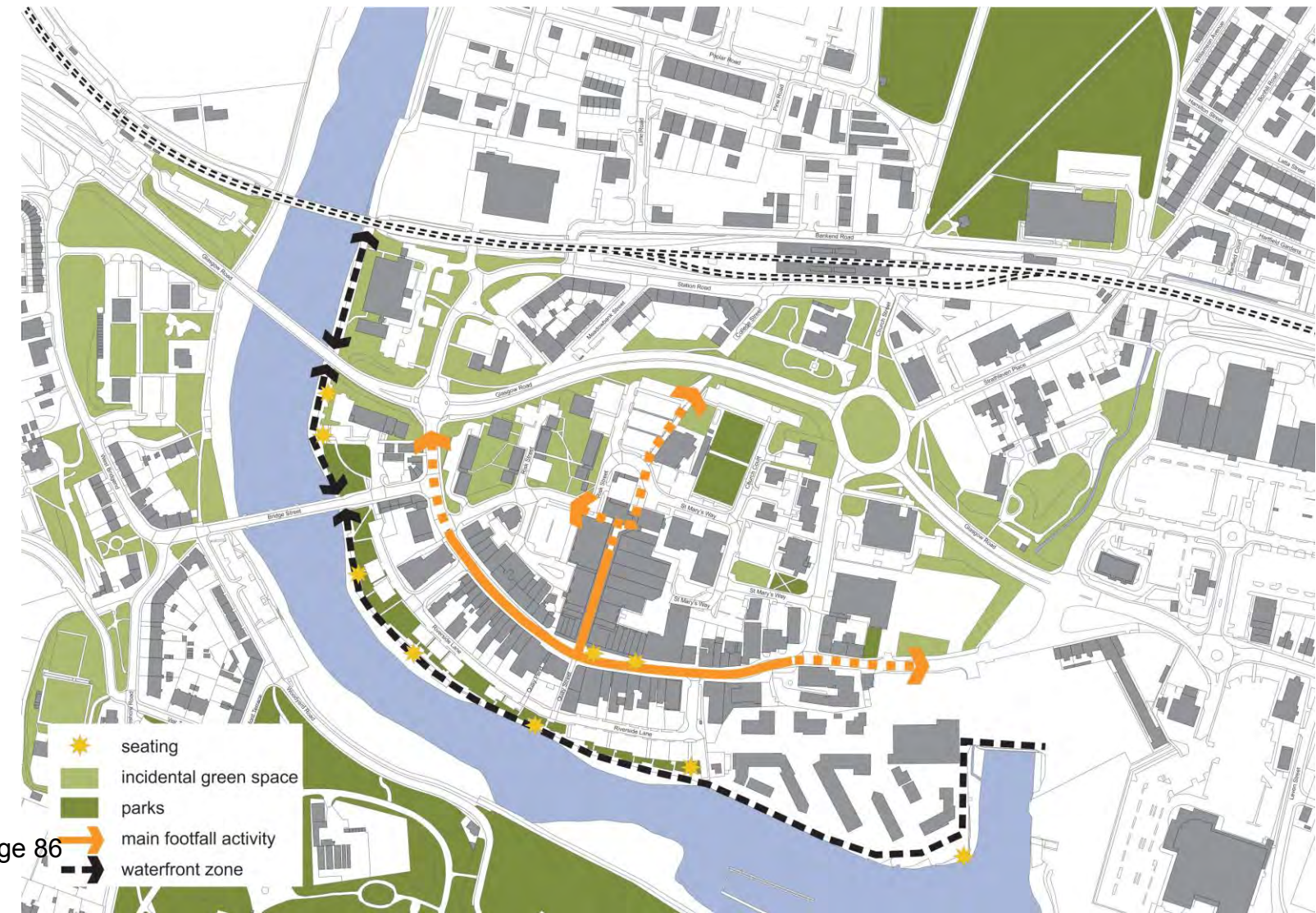
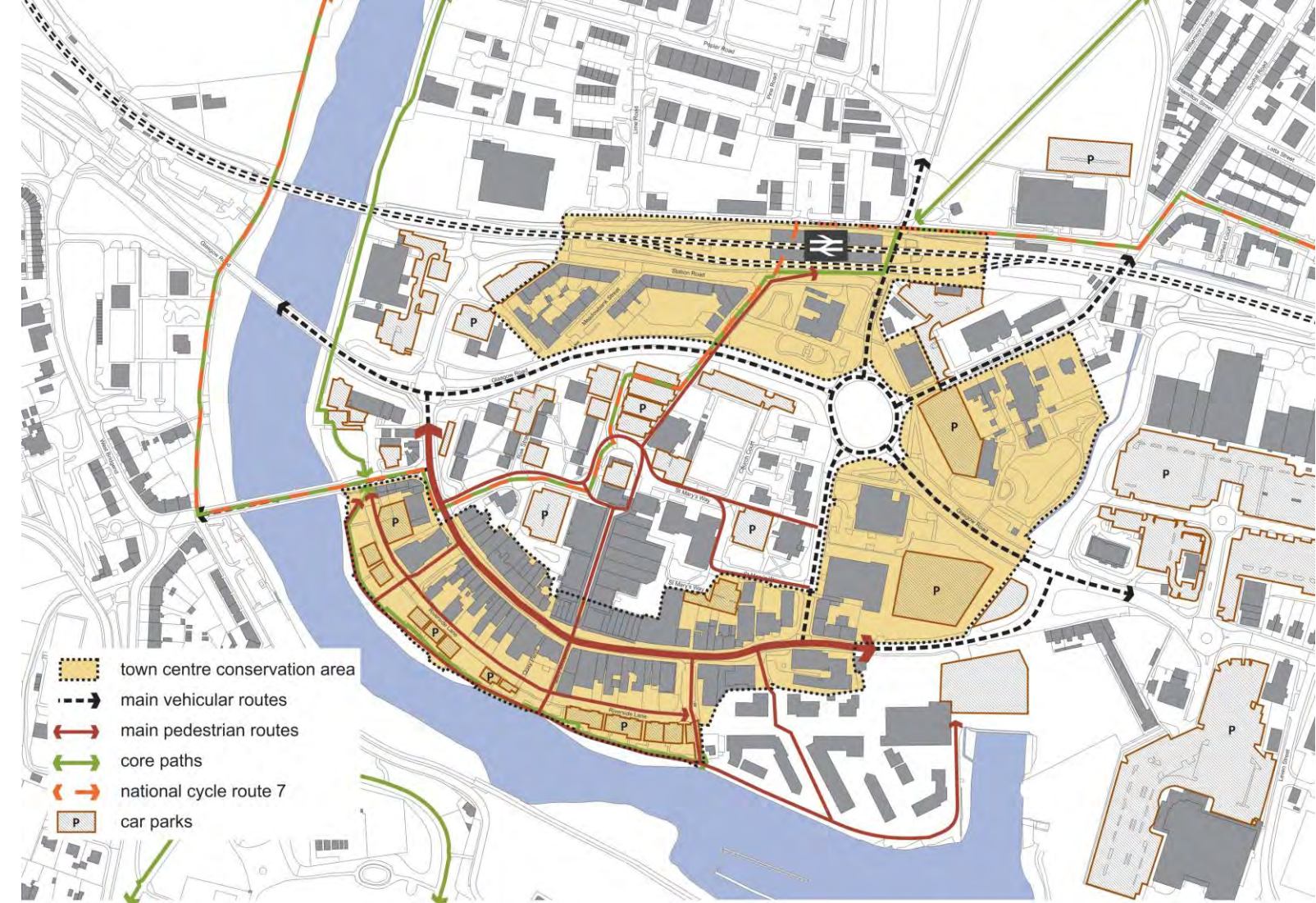
The defining plot type in the Conservation Area is the narrow burgage feu. These largely survive on the south side of High Street, albeit they were all reduced in depth as part of the Leven Embankment transformation in the 1960s and 70s. Elsewhere, there is a lack of perceptible pattern to the plot shapes and sizes, albeit a brief recovery of historic street width occurs around the Station Road tenements.

Pedestrian movement in the town centre is closely related to bus routes and car parking. Ease of movement on and south of High Street is good, but the re-modelling (and enlargement) of the Artizan Centre destroyed the 1960s pedestrian route through the town square to the cinema, housing and station beyond. There are a number of wide road crossings that make walking around Dumbarton Town Centre a frustrating experience, and while the underpasses beneath the A814 were intended to enable free movement from High Street to and from the station, they are not universally popular. Furthermore, while the creation of large numbers of car parks controls the impact of stationary cars on the town centre, cars (and buses) in motion have precedence over the pedestrian. Parking is permitted on High Street. There are, however, plans to improve the public realm around Dumbarton Central Station in collaboration with Sustrans and improve National Cycle Network Route 7 to the benefit of walkers and cyclists.

In the town centre, density is low, and the downside of the resulting permeability is that too many buildings are defined by their rear façades rather than by their street frontages. There is insufficient recognition of the importance of the riverside and the need to define and celebrate it by outward-facing activities. Additionally, there are a number of unresolved areas behind and near the Artizan Centre that do not aid orientation.

Clockwise from top left: The former Hiram Walker offices present a poor image of Dumbarton Town Centre - the building is on the Buildings at Risk Register (© author); the Risk Street housing is architecturally adventurous but ignores the old street pattern (© author); the Town Centre (now Artizan) once had a central courtyard that allowed for orientation (© M Anne Dick); new social housing on the old distillery site sets up views to Dumbuck (© author).







It has long been recognised that connectivity between the station and town centre has been compromised twice: first by the construction of the re-aligned A814, and then through the removal of the public square at the heart of the Artizan Centre.

## BUILDINGS AND TOWNSCAPE DETAIL

With the demolition of the seven-storey distillery, a uniform sense of scale has returned to the town centre. High Street retains much of its original form, presents a solid frontage with few gaps, and even where more recently developed has a roofline that is for the most part consistent. Commercial buildings are mostly two or three storeys in height (apart from one remarkably tall exception with half-timbered gable by architect J M Crawford, and a four-storey red sandstone tenement on the north side) while the churches are all relatively similar in size. The former Glasgow Savings Bank is unusually diminutive, and the 1938 shops and offices built for the Dumbarton Equitable Co-operative Society bulkier than most, but the scale of the main street is not dissimilar to that existing at the beginning of the 20th Century. Additionally, on High Street the building line is consistent (the Artizan Centre canopies are not original) and the widening of the street at Glencairn Greit House of historic importance (see *Architectural Character and Styles*, below).

There is even a uniformity of scale in the buildings that were delivered as part of the re-development initiative. The Artizan Centre (then simply referred to as the shopping precinct), the Concord Community Centre, the Denny Civic Theatre (even the Masonic Temple) were all designed to co-exist rather than compete and were carefully height-controlled. The Risk Street Housing by Garner, Preston and Strebel is also only marginally higher than the Station Road tenements of 1898, built tall due to their proximity to the elevated railway track.

The remaining town centre buildings vary in scale, but there are no major disturbances to the urban character: this only occurs outwith the Conservation Area to the west, where there are three 16-storey point blocks alongside the Artizan Bridge. Whatever else it brought to the landscape, the distillery tower at

least acted as a counterpoint to the high-rise housing.

## OPEN SPACE, LANDSCAPE AND TREES

Open space in the town centre comprises largely of car parks and small pockets of grass: Dumbarton is well served by places to park and the majority of these are landscaped with hedge planting and trees (some flowering). Outwith the Conservation Area, but very much in the centre of town, are two bowling greens surrounded by neat walls: the Dumbarton Bowling Club has had its site here since 1859. Similarly, on the outer fringe of the Conservation Area, the stepped-section housing by Garner, Preston and Strebel is attractively contoured, and the same attention to detail has been lavished on the Leven Embankment promenade by the same architects.

Here, the land next the river was once used as a goods transport centre and for storage and workshops: once the land became derelict it was incorporated into the masterplan for the town centre. There are some fine semi-mature trees, grassed areas brought to lawn, cobbled walkways (using original setts) and tamped concrete paving. Changes in level using concrete edging provide occasional seating and there is an attractive cobbled lane (vennel) passing beneath Glencairn Greit House en route to High Street.

The principal buildings almost all sit in landscaped grounds: there is a small graveyard east of the Riverside Parish Church and mature weeping trees grouped at the main entrance. The grassed areas around the Municipal Buildings (College Park) are well maintained and the whalebone-arched College Bow, three historic cannons, and statue of Peter Denny by Sir William Thornycroft add welcome interest (there is little statuary in the Conservation Area). Modern landscaping behind West Dunbartonshire Council's headquarters (the former Burgh Hall and Academy) relates well to the columnar brick façade (while there are some fine railway tracks retained in a nearby car park off Castle Street). There is some recent tree planting at the eastern end of High Street, although the landscaped

Clockwise from top left: High Street looking east at the turn of the century (© West Dunbartonshire Libraries); connectivity diagram (© Ines Triebel); green space and landscape diagram (© Ines Triebel); High Street looking east present day - some historic buildings remain, but there are gap sites (© author).







route from here to the new riverside housing lacks the quality of the High Street pavements. These have been finished in Caithness slab with granite kerbs and small granite blocks at building edges. At Glencairn Greit House there is a good tiled platt at the entrance door (dating from its ownership by the Dumbarton Gas Company) and a recent addition to the landscape is an equally colourful path from College Street to Dumbarton Central Station laid down in thermoplastic floor surface coverings as part of the Dumbarton Active Travel Strategy in 2021.

Strathleven Place is appropriately residential in nature, leafy and with some stretches of good sandstone boundary walling, although the concrete slabbed path that leads past the Public Library to Dumbarton Central Station is being damaged by tree roots and is insufficiently welcoming to encourage frequent use. Nearby, the backcourts behind the Station Road tenements are delightful and well screened from the A814.

The conclusion is that the town is relatively green but the landscape is fragmented and in some locations dated: there is a dearth of good quality and useable hard and soft open space.

## ACTIVITIES AND USES

The Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area is a microcosm of a typical town centre, containing residential units (almost entirely flatted in type), a railway station, civic and municipal buildings, churches, recreational and community facilities, some offices and banks, and small-scale retail. Large-scale retail has been located east of town to the St. James Retail Park.

There is noticeable vacancy amongst the retail units on High Street.

## ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER AND STYLES

The architecture of Dumbarton Town Centre falls into a number of distinct eras

which can be easily identified by the styles and materials employed: this creates interest and relieves potential monotony. The standout examples from every period are typically listed by Historic Environment Scotland. First, there is one building that is mediaeval in origin, then buildings from the Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian periods, then the Art Deco (1930s) phase of development, and then the post-war re-development period. There is relatively little that is properly modern, with the exception of the brick-built riverside housing on the old distillery site, and the re-imagining of the former Burgh Hall and Academy as the headquarters of West Dunbartonshire Council at No. 16 Church Street.

Linking all of these is the use of the Dumbarton Coat of Arms (first granted in 1357) which depicts an elephant carrying a castle on its back. This appears on a number of High Street buildings, including the former British Linen Company Bank at No. 17 (1897-8), the former Dumbarton Equitable Co-operative Society's shop at No. 32 (1936-8), and - combined with elements from Glasgow's Coat of Arms - on the former Clydesdale Bank at No. 53 (1939). There are particularly good depictions on the Public Library (1909), the Station Road tenements (1898), and – unsurprisingly – the Municipal Buildings (1899-1903).

## Mediaeval Period

The sole survivor from the (late) mediaeval period is **Glencairn Greit House**, built in 1623 as the urban residence of the Earls of Glencairn, and later used by the Dukes of Argyll. Built of snecked and coursed rubble (which was originally harled) the main frontage is now carried on three round arches installed during the 1920s by Dumbarton Town Council, but once had a forestair, tall wallhead chimneys and a traditional shop frontage. Surviving from its days of aristocratic status are four eaves dormers with decorative pediments, but little remains of the interior, re-modelled when in use as a Gas Showroom. The fourth arch to the east is, however, original and provides access to the vaulted passage of Quay Pend (although the east side was rebuilt in 1936). The property used to share its setting with the Mercat Cross and had a view up Cross Vennel (later College Street),

Clockwise from top left: View of the town centre riverside from the south bank of the Leven (© author); Glencairn Greit House before removal of harl and alterations to the ground floor (© author's collection); thermoplastic path from Dumbarton Central Station (© New Practice).







creating a meeting place for proclamations and public events that is still reflected in the enhanced width of the pavement. Glencairn Greit House is Listed Category 'B' (and would be Category 'A' were it not for the 1920s alterations).

Also mediaeval, but fragmentary, is the pointed-arch **College Bow** (c1453), salvaged from the Collegiate Chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary in around 1758 and later relocated to the foot of Kirk Vennel (Church Street) in 1850. Finally, a permanent site was found for it on an axis with the entrance to the Municipal Buildings in 1907. The College Bow is Listed Category 'B'.

### Georgian Period

The Georgian Period is better represented: there are two stone tablets from the 18th Century MacKenzie House (which stood on the north side of High Street), and which have been built into the gable of the Public Library on Strathleven Place. Also from this period are the remains of the **Old Prison** on Maclean Place built by James Gillespie Graham and Robert Scott c1824 as a two-storey cell block serving the County Buildings: some fragments are incorporated into the verges alongside the A814. Survivors from the 1973 demolition include a portico, Coat of Arms, studded door and two cell windows built into a rubble enclosure. The remains are Category 'B' listed.

Some of the High Street tenements east of Glencairn Greit House have a Georgian flavour (although the overall condition is inconsistent) but best are the **Sheriff Court House** on Church Street (1824-26, James Gillespie Graham and Robert Scott), and the **Riverside Parish Church**. The original County Buildings by Graham and Scott are classical in style with a pedimented central bay with coupled Ionic pilasters to which was added balustraded pavilion ends by William Spence in 1865. Despite significant alterations, enlargement and various iterations over the years, the interior retains some of its Georgian delicacy: one of the courtrooms retains an anthemion and palmette frieze. The complex is listed Category 'B'.

The church, by John Brash, was built in 1811 as Dumbarton Parish Church, incorporated materials from an older church on site, and is Category 'A' listed. The broad corniced ashlar pedestrian gatepiers with urns that face down High Street are especially fine, as is the ashlar bell and clock tower rising to a gilded weathervane. The stained glass scheme is significant (including work by W and J J Keir, Stephen Adam, and William Morris and Co.) and behind the building is the Category 'C' listed **Mausoleum** enclosure erected in 1846 as the burying place of the Napier family of Shandon, pioneers of marine engineering whose one-cylinder engine from the paddle steamer *Leven* is on display outside the nearby Scottish Maritime Museum.

### Victorian Period

The only villa in the Conservation Area, the Tudor-Gothic "Drumoyne" on Strathleven Place, was built in 1853 as **Strath Cottage** to designs by J T Rothead. Designer of the National Wallace Monument, the architect's mastery of Scots-Baronial detailing is better represented by Levenford House in the Kirktonhill Conservation Area, but this square, two-storey house was built on a budget from local stone in as picturesque a manner as could be afforded and was featured in Blackie's *Villa and Cottage Architecture* of 1868 as an example of economic design. It is Category 'B' listed.

Diagonally across town, Early English Gothic is represented by the grey ashlar former **High Church** at the west end of High Street, the gabled frontage and tall broached spire purposefully punctuating one of the gateways into the Conservation Area. Currently the Bell Leisure Centre and Arcade, the church was designed by John Honeyman for the Free Kirk in 1863 and has long been a striking feature on a street otherwise lined with low-rise shops and tenements. It is Category 'B' listed. A little east, on the same side of the street, a commercial building at **Nos. 127- 135** has interesting blind Venetian windows centred on its frontage, pedimented first floor windows, a datestone reading 1854, and stair turrets to the rear. Also Category 'B' listed, it may once have had an off-centre pend to the waterside.

Clockwise from top left: Stone tablet from the C18 MacKenzie House, now on extension to the Public Library (© author); the old Dumbarton Parish Church with its handsome gateways (© author); the original County Buildings on Church Street (© author).







The Victorian predilection for ornamentation is better captured by the former **Burgh Hall and Academy** on Church Street, one of the few properly decorative buildings in the Conservation Area. Completed to designs by William Leiper in 1866, the building is French Gothic in style with large plate-traceried windows at first floor, and a high belfry tower open to the street at the base, effectively a porte-cochere. Originally with a slated spire (destroyed by fire in 1882) the Category 'A' listed building has variously housed the Burgh Academy with public halls and committee rooms, a School of Art, primary school, and police station, and is now modern offices following an extensive re-construction by West Dunbartonshire Council. The richly-sculpted and foliated Gothic decoration on the main frontage sets the building apart from others in the area (most of which are classical and rather severe).

South-west, on High Street, more Gothic (this time of the Decorated period) is presented in the form of **St. Augustine's Church**, opened in 1873 to designs by the distinguished Edinburgh architect Robert Rowand Anderson. Category 'A' listed for its interior, the tower that was meant to rise above the street-facing vestry was never built. It was here that Charles Rennie Mackintosh married Margaret MacDonald in 1900.

### Late Victorian/Edwardian Period

Although the railway came to Dumbarton in 1850 as part of the Caledonian and Dumbartonshire Junction Railway from Bowling to Balloch, the present **Station** was not built until 1898 and was largely designed in the Caledonian Railway style under the superintendence of railway engineer Charles de Neuville Forman (of Glasgow Central, and West Highland Railway fame). The elevated track necessitated long, high supporting walls with a principal entrance off Church Street, under cover of the railway bridge overhead. At street level were located the booking hall, porters and refreshment rooms, while at (twin island) platform level were the waiting rooms, toilets and staff accommodation. Presently, public access is from a ramped approach at the west, but hidden are two flights of stairs

with exceptional tiled wall decoration and a fine ticket office, all to the east. The platform buildings are single storey in sandstone, polychromatic brickwork and timber with Tudor detailing and have wide overhanging lattice-beamed canopies; some good period decoration survives internally including dome-lights at the western ends of both buildings. The embankments are a combination of sandstone, red engineering brick and pinkish render (in simulation of stone), with crenelated parapets, octagonal buttresses, mock cross gun loops, and Tudor-Gothic two-centred arches to window openings. The station is Category 'A' listed.

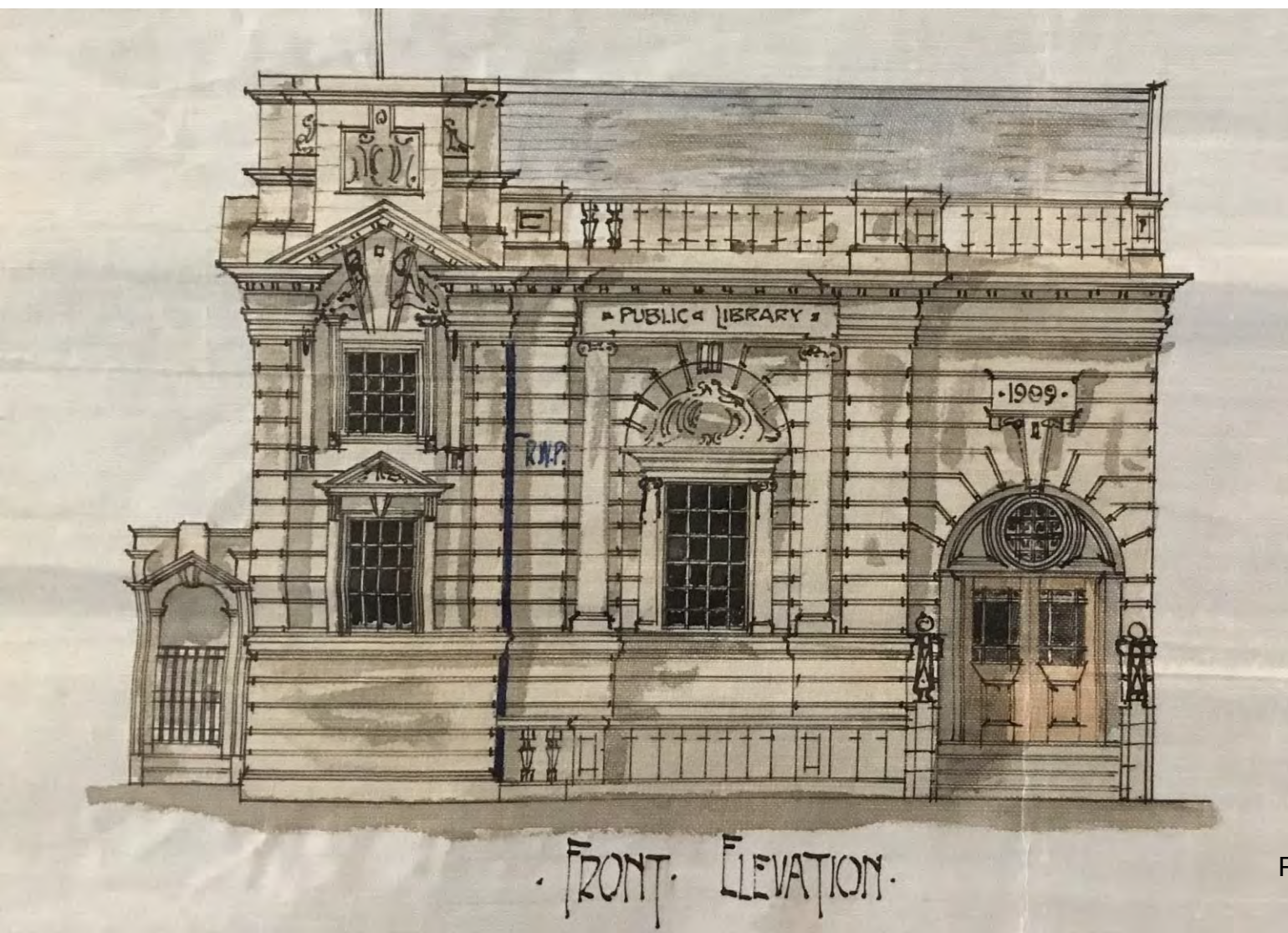
At around the same time, in 1897, J Dick Peddie and George Washington Browne imported some Edinburgh swagger when designing the Category 'B' listed **British Linen Company Bank** on High Street, also in the Tudor-Gothic style and incorporating some fine naturalistic decoration.

Further north, James Baird Thomson's **Municipal Buildings** of 1899-1900 are instead Baronial. Much uplifted by the choice of red Locharbriggs sandstone, the building is rich in roll mouldings, crowsteps and corbels, with good early 20th Century stained glass by William Meikle and Sons, and Shrigley and Hunt. The fine Westmorland slate roofscape, iron brattishing, tourelles and carving contribute to the Category 'B' listing.

Dumbarton's Victorian tenements are by and large modest: the 1895 red sandstone range at Nos. 84-92 High Street displays architectural ambition (replacing as it did the notorious 17th Century "Holy Land" housing), and there are two good three-storey tenements from around 1885 at the foot of Church Street (one with banded stonework redolent of Alexander "Greek" Thomson, the other called "Hodge's Corner"). The real surprise comes with the 1898 **Station Road/College Street** tenements by J M Crawford, a corner block in the Scots-Baronial style designed originally with a large ground floor pub complete with dining rooms and sitting rooms, and a first floor assembly room and supper room. The client was William Young, a local builder and owner of the land, no doubt optimistic that the newly improved station would bring customers to his door. With eaves dormers

Clockwise from top left: The former Burgh Hall and Academy from the west: the spire has long been lost following a fire (© Turkey Red Media); Nos. 127-135 High Street (© West Dunbartonshire Libraries); drawing of a traditional High Street property, classical in style with attic dormers and a generous shop frontage (© West Dunbartonshire Libraries); the Category 'A' listed Dumbarton Central Station (© author); St. Augustine's Church on High Street - the steeple was never built (© West Dunbartonshire Libraries).







inspired by Glencairn Greit House, crow-stepped gables, blind windows and an asymmetrical bartizan, the building stands up well to its high level neighbour. Inside, there is a delightful corner stairwell to the upper floor apartments. It is Category 'C' listed (but deserving of Category 'B').

### Edwardian Period

Completing the Station Road streetscape are further tenements in grey and red sandstone, the latter rotating onto Meadowbank Street by way of conical slated corners. These date to the beginning of the 20th Century, with the freestanding block next to the College Street underpass dated 1906.

In this northern part of the Conservation Area, on Strathleven Place, stands the Andrew Carnegie-funded **Public Library**, 1909 Renaissance built of pale grey Dalreoch sandstone to competition-winning designs by local architect William Reid. Long on plan, with a vaulted interior, the building has an appropriately grand entrance front, with a blind balustrade, deep aediculed main window bearing a huge Coat of Arms, and a corner bay with putti topped by a decorative raised parapet. Surprisingly un-listed, an oversight that should be corrected.

Within sight of the library stands another fine church, this one **St. Patrick's RC** built in 1901 by Dunn and Hansom of Newcastle. Gothic in style, the church was built first in nave-and-aisle format without the tower – this came later (in 1926) and was designed by Pugin and Pugin. Built of Dumfriesshire red bullfaced sandstone, the church is broad-fronted and with handsome boundary walls and railings.

The belfry is all but detached, enhanced by statuary, buttressed at the corners and topped by crocketed finials. It holds a carillon of twenty-three bells (the first of its kind in Scotland). The interior is richly furnished and includes a rainbow-winged St. Michael the Archangel by Eric Gill from 1920. Reported to be the first building in Dumbarton to be lit by electricity, the church is Category 'B' listed.

### Art Deco/Thirties Period

It is easy to forget that Dumbarton was once a shopping destination for Cardross, Helensburgh and the Gareloch, and the Vale of Leven. This is borne out by the number of buildings surviving in the Town Centre from the period of retail expansion in the 1920s and 30s by former household names such as Burtons, Claude Alexander, City Bakeries, Woolworths and - especially - the Co-op, represented in town by the Dumbarton Co-operative Equitable Society. The demand for the goods and products offered by these popular businesses will have made investment in the town attractive (despite the economic downturn of the time).

As a result of this there is a surprisingly large contingent of buildings on Dumbarton's High Street that exhibit Art Deco detailing, albeit some of this is now hidden beneath layers of paint. The crossing of High Street and Quay Street is marked by two buildings clad in white faience - Nos. 77-79 (originally Claude Alexander), and No. 81 (once Burtons, on the site of the old Elephant Hotel) - while west and east of the junction, at Nos. 55-63 (originally a tearoom, restaurant and shops) and Nos. 97-99 (once Woolworths) Thirties streamlining is still (just) in evidence, with zig-zags, chevrons, flagpoles and fins. At No. 32, the Dumbarton Co-op created a fine flattened façade from buff sandstone in 1938, as they did also at Nos. 106-116.

Two banking institutions invested in Dumbarton during the same period – the Glasgow Savings Bank, who opened a branch at No. 12 High Street in 1938, and the Clydesdale Bank at No. 53 one year later. Eric A Sutherland, who had a monopoly on work for the Glasgow Saving Bank, created a typically elegant frontage for his client with granite base, pale buff ashlar walling and steel casement windows (all much altered), while Baird and Thomson of Glasgow designed a stripped-back classical flat-roofed building for the Clydesdale Bank. Five bays wide, the central three with fluted pilasters with armorial crests in the capitals, the building had a quiet dignity now disrupted by painting of the façade and relocation of the entrance.

Clockwise from top left: Scots Baronial tenements on Station Road - they make for an arresting sight from the station platform (© author); J M Crawford's drawing of the narrow corner of the same tenement block - it has an interesting floor plan layout (© West Dunbartonshire Libraries); the Dumfriesshire red sandstone St. Patrick's RC Church (© author); Eric A Sutherland's design for the Dumbarton branch of the Glasgow Savings Bank (© West Dunbartonshire Libraries); William Reid's design for the Public Library (© West Dunbartonshire Libraries).







## Post-War Period

The ambitious re-development of Dumbarton during the 1960s has been polarizing. There was considerable loss of the urban fabric north of High Street and by all accounts a number of good historic buildings were demolished. Time is rarely kind to exposed concrete (of which much was used), but there was a uniformity to the new buildings that attempted invigoration of what was by then a flagging town centre. The competition brief was for housing, retail, a hotel, community buildings, car parking and offices. The two-storey shopping precinct on College Way by Garner, Preston and Strebel, low-rise and with exposed flint wall panels separated by slit windows, was designed to create a new urban aesthetic and until the removal of the town square provided a community space, not to mention connectivity across town to and from the station.

Winner of a Scottish Civic Trust commendation, the buildings have not been well treated, but for aficionados of the period, there is a splendid shuttered concrete external stair on the north-west side.

Elsewhere, and outwith the Conservation Area, the medium-rise Risk Street Housing (winner of a Saltire Society Award) has a bold geometry and thoughtful landscaping. Exposed shuttered concrete, stepped-section glazed balconies, and blue/brown brick ensures architectural interest despite some over-cladding. Additionally, the Masonic Temple (by its very nature inscrutable) is finely massed in dark brown brick, and typical of the cubic minimalist forms popular during the period. This period in Dumbarton's re-invention is not to everybody's taste, but it was delivered with commitment on the part of the local authority and deserves better press than it typically receives.

## TYPICAL BUILDING MATERIALS

Given the various periods of development evident in the Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area, there is a wide range of building materials used, not all of

which fall under the category of "traditional". Glencairn Greit House would have been finished in **lime harl**, but this was stripped off in the 1920s. There are no other buildings making use of this material. There are, however, many instances of **cementitious render**, used on exposed gables, on rear elevations, and in the attic gable of Nos. 63-65 High Street. Extensive lengths of the railway embankment walls on Station Road and Bankend Road are finished in render channelled to mimic stone blocks.

**Stone** is used in a range of colours and walling techniques. There were a number of small local quarries yielding grey sandstone, but there are examples of buff, red, and pinkish-red ashlar, some very finely carved. Late Victorian buildings such as the Municipal Buildings use Locharbriggs red sandstone, readily available once the road and rail network from the south improved, but just as likely to have been imported by river. Much of the stonework on High Street has been over-painted, some undoubtedly hiding the carbon deposits (not to mention spirit evaporation) that goes hand-in-hand with industry. There are also a number of areas of rubble stonework in boundary walls, some of which are fragments with real provenance. A particularly good panel of random stonework brought to course has been built into a brick wall behind Glencairn Greit House. **Granite** is not used greatly in the Town Centre and tends to be associated with buildings of the Art Deco/Thirties period, including at No. 22 High Street where it has been used to reclad the ground floor of an older building (probably for the Bank of Scotland).

**Brick** is widely used and in greater evidence than might be expected: a study of the brickworks used in the development of Dumbarton would make for an interesting project. Both red and ochre bricks appear throughout town: some of these are "commons" and some of an engineering quality (principally on the station buildings). Brick appears on exposed gables (many not designed to be quite so visible) with an attractive gable complete with fireplace surrounds adjacent to the Castle Street car park of West Dunbartonshire Council's headquarters. There are brick turrets and (former) toilet stacks on display behind a range of High Street buildings, and brick used in polychromatic format on Dumbarton Central

Clockwise from top left: Period photograph of the original Clydesdale Bank on High Street - a good example of 1930s architecture (© West Dunbartonshire Libraries); the building has not been well served by alterations and over-painting (© author); brick is used in buildings across town, often now exposed after demolition (© author); the town centre redevelopment during construction (© West Dunbartonshire Libraries).







Station. Outwith the Conservation Area, red and yellow stone is also combined as patterning on the walls of the Ship Model Experiment Tank building.

Dark coloured bricks (blue/brown/purple in hue) were used extensively in the buildings associated with the re-development period, including in the loading bay boundary walls along the Leven Embankment. More recently, a soft buff brick was used to extend the former Burgh Hall building at No. 16 Church Street for West Dunbartonshire Council, and dark red variegated brick used on the Riverside Housing scheme.

Where roofs are not flat and variously covered in membranes old and new, they are finished in **slate** or **concrete tile**. The Westmorland (Lake District) slate used on the Municipal Buildings is especially good. **Terracotta** is used for ridging on the former Burgh Hall, St. Patrick's RC Church, St. Augustine's Church, the former British Linen Company Bank, and with cresting at Dumbarton Central Station. Flashings and weatherings on the majority of pitched-roof buildings are **lead** and **zinc**. There are examples of **metal** (possibly tin) rooftop ventilators on the Public Library, and copper ridge vents to the rear of the former Art Deco tearoom at Nos. 55-63 High Street.

Metalwork is represented by **cast iron** in the form of simple boundary railings to St. Patrick's RC Church and Riverside Parish Church, and in rainwater goods such as the decorative hoppers to the former British Linen Company Bank. The rooftop decoration to the Municipal Buildings is probably **wrought iron**, and there is extensive use of decorative and structural **steel** and iron on Dumbarton Central Station. Nos. 106-116 High Street retain two good (**bronze**?) fanlight infills redolent of the Thirties period. **Timber** is used to decorative effect on the attic gable at Nos. 63-65 High Street, in windows, and in the occasional barge board, but most extensively on Dumbarton Central Station.

**Faience** is employed on four of Dumbarton's High Street buildings, white and cream for the most part, but known to be black, green and orange below layers

of grey paint on Nos. 55-63. There is very little in the way of decorative ceramic/ encaustic **tiling** on show, but it is used to good effect in the entrance platt at Glencairn Greit House and is known to be particularly fine (albeit hidden) on the walls of the east staircases at Dumbarton Central Station. Also worthy of mention (although not included in the Conservation Area) is the tile scheme to the frontage of the British Telecom building on Strathleven Place, and the Dumbarton Underpass Project, which delivered colourful graphics on the tiled walls of the Strathleven Underpass. **Fireclay** is used in chimney pots.

**Concrete** is used in the form of blockwork (to the rear of No. 3 High Street) but more commonly in poured, shuttered form as part of the Artizan Centre (in canopies and stairs in particular). It is also used creatively on the Leven Embankment. **Flint** also occurs in the precast wall panels of the shopping precinct, albeit much of this has been over-painted (and some overclad).

**Glass** is used in modern canopies to the Artizan Centre, and in the occasional conservatory extension (to No. 3 High Street) but has been mostly removed from the overhanging canopies of Dumbarton Central Station. Remaining, however, is a great deal of glass used very effectively above the approach ramp to the station platforms. More modern materials such as large format wall cladding panels and uPVC also appear in the Conservation Area and are uniformly negative in character.

## PUBLIC REALM

Road and pavement surfaces are typically tarmac, but there has been extensive improvement work to Church Street and the High Street corridor using Caithness slab, granite kerbs and paviours. Polished granite blocks have been used for occasional seating on pavements of generous width. Stainless steel is used in bike stands; and bollards, litter bins, signage and bus stops are modern. Finishes are tidy, albeit clinical, with original pillar boxes and the Police "Tardis" that stood outside Glencairn Greit House long since removed. There are few surviving

Clockwise from top left: The Municipal Buildings are a handsome combination of red sandstone and green slate (© author); the tiled platt at the entrance to Glencairn Greit House (© author); faience is used well on the main frontage of the former Burtons on High Street (© author); attractive wrought ironwork at Dumbarton Central Station (© author).







Victorian lamp standards. The Leven Embankment, however, is attractive, using as it does a good combination of tamped concrete and original cobbles. A cobbled path links High Street and the promenade beneath Glencairn Greit House, while cast iron capstans have been used in various locations.

Concrete benches outside No. 16 Church Street form part of the overall aesthetic (although they are staining swiftly) and the ramped access to St. Augustine's Church is neatly done. The cast iron lamp standards here are a welcome addition to the streetscape (which, despite the quality of materials and some tree planting is a little sterile). There are nevertheless some good modern barriers/boundary railings adjacent to Dumbarton Central Station (as well as some excellent original gates and railings) and alongside West Dunbartonshire Council's headquarters, where once stood the Denny Institute and the Windsor Buildings.

Boundary wall treatments are typically sand-rubbed or common brick or stone, some topped with railings, while shuttered concrete used in the approaches to the A814 underpasses is not unattractive. Blue heritage plaques appear on a number of historic buildings, the story they tell abbreviated from the information produced in West Dunbartonshire Council's *Dumbarton Heritage Trail*.

Where the public realm works are worst is in the backlands and service bays behind High Street: of necessity these areas contain refuse and recycling bins (as well as car parking), but they currently provide shortcuts to High Street from the north and although excluded from the Conservation Area, are a poor feature of the route from the Station to the Town Centre. Some of the service yards off the Leven Embankment are no better, having lost the controlled enclosure provided in the 1970s through use of walls of consistent height and materials.

In summary, there has been ongoing investment in public realm and the quality of recent projects has been high, but the result is now rather piecemeal. Efforts may need to be directed to secondary spaces and connections to generally provide more cohesion to the public realm.

## GENERAL CONDITION

Buildings in the ownership of the church and local authority are in uniformly good condition, but those in private or mixed ownership are variable. There is a preponderance of buddleia growing from roofs and walls on High Street, and much building fabric in need of attention. There are three buildings on High Street on the *Buildings at Risk Register*, including the former Hiram Walker headquarters at No. 3. Added in September 2021, the entry draws attention to the vacancy, established vegetation growth, spalling render to the rear, delamination of stone, cracking, and failed rainwater goods. At Nos. 119-123 High Street, issues of vacancy and dampness are highlighted (including the poor condition to the rear), and at Nos. 125-133 High Street peeling paint, potential parapet gutter failure and upper floor vacancy are noted. The service yard behind Nos. 119-123 is disused, and a large sycamore has been allowed to grow too close to the brick boundary wall, which is showing signs of movement.

The former Hiram Walker headquarters (originally the McMillan Shipyard offices and more recently the offices of the Procurator Fiscal and then a public house) is in particularly poor condition, with roosting pigeons, distortion in the metal windows, an ugly attic storey, and a redundant conservatory to the west in the gap next to the former British Linen Company Bank. Nor is this second building in a well-maintained state, with failed (cracked) rainwater goods, and extensive vegetation growth (including grass growing from gutters). There is efflorescence and biological growth on the main frontage, both hallmarks of a chemical clean of the stone in the past (or the application of water repellent). Few of the building façades on the south side of High Street have been left unpainted: paint on ashlar conventionally traps moisture (as well as hiding other defects) and peeling paint is evident at a number of locations. At No. 53, the former Clydesdale Bank, the paint is likely to have been particularly damaging (not to mention currently unattractive), and the stepped parapet has extensive plant growth in the joints.

There is stonework deterioration and vegetation at Nos. 63-65 (J M Crawford's

Left: Although there has been investment in the public realm on High Street, and the setting to St. Augustine's Church is good, No. 3 High Street is in especially poor condition and requires intervention (© author).







1895 design for the National Boot Depot), and a veritable (unintentional) roof garden at cornice level on the former Claude Alexander building (now Costa). At the former Burtons, on the corner of Quay Street, there are small ferns growing from the joints in the faience. Further west, there appears to be gutter failure and some cracking at No. 107 (most of the High Street properties have internal rainwater goods, some of which may be blocked), Nos. 119-123 appear to have been vacated, and building repairs at Nos. 125-133 are not quite complete. Next door, at No. 135, crazing on the frontage is suggestive of a failing cement skim on the stonework. The diminutive two-storey public house at No. 139 may have a snapped window lintel since the mutuled eaves cornice droops at the east, while No. 141 has an untidy slate roof (particularly on the rear turnpike stair) and badly finished gable. As the Conservation Area boundary is reached to the west, the former High Church, now Bell Centre, has a range of defects typical of a large building with inaccessible tower, and an especially ugly gable where a tenement once adjoined.

The condition on the north side of High Street is better, although the large red sandstone tenement at Nos. 84-92 is water damaged. Nos. 16-20, once home to the London and Newcastle Tea Company, has deteriorating attic dormers and much damaging cement pointing to the rear (in common with No. 22), while the roof to Nos. 8-10 is uneven (and the plastic rainwater goods to the front an addition). Nos. 2-6 (dated 1880?) have been recently and reasonably well restored, the armorial carvings on the street front worn but still legible. On Castle Street, the attractive three-storey tenements (c1885) turning onto Church Street are exhibiting stonework erosion, and there is a truncated wallhead chimney at No. 2 Church Street. Nos. 3-13 Castle Street are elegant but with loss of stonework detail; the soft red sandstone to the rear elevation has also been patched with cement.

The defects encountered at Dumbarton Central Station have been well documented in the excellent *Conservation Management Plan* produced for the Dumbarton Stations Improvement Trust in 2019. These include high moisture levels in the fill beneath the track beds (typically manifesting itself as efflorescence

on the embankment walls), structural movement in the platform buildings, water management from the bridge across the top of Church Street, and poor brick indenting to the buttresses on Station Road and Bankend Road.

There are defects also apparent on the Station Road tenements, largely relating to erosion of stonework (Nos. 1-5 Meadowbank Street are built of very soft red sandstone), rising damp, rusting rainwater goods and truncated chimneys. On the whole, the grey sandstone of the slightly older corner tenement has weathered better than the red ashlar of the Edwardian houses.

Shop frontages are uniformly unsympathetic, although at No. 117 and No. 139 High Street (both pubs) the aesthetic is better and, if not original, at least in keeping. More modern shopfronts have been installed to the Church Street/Castle Street tenements which, while a little unorthodox, are uniform in design and materials. Many replacement windows (and replacement rainwater goods) have been carried out in uPVC throughout the Conservation Area, including to buildings that are listed. At Glencairn Greit House the rear windows have been replaced in timber although the astragal sub-division is curious (and surely incorrect).

In many instances properties within the Conservation Area require urgent as well as routine maintenance. The physical and visual integrity of High Street, in particular, requires a co-ordinated effort to safeguard the special architectural character and townscape value of the area for the future. There have been a number of inappropriate alterations to buildings of all ages (not just the Victorian properties), and a wholesale improvement in maintenance levels is required (in addition to monitoring of works) to ensure that interventions comply with Planning Policy, and the gradual erosion of the special character of the area is reversed.

Clockwise from top left: The former National Boot Depot on High Street has a great deal of buddleia growth at high level and a poor shopfront (© author); the building (by J M Crawford) not long after construction showing the original shop frontage (© West Dunbartonshire Libraries); the former High Church (now Bell Centre) has an unfortunate exposed gable and is in need of repair (© author); building condition is variable (and in some instances poor) on the south side of High Street (© author).







## CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

### AREA ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT

Within the Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area there are four distinct Character Areas, being High Street (including the mediaeval core of town and the waterfront), Church Street up to the A814 (which provides a pedestrian and vehicular link north from High Street but also contains a number of important historic buildings), Station Road (which is predominantly late Victorian/Edwardian and pleasingly muscular in character), and Strathleven Place (which is residential, and quieter in nature).

#### High Street

The *Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area Proposal* of 2019 noted that the High Street Character Area had retained much of its original form in terms of its solid frontage and retail designation. Many of the listed buildings in the Conservation Area are located on High Street and later additions to the townscape, such as the Artizan Centre, although conforming to a different design aesthetic have recognised and adapted to the scale of the original setting. The waterfront (Leven Embankment) comprises green public spaces, a promenade, and easily-accessed and orderly parking facilities. It offers excellent views to the river, the Category 'B' listed old Dumbarton Bridge and Dumbarton Rock to the south-west. The north side of the waterside lacks frontage due to its location on the back of High Street (it was originally intended that housing would provide a visual barrier) but notwithstanding, the area is of great significance. It has retained its original medieval street pattern with narrow feus and vennels leading from the High Street to the Leven and is historically very significant.

The primary public space is the leafy promenade with its views of the river and beyond. This contributes positively to the character of the area, as does the improved public realm and the solidity of the street frontage. Negatively impacting on the Character Area is the condition of individual buildings, poor shop frontages, vacancy of ground and upper floors, the unkempt condition of some of the loading bays facing the river, and the extent of ground given over to car parking. Exposed gables are uniformly distracting.

#### Church Street

The old Kirk Vennel is more piecemeal, the west side having been lost entirely, but it contains a range of robust tenements on the corner with High Street/Castle Street, two significant public buildings (both of which are listed), a fragment of one that is also listed, and the town's best example of modern architecture in the form of West Dunbartonshire Council's offices. Boundary walling, street furniture, railings (old and new), and hard and soft landscape is also good, and the west side of the street (admittedly outwith the Conservation Area) is attractively planted at the entrance to St. Mary's Way and has a smart example of 1970s minimalism in the shape of the Masonic Hall.

The primary public space is the environs of the former Burgh Hall and Academy: following recent modernisation these contribute positively to the area, telling a tale of historic building rescue and re-invention. Negatively impacting on the Conservation Area is the interruption at the north by the A814, and the uncomfortable relationship (and large gaps) between the different building types, and the extent to which there is no strong street edge.







## Station Road

This Character Area excellently encapsulates Victorian Dumbarton: there are two three-sided blocks of four-storey tenements in mostly red sandstone, some retail, the Category 'A' listed Dumbarton Central Station to the north, and the well-maintained Category 'B' listed Municipal Buildings. There is green space and a sense of activity/community. Despite the disruption of the A814 to the south, this area maintains its street pattern and urban form. The concentration of heritage in this area creates an overall positive character and as advised in the *Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area Proposal*, it is an important area to safeguard against unsuitable development. The corner tenement by J M Crawford is both interesting and innovative on plan, and a positive feature of this character area. Indeed, the station buildings and tenements converse animatedly across the fine roofscape of the Municipal Buildings.

The primary public space is the landscaped grounds of the Municipal Buildings: the statuary and overall setting impart civic presence (although the redundant diagonally-set stone gateway is a reminder of the missing street pattern). The Glasgow Road roundabout and A814 is a deeply negative aspect of the character of the area, as is the absence of an attractive, safe link between station and town centre.

## Strathleven Place

This fourth Character Area is largely Edwardian in nature. The northern part features the Public Library and two 20th Century buildings hosting BT services, while the south side includes two 19th Century semi-detached houses, the Category 'B' listed St. Patrick's RC Church, two detached 19th Century houses (one of which, "Drumoyne", is Category 'B' listed) and some late 20th Century residential developments further east. Strathleven Place is consistent with the original street pattern and still retains some of the old masonry walls along the street which are largely intact and in good condition.

There are no primary public spaces in this Character Area – essentially it is more private by nature. The Glasgow Road roundabout and A814 impact negatively on the character of this area, as does the poor eastern setting for the Public Library.

Outwith the four character areas, other parts of the town centre have distinctive features, some of which are positive (such as the bowling greens) and others negative (vacant space, ill-defined routes, poor modern interventions).

## BUILDINGS ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT

There are a number of buildings in the Conservation Area that make a valuable contribution to its character and appearance. These include churches, public buildings, and housing, with many of them listed. There are nineteen listed buildings (including one statue and two fragments) in and near the Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area, most of which have been described in the section on *Architectural Character and Styles* (the Ship Model Experiment Tank and Old Dumbarton Bridge are excluded from the Conservation Area).

Where buildings are listed, they have already been assessed by Historic Environment Scotland as being of special architectural or historic interest and are included on the Scottish Ministers' statutory list. Listed buildings in poor condition that are repaired appropriately can contribute even more positively to the character of an area, as is evidenced by West Dunbartonshire Council's offices (before restoration, the sight of the façade retention measures was a negative feature of town). Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area includes four buildings listed at Category 'A' – St. Augustine's Church, Riverside Parish Church, No. 16 Church Street (the aforementioned former Burgh Hall and Academy), and Dumbarton Central Station.

With the exception of the Station Road tenements designed by J M Crawford (Category 'C'), the remainder are listed at Category 'B'.

Left: Station Road, the Municipal Buildings, the Scots Baronial tenements and the route through town towards Cardross and beyond that necessitated demolition of so many buildings (© Turkey Red Media).







Listed buildings contribute positively to the appearance of an area, provide points of interest and enrich an area's special character, as well as having stories to tell about the development of a place and its people: Dumbarton is no exception – its churches and public buildings continue to serve the townsfolk usefully (and provide important orientation points) and its station is one of only thirteen in Scotland listed at Category 'A'. These are positive aspects of the area.

*Consideration should be given to having the listed status of the Scots-Baronial Station Road/College Street tenements upgraded to Category 'B'.*

Unlisted buildings of townscape merit can also make a positive visual contribution to the character and appearance of an area and may be landmark buildings or more modest buildings which help to unify the townscape. A number of High Street buildings fall into this category.

*Serious consideration should be given to having the Public Library and former Hiram Walker Headquarters (No. 3 High Street) listed by Historic Environment Scotland:* currently the only statutory protection afforded these key buildings is their location within the Conservation Area.

*Additional consideration should be given to having No. 22 High Street (former Bank of Scotland), the Church Street/Castle Street tenements, the former Glasgow Savings Bank and the tenements at Nos. 6-8 High Street listed.*

## KEY POSITIVE FEATURES AND BUILDINGS

A detailed assessment of the buildings and spaces within a Conservation Area allows for the identification of the key features that define the special architectural and historic character of the area. There should be a presumption against demolition, disruption, and inappropriate alterations that detract from the character and appearance of such an area.

In the Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area, the key features are:

- Survival of the street pattern and burgage plots from the mediæval period.
- The attractive riverside setting and embankment walkway and views therefrom.
- Consistency of building line along High Street, creating a regular (and reassuring) sense of enclosure.
- Unexpected range of architectural styles, including good examples from the Art Deco period, co-existing surprisingly harmoniously on High Street.
- Survival of the Victorian street pattern and urban grain adjacent to Dumbarton Central Station and along Strathleven Place.
- Architectural quality of the prominent buildings.
- Representation of pre-eminent Scottish architects (Brash, Honeyman, Leiper, Gillespie Graham, Rowand Anderson) alongside local practitioners (J M Crawford, William Reid).
- Consistency of post-war development (uniformity of height, aesthetic, and construction materials).
- Well-maintained public spaces.

In the Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area, the key buildings are those currently listed by Historic Environment Scotland, *as well as*: -

- Public Library, Strathleven Place
- No. 3 High Street (former Hiram Walker Headquarters/McMillan Shipyard Offices). Un-listed and on *Buildings at Risk Register*.
- No. 53 High Street (former Clydesdale Bank).
- Nos. 63-65 High Street (former National Boot Depot).
- Nos. 81-95 High Street (former Burtons).
- Nos. 97-99 High Street (former Woolworths).
- Nos. 84-92 High Street (good red sandstone tenement).
- No. 22 High Street (former Bank of Scotland).
- No. 12 High Street (former Glasgow Savings Bank).
- Nos. 2-14 Church Street/Nos. 1-17 Castle Street (good grey/buff sandstone tenements).

Clockwise from top left: The Edwardian Public Library is a valuable asset to the town - it should be listed (© author); consideration could be given to listing the former Bank of Scotland at No. 22 High Street (© author); the Church Street tenements adjoining the Council headquarters are worthy of consideration for listing (© author); the Station Road tenements could be upgraded to Category 'B' listing to further protect them (© M Anne Dick).







## KEY CHALLENGES

The key challenges in any Conservation Area are inappropriate elements that detract from the character and appearance of the area. The Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area is relatively new, and as a result many changes had previously occurred over which little statutory control was exercised. In the Town Centre, therefore, the key challenges are: -

### Loss of original architectural detail

Original architectural detail makes a defining contribution to the character and appearance of any Conservation Area. Retention and repair are therefore important aspects of the preservation and enhancement of an area. Conversely, inappropriate replacement windows and rainwater goods, inconsistent colour schemes, alterations to doors, roof coverings and boundary treatments, and loss of chimneys and original ironmongery all erode the special character of an area. Reference to historic photographs of Dumbarton illustrate the extent to which this has already taken place: for instance, the large sandstone tenement at Nos. 84-92 High Street has been shorn of its street-facing wallhead chimneys and parapet balustrade, immediately reducing its visual impact.

### Use of inappropriate materials and repair techniques

The use of the correct building materials in any Conservation Area is important to character and appearance. Traditional materials provide a cohesive effect across a Conservation Area and loss of character will result when these are replaced with modern materials or detailing. Traditional materials such as stone, slate, lead and cast iron are long-lasting and age well: they belong in a Conservation Area, but more than that belong in an energy-conscious society. The use of uPVC in replacement windows and rainwater goods is especially damaging to the integrity of a Conservation Area, as is the inappropriate use of timber boarding, or the incorrect colour on doors and windows. Astragal sub-division of windows

is also important since the arrangement of these relates directly to the pane sizes available during a specific period of construction: Georgian buildings typically exhibit smaller panes of glass and more slender astragals than Victorian properties (an important distinction in glass-producing Dumbarton).

Concrete roofing tiles have a far shorter life expectancy than slates and are large in format and thickness, so imparting heaviness to a small building. The striking four-storey tenement at Nos. 63-65 High Street has lost some of its crispness through the use of tile in re-roofing: this is particularly obvious from the rear.

Painting of ashlar frontages can be extremely damaging where the paint used is non-breathable. There has been a tradition of painting the smaller stone-built properties in Dumbarton, but stone needs to breathe, and trapped moisture behind a layer (or more) of paint can lead to long-term decay. Additionally, the use of cement in repairs can accelerate deterioration of stonework, as can be seen in the Station Road/Meadowbank Street tenements where the ashlar was already very soft.

### Inappropriate modern additions to buildings

Satellite dishes, burglar alarm boxes and CCTV cameras all impact negatively on a Conservation Area when their installation is not controlled. More damaging is the impact that can be made through an inappropriate modern intervention. Although not recent, the flat-roofed, cement-covered attic storey to No. 3 High Street creates an ugliness that is undeserved on an historic building. Similarly, extensions to the rear are equally unsympathetic. Adjacent to the same building, a modern timber conservatory installed from the period when the building was in use as a restaurant is a jarring feature of the eastern end of High Street.

In the same vein, the 1960s extension of the Public Library eastwards lacks sensitivity and detracts significantly from what is an otherwise handsome Renaissance building.

Left: Nos. 84-92 High Street have lost much of the original architectural detail (© author); insert shows a datestone over the rear service entrance, salvaged from a far older building (© Jeremy Watson).







## Gap Sites

Strong building lines and a sense of enclosure can make positive contributions to the character and appearance of any Conservation Area. The impact of the Riverside Lane one-way through-route on Dumbarton was to create wide gaps on the south side of High Street where none had previously existed. Accordingly, additional gaps detract significantly from the streetscape. The gap between Nos. 3 and 17 High Street (albeit partially occupied by a conservatory and beer garden) is a negative feature of the Conservation Area. Although the site was originally filled by a low-rise building (allowing for windows on the west gable of the former Hiram Walker offices), the building line was at least maintained, and the existing railings across the gap are no substitute. Outwith the Conservation Area, there are significant unfilled/unresolved gaps, particularly on the north rear side of High Street.

## Shop Frontages

The lack of quality in shop frontages and signage is extremely detrimental to the character and townscape of Dumbarton. Many shop fronts and signage displays on High Street are constructed of non-traditional materials, and do not reflect the original proportions of traditional shop fronts. Interestingly, the different periods in architecture over which High Street was developed make possible a range of different treatments at shop level, so not every frontage would be expected to conform to the same set of rules: Victorian shops would have used extensive areas of glass for the purposes of retail display; shop entrances may have been recessed with feature platts; and the principal framing would have been constructed of timber with uniform fascias and often awnings. The Art Deco period saw the same use of glass, but often framed in metal with faux marble and Vitrolite used for decoration. The important factor is authenticity, and this is typically missing from the shop and pub frontages in town, where the proportions and materials impact negatively on the Conservation Area.

## Exposed gables

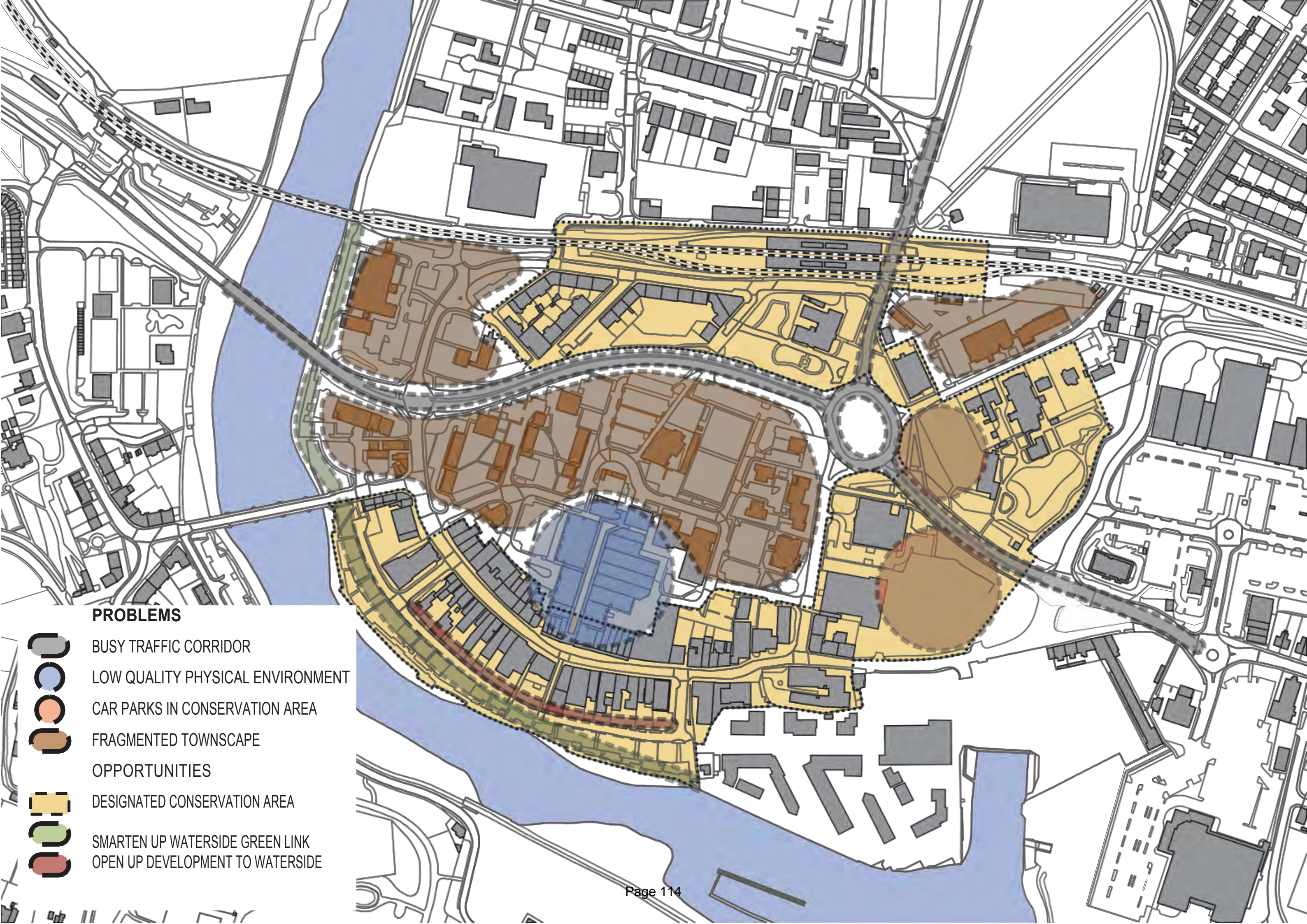
Featureless façades rarely complement the character and appearance of a Conservation Area. Particularly where unintended, exposed gables on buildings can impact negatively on an area unless they tell an interesting story. Although it exhibits a range of defects (including cracking) the gable of No. 17 Castle Street has aesthetic and historic value (exposing fireplace surrounds and the outline of a smaller building). Remaining exposed gables across town (of which there are many) are uniformly unattractive, including the rubble walled east gable of the former High Church (Bell Centre) and the 1966 east wall of the Public Library. There is here the opportunity to enhance the Conservation Area through imaginative treatment of these gables, perhaps as took place in Glasgow in 1974 using funding from the Scottish Arts Council (and is a continuing tradition in the city today).

## Exposed and open backlands









The unintended high visibility of rear façades is detrimental to the character and townscape of Dumbarton. The town centre's backlands had a charm and sense of purpose until contraction of industrial activity and subsequent dereliction necessitated large-scale clearance. The buildings of High Street had been largely hidden to the rear, with few designed to be visible in the way that they are today. The 1970s design of the Leven Embankment was carefully considered, creating loading bays and designated parking behind most of the High Street retail units, enclosing these by way of stone and brick walls. At the same time, however, there had always been an ambition that riverfront housing would be provided. Today, some of the loading bays and undeveloped back grounds are unkempt, with an inconsistent quality in the architecture of the outward-facing businesses. There is some residential use of the backlands, but it is small in scale and contributes little to the visual appearance of the riverside. The lack of animation and activity along the embankment is a key problem as it reinforces the feeling that the riverside is a "back", and it feels uncomfortable and unsafe at night.

Left: There is much of interest on the rear facades of many of the High Street buildings, but they were not designed to be seen across large areas of unused backlands as they are at present. Note the use of brick in the stair turret (© author).





**PROBLEMS**

-  BUSY TRAFFIC CORRIDOR
-  LOW QUALITY PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT
-  CAR PARKS IN CONSERVATION AREA
-  FRAGMENTED TOWNSCAPE
-  OPPORTUNITIES
-  DESIGNATED CONSERVATION AREA
-  SMARTEN UP WATERSIDE GREEN LINK
-  OPEN UP DEVELOPMENT TO WATERSIDE



On the north side of High Street there is also a series of service courts that are effectively private but used by members of public as shortcuts from various car parking areas onto High Street. Routes to and through the Artizan Centre are confusing (more so than when originally designed). Notwithstanding, there are stair towers and raised drying greens behind the High Street properties that are of interest architecturally, but currently of negative impact on the character of the area due to poor maintenance and control.

### Vacancy

Vacant properties and sites have a negative effect on the character of any area. To restore the vitality of High Street it is important that vacant premises including listed buildings and shop units are returned to use. Similarly, the closure of the original entrance to Dumbarton Central Station and vacancy of the spaces associated with it is a negative feature of the northern end of Church Street.

The *Buildings at Risk Register* identifies three buildings on High Street, all of which are important to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

### Connectivity

The re-routing of the A814 has long been detrimental to the character and townscape of Dumbarton (albeit it relieved pressure on Castle Street, High Street and the old Dumbarton Bridge). One of the defining features of pre-war aerial views of Dumbarton Town Centre is the route of College Street (once Cross Vennel) which ran in a straight line from High Street (alongside the red sandstone tenement at Nos. 84-92) as far as the ramped platform access to Dumbarton Central Station. To the east, Church Street (once Kirk Vennel) linked High Street directly to the main passenger entrance to the station. Both of these routes continued north under the railway line, but were in fact historic, pre-dating considerably the arrival of the railway. Originally the old vennels met a natural boundary at the north and

in doing so defined what would become College Park, on which the Municipal Buildings were erected.

During its heyday as a shopping destination and visitor attraction, Dumbarton Central Station enjoyed good visual and physical links to High Street, and while these routes survive in the form of underpasses, they are no longer well defined. As a result, two of the Character Areas within the Conservation Area (Station Road and Strathleven Place) are dependent on the third (Church Street) for a direct connection to the fourth and largest (High Street).

### Financial Constraints

It is recognised that financial constraints across both the public and private sector continue to impact on the resources available for preservation and enhancement of the historic environment. The planning of priorities and identification of funding and other resources to maximise the benefits to the Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area is a key recommendation of this appraisal.

Left: Area analysis diagram (© Ines Triebel).







## CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY

### ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT BOUNDARY

The Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area was only designated in 2019 and so it may seem premature that its boundary be adjusted. As part of this appraisal, however, the boundary of the Conservation Area was studied, as much to assess what had been excluded in 2019 as had been included. The intentions of the *Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area Proposal* were: -

*To ensure more careful and thoughtful future developments, the boundaries of the proposed conservation area aim to include all the historic fabric within Dumbarton Town Centre, as well as adjacent elements that are currently not detrimental in a ratio that keeps the historic aspect of the area relevant. The conservation area will help provide better protection for the fabric contained within it. It will also help enhance the setting around heritage assets, regulate future development and prevent unsympathetic additions to the historic context.*

Excluded from the final Conservation Area was the old Dumbarton Bridge (also excluded from the Kirktonhill Conservation Area) and the Category 'A' listed Ship Model Experiment Tank.

In reviewing the content and boundary of a Conservation Area it is important to establish criteria against which decisions can be assessed. An overarching principle comes from the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. In defining Conservation Areas and the role planning authorities have in considering development proposals within them, four main themes are identified, being architectural interest, historic interest, character, and appearance.

### PROPOSED BOUNDARY AMENDMENTS

#### The case for Dumbarton Bridge

It seems anomalous that the buildings at the junction of Bridge Street and High Street, which have been significantly altered and are un-listed, are included within the Conservation Area while the old Dumbarton Bridge is not. This is an important architectural and historic feature of Dumbarton (as evidenced by its Category 'B' listing) and while it is afforded statutory protection by its listing, it should be included within the Conservation Area, thereby connecting with the Kirktonhill Conservation Area.

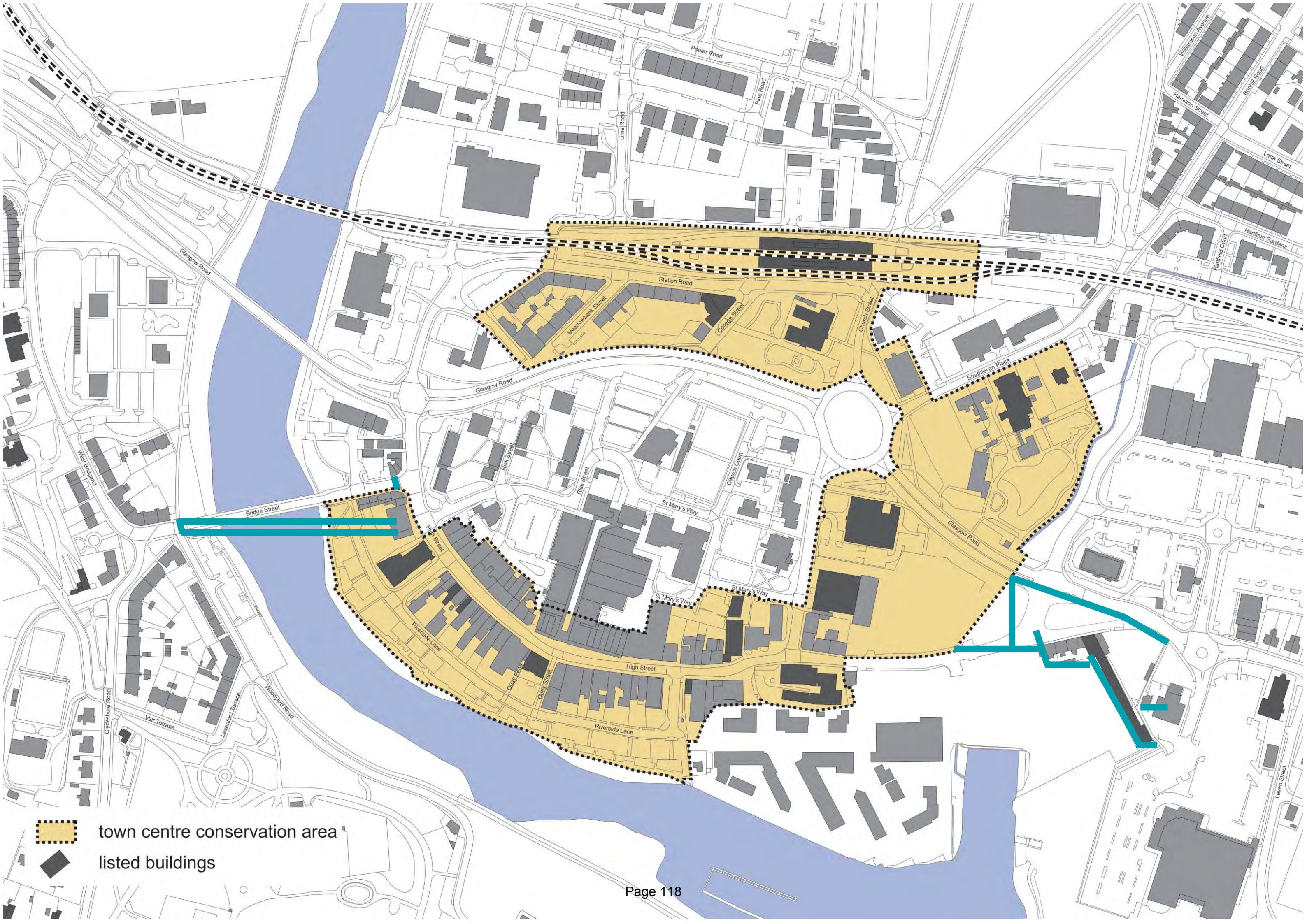
#### The case for the Castle Street Car Park

This is an historically significant site where there was a railway goods station with sidings and weighbridge. From here there were tracks leading to the dockyard of Archibald McMillan and Son and later the Hiram Walker distillery. One of these tracks has been incorporated into a recent landscape improvement scheme for the site (which bounds the car park for West Dunbartonshire Council's offices), continuing across the A814 as an important reminder of the town's industrial past.

To protect it from unsuitable development, as well as in recognition of its historic importance, it should be included within the Conservation Area, along with Castle Terrace and the Ship Model Experiment Tank.

Left: Dumbarton Bridge is excluded from the Kirktonhill Conservation Area and the present Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area (© author).





town centre conservation area



listed buildings



### The case for the Ship Model Experiment Tank

The Denny Ship Model Experiment Tank (more properly the Scottish Maritime Museum) on Castle Terrace was built in 1882 and opened as a museum in 1988. The polychromatic sandstone street frontage commemorates William Froude, heralded on an engraved plaque as “The Greatest of Experimenters and Investigators in Hydrodynamics”. In addition to the pitched-roof shed containing the 100 metre-long hydraulic experimentation tank (designed for William Denny’s Leven Shipyard), workshops and a timber-lined drawing office are preserved. In the grounds stands the Robert Napier-designed engine from the wooden paddle steamer *Leven* (1821) which was relocated from a reflecting pool in Dumbarton Town Centre in 1984 (having been taken there from a site at Dumbarton Rock). The complex is Category ‘A’ listed and is complemented nicely by a truncated row of two-storey terraced houses with slate roofs and restrained detailing. These buildings should be included within the Conservation Area for architectural, historic, archaeological and townscape reasons.

Left: Suggested boundary changes to Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area to include Dumbarton Bridge, the Castle Street car park, and the Ship Model Experiment Tank (© Ines Triebel/author).







## PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

### MANAGEMENT PLANNING

The Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area would benefit from an overall management plan to aid in the prioritisation and co-ordination of preservation and enhancement initiatives, as well as the identification of resources. It is accepted that there are present-day financial constraints on heritage management and historic building care and repair, but a management plan will allow for a structured approach to making the best use of available funds.

The management plan should seek to set targets for implementing the following:

- Identifying potential funding streams and other resources.
- Prioritising projects and other actions, for instance concentrating on Buildings at Risk.
- Identifying management issues and any problems with control of works, such as problems of ownership.
- Encouraging different departments within West Dunbartonshire Council as well as other organisations, groups and interested individuals to work together on priorities.
- Ensuring that appropriate information and advice about practical conservation and planning issues is readily available, for instance in the Public Library and online.
- Identifying means of promoting awareness of the importance and key features of the Conservation Area through education, interpretation, activities and events, such as practical demonstrations of traditional skills.

- Targeting tomorrow's stakeholders, building owners and potential heritage professionals by engaging with local schools.
- Ensuring that flood risk and management are at the forefront of discussions over the development of the town centre.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

Conservation Area status should be seen as an opportunity, and engagement with the local community is essential to fostering a sense of ownership, responsibility for the historic environment, and pride in the town centre.

The following initiatives represent general opportunities: -

- Where general enhancement projects are being planned (for instance, a co-ordinated approach to improvement of exposed gables), the educational and outreach benefits of the exercise should be maximised through consultation and community involvement.
- Promotion of the key features of the Conservation Area should be implemented through the distribution of information leaflets, and community events.
- Guidance on the economic and aesthetic benefits of good practice in building repair should be circulated/produced.
- The importance of routine building maintenance should be emphasised to building owners and tenants.
- Advice on energy efficiency, and the importance of preserving existing buildings and using sustainable materials should be made available to building owners and tenants.







- Opportunities for local trades in repair and maintenance of the historic built environment, creating economic and cultural opportunities.

The following initiatives represent specific recommendations: -

- There should be a presumption against demolition – the most sustainable building is one that already exists.
- Alterations to un-listed buildings should be controlled through positive engagement with owners. Inappropriate signage, window replacement, roof coverings, chimney alterations, stonework repairs and the installation of modern fittings should be discouraged.
- The removal of three sites in the Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area from the *Buildings at Risk Register* through repairs and re-use (significant in the case of the former Hiram Walker offices) should be a priority.
- Improvement of the thresholds (“gateways”) of the Conservation Area should be targeted.
- The creation of definitive, safe and attractive routes for pedestrians and cyclists from the north to the south of the Conservation Area should be a priority.
- All new developments should be of the highest quality, be in harmony with the historic nature of the town, respond to the scale and massing of existing buildings, be built of sustainable and long-lasting materials, and be capable of demonstrably improving the appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Sensitive and imaginative proposals for the re-use of vacant buildings and gap sites should be encouraged.
- Sensitive and imaginative solutions to the backlands should be encouraged. Consideration should be given to creating an active frontage facing the riverside.
- Holistic and comprehensive treatment of exposed gables should be considered as an opportunity to positively enliven (as well as improve) the appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Holistic and comprehensive improvements to shop frontages (using historic

photographs and period-appropriate materials) should be considered as an opportunity to lift the appearance of the Conservation Area, alongside the reinstatement of missing architectural features.

- Where possible, paint should be removed from ashlar building frontages, for instance as part of a wider repair and improvement scheme.
- Protection of trees and existing traditional boundary walls that do much to contribute positively to the Conservation Area should be enforced.
- The results of recent High Street improvements to the public realm should be expanded to include and improve the quality of secondary links, especially on key desire lines.
- Car parks should be reviewed with a view to rationalising some of the greenspace to create more meaningful, useful and sustainable green areas in the town centre.
- The promotion of Dumbarton Town Centre as a heritage destination should be considered, in collaboration with wider stakeholders and owners of significant sites (such as Dumbarton Castle).
- The development of the attractive riverside route from the old Dumbarton Bridge eastwards should be continued as an area-wide benefit.
- The potential for restoring the Artizan Centre to its 1960s award-winning form should not be dismissed without careful consideration of the impact of radical change.

This appraisal should be reviewed every five years from the date of its formal adoption by West Dunbartonshire Council. It should be assessed against any changes in the local development plan, Scottish Government policy and/or guidance issued by Historic Environment Scotland on managing change, and care and repair.

Left: The Leven Embankment which has huge potential but is given over to car parking (© author).







## MONITORING AND REVIEW

Ideally, a review should include:

- A survey of the Conservation Area (including a photographic record) to support any possible enforcement action.
- An assessment of the degree to which key features identified in this appraisal have been protected and/or enhanced.
- An assessment of the degree to which the key challenges identified in this appraisal have been addressed (and the success thereof).
- The identification of any new issues that require to be addressed (including suggested actions).
- The production of a short, illustrated review detailing the findings and setting out recommendations as appropriate.
- Publicity and consultation.

The review should be carried out by heritage consultants or West Dunbartonshire Council in collaboration with local stakeholders and amenity bodies with a vested interest in the protection and enhancement of the Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area.

Left: Carved detail on West Dunbartonshire Council headquarters on Church Street (© author).







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### **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.

“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?”

### **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.”







### **Assessment of buildings suggested for listing through draft Dumbarton Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal consultation process**

#### **The new harbourside development and harbour**

Buildings which are less than 30 years old are generally not considered for listing.

***Recommendation: Not recommended for listing***

#### **Tenements at 84-92 High Street**

These are a representative example of a red sandstone tenement of its time. While they have a positive contribution to town centre, it is not considered that there is special architectural or historic interest. Conservation area protection is sufficient.

***Recommendation: Not recommended for listing***

#### **35 High Street**

35-37 High Street is the RBS Building, designed by John Ernest Douglas Sanderson from 1972. This is not considered to be of particular architectural or historic interest.

***Recommendation: Not recommended for listing***

#### **4-10 Castle Street**

A proposal to extend the conservation area, so as to include these houses has been put forward in the Consultation Draft of the Conservation Area Appraisal. HES's response to this provides the below commentary:

"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." On this basis, listing would not be appropriate.

***Recommendation: Not recommended for listing***

#### **119-133 High Street**

127-135 are listed category B.

119-125 is a two storey building with six classically detailed windows, on the first floor. No detail have been found on architect or age which could justify listing.



***Recommendation: No change.***

### **Original slipways at Leven Quay**

The remains of the slipways at the former Leven Shipbuilding Yard, do have an accepted social historic interest for the town, and indeed could be considered to be a legacy of an industry of national importance. However due to the poor condition of the slips it is unclear if they would qualify as representative examples of their type. Would be supportive of the designation, in principle, but not sure if they would meet the threshold.

***Recommendation: discuss suitability for listing with Historic Environment Scotland.***

### **Suggestions for listing buildings that sit outwith Dumbarton Conservation Area**

#### **Risk Street housing complexes**

The Risk Street Housing, completed by Garner Preston & Strebel, 1965-1970, was awarded a Saltire Society Award in 1970. As noted in the conservation area appraisal, this style of architecture is not to everybody's taste, however there is architectural interest which would merit a degree of protection.

***Recommendation: discuss suitability for listing with Historic Environment Scotland.***

#### **Old Keil School building should be retained as a listed building**

Agreed

#### **United Reform Church, Leven Street – upgrade to B listed**

To justify changing the category of this to B would require this to be considered a major example of a particular period style or building type. Within Dumbarton, this could be considered to be a major example of Greek revival architecture it is unclear if it would meet the threshold in light of other examples across Scotland.

***Recommendation: should be considered to be put forward Category B***

#### **Levenford House, Lodge and Stables and wall**

Levenford House is already listed Category A, The Lodge and Stables are listed category B. it is not considered that that wall has a particular interest which requires



designation beyond the protection it already has due to being within the conservation area.

***Recommendation: no change***







## WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

## Report by Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager

Planning Committee: 19 April 2023

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**DC22/049/MS:**      **Planning appeal decision - Approval of matters specified in conditions 1, 3, 5 and 7 of PPiP approval DC19/203 for the erection of 99 dwellinghouses, formation of access, landscaping, open space, SUDS and associated infrastructure at Farm Road, Duntocher, Clydebank**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of legal advice received in respect of the above appeal decision.

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Committee note that the legal advice received by the Council is that there are no grounds for challenging the appeal decision.

**3. Background**

- 3.1** In September 2020, planning permission in principle was granted on appeal for a residential development subject to seven planning conditions with an indicative capacity of up to 99 dwellinghouses. The Council made an appeal to the Court of Session against this appeal decision. The Council's appeal was dismissed. The Council subsequently sought permission to appeal this matter to the Supreme Court, but this was refused.
- 3.2** Planning application DC22/049/MS considered the details in respect of the matters specified in conditions 1, 3, 5 and 7 of the planning permission in principle. Condition 1 addresses a variety of details including the site layout, siting and design of the proposed houses, access arrangements, car parking, levels, landscaping, garden space and provisions for waste. Condition 3 addresses the requirement for an updated habitat survey and condition 5 addresses flooding and drainage details. Finally, condition 7 relates to the provision of bus stops on Craigielea Road and associated footpath connections.
- 3.3** The application for matters specified by condition was refused by the Planning Committee in October 2022 as it was not considered that proposal layout and design of the development achieved the right development in the right place, did not achieve housing that is of a high-quality, adaptable, and designed to be suitable for a mix of occupants, failed to achieve a layout that is of a high quality and easy to move around and failed to demonstrate the six qualities of successful places. The Committee further considered that the development would detract from both the local amenity and from the overall character of the local settlement and the adjoining Kilpatrick Hills.



- 3.4** Following the refusal of the matters specified by condition application, the applicant submitted an appeal together with a claim for award of expenses to the Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals. The appeal decision was published on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023. The Reporter upheld the appeal and granted the application for matters specified by condition. A partial award of expenses in the appellant's favour was also allowed.

**4. Main Issues**

- 4.1** The March Planning Committee requested that an external legal opinion be sought on whether there were grounds to challenge the appeal decision by the Reporter. An opinion was therefore sought from Counsel who advised that there was no stateable ground of appeal as he did not think that the appeal Reporter's conclusions could be considered unreasonable. This brings the appeal process to a conclusion.

**5. People Implications**

- 5.1** There are no people implications associated with this report.

**6. Financial and Procurement Implications**

- 6.1** The costs of the external legal advice will be met from the Planning and Building Standards budget. At the time of writing the report the invoice for the legal advice has not been received by the Council.

**7. Risk Analysis**

- 7.1** There are no risks associated with this report.

**8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 8.1** There are no equalities issues associated with this report.

**9. Consultation**

- 9.1** Statutory consultation was undertaken during the consideration of the planning application.

**10. Strategic Assessment**

- 10.1** The appeal decision is considered to have no implications in terms of the strategic priorities.

**Pamela Clifford**  
**Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager**  
**Date: 19 April 2023**

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**Person to Contact:** Pamela Clifford, Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager  
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**Appendices:** None

**Background Papers:**

1. Planning Committee report – DC22/049/MSC
2. Planning appeal decision PPA-160-2039 - [Scottish Government - DPEA - Case Details \(scotland.gov.uk\)](https://scotland.gov.uk/government/dpea/case-details)

**Wards affected:** Ward 4 (Kilpatrick)