

**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL****Report by Strategic Lead- Regulatory****Planning Committee: 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

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**Subject: Design Codes - Queens Quay, Clydebank.****1. Purpose**

- 1.1** To seek approval of the draft Queens' Quay Design Codes.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Committee approves the Queens' Quay Design Codes document set out in Appendix 1 for consultation.

**3. Background**

- 3.1** The Queens Quay site is one of the most significant regeneration opportunities in West Dunbartonshire and it is seen as a key catalyst in the transformation of Clydebank. A Design Framework, including masterplan has been approved for the central 23 hectares of the site and Planning Permission in Principle has been granted for up to 1,000 new houses, commercial, health and leisure uses, public realm and road infrastructure.
- 3.2** There has already been considerable investment in the areas surrounding the site with West College Scotland, the Titan Enterprise and Aurora House offices and the Clydebank Leisure Centre. Work is well underway on a District Heating Energy Centre and the central road infrastructure is now complete on the site. The new Clydebank Care Home is under construction and this will form part of a 'health quarter' alongside a health and care centre which will begin construction this year together with the construction of 146 affordable homes. The Queens Quay site will also be linked with the town centre and the railway and bus station by the Connecting Clydebank A814 Corridor project which is to provide a high quality streetscape.
- 3.3** The vision for Queens Quay is as a vibrant mixed use community that links the town centre with the waterfront. It is intended that Queens Quay will be a place for people to live and work which will allow the Clydebank community access to the river, as well as, high

quality public spaces at the waterfront to attract visitors and new residents from outwith Clydebank. The approved development on Queens Quay is of very high quality and it is intended that this will continue through the remaining plots. The approved masterplan identifies twelve development parcels with two of these parcels now well advanced as described above.

- 3.4** An accredited design consultant team have been commissioned to provide Design Codes to support the delivery of the remainder of the development parcels. It is intended that the Design Codes will provide clarity and certainty to decision makers and to prospective developers about the expected outcomes with regard to key aspects of the street layout, development pattern, massing, density architectural treatment and materials. The Design Codes will assist in providing clear guidance at an early stage of the development process and provide a structured approach for the assessment of future planning applications in the Development Management process. It will help to facilitate the delivery of high quality development for the remaining development plots. The guidance builds upon the approved Design Framework and will be used by developers, planning officers and decision makers to inform design requirements and place making ambitions at an early stage of the development process with the aim of creating a high quality place.

## **4. Main Issues**

### General Design Codes

- 4.1** A Design Code is a form of detailed guidance often used in respect of a new neighbourhood. Typically they are developed in support of a Masterplan and comprise of a series of written and graphic rules that set out the two and three dimensional design elements of the development. Design Codes are a positive statement recognising the particular qualities of a place, focusing on design characteristics that are important to achieve and they establish and firmly fix the 'must have' design elements. In doing so, Design Codes help to provide continuity in quality and consistency over time. They offer certainty to developers and communities around the type of development that may be built next to their own development ensuring that a high standard of design quality is maintained throughout the entire development in order to deliver the masterplan vision. Design Codes are most successful when they are developed to 'get the fundamentals right' and are not so prescriptive that they give too little scope for distinctive and innovative architectural expression.

#### Queens Quay Design Codes Document

- 4.2** The Queens Quay Design Codes, which is contained in Appendix A, set out the parameters for how development should be taken forward for the remaining development plots on Queens Quay which will be principally developed for private housing. It is likely that the plots will be developed over the next 5-10 years. The Design Codes are formatted to provide a higher degree of detail around the design aspirations which are detailed in the approved Design Framework for the site and they deliberately stop short of being overly prescriptive. They are not 'rules' that encourage uniformity or that stifle innovation or creativity but are furnished with examples of well designed places elsewhere to ensure the basics are right in evolving the physical fabric of the area.

#### Structure of Document

- 4.3** The Design Code document sets out the context through an appraisal of the site, its location within the town and in relation to surrounding areas and the history which is a big part of what makes Queens Quay a special place. Two dimensional 'regulating plans' are provided in the first section which allow developers and planning officers to easily locate where the provisions of the codes will apply and to express how the codes relate to plots and different character areas that have been identified across the site. Each additional section of the document expands on this by providing more detail around the expectations for the site, offering precedents images of building and landscape materials suitable for a waterfront environment. The images show examples of roofing materials and edging, windows, entrances and street and landscape materials for roads and pavements, boundary treatments, gates and planting that demonstrate examples of what is preferred and not preferred or what is deemed as being successful and what is seen to be less successful.
- 4.4** The document has been formatted to reflect the order in which a designer would be expected to approach the design development of a plot and will also assist Planning Officers in the assessment of future applications. The format of the Design Code document is as follows:
- The 'Context' section sets the scene in terms of historical significance, existing townscape, built form and public buildings, public transport access, the cycling network and the green network as an overview and it directs the code user to significant policy documents such as the Masterplan and the relevant planning consents already granted.
  - The Regulating Plans set out the site wide urban design considerations for the site. These diagrams are an easily relatable set of guidelines that demonstrate the key, strategic moves that

should be adhered to when a developer begins to design a plot or plots. They provide parcel subdivision, a transport and access diagram, density standards, and the hierarchy of the road and street networks, including acceptable parking standards/locations and a waste and recycling strategy.

The regulating plans are supported by a more detailed study which identifies 3 character zones:

- a Parkland character zone that runs parallel and adjacent to the linear park on the waterfront;
- an urban character zone that sits off the main vehicular route through the site;
- a Mews character zone that has its own character but sits comfortably between the Urban and Parkland zones.

- 4.5** The regulating plans go on to explain the locations of the different building typologies and the height of buildings which is linked to views/ vistas, landscape character and neighbourhood nodes. The section on 'Materials' describes the aspirations for quality materials across the buildings and the landscape which would be suitable to the marine environment on the Clyde, noting the link to heritage and the past. It advocates the importance of a simple and robust material palette using good architectural detailing to avoid staining and weathering issues. The materials section is extended to cover streetscape and materials that would be successful in the various character areas identified above.
- 4.6** The 'Character' zones are further expanded by identifying general development principles, carefully describing a typical street where the landscape and streetscape treatment will vary from a more urban approach beside the main vehicular route through the site to a parkland character beside the river. Every different type of space is considered; there are details of how the 'node' spaces (which are public spaces linking developments parcels together) should be treated in order to ensure their success as important hubs for community or social activities and of the preferred landscape character and treatment of back courts and parking courts that reduce the dominance of the car and put pedestrians and amenity first.
- 4.7** The document finishes with a series of 'Case Studies' illustrating successful examples of good design and places elsewhere with the intention to be used flexibly but to stimulate excellence and innovation.

#### Elected member workshop

- 4.8** An Elected Members workshop was held in December 2019 for the Design Codes. Member's comments included encouraging the use of colour and interest on the waterfront and alternative waste collection strategies.

#### Place and Design Panel

- 4.9** In January 2020 the Design Codes document was presented to the Place And Design Panel and the Panel were impressed by the quality of the Design Codes and felt that the deep thinking that had gone into the document really helped with the understanding of the site and what was appropriate for development there. The Panel agreed that the document would be a very useful resource that was straight forward to understand and use and it had the right balance of prescriptive design within them but would still allow for innovation. The Panel made further suggestions around the nature of the codes in relation to the mixed use areas of the masterplan and also suggested ways in which to ensure the landscaping is successful particularly in relation to the waterfront and the park that the consultants will take cognisance of in the development of the Codes.

#### Next Steps

- 4.10** The draft Design Codes will be published for consultation for a period of 6 weeks. An advert will be placed in the local press and the draft document will be made available on the internet and in libraries and to relevant organisations such as community councils, housebuilders, housing associations and relevant Council services. Following this, the consultation responses will be reported back to the Committee along with a finalised version of the Design Codes.
- 4.11** As part of the consultation, a workshop will be held whereby the usability of the Design Codes will be tested by both designers and planning officers.
- 4.12** The method of carbon reduction on the building fabric of future housing on Queens Quay is being considered. This would offer clarity over expected minimum building fabric performance if a development is connected to the District Heating network. This would form an annex to the Design Codes and would be used with the Design Codes by future housebuilders on the site.

## **5. People Implications**

- 5.1** There are no personnel issues associated with this report as the work will be carried out within current workload of the Place and Design Officer.

## **6. Financial and Procurement Implications**

- 6.1** There are no financial or procurement implications associated with this report as the consultants were appointed after a complaint tendering exercise and the budget has been taken from the existing Place and Design Panel budget.

## **7. Risk Analysis**

- 7.1** The Design Codes will provide clear guidance to future developers of the site and will assist with the assessment of any future planning applications on the respective plots. This is intended to lead to a smoother and quicker application process resulting in quality development.

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

- 8.1** An Equalities Impact Assessment is required to assess the impacts of the Design Codes on the existing and new populations in West Dunbartonshire and visitors who will use Queens Quay.
- 8.2** The Impact assessment work carried out during the development of this proposal has identified a range of positive impacts, especially for women, BME groups, disabled people and older people as well as children.

## **9 Environmental Sustainability**

- 9.1** A Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required

## **10. Consultation**

- 10.1** In early 2019 officers from the Services of Regeneration, Roads, Asset Management, Greenspace, Waste, Housing, Capital investment, Consultancy Services, Energy and Compliance, Environmental Health, The Access Panel, Scottish Green Network, Performance and Strategy attended a stakeholder's scoping workshop to discuss the main issues that the codes should address.

## **11. Strategic Assessment**

- 11.1** The Design Codes document is considered to strongly align with all the strategic priorities; in particular improving the strength of and growing the local economy and investing in regeneration which takes account of the environment, sustainability and health and well being.

**Peter Hessett**  
**Strategic Lead - Regulatory**  
**Date: 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

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**Person to Contact:** Pamela Clifford, Planning, Building Standards and Environmental Health Manager,  
[pamela.clifford@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:pamela.clifford@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)  
0141 951 7938

Ashley Mullen, Place and Design Officer  
[ashley.mullen@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:ashley.mullen@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)  
01389 737775

**Appendices:** Appendix 1 – Queens Quay Design Codes Draft (2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019)

**Background Papers:** Equality Impact Assessment

**Wards Affected:** Ward 6 Clydebank Waterfront