

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Chief Officer, Regulatory and Regeneration****Infrastructure, Regeneration & Economic Development Committee****1 November 2023**

Subject: Development Strategy for the Artizan Centre**1 Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the proposed Artizan Redevelopment Masterplan, submission of an application for a Planning Permission in Principle for the site, and delivery of the Phase 1 of the redevelopment.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that Committee:

- Notes the progress made on Artizan redevelopment proposals
- Approves the Masterplan for the Artizan redevelopment and that it will form an application for the Planning Permission in Principle, to be submitted later in 2023
- Authorises development, procurement and delivery of Phase 1 of the redevelopment works including submission of a detailed planning application and appointment of one or more principal contractors for the works.
- Notes that the existing tenants will continue to be supported as part of the strategy.

3. Background

- 3.1** West Dunbartonshire Council successfully applied to the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund (LUF) to tackle the decline of Dumbarton Town Centre and deliver three key projects in the town: Glencairn House; Connecting Dumbarton and the acquisition, part-demolition and costs towards the redevelopment of the Artizan Centre. The Artizan Centre was purchased by the Council in March 2022 and this presents a unique and exciting opportunity to redefine the town centre.

- 3.2** A total of £22.1m of funding has been made available for the three key projects. This breaks down as £19.9m of UK Government LUF Funding and a £2.2m contribution from the Council. £10.165m of the £22.1m has been allocated to the Artizan redevelopment. Exhibit 1 sets out the current status of the Artizan Redevelopment budget.

Exhibit 1 – Artizan Redevelopment Budget as at October 2023

	£000	£000
Total Budget		10,165
Acquisition Cost	1,750	
Roof Replacement	750	
Demolition	400	
Fees/ Survey Costs	100	
Total Costs / Estimates to Date		3,000
Remaining Budget		7,165

- 3.3** Exhibit 1 confirms there is £7.165m left from the £10.165m allocated to the Artizan redevelopment. As LUF funding must be drawn down by the end of March 2025 the LUF £19.9m will be used to fund all LUF across the three projects activity before the Council's £2.2m is utilised.
- 3.4** In September 2022, the IRED Committee approved procurement and delivery of early works including demolition of the rear Artizan units, development of temporary landscaping and meanwhile uses, property improvements as well as procurement and development of detailed feasibility studies to inform a medium and long term development strategy and feasibility of new uses on site. While at this stage of the development there was no requirement for temporary landscaping or meanwhile uses and these works were not taken forward, significant progress was made in other areas and is outlined below. .
- 3.5** A contractor has recently been appointed for the demolition of the rear vacant Artizan units A & B (refer to Appendix 1). Demolition works are scheduled to start before the end of 2023 and will take up to 20 weeks. Property improvement works focusing on roof refurbishment of the Artizan units along High Street are underway and are expected to be completed in December 2023.
- 3.6** The Council has had discussions with NHS GGC and West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership regarding the location of a future new Dumbarton Health and Care Centre. A team of consultants was appointed by the Council in late 2022 to carry out a feasibility study to determine whether the Artizan site could accommodate a modern Health and Care Centre (H&CC) building which meets the operational requirements of both the NHS and HSCP. This study concluded in early 2023 and informed further design development works including the proposals presented to the Committee

today.

- 3.7** In June 2023 a Project Manager was appointed to assist the Council and lead on the next phase of the Artizan redevelopment which includes preparation of a Masterplan for the Artizan site, obtaining Planning Permission in Principle for the Masterplan scope, development of technical design, and management of delivery of the next phases of LUF funded improvements. The Project Manager leads an experienced design team
- 3.8** The Masterplan scope is informed by conclusions of the previously completed Development Strategy and H&CC Feasibility Study, as well as by the outputs specified in the LUF application and by National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). The Development Strategy recommended that a mix of uses within the future redeveloped Artizan site would bring vibrancy back into the town centre and help sustain high levels of footfall. The uses could include improved retail and active frontages on ground floor, housing to repopulate the town centre and contribute to delivery of 20 minute neighborhood principles, public and green spaces, as well as a new anchor development which would bring additional footfall to the town centre (e.g. Primary Healthcare facility). The H&CC Feasibility Study recommended that to achieve the best placemaking outcomes while meeting operational requirements, a new H&CC building should be located on the west side of the Artizan site.
- 3.7** The Council committed to delivery of the following outputs for Artizan in the LUF application:
- Public space
 - Creating a connection through the Artizan site to extend Connecting Dumbarton as part of a Railway to Rock Strategy
 - Enable delivery of a total of 105 residential units, all of which will be affordable homes
 - Enable the delivery of a new 4,750m² Civic Centre as part of the redevelopment in central location
 - Enhance 730m² of ground floor retail property

4 Main Issues

- 4.1** The overarching objective of the Artizan redevelopment is regeneration of Dumbarton Town Centre which seeks to balance the need for economic vibrancy, place making and design quality, with the requirement to ensure long term viability and sustainability. Through consolidation of retail areas, introduction of supplementary uses, town centre living, and new public and green areas, a momentum will be created for the town centre to thrive. This redevelopment should act as a catalyst for further new developments in the town centre and support long term town centre revitalisation.

- 4.2** Artizan redevelopment will be led by a masterplan approach for which a Planning Permission in Principle (PPiP) consent will be sought. The project is classed as a Major Development and a Proposal of Application Notice was submitted in July 2023. Online Public Consultation took place between 24 August and 9 October 2023, and two in-person public consultation events took place on 24 August and 28 September at a unit in High Street, Dumbarton. These were advertised in the local newspaper as well as through the Council's social media channels and the dedicated project website www.dumbartontowncentre.com. The consultation process aims to involve the community at the early stage of the project development, to ensure local views are represented and to inform the proposed uses prior to the application being formally submitted.
- 4.3** The purpose of the first consultation event was to gather people's views on the town centre and find out what they would like the new redeveloped Artizan site to deliver. It was attended by approximately 50 people, of whom 12 provided written feedback. Additional 28 people completed the feedback form online. 70% of respondents were in favour of including housing as part of a mixed-use development with detailed comments relating to improving the nighttime economy and introducing leisure uses – including facilities for young adults. 72% of respondents were in favour of creating more open space, with specific comments focusing on the need for better seating, children's play spaces, public art and spaces for young adults – maintenance of spaces will be key to their success. Parking remains a concern for many post redevelopment.
- 4.4** Developed proposals informed by the feedback from the first consultation event were presented at the second consultation event. It was attended by approximately 35 people, of whom seven provided written feedback. Additional feedback was completed online. In total during the consultation period 74 written responses were submitted. 68% of respondents were in favour of more housing in the town centre, while 26% were against it. In general, those not supportive of housing, expressed a view that support for businesses should take priority. Many people felt that it is important to support existing businesses and that it would be good to have a greater variety of uses in the town centre. 71% of respondents were in favour of more open space, many remembering the old square. 26% were against new open space pointing to potential of anti-social behaviour, poor maintenance and to the waterfront as an underused asset.
- 4.5** An Elected Member Briefing took place on 10 October 2023 to provide Members with information relating to the masterplan and the forthcoming application for Planning Permission in Principle. Points raised by Members have been considered in terms of the masterplan and the development proposals in terms of retail provision, housing, phasing, carbon footprint, parking and flooding.

- 4.6** Following completion of the statutory consultation process, the proposed masterplan has been finalised (Appendix 2). It presents a long-term vision for a transformative town centre regeneration project which brings economic, social and environmental benefits to the local area and:
- Creates a resilient and thriving place that meets the needs of the wider community.
 - Rebalances uses to provide a more resilient mix and stimulate footfall.
 - Consolidates retail, introduces new town centre housing and creates positive public place.

In summary and subject to funding, the proposed development when completed is intended to provide:

- Up to 112 affordable residential units of different types and tenures;
 - Circa 5,000m² Primary Healthcare facility;
 - Circa 2,800m² of active ground floor use within retained buildings of retail, restaurants, cafes, hot food takeaways/public houses, Office use and Leisure uses (blocks D & E, refer to Appendix 1);
 - Circa 350m² of active ground floor use within new buildings of retail, restaurants and cafes, hot food takeaways/public houses, Office, Leisure uses;
 - 80 parking spaces to serve the new development, internal access roads, and retention of existing delivery access.
 - Creation of new public square with hard and soft landscaping spaces and pedestrian routes; and
 - Space and facilities to support activities for a wide range of age groups including sheltered space for events and markets, innovative play areas, outdoor seating and outdoor café opportunities.
- 4.7** The masterplan will provide a road map for all future project development and funding decisions and provides a structured approach to how the site will be taken forward and developed in the future and provides a structured approach to how the site could be taken forward and developed in the future. It designates specific areas for particular uses, including multi-functional green infrastructure spaces and biodiversity enhancements as well as opportunities for active travel. It takes advantage of the town centre location and the proximity of the Conservation area - Dumbarton has a rich history and this should be reflected in the design and form of the development. Any future developments will be subject to applications for Approval of Matters Specified in Condition (detailed) and will require to be guided by the agreed masterplan. As well as enabling the wider regeneration of the Artizan site, LUF funding is

used to deliver the Phase 1 of the Masterplan. Funding for the later phases will be secured from different sources including housing grants and other public and private investment.

- 4.8** Phasing strategy is critical to successful delivery of a major redevelopment project. Development phasing associated with the Masterplan shows what will be delivered in the next 2-3 years and demonstrates how future phases may be developed over time. The timeframe for Phases 2&3 and for the long term plans is indicative and is subject to budget availability and further approvals.

Phase 1: 2024-25

This phase will be delivered using the remaining £7.165m set out in exhibit 1 to this report and will include the works listed below. Scope and specification of the Phase 1 works will be developed in line with the available budget.

- Public realm works including creation of a new public square with hard and soft landscaping, public play areas for multiple ages, and improved pedestrian routes through the site. This will form the centre of the Artizan redevelopment and reinforce the Railway to Rock connectivity;
- Infrastructure works to prepare development platforms for future developments, as well as relocation of the existing substation to a new permanent location;
- Façade improvements of the existing Artizan buildings which will be retained, and
- Temporary spaces and areas for meanwhile uses within the future development plots to animate and bring more activity to the town centre and make best use of vacant land, and opportunities presented.

Phase 2 & 3: 2026 +

Later phases of the redevelopment will stretch beyond the Levelling Up Funding timescale. Current proposals include new Later Living housing of up to 42 units and a possible new Health and Care Centre. Later Living housing could be delivered by the Council or another Registered Social Landlord (RSL). Health and Care Centre would be delivered by NHS GGC, however at this stage it must be considered as an aspiration rather than a firm proposal as no Business Case has been approved or budget identified. A delivery plan for Phases 2 & 3 will be developed, but future proposals are subject to funding, relevant approvals and statutory permissions.

Long term possibilities for the site: 2028 +

Future phases of the redevelopment could deliver additional affordable and private housing providing a mix of apartments and maisonettes for family living (up to 70 units) and connect the new public square with the Denny Theatre and the Community Centre. A long term delivery plan will be

developed, but future proposals and timescales are subject to funding, relevant approvals, statutory permissions and market conditions at the time.

- 4.9** An important consideration is that disruption and impact on current tenants is minimised. The early demolition works focus on the area of the Artizan to the rear and west block with the highest number of vacant units (blocks A & B, refer to Appendix 1). Phases 1, 2 & 3 would be delivered without any further demolitions required. Demolition of additional existing retail units (block C, refer to Appendix 1) on the East side of the Artizan Centre would be required to deliver the long term vision (2028+). Existing tenants affected by future proposals will be offered extended lease term with appropriate lease and development break clauses.
- 4.10** The site is highly accessible with good connections to the other parts of the town centre, bus stops and the train station. The redevelopment should encourage use of more sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling. The historic north-south route along College Street that previously existed on the site will be improved as part of the LUF funded works (Connecting Dumbarton). It forms part of the strategic active travel “Rail to Rock” route which will eventually link the railway station with the Rock and Castle and the residential areas in Dumbarton East.
- 4.11** There are a number of town centre car parks in close proximity to the site and up to 80 parking spaces within the site will eventually be available to serve the development. This represents a net gain of up to 22 spaces. Other town centre sites within an easy reach of the Artizan site are under consideration for long stay car parks. Spaces for on-call doctors and dedicated Disabled Spaces for patients would be provided adjacent to the new Health and Care Centre. A Parking Management Strategy will be developed to set out how future demand for parking in Dumbarton Town Centre can be managed, and how an approach to parking can contribute to the wider policy aims of changing behaviours, reducing dependency on the car and encouraging alternative ways to access the town centre including public transport, walking and cycling.
- 4.12** Flooding presents a significant challenge to the Artizan redevelopment. The entirety of the site is within the SEPA future coastal flood risk area (accounting for climate change). National Planning Framework 4 sets out more restricted criteria in terms of flood risk and climate change in contrast to previous Scottish Planning Policy. For Dumbarton town centre this is an increased coastal flood risk level of 85cm by 2100. Previous areas at risk of coastal flooding were those below 4.41m. Post NPF4 this now extends to areas below 5.26m. A further freeboard allowance of 60cm is required for the finished floor level of new buildings.

Whilst residential units can be built above these levels with basement parking, safe access and egress above the flood risk level needs to be maintained. At present the residential and health facility elements of the development would potentially create 'islands of development' which are unacceptable under Policy 22 of NPF4. SEPA have indicated if consulted on the current proposals for the Artizan Centre, they would object in principle on the basis that the proposal is contrary to the flood risk principles of national planning policy. The flood risk issues facing the proposals for the Artizan Centre in terms of the increased restrictions by NPF4 are also being experienced by other redevelopment proposals for other Scottish town centres. Discussions are taking place at a senior level with the Scottish Government Chief Planner, SEPA and Heads of Planning (Scotland) regarding the new provisions required by Policy 22 of NPF4 and its impact on future town centre regeneration proposals being brought forward. In terms of the other policies of NPF4 they support the redevelopment proposals in terms of the use of brownfield and vacant land, local living, placemaking, town centre first approach and increasing green infrastructure and active travel.

- 4.13** An application for Planning Permission in Principle will be submitted later in November/December 2023. A detailed Planning Application for the Phase 1 works will be submitted in parallel if the flooding issue is still under discussion. Subject to all approvals being in place, it is expected that Phase 1 works would start on site in late 2024. LUF funded work must be completed by 31 March 2025.
- 4.14** The support of existing retailers, businesses, community planning partners, the community and community-led organisations that already do much to contribute to the vitality of the town centre will be vital for the success of the Artizan redevelopment. A robust communication and engagement plan will be produced to ensure that our ambitions for the town are properly conveyed, timescales for the works are clearly explained and that existing stakeholders in the town centre benefit from the vision.
- 4.15** A successful redevelopment of the Artizan site would contribute to the delivery of national policy priorities including Local Living and 20 minute neighbourhoods, Town Centre First approach, carbon reduction, place making and community empowerment.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** Delivery of the vision will require commitment from various Council services and the utilisation of existing staff resources. The cross-service collaboration, particularly across Regeneration, Planning, Asset Management and Roads/Transportation and partnerships with external partners will continue.

6. Financial & Procurement Implications

- 6.1** Funding from the Levelling Up Fund must be drawn down by 31 March 2025. A monitoring and spending plan has been established with Central Government, to agree a project spend timeframe. To comply with the requirement of the fund, continuous progress must be demonstrated towards delivery of the agreed outputs. Delays or change of outputs could reduce the funding currently available.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** If the LUF grant is not drawn down within the timescales required (31 March 2025), or grant conditions are not met, there is a risk that not all the funding will be made available resulting in the further delays and deterioration of Dumbarton Town Centre. LUF Programme is very tight with a number of factors impacting on its delivery, a delay to approval of the masterplan and delivery phasing being one.
- 7.2** Flooding presents a significant risk to the redevelopment proposals. Progress of the application of Planning Permission in Principle may be delayed while discussions are ongoing with the Scottish Government Chief Planner, SEPA and Heads of Planning (Scotland). Officers will continue to liaise with the LUF team to ensure that they are aware of the risk, and of how we are planning to mitigate against it.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 8.1** An assessment has been carried out. The redevelopment of the Artizan has relevance to a number of equality groups, and positive impacts were identified for each.

9. Environmental Sustainability

- 9.1** In line with the Council's Climate Change Strategy, a 'zero carbon' approach which will make a positive contribution to environmental sustainability and ensure inclusive transition to net zero, is embedded in the masterplan approach. Depending on the details of the developed design for the next phase of works, this could include additional greening of the town centre and new biodiversity areas, introduction of Sustainable Urban Drainage System, flood risk management and provision for EV charging points. The redevelopment will support sustainable travel both for every day and longer

journeys through traffic free routes, accessibility of services, learning, work and leisure locally and excellent public transport connections. Future developments will deliver modern, energy-efficient buildings and homes.

9.2 NPF 4 states that given the need to conserve embodied energy, demolition is regarded as the least preferred option. Following a discussion however it was concluded that benefits of conserving the building's embodied energy would be outweighed by benefits of introducing new uses. Construction of modern fit for purpose housing and a Health and Care Centre will bring more footfall into the town centre and contribute toward creation of a sustainable and vibrant place. We will assess and monitor the overall carbon footprint of the redevelopment.

10. Consultation

10.1 As indicated in paragraphs 4.3 and 4.4 there has been extensive consultation on the future of the Artizan Centre. The views expressed in those engagement events have informed the final masterplan proposal. There will be further opportunity to provide comments through the statutory planning process in terms of neighbour notification and advertisement in the local press.

11. Strategic Assessment

11.1 The vision will support the Council's strategic priorities:

- Our Communities - Resilient and Thriving
- Our Environment - A Greener Future
- Our Economy - Strong and Flourishing
- Our Council - Inclusive and Adaptable

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Artizan Plan (existing)

Appendix 2 – Artizan Redevelopment Masterplan

Appendix 3 - EIA

Background Papers:

IRED Report 10 June 2021 Levelling Up Fund and
Community Renewal Fund – Proposed Bids

IRED Report 27 September 2022 Development Strategy
for the Artizan Centre

Wards Affected:

Dumbarton Central