

HELENSBURGH PIER MASTERPLAN PROPOSED APPROVAL AS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report asks the Council's Executive Committee to approve Helensburgh Pier Masterplan as supplementary planning guidance and proposes options for taking forward the Masterplan.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Members note the detail of the recently circulated Helensburgh Pier Masterplan, see attached **Appendix 1**, and approve the Masterplan as supplementary planning guidance.
- 2.2 That Members consider the option to appoint an external consultant on a part time and temporary basis to take forward agreed actions, to a maximum expenditure of £20,000 in order to progress the Helensburgh Pier Masterplan.

3. PIER HEAD MASTERPLAN

- 3.1 The Helensburgh Pier Masterplan has recently been issued by the Helensburgh Partnership and a briefing note was provided directly to Members by the Partnership on 16 July 2009 (**please see Appendix 2**). Members of the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee subsequently agreed to recommend to the Executive that the Masterplan be approved as supplementary planning guidance. Helensburgh and Lomond Members also agreed to ask the Executive to appoint a Lead Officer to take forward the Masterplan and associated issues with the private sector.
- 3.2 The Masterplan, as identified in **Appendix 1**, provides a range of potential uses on the pier head site. This will be of guidance to any eventual developer and to the Council as local planning authority. The Masterplan has been subject to extensive public consultation, which has assisted in the production of a comprehensive and high quality mixed use scheme. This scheme has also been carefully examined in terms of its deliverability, subject to market conditions returning to normal levels. The Masterplan has also been examined by relevant officers of the Council and it is confirmed that it complies with the Argyll and Bute Local Plan that was adopted by the Council on the 6 August 2009.
- 3.3 Notwithstanding the above, in order for the Masterplan to be implemented in the current difficult market conditions the Council will need to maintain momentum. This has been recognised by the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee in their recommendation to Executive to appoint a Lead Council Officer to undertake additional work and liaise with the private sector. Whilst Development Services recognise the importance of the Masterplan for Helensburgh and the wider Lomond area there is a lack of staff capacity within the Department to move things forward at this time.

3.4 One option however is to appoint an external consultant, on a part time temporary basis, to undertake particular agreed actions within a set budget. The cost of this option will be met from the remaining funds (a figure of £40,794) of the former Helensburgh Partnership that has been set aside for the further economic development of Helensburgh. The exact expenditure and associated studies will need to be subject to a further report to the Helensburgh and Lomond Committee who are in control of the relevant budget.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The existing Helensburgh Partnership has reached the end of its natural term, having delivered a large range of preliminary planning and development projects. One of the most significant of these projects is the Helensburgh Pier Masterplan that forms **Appendix 1** of this report. The regeneration of this prominent site has the potential to retain significant levels of retail leakage within the town centre and create a significant number of additional jobs as well as offering much improved leisure opportunities and high quality apartments. The next step for the Masterplan is to approve it as supplementary planning guidance but there is also a need to maintain the momentum with the appointment of a lead officer with the necessary skills and experience to engage with the private sector and take this site to the market.

5 IMPLICATIONS

Policy: Consideration of the Masterplan and subsequent approval by the Council's Executive will allow a proper development process for the pier head to continue.

Financial: None directly associated with the acceptance of the Masterplan as Supplementary Guidance. However, the appointment of an external lead officer together with associated studies to facilitate the regeneration of the Pier will have costs attached to it. This will need to be subject to another report but costs would be met from the remaining Helensburgh Partnership funds that have been ring fenced for the economic development of Helensburgh.

Personnel: None.

Legal: The on-going work by external legal advisers to the Council in clarifying usage and ownership of the pier head will be aided by the Executive approval of the Masterplan in due course.

Equality Impact Assessment: None.

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS:
HELENSBURGH PIER HEAD MASTERPLAN

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DEVELOPMENT POLICY MANAGER

HELENSBURGH PIER HEAD MASTERPLAN

HARD COPY AVAILABLE IN THE MEMBERS ROOM

The Pier Head Site Masterplan Report Briefing Note Previously Circulated

1. The Masterplan Process

Turley Associates, and their various sub-consultants, have worked through the four stages of the masterplan commission.

Stage 1 involved the consultants familiarising themselves with the site and reading the various background studies and papers.

Stage 2 was completed when a Stakeholder Workshop took place in Victoria Halls on 31 October 2008 and a subsequent report was issued on the outcome. Following the Stakeholder Workshop and, taking account of what emerged during discussions, Turleys prepared 4 Scenarios for discussion with the Partnership Board.

Stage 3 involved a Public Exhibition which took place over three days on 4th, 5th and 6th December 2008. The 4 Scenarios discussed with and approved by the Board were displayed for discussion at the Public Exhibition. Turleys subsequently prepared a report on the entire Community Engagement process and this was finalised at the end of January 2009. **It was clear from community feedback that there was a clear preference for Scenario 3 (The Diagonal) and Scenario 4 (The Canal).** There was less support for Scenario 2 (The Arms) and Scenario 1 (The Block) gained some approval – this was the preferred scenario of the Helensburgh Study Group, with Scenario 3 being their second preference.

Stage 4 involved the preparation of a finalised masterplan and design guide for the site, taking account of the feedback from consultation with the public whilst seeking to address a number of gaps in Helensburgh's property market.

2. The Masterplan Objective

The objective of the Masterplan for the Pier Head Site is to provide a practical but flexible guide for the redevelopment of the site.

The masterplan prepared by Turleys provides a basis for the full potential of the site to be realised, step-by-step over time, for the benefit of the local community, business and visitors. It comprises ideas about the development potential, character and form of the site. The masterplan is enabling in approach rather than restrictive.

It is designed to be robust in overall structure, yet flexible. Changes in market conditions, perceived needs and new opportunities will demand its periodic review and updating.

3. The Masterplan Requirements

Studies commissioned by the Partnership during 2007 and early 2008 identified potential demand capacity in Helensburgh for the following range of uses.

- Food Retail – 1,500 sq m (Colliers CRE)
- Non-food Retail – 5,600 sq m (Colliers CRE)
- Food and Beverage Space – up to 1,900 sq m maximum (Jones Lang LaSalle)
- A Boutique Hotel – up to 35 Bedrooms and Restaurant Facility (Jones Lang LaSalle)

In reaching their figures, Colliers CRE assumed that Food Expenditure Leakage could be reduced from 50% to 20% - in other words returning 60% of the expenditure on food lost to the town.

Their figures assumed that Non-food Expenditure Leakage would be reduced from 74% to 50% - in other words returning 30% of the expenditure on non-food lost to the town.

The Pier Head Site is clearly the only site in Helensburgh Town Centre that has the capacity to accommodate significant amounts of new retail, leisure and residential space.

The Masterplan Brief required the consultants to devise a Masterplan that would meet a number of requirements including:

- Reflects a mix of town centre uses
- Be implementable – in physical, financial, infrastructure and planning terms
- Demonstrates that a high standard of design is required
- Is imaginative, innovative and visionary
- Benefits Helensburgh in economic, social and environmental terms
- Considers the potential for an area of the site for public events

4. The Masterplan Components

Turleys and the sub-consultants have worked up a number of versions of Scenarios 3 (The Diagonal) which emerged from the Public Consultation as one of the two preferred scenarios. It was clear to Turleys that people wanted to see a “wow” factor in the redevelopment of the Pier Head Site. Scenarios 3 and 4 were the only scenarios presented where local people responded with genuine excitement and passion. Whilst Scenario 4 appears to offer more of a “wow” factor, Scenario 3 offers much greater certainty of delivery.

The final version of the masterplan incorporates the following components

- Food Retail – 1,600 sq m
- Flexible Ground Floor Space (Non-food Retail, Pubs, Restaurants, Business) – 5,558 sq m
- Apartments – 138
- Boutique Hotel
- Leisure Centre/Swimming Pool
- 75 Under-croft Car Spaces
- 267 Surface Car Spaces

The plans in the Masterplan Report show that the site can accommodate a range of sizes of Ground Floor units to meet the potential space requirements identified in each of the Colliers and JLL Reports.

5. Considerations

- (1) Turleys has been tasked with producing a Masterplan for the Pier Head Site which includes the 3 R's – Retail, Recreation and Residential. This Masterplan provide for each.
- (2) The masterplanners were tasked with preparing a scheme that would benefit Helensburgh economically by more specifically addressing some of the market failures in property terms. The various studies identified potential requirements for 1,500 sq m of Food Retail and up to 7,500 sq m of Flexible Ground Floor (Non-food, Pubs and Restaurants). The Draft Masterplan Options demonstrate that the site has the capacity to accommodate all of the Food Retail requirement and 74% of the Flexible Ground Floor space.
- (3) The Masterplan provides for a Boutique Hotel as identified in the JLL Report
- (4) The Masterplan provides for 138 Apartments. This compares to the 100+ Apartments implied by the Yellow Book Report.
- (5) Turleys' proposal shows a new swimming pool/leisure centre in a different location on the site.
- (6) The Masterplan provides for a range of sizes of Ground Floor units to reflect the guidance provided in the various studies. The Developer, the Local Planning Authority and market conditions will determine the ultimate configuration and mix of units on site. The masterplan demonstrates what the site has capacity for and how the site might attempt to accommodate the types of units identified in the various reports.
- (7) The Scenarios indicate Building Heights that reflect feedback from the Community Engagement process – 3-4 storeys on West Clyde Street with heights increasing to 5 and 6 storeys further into the site. Currently, the tallest building is 6 storeys.
- (8) Financial viability is still a major challenge in current market conditions. However, if there proves to be demand in due course for this scale of development then this will increase the prospect of achieving a viable development on the site.
- (10) The Urban Design concept indicated in the Masterplan reflects the preferences of the Helensburgh Community. It is probably more accurate to state that the community helped devise these Masterplan Options.