

27 AUGUST 2009

---

HELENSBURGH PIER MASTERPLAN PROPOSED APPROVAL AS  
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

---

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report asks Members of Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee to recommend to the Council's Executive Committee that the Helensburgh Pier Masterplan be approved as supplementary planning guidance.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Members note the detail of the recently circulated Pier Head Masterplan, attached as a **Appendix 1** of this report, that follows work by the Helensburgh Partnership, Turleys Associates employed as consultants and Council Officers and that they recommend to the Executive that the Masterplan be approved as supplementary planning guidance.

3. PIER HEAD MASTERPLAN

- 3.1 The Pier Head 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 (**Appendix 2**).
- 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<sup>th</sup> of August 2009.

**3.3** The Pier Head Masterplan is also important in respect of ongoing work being carried out by the Council's external legal advisers on ensuring clarity on ownership of the pier head site.

**3.4** Previous advice from Brodies has indicated that the ability of the Council to point to a Masterplan for the pier head being in place will make the position of having to apply to the Court of Session for necessary determinations on ownership and use much more straightforward. A copy of the Masterplan report has been provided to the legal advisers and further advice will be brought to Members of the Area Committee in due course.

#### **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.

#### **5 IMPLICATIONS**

**Policy:** Consideration of the Masterplan and subsequent approval by the Area Committee and then 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, various studies to facilitate the regeneration of the Pier in accord with the Masterplan could be progressed (subject of a further report). There would be financial implications related to such actions.

**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 Area Committee approval of the Masterplan in due course.

**Equality Impact Assessment:** None.

For further information contact: Fergus Murray

Telephone 01546 604293

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS:**  
HELENSBURGH PIER HEAD MASTERPLAN

**FERGUS MURRAY**  
**DEVELOPMENT POLICY MANAGER**

**HELENSBURGH PIER HEAD MASTERPLAN**

**HARD COPY CIRCULATED**

**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 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> 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.