



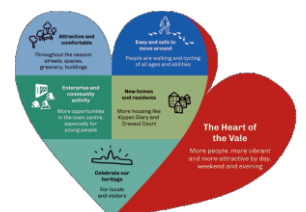
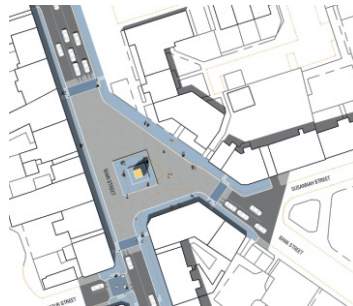
WMUD

ALEXANDRIA

TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN/2030 VISION

FINAL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2021



Attractive and comfortable
 Through the success of this vision, people are working and getting on with their lives.

Easy and safe to use
 People are walking and cycling more and more.

Enterprising and exciting
 More opportunities to do business and make money.

New homes and residents
 More housing for people to live in.

Celebrate our heritage
 For locals and visitors.

The Heart of the Vale
 More people, more shared and more attractive by day, weekend and evening.

WILLIE MILLER URBAN DESIGN

Willie Miller (who sadly passed away before the masterplan had been completed)
Ines Triebel

BENTON SCOTT-SIMMONS

Laura Scott-Simmons

NICK WRIGHT PLANNING

Nick Wright

ICECREAM ARCHITECTURE

Desmond Bernie
Charline Roussel
Jim Bevington
Agnieszka Tarsa

RYDEN

Mark Robertson
Michelle Docherty

WILLIE MILLER URBAN DESIGN

20 Victoria Crescent Road Glasgow Scotland G12 9DD
wim@williemillerurbandesign.com
+44 141 339 5228

<https://www.williemiller.com>

ALEXANDRIA TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN FINAL REPORT

APPROVED BY WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL ON 15 SEPTEMBER 2021



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1 Introduction

Like town centres across the country in recent years, Alexandria town centre has struggled to secure the footfall and investment it aspires to. The rise of the internet, changing public finances, COVID and the climate emergency all mean that a different approach is needed. The local community and the local authority need to work together to deliver action.

Good things have happened in and around the town centre in the last few years. The Council, community and others have developed new homes near the Smollett Fountain, new planting on Alexander Street, Barry the Cat murals down by the river, and the Vale Centre for Health and Care. The Smollett Fountain will be renovated and its setting improved in 2021-22 with money committed from Council budgets. The former St Andrews Church by the Co-op is being transformed into a new creative arts and cultural centre with Scottish Government funding. Alexandria Library is upgrading internal spaces for community use, to make it more accessible and show more local heritage. Christie Park is being improved, including investment in paths and toilets.

All these are thanks to active and committed community groups who want to make things happen, and a local authority which wants to play its part.

Although good things are happening, these are only a start. More action is needed, which needs to be co-ordinated and resources secured. Two complementary plans are being prepared with those very purposes in mind: this Town Centre Masterplan and a community-led action plan covering the wider town.



Fig 1.1

St Andrew's Church, Alexandria

Why have a Town Centre Masterplan?

The purpose of this Masterplan is to provide a framework to guide land use, development and spatial interventions in Alexandria town centre over the next 15 years. The masterplan reflects and contributes to delivery of national policy priorities including 20 minute neighbourhoods, carbon reduction, placemaking and community empowerment.

More specifically, the intention is that the Masterplan will:

1. Deliver strategic policy aims contained in:
 - West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan (see 'Local Development Plan context' below for more information).
 - West Dunbartonshire Community Empowerment Strategy
 - West Dunbartonshire Economic Development Strategy
 - other West Dunbartonshire policy documents such as the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report, and Climate Change Strategy
2. Respond positively to community aspirations expressed in a number of public consultations undertaken in recent years, both as part of the masterplanning process and separately (see 'Community aspirations' below for more information).
3. Set out a realistic framework to stimulate regeneration of the town centre over the next 15 years.
4. Identify strategic projects and interventions by Council and local partners that are deliverable and realistic, in order to:
 - Help secure funding for individual projects.
 - Guide decision-making in relation to land, buildings, streets, spaces, transport, economic development and planning.
5. Complement a community-led action plan or 'Locality Place Plan' currently being prepared for the town as a whole, which will have a wider social & economic scope. An outline of the emerging priorities for the town-wide plan was consulted on publicly at the same time as an initial draft of this Town Centre Masterplan in May-June 2021, and can be seen online at www.alexandria.town/vision. Those emerging priorities are categorised under five headings, which themselves reflect community priorities and which have helped shape this Town Centre Masterplan :
 - Economic vibrancy
 - Infrastructure
 - Greener and sustainable
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Our heritage

Local Development Plan context

This Town Centre Masterplan takes as its starting point the context set by West Dunbartonshire Local Development Plan 2. The original study area for the Masterplan is shown in the accompanying plan. It corresponds to the town centre boundary identified in Local Development Plan 2, plus Lomond Galleries to the north.

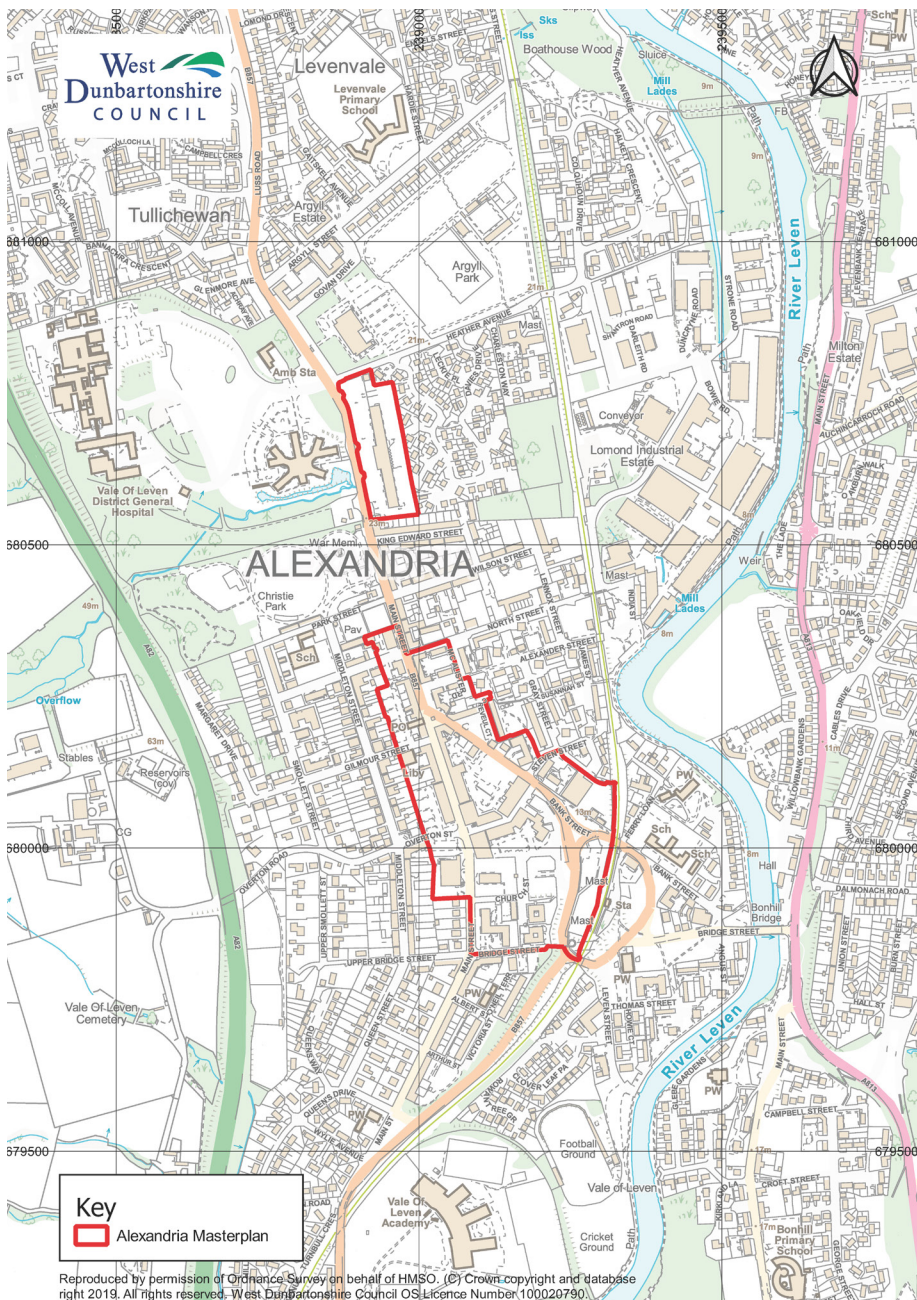


Fig 1.2
Town Centre Masterplan core focus

The masterplan should also be used to influence the policy framework that will be contained in Local Development Plan 3, which is anticipated to emerge during the lifetime of this masterplan.

Within the study area, Local Development Plan 2 sets the immediate policy context for the land use, development and spatial proposals contained in this Masterplan. In addition to general planning policies for future development, Local Development Plan 2 contains a development strategy and policy statement for the town centre (see accompanying extracts).

Fig 1.3

Extract relating to Alexandria town centre from West Dunbartonshire Council Local Development Plan 2, pages 43



Alexandria Town Centre Policy Statement

Key Projects and Uses

All new developments shall be in accordance with the Alexandria Town Centre Masterplan. In particular, the Plan will support the following key projects and uses:

- A new foodstore of approximately 2,300 sq.m, on a site extending south from Mitchell Way;
- Other new and refurbished retail floorspace in and around Mitchell Way where it complements existing uses;
- Residential development opportunities, especially within the Mitchell Way redevelopment, to increase footfall and diversity of uses;
- A further residential opportunity at the former office site on Church Street;
- The restoration of the B-listed Smollet Fountain and its incorporation into a new civic space with a high quality setting at the junction of Bank Street and Main Street;
- A mixture of Town Centre uses as part of the redevelopment of the Bank Street;
- Building refurbishment, shopfront improvements and enhancement to the public realm, especially on Main Street and Bank Street;
- Improvements to parking and access from the rear of Main Street; and
- Improved multi-user and active travel linkages to the railway station and River Leven.

Fig 1.4

Extract relating to Alexandria town centre from West Dunbartonshire Council Local Development Plan 2, pages 43

Development Strategy

The Development Strategy for Alexandria Town Centre is:

- To strengthen the retail offer through the identification of opportunities for a new foodstore and other new and refurbished retail floorspace;
- To increase the population of the Town Centre through the identification of housing opportunities;
- To support mixed use redevelopment along Bank Street;
- To support residential development on the former Council Office site on Church Street; and
- To enhance the attractiveness of the Town Centre through accessibility, public realm and transport improvements.

The Development Strategy Map, over, illustrates what parts of the Town Centre are appropriate for the uses identified within the Development Strategy.

Fig 1.5

Extract relating to Alexandria town centre from West Dunbartonshire Council Local Development Plan 2, pages 42

Community aspirations

Local people have expressed their concerns and aspirations about the future of the town in response to various community consultations over the last few years. Those that are most relevant for this Masterplan are summarised in this section.

In 2019, [the Vale of Leven Trust](#) (a community led charity in Alexandria) organised a consultation for Alexandria and the Vale of Leven, using the [Place Standard](#). To see the results in detail, please click [here](#).

In the same year, [The Clydesider](#) (the community newspaper for West Dunbartonshire) organised a community consultation about Alexandria and the Vale of Leven. You can read more about it and see the results [here](#). There are lots of interesting things about Alexandria.

In late 2019 and early 2020 before the COVID-19 pandemic took hold, various engagement activities to explore the future of the town centre were organised in relation specifically to the Town Centre Masterplan, before any proposals had been drafted. These engagement activities included:



- A dedicated consultation website www.alexandria.town with interactive mapping (35 responses) and a simple survey (25 responses).
- An afternoon/evening ‘Bake’n’Blether” community drop-in event in the former Lagavulin bistro on Main Street.
- One-to-one contact with businesses in the town centre, with face-to-face input from the majority of businesses.
- Sessions with school pupils in Vale of Leven Academy, St Marys Primary and Christie Park Primary.
- Discussions with Alexandria Neighbourhood Action and subsequently Alexandria Community Action Network (which continued throughout 2020 and the first half of 2021).

Fig 1.6

Extract from www.alexandria.town online consultation in early 2020, showing public likes and dislikes about the town centre on an interactive map

All these consultations produced common messages from the local community. Some of these were general points referring to the town as a whole, such as a feeling that the community is over-consulted and under-listened to. Other common messages which the town centre masterplan could respond positively are summarised in the graphic below:



Consultation on draft Masterplan content

Within the study area, Local Development Plan 2 sets the immediate policy context for the land use, development and spatial proposals contained in this Masterplan. In addition to general planning policies for future development, Local Development Plan 2 contains a development strategy and policy statement for the town centre (see accompanying extracts).

The masterplan should also be used to influence the policy framework that will be contained in Local Development Plan 3, which is anticipated to emerge during the lifetime of this masterplan.

Public consultation on the draft aims and projects contained in this Masterplan then took place over a three week period in May and June 2021. The consultation was held primarily online using a bespoke consultation website www.alexandria.town due to COVID-19 regulations, with hard copies and non-online contact also available.

The consultation covered both the [draft content of this Town Centre Masterplan](#) and [draft priorities for the community-led action plan for Alexandria](#) as a whole (please click on those links to see the consultation material and responses). The online consultation attracted over 1,800 individual people over the three week period. For the Town Centre Masterplan element of the consultation, people were provided with information on 12 potential town centre projects and asked to score them in terms of importance on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 represented 'thumbs down' and 5 represented 'thumbs up'. All projects scored above average, the range being between 3.5 and 4.6. People were also invited to provide comments to help take the potential projects forward

Around 240 people took part in the scoring, and around half that number provided comments. To see the full results, including transcriptions of all responses, please [click here](#). Summaries of comments relating to each potential project can be seen under each project heading in section 3 'Projects' of this Masterplan.

2 Objectives

The ultimate objective of this Town Centre Masterplan is that Alexandria town centre regains its role as the **Heart of the Vale**.

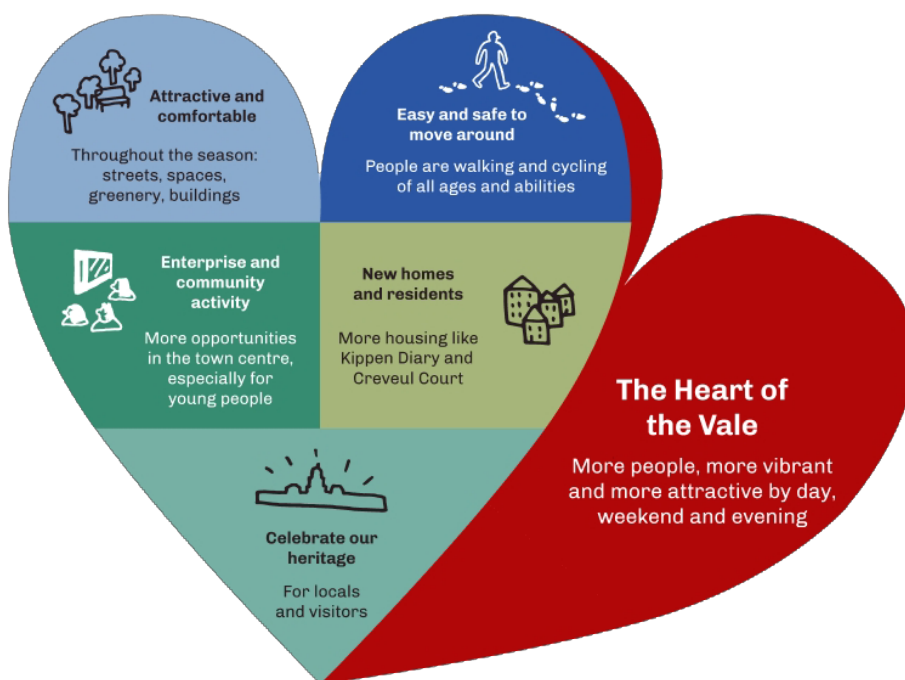


Fig 2.1

Vision for Alexandria town centre: the Heart of the Vale

This includes:

- **Enterprise and community activity:** more opportunities in the town centre, especially for young people.
- **Attractive and comfortable environment:** throughout the seasons, daytime, evenings and weekends; for everyone whatever their sex or ethnicity; streets, spaces, greenery, buildings and activities.
- **Easy and safe to move around:** people of all ages and abilities walking and cycling.
- **Celebrate the town's proud heritage:** for locals and visitors alike.
- **New homes and residents:** more housing like Kippen Dairy and Creveul Court, leading to more footfall in the town centre.

The 12 projects in section 3 of this Masterplan are designed to work as a practical package of spatial, land use and development proposals to contribute to that aim. Other suggestions will undoubtedly emerge in the future. They should be assessed for their positive impact against the Masterplan objectives.

In addition, each Masterplan project (and future suggestions) should play its part in tackling bigger strategic objectives that reflect public consultation responses and public policy agendas:

Fig 2.2

bigger strategic Masterplan objectives



Every project should maximise its contributions to these objectives in how it is designed and delivered. There are many sources of advice and guidance to assist with this. Good starting points are the [Town Toolkit](#) (2021) and the [original Town Centre Toolkit](#) (2015), both prepared by Scotland's Towns Partnership on behalf of the Scottish Government.

3 Projects

The Masterplan comprises 12 projects, which are each described in this section. No single project will turn the town centre around, but taken together they will help the town centre to regain its role as the Heart of the Vale.

Each project has been developed and identified in response to the Objectives outlined in section 2, community aspirations, available opportunities, potential funding and deliverability.

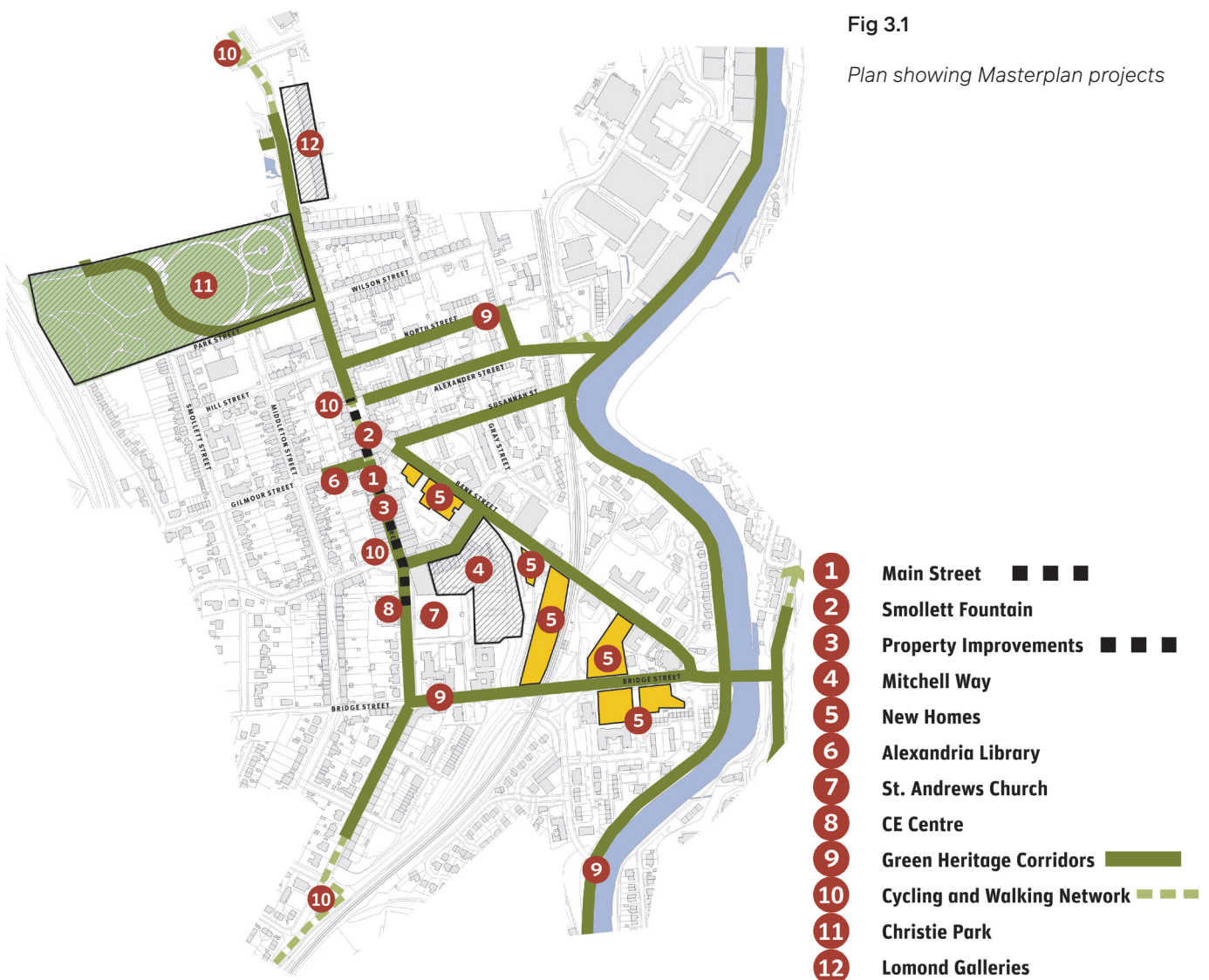


Fig 3.1

Plan showing Masterplan projects

Fig 3.2*shop fronts on Main Street***Fig 3.3***Alexandria Main Street*

1. Main Street

If the town centre is the heart of the Vale, Main Street is the heart of the town centre. At the moment the street is dominated by vehicles (many illegally parked) and pavements are too narrow.

The aim is to make Main Street more attractive for people to spend time in, supporting businesses and community life. Many people have said that they would like to see a broader range of shops and businesses. We can't make businesses open, but we can help create the conditions for that to happen by making the street more attractive. Studies elsewhere have shown that doing that, particularly by creating more space for people, increases footfall and spend.

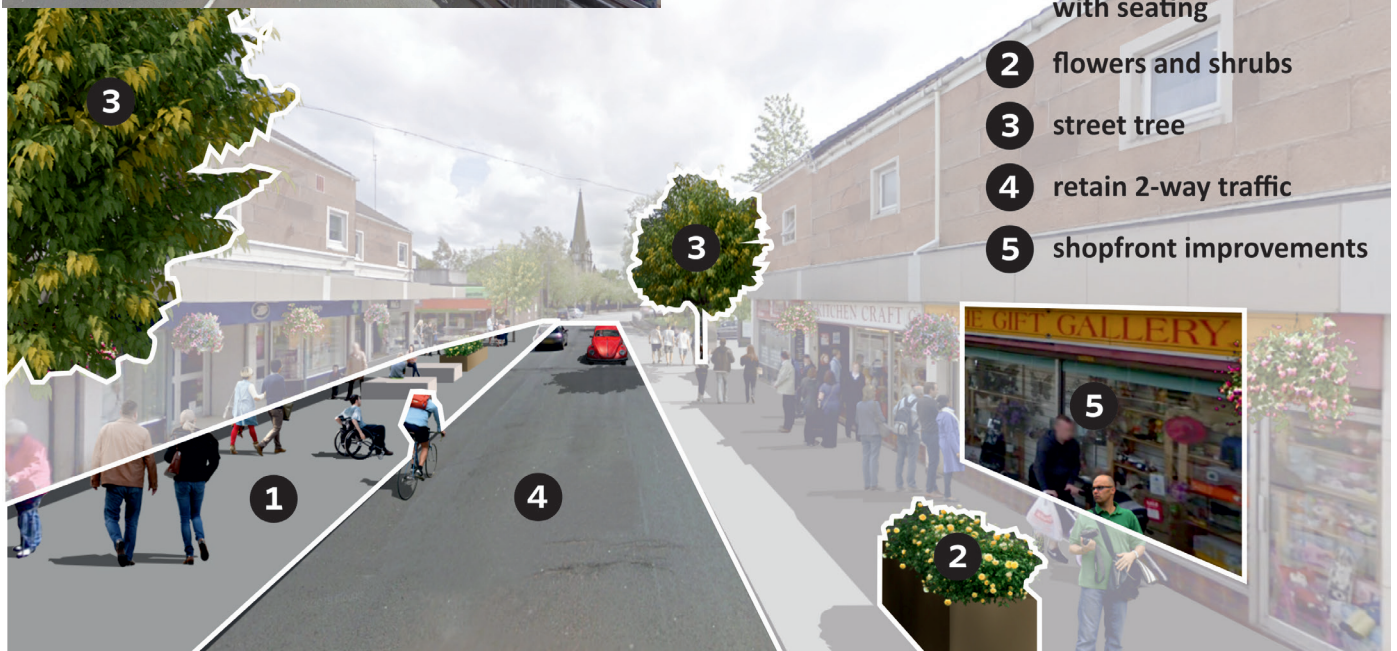
The vision is to make the pavements better and wider, crossing the road easier and safer, stop illegal parking, improve lighting, and more besides. Provision of accessible public toilets is also important.

To maximise positive impact, delivery should be co-ordinated with other masterplan projects such as property improvements and Green Heritage Corridors.



Fig 3.4

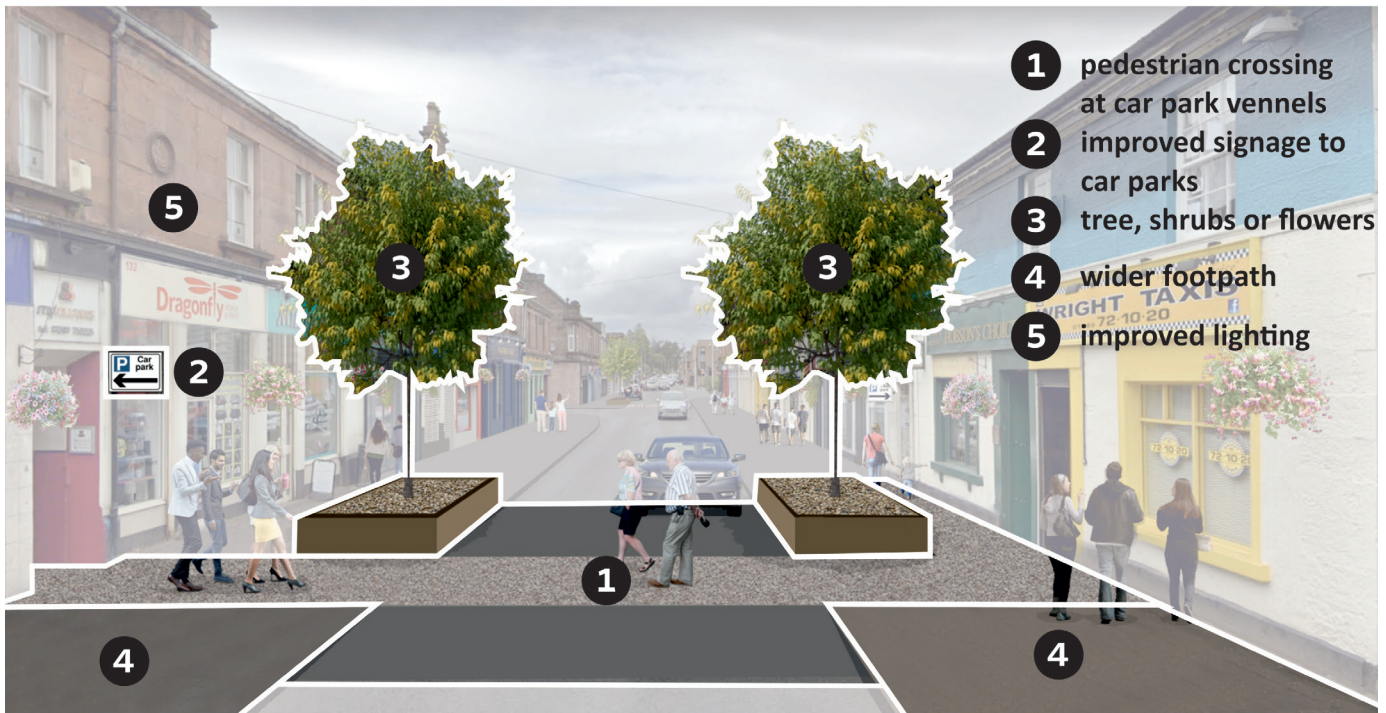
More space for people, less on-street car parking



- 1** wider footpaths with seating
- 2** flowers and shrubs
- 3** street tree
- 4** retain 2-way traffic
- 5** shopfront improvements

Fig 3.5

More crossings, more greenery, better car parking signage



**Fig 3.6**

More planting, better lighting, better access to car parks

To encourage people to use the car parks behind Main Street and the shops along the street, the half a dozen vennels should be improved and made more attractive, and signage improved.



CONSULTATION COMMENTS

As with all the projects, people responding to the consultation scored this project above average for importance (3.6 on a scale of 1 to 5). There were mixed views for and against. All comments can be seen in the consultation report ([please click here](#)). In summary, key points raised by respondents included:

- Pedestrian crossings and disabled access are essential.
- Maintenance will be important.
- More greenery and better pavements are not enough on their own - need to attract wider range of businesses in order to attract more people.
- The road needs to be wide enough for buses to pass.
- Concerns that narrowing Main Street will result in traffic blockages from illegal parking, deliveries and buses, and cause increased traffic on Middleton Street. People referenced the traffic impacts of recent changes in Balloch.
- Parking enforcement will be essential to avoid the road being blocked.

NEXT STEPS

Work collaboratively with businesses and residents to prepare more detailed proposals including:

- Two-way traffic along Main Street
- Delivery arrangements for businesses
- Disabled access and parking
- Lighting and footway improvements
- Convenient short-stay parking for quick visits
- Avoid “rat-running” along Middleton Street
- Long term maintenance proposals
- Parking enforcement
- Consider trial project to test potential design, taking account of feedback on current trial project at Smollett Fountain
- Accessible public toilets

Fig 3.7

Trial project for reallocating roadspace for other uses in Clarkston, East Renfrewshire (courtesy of Google Maps)



2. Smollett Fountain

To celebrate the importance of this listed structure, which sits on the junction of Bank Street and Main Street and is an important historical landmark, the Council has committed funding for the restoration of the fountain and upgrading of its surroundings. The aims are also to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety whilst also allowing traffic to move through the junction in a courteous and slower manner by altering traffic management priorities.

Work will be undertaken in three phases. The first phase started on site in Spring 2021. This phase of work was a temporary trial funded by Sustrans. The changes to pedestrian crossings and the management of traffic were monitored and observations are being used to refine the second phase of work due to start later in 2021: permanent changes to the road and pavement layout.

The third and final phase will be refurbishment works to the fountain itself, which was last restored in 1996. The proposals include creative lighting using a 'Fountain of Light' concept. People are also keen to see reinstatement of the disconnected water supply to the gravity fed fountain. This has been investigated but unfortunately, due to safety considerations and other issues, it is not currently viable.

Fig 3.8

Plan of proposed improvements around the Smollett Fountain

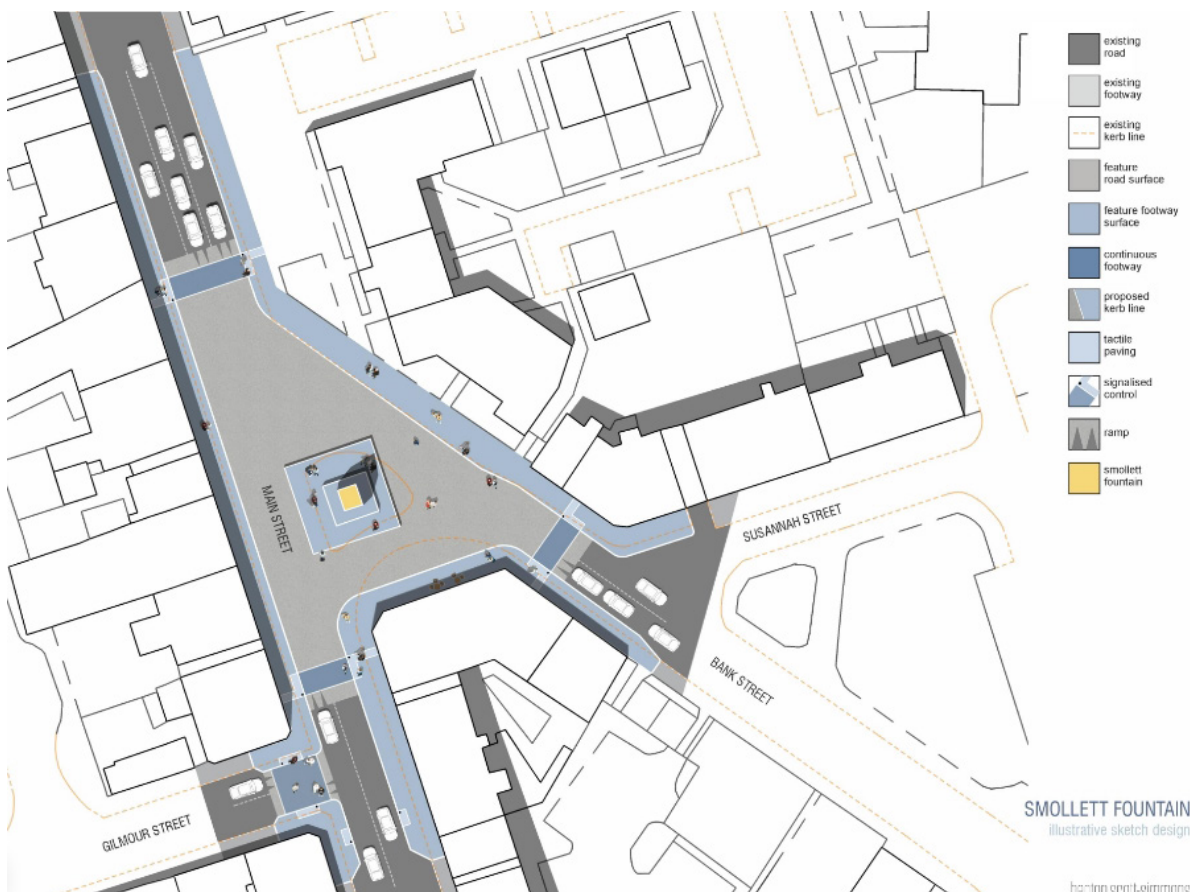
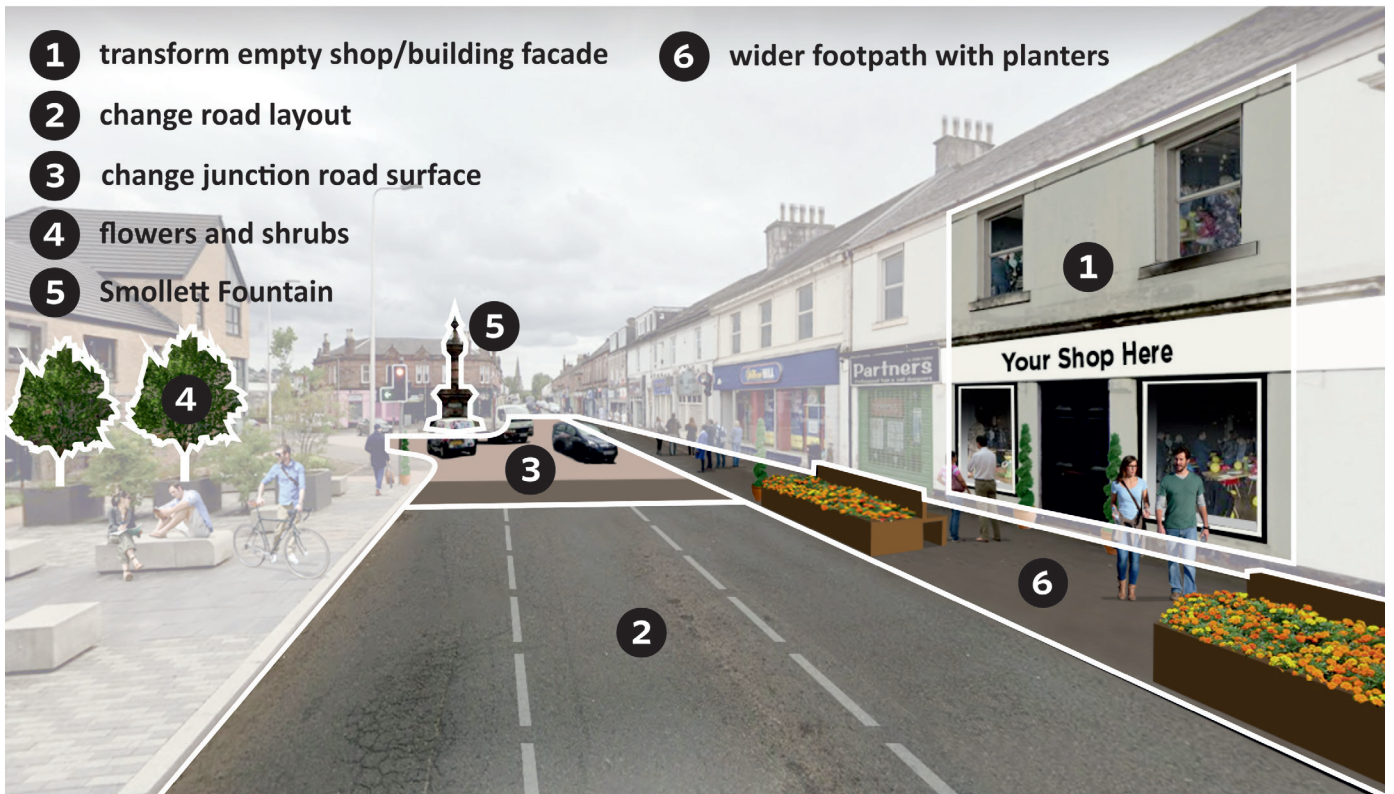


Fig 3.9

Improved setting for Smollett Fountain, looking south along Main Street



**Fig 3.10**

Improved setting for Smollett Fountain, looking up Bank Street

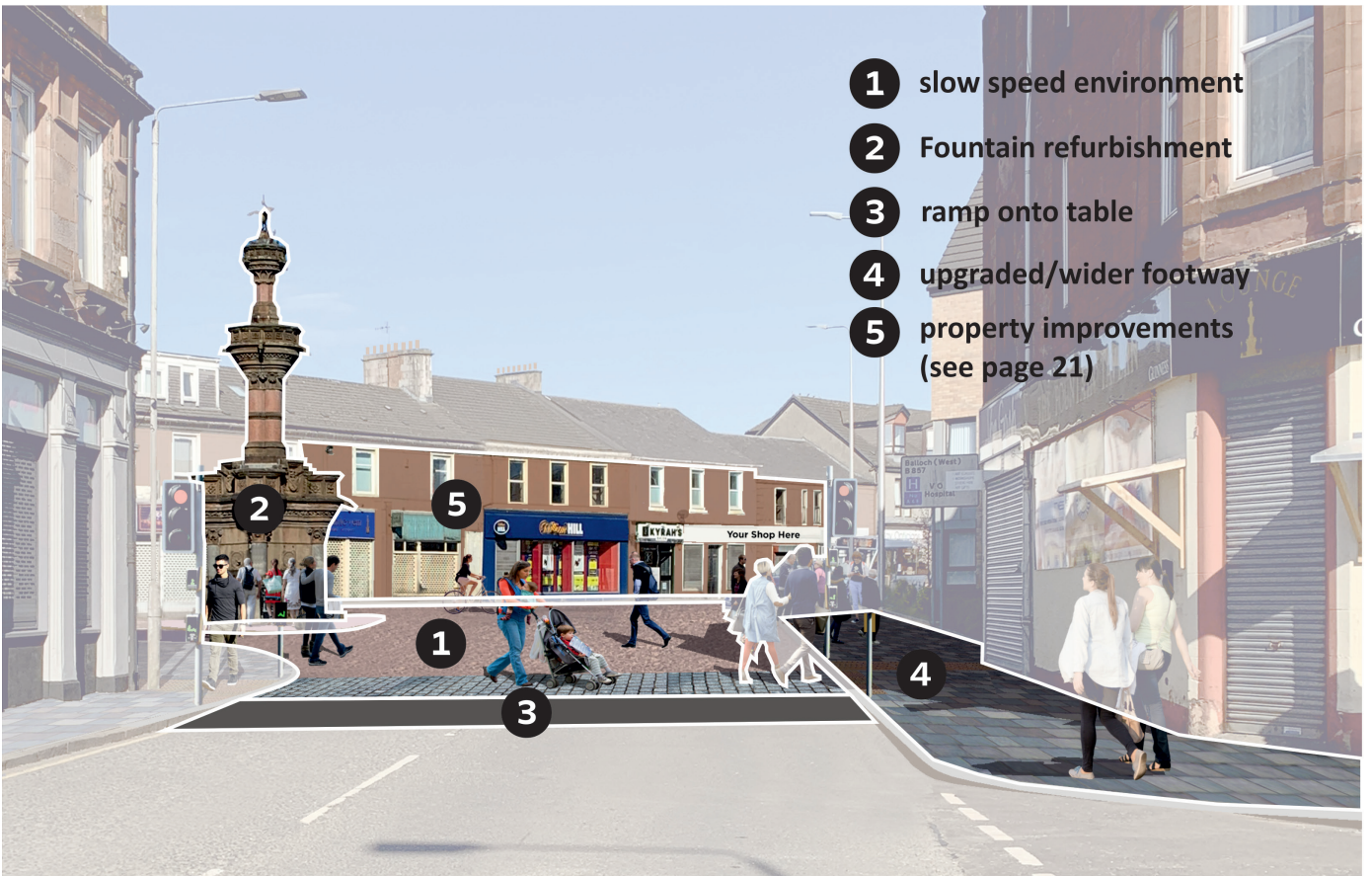


Fig 3.11

Old photograph of the Smollett Fountain



CONSULTATION COMMENTS

As with all the projects, people responding to the consultation scored this project above average for importance (3.5 on a scale of 1 to 5). There were mixed views for and against. All comments can be seen in the consultation report ([please click here](#)). In summary, key points raised by respondents included:

- Good to restore heritage and get the Fountain working again. It is important to make the Fountain more prominent and focal point.
- Many people want the fountain to be restored and the area to look better, but not at the expense of interfering with traffic flow.
- Concerns about traffic flow, road width and long vehicles turning. Many comments referred to the impact of the current trial which is being undertaken in advance of any permanent changes being made, such as inconsistent lane widths and traffic queues.
- Comments on details included locations of planters and details of road layout.

NEXT STEPS

- Evaluate trial project
- Review design as necessary
- Complete implementation and restore/upgrade fountain

3. Property Improvements

Many town centre properties are in poor condition. We want to explore what can be done to make them more attractive for existing business and new uses, more accessible, and conserve the town's built heritage.

Some properties are owned by the Council; many are in private ownership. This will require working with building owners and finding funding for things like building and canopy repairs, painting, shopfront improvements, re-use of upper floors and so on. It will not be straightforward or quick to achieve as funding is not immediately available, but we want to be ready to tap into new sources of potential funding as and when they become available.



Fig 3.12

Attractive shop frontage on Gilmour Street

CONSULTATION COMMENTS

As with all the projects, people responding to the consultation scored this project above average for importance (4.1 on a scale of 1 to 5). There were mixed views for and against. All comments can be seen in the consultation report ([please click here](#)). In summary, key points raised by respondents included:

- It's important to make the town look appealing to customers and to attract new businesses.
- Work with owners and local community
- A more uniform look and restoring heritage would be good.
- Good to support business.
- Rent/rates need to be affordable to retain and attract businesses.
- Need to work with owners and businesses.

NEXT STEPS

- Explore options for securing more investment in town centre buildings
- Work with owners and local community
- Explore further options for protecting heritage and ensuring design quality, such as Conservation Area designation and/or design guidance.

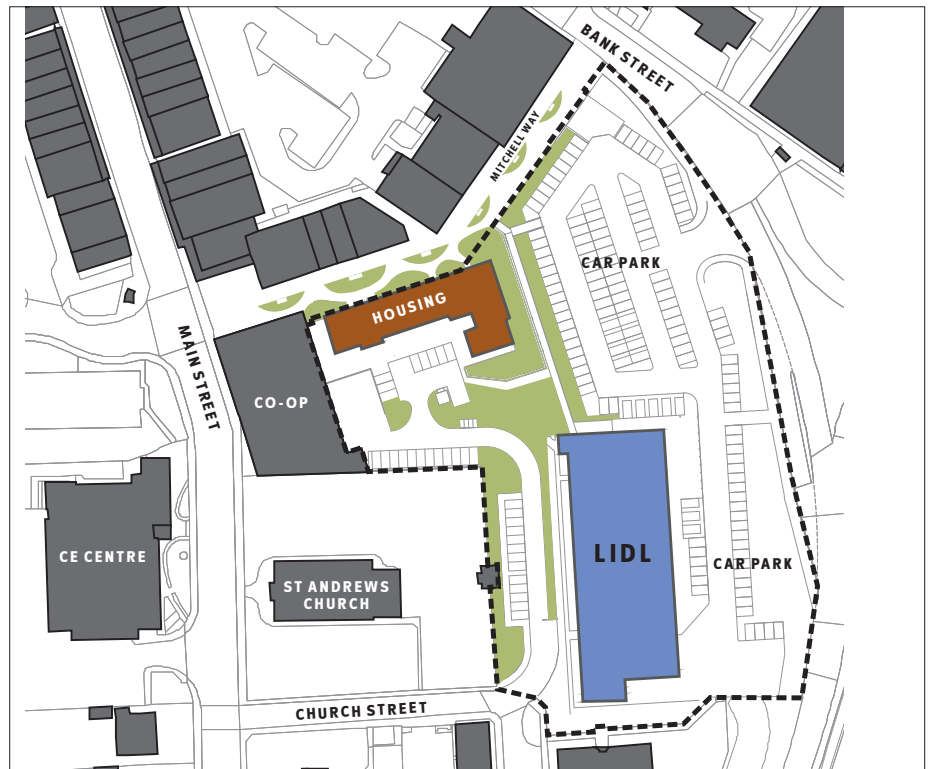
4. Mitchell Way

The condition of buildings on Mitchell Way is a major source of concern for the local community.

As a major landowner, the Council now has a preferred development partner with a proposal to demolish and redevelop the vacant buildings on the south side of Mitchell Way for commercial and residential use, improve public spaces and construct a new supermarket (Lidl is currently interested and discussions with them are ongoing). The latest proposed plan from the development partner shows how Mitchell Way could be redeveloped with 25 one and two bedroomed flats in a four storey building on Mitchell Way and a new supermarket and car park.

Fig 3.13

Proposed site plan for Lidl store and flats on Mitchell Way



CONSULTATION COMMENTS

As with all the projects, people responding to the consultation scored this project above average for importance (4.6 on a scale of 1 to 5). There were mixed views for and against. All comments can be seen in the consultation report ([please click here](#)). In summary, key points raised by respondents included:

- Good to see this in the plan, it's a major eyesore and an urgent priority.
- New development should integrate with the town centre in terms of the proposed public space, attracting more businesses to the town centre, and how the supermarket would support the existing town centre.
- Space for more independent shops would be good.
- Mixed views on the need for another supermarket.

NEXT STEPS

- Work with development partner to ensure that:
 - Placemaking principles are taken into account in the planning and design process
 - The proposals face and connect with Mitchell Way and Main Street, so the proposed supermarket feels part of the town centre, shoppers are encouraged to visit other town centre businesses, and footfall along Mitchell Way and Main Street is maximised.
 - The proposals complement the New Homes project.



Fig 3.14

Current Mitchell Way condition

5. New Homes

This would be a big transformational project covering a large area between Mitchell Way, Bank Street and Bridge Street, on either side of the railway station.

It would include:

- 100-200 new good quality affordable homes, sensitively designed and laid out with community facilities like green space, play areas and so on.
- Removal of the roundabout around the railway station and reinstatement of old street block pattern of Bank Street and Chapel Street (estimated cost £4-5m which would be offset by the creation of development sites).
- Improvements to the railway station and park-and-ride.

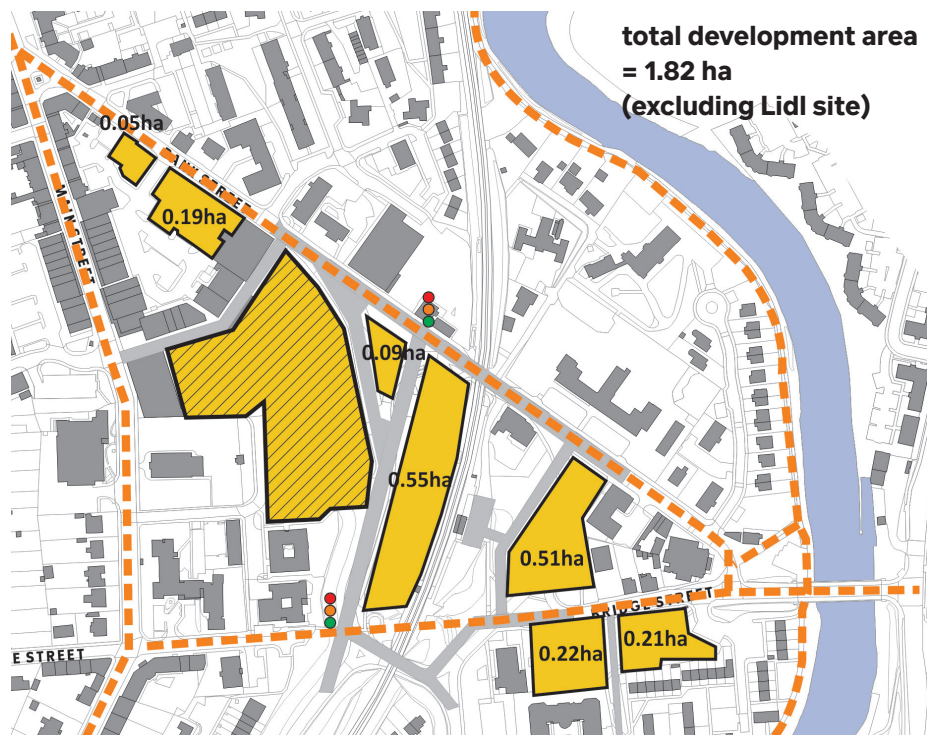
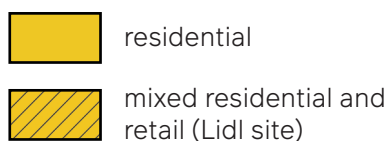
The aim is to achieve:

- More people living in the town centre - and therefore more footfall for businesses.
- Affordable good quality homes for local residents in particular.
- Make it easier to walk and cycle between Bonhill Bridge and the town centre, by removing the roundabout around the station.
- Practical implementation of the Scottish Government's "20 minute neighbourhood" concept, with associated zero-carbon and health/wellbeing benefits (please see Figure 3.16 overleaf).

Creating community and good design quality would be priorities, in line with Scottish Government and West Dunbartonshire policy objectives of creating 20 minute neighbourhoods, placemaking and carbon reduction.

Fig 3.15

Plan showing potential new street layout and development sites



**Fig 3.16**

Diagram explaining what's in a 20 minute neighbourhood. Please see page 24 for an explanation of how this would benefit the town centre.

CONSULTATION COMMENTS

As with all the projects, people responding to the consultation scored this project above average for importance (3.9 on a scale of 1 to 5). All comments can be seen in the consultation report ([please click here](#)). In summary, key points raised by respondents included:

- Widespread support for new homes (and for upgrading existing ones) as long as the infrastructure and facilities are there to support them.
- Affordable homes are needed especially to keep young people in the area.
- Proposals need to include parking, roads, schools, shops, green spaces and play areas, including '20 minute neighbourhood' concept.
- Homes should be houses rather than flats, eco-friendly, high quality and good design.
- Mixed views on removing the roundabout around the station: some suggest it will improve access from Bonhill to the town centre, others are concerned about impact on traffic flow.

NEXT STEPS

The work would be carried out in stages and would take 5-10 years. The first stage would be a feasibility study to establish the viability of the project, which would explore:

- Potential tenure, mix and number of homes.
- Design and performance standards to maximise low carbon and health / wellbeing benefits.
- Infrastructure and engineering requirements.
- Supporting community amenities and facilities,
- Costs, income and potential sources of funding
- Phasing.

6. Alexandria Library

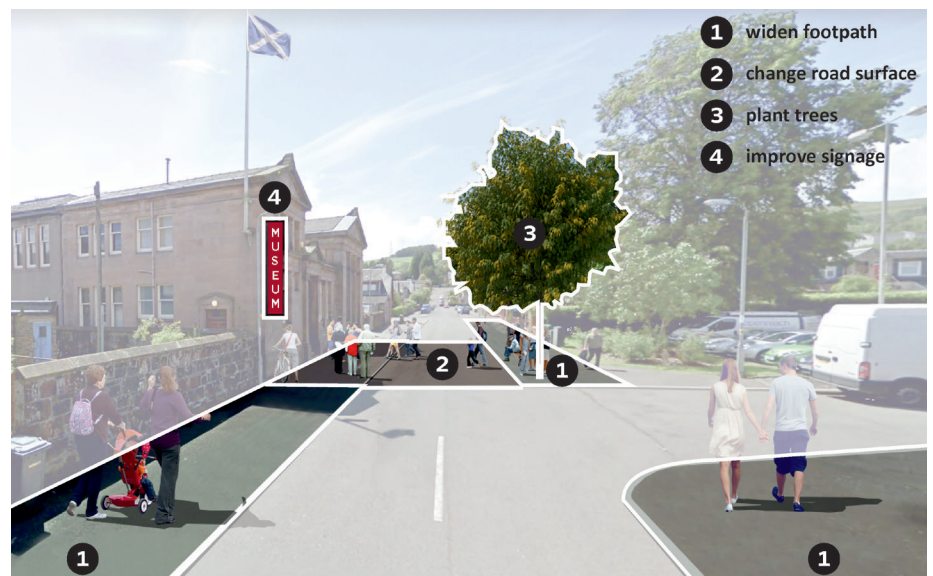
The Masterplan has a number of proposals to encourage more town centre activity by investing in community buildings and spaces, so creating more indoor and outdoor space for events and activities in the town centre. The increased footfall would also help town centre businesses.

The first of these is investment in Alexandria Library, particularly in relation to heritage, historical resources and learning. Funding has already been secured to install a lift and refurbish the upstairs space for community use (for example, a youth theatre) and new exhibition space on the Vale's heritage - including Turkey Red, Argyll Motor Works and world champions Renton FC!

Future work could include opening up the Library garden as a community space, heritage trails, projects with local schools, and events space and better lighting in front of the Library.

Fig 3.17

Enhanced public space in the front of the Library



CONSULTATION COMMENTS

As with all the projects, people responding to the consultation scored this project above average for importance (3.7 on a scale of 1 to 5). All comments can be seen in the consultation report ([please click here](#)). In summary, key points raised by respondents included:

- General support for improving and making more of the Library, it's good for the community.
- Lots of ideas for how to use the new community spaces inside the building.
- Limited support for proposed changes to the road outside.

NEXT STEPS

- Continue to invest in the Library as a hub for community/heritage activity.
- Explore how improvements to outside spaces might best contribute to the concept.

7. St Andrews Church

The former St Andrews Church on Main Street, opposite the CE Centre, is being transformed into new arts and creative space and studios. The project will provide cultural and art opportunities to people who would not normally access them, increasing pride in Alexandria and its connections to a larger audience through Scotland and beyond as it attracts and welcomes visitors.

The project recently received major Scottish Government funding and is now in progress.

Find out more on the [project website](#).



Fig 3.18

*St Andrew Church, Main Street
(courtesy of Google Maps)*

CONSULTATION COMMENTS

As with all the projects, people responding to the consultation scored this project above average for importance (3.6 on a scale of 1 to 5). All comments can be seen in the consultation report ([please click here](#)). In summary, key points raised by respondents included:

- Good to have something creative like this, especially for young people.
- Needs to be accessible and open to the whole community.
- Need to conserve the historic fabric of the church, graves and so on.
- Need to coordinate with other initiatives like the CE Centre, library, and Lomond Galleries.
- Questions over use of public funding for a project on property currently in private ownership.

NEXT STEPS

- Continue to investigate suitable funding to deliver the project
- Further examine culture and arts opportunities for the building which benefit the community

8. Community Education Centre

We want to encourage more outdoor events and activities in the town centre in existing event spaces like Christie Park and the Community Education (CE) Centre car park. This would increase community activity, bring more people into the town centre, and help town centre businesses.

The car park between the CE Centre and Overton Street is already home to occasional events like Vale Pride. The space could be improved to make it easier to organise more events, as shown in the visualisation below.

The CE Centre itself is an important community asset which draws people into the town centre during the day and evenings. Investment in the CE Centre building itself should be considered to maximise its value to the local community.

Fig 3.19

Easier use of the CE Centre car park as a temporary event space



CONSULTATION COMMENTS

As with all the projects, people responding to the consultation scored this project above average for importance (3.5 on a scale of 1 to 5). All comments can be seen in the consultation report ([please click here](#)). In summary, key points raised by respondents included:

- Support for more markets, local music events etc.
- Concern about reduction in parking, especially because it is a busy car park with disabled spaces.
- CE Centre needs a makeover too.

NEXT STEPS

- Investigate opportunities for internal and external improvements to the CE Centre, and adjacent car park, which maximise use and benefit for the community and enhance visual attractiveness.
- Design and implement improvements.
- Work with local businesses and community groups to develop a year-round events calendar.
- Ensure alternative disabled parking spaces are available during events.

9. Green Heritage Corridors

This community-led project proposes more trees, greenery and flowers in and around the town centre including along Main Street, to Christie Park, and down to the Barry the Cat mural on the river.

As well as brightening up the streets, improving walking and cycling and bringing in more nature, the 'Green Heritage Corridors' would create lots of opportunities for local residents, schools and community groups to be involved in artwork, better play facilities, growing food, tree planting and nature trails.

Some of this greening could be temporary until gap sites are developed. This "stalled spaces" approach could equally be applied on other sites, subject to funding and landowner consent.



Fig 3.20

Trees, allotments and a play area: how Alexander Street could look



Fig 3.21

Green Heritage Corridors network indicated by green lines (National Cycle Network shown with a solid green line)



CONSULTATION COMMENTS

As with all the projects, people responding to the consultation scored this project above average for importance (4.0 on a scale of 1 to 5). All comments can be seen in the consultation report ([please click here](#)). In summary, key points raised by respondents included:

- Support for improvements like this.
- Some concerns about future maintenance.

NEXT STEPS

- Develop proposals and secure external funding.
- Agree a collaborative approach to implementation and maintenance involving the local community and the local authority.

10. Cycling and Walking Network

Linked to the green heritage corridors (see page 29), this project would develop a network of safe walking and cycle routes to make it easier to get to and through the town centre from different parts of the Vale, so folk can safely walk and cycle to school, to the town centre or to meet friends. This is an essential part of delivering the '20 minute neighbourhood' concept (see pages 24-25 above).

The network can become a focus to encourage people to get outdoors and be active, including organising community events like walking groups and cycling festivals.

The network would link with the National Cycle Network along the river, and encourage visitors walking and cycling between Dumbarton and Loch Lomond to come into the town centre and see what it has to offer.



Fig 3.22

Cycling and walking network indicated by orange lines (National Cycle Network shown with a solid orange line)

CONSULTATION COMMENTS

As with all the projects, people responding to the consultation scored this project above average for importance (3.9 on a scale of 1 to 5). All comments can be seen in the consultation report ([please click here](#)). In summary, key points raised by respondents included:

- Having a good quality joined up walking and cycling network is welcomed by many.
- Some concerns about impact on traffic and future maintenance.

NEXT STEPS

- Secure funding to develop and implement proposals.
- Align network proposals with WDC active travel strategy

11. Christie Park

Christie Park is a wonderful asset for the town in so many ways: a beautiful historic green space in the heart of the town, and a place for everything from big community events to simply enjoying some peace and quiet, for locals and visitors alike.

This community-led project would secure funding to improve the Park by:

- Reopening the toilets.
- Supporting more community activities like family fun, heritage and nature walks, and arts events.
- Creating a path link to the hospital
- Renovating the War Memorial.
- Linking with the Green Heritage Corridors project.



Fig 3.23

Christie Park by Eddie Mackinnon (licensed under Creative Commons BY-SA 2.0)



Fig 3.24

Christie Park by Son of Groucho (licensed under Creative Commons BY 2.0)

CONSULTATION COMMENTS

As with all the projects, people responding to the consultation scored this project above average for importance (4.4 on a scale of 1 to 5). All comments can be seen in the consultation report ([please click here](#)). In summary, key points raised by respondents included:

- The park is seen as a great asset and improvements are widely supported.
- Popular suggestions for improvements include toilets, café, kiosk, bandstand, putting green, improved toddlers play area, better maintenance, path link to hospital and community activities.

NEXT STEPS

- Secure funding to develop and implement proposals.

12. Lomond Galleries

The former Argyll Motor Works is a wonderful building with some great businesses inside. But how can Alexandria make more of the building's untapped potential?

Since the building and forecourt are privately owned, all that can be done at this stage is to put forward ideas. For example:

- More events in the forecourt? For example, historic car shows harking back to its heyday as the Argyll Motor Works, outdoor heritage exhibitions for locals and tourists, or showcasing local businesses with events or popups.
- New landscaping, recreational space, lightshows and art installations in front of the building and in the empty facade towards Heather Avenue?
- A new modern extension at the Heather Avenue end of the building for more business space, arts studios or apartments?

The plan and visualisations below offer some ideas of how the Galleries could be enhanced in the future, both for the local community and to help develop Alexandria's visitor offer given its proximity to Loch Lomond. Please note that these ideas do not necessarily represent the views of the owner.



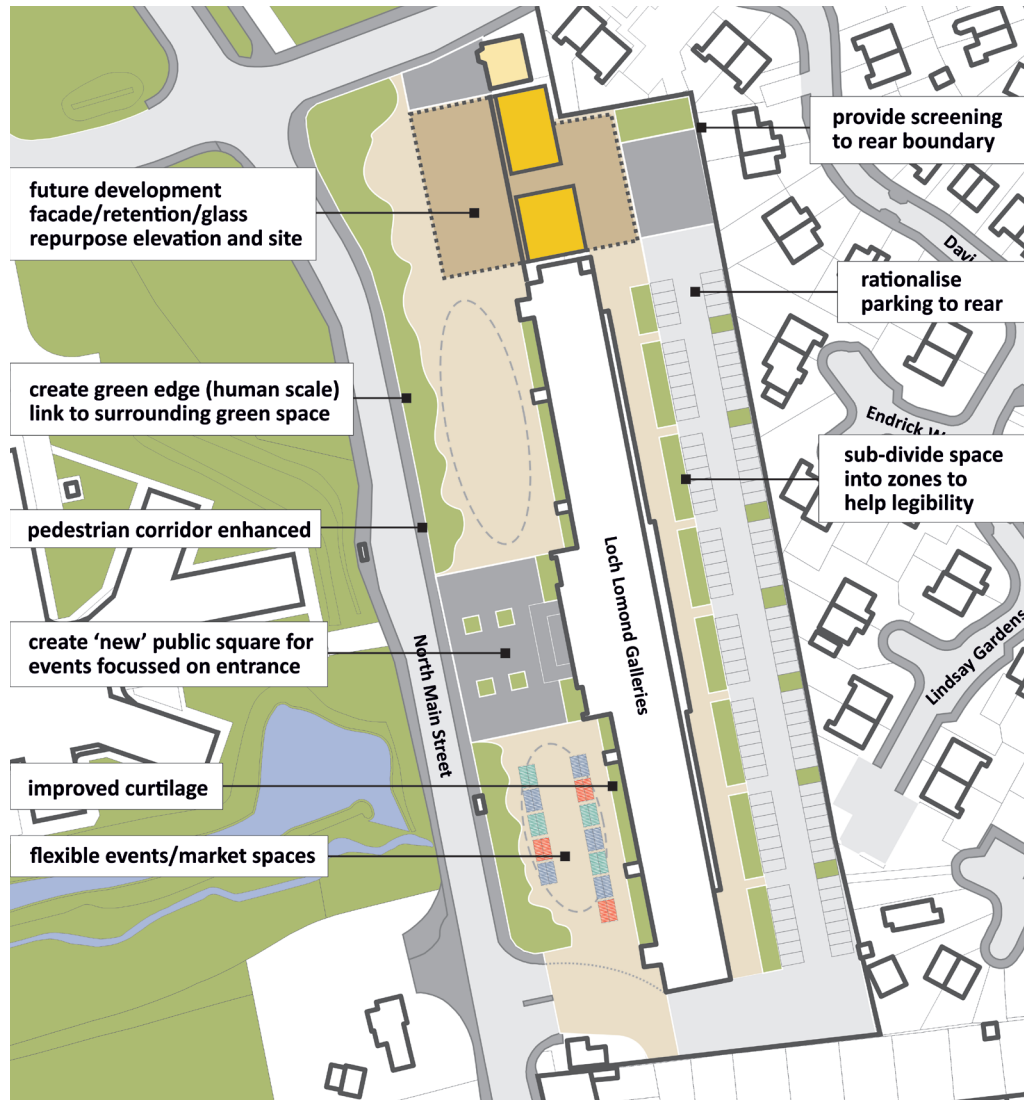
Fig 3.25

Visualisations illustrating the potential of Lomond Galleries



Fig 3.26

Plan illustrating the potential of Lomond Galleries



CONSULTATION COMMENTS

As with all the projects, people responding to the consultation scored this project above average for importance (4.3 on a scale of 1 to 5). All comments can be seen in the consultation report ([please click here](#)). In summary, key points raised by respondents included:

- A beautiful historic asset for the Vale but underused.
- Great scope to attract visitors and locals for events, arts and so on.
- Bring back the former car boot sale!
- Conversion to flats suggested by some people.
- Some suggest that the Council should step in, others say not.

NEXT STEPS

- Encourage and assist owner to make more of the building's potential.

4 Implementation

The projects described in this Masterplan are designed to work as a package of measures which are a realistic response to community aspirations. One single project will not transform the town centre, nor will change happen overnight. Complex projects like the development of new homes and streets may take 5-10 years to come to fruition, but work needs to start now for that to happen.

Implementation of any of the projects in this Masterplan will be a collaborative effort involving the local authority, the local community and external funding partners, as emphasised in the Town Toolkit recently published by Scotland's Towns Partnership on behalf of the Scottish Government.

This Masterplan document should focus minds, help each partner attract funding for individual projects, and act as a guide for detailed design and delivery of each project.

To support implementation of the Masterplan, consideration should be given to:

- Encouraging the community and other partners to establish a town centre business association, in order to act as a voice for private and social enterprises and to assist in project delivery. This would be particularly useful for projects like Main Street and property improvements.
- Using the Town Centre Forum to co-ordinate, promote and monitor delivery of this masterplan, publish annual progress updates, and review Forum membership annually to ensure good cross-sectoral representation from community organisations, local businesses and Community Planning Partners.

The 12 projects are shown in Fig 4.01 (overleaf) in the form of an action plan. Suggested initial steps for each project are contained in the Projects chapter, based on previous experience with other projects.

To ensure that the aspirations expressed in this Masterplan are delivered, the projects should be developed in collaboration with community groups to give schools, heritage groups and a range of other organisations the opportunity to be involved. Engagement will also continue with Alexandria Town Centre Forum which represents a range of town centre interests.

Fig 4.1

Action Plan

Project	Delivery timescale	Indicative cost	Led by
1 - Main Street	Medium term: 2-5 years	£0.75m - £1m	WDC
2 - Smollett Fountain	Short term: 1-2 years	Funding already committed	WDC
3 - Property improvements	Medium term: 2-5 years	£0.25m - £0.5m	WDC/ private owners
4 - Mitchell Way	Medium term: 2-5 years	TBC	WDC/ private developer
5 - New homes	Longer term: 5-10 years	£5m infrastructure costs	WDC
6 - Alexandria Library	Short term: 1-2 years	TBC	WDC
7 - St Andrews Church	Short term: 1-2 years	£1m	WDC/ community
8 - CE Centre	Short term: 1-2 years	£150k - £200k	WDC/ community
9 - Green heritage corridors	Medium term: 2-5 years	TBC	WDC/ community
10 - Cycling and walking network	Medium term: 2-5 years	£150k - £200k	WDC/ community
11 - Christie Park	Short term: 1-2 years	£75k - £100k	WDC/ community
12 - Lomond Galleries	Medium term: 2-5 years	£200k (greening exterior spaces works) to £5m+ (new development and building refurbishment)	private owner

