

1. INTRODUCTION

A number of factors exacerbated by the current economic climate have impacted negatively, both directly and indirectly on Port Glasgow town centre. Firstly this has adversely affected the traditional retail core through reduced expenditure capacity and secondary impacts also are evident in terms of the perception and use made of the town centre. Consequently, the vitality and viability of Port Glasgow town centre has been severely damaged and is showing signs of decline with a number of vacant units and a large number of charity shops and discounters. Many prominent areas looked downtrodden and in urgent need of investment, with the main shopping area looking dated and shabby by comparison to the newly upgraded Tesco surroundings.

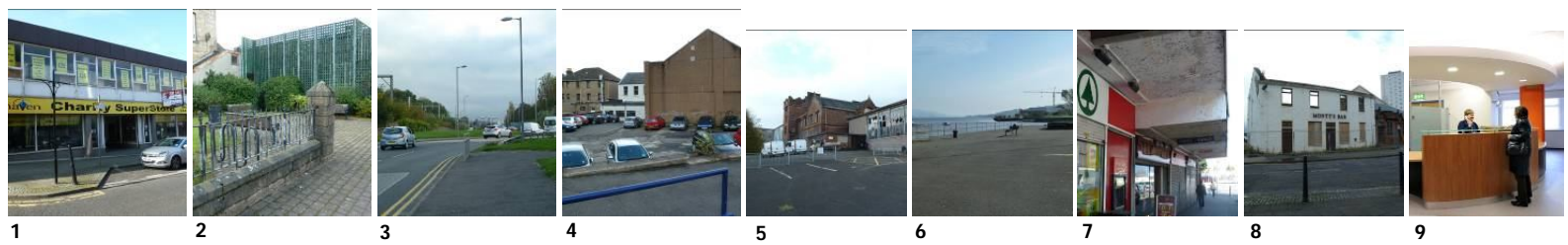
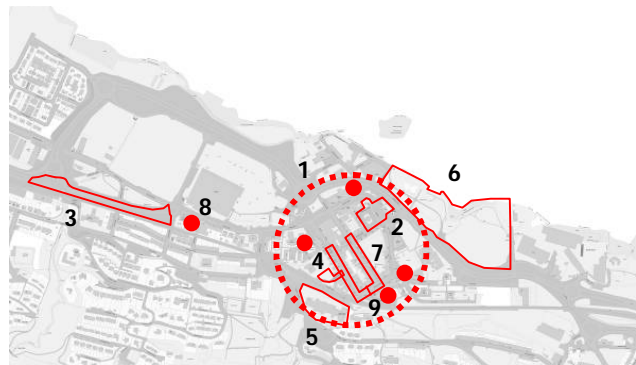
It is essential that Port Glasgow be provided with all the economic regeneration incentives possible to help the town centre retailers and service providers survive during the current economic downturn and to that end Inverclyde Council and Riverside Inverclyde (RI), the local urban regeneration company are seeking to create an environment where economic growth can be stimulated and where the quality of life within the community can be improved.

The images on this board show the proposed site areas, together with various pictures of existing conditions on site.



PROJECT BRIEF

1. Refocus the land uses within the Town Centre
2. Bus Station Environs / Bus Station Upgrade
3. New Western Entrance to Port Glasgow
4. New car parking for visitors within the Town Centre
5. New Park'n Ride Facility at the former Highholm School Site.
6. Upgrading of Coronation Park.
7. Improvement of Town Centre Environs
8. Individual Sites in Town Centre
9. New Joint Services Centre



2. PROGRESS SO FAR AND NEXT STEPS



PROGRESS SO FAR

Inverclyde Council and Riverside Inverclyde secured Town Centre Regeneration Funding (TCRF) from the Scottish Government in 2009/2010 to undertake environmental improvement works to Port Glasgow town centre. These works provided an upgraded and updated A8 entrance landscape framework and distinctive new quality signage at Fore Street around the war memorial along with an inspirational new public art sculpture, which was the popular winner in a local voting poll. The sculpture will be completed and erected around Christmas 2011. The fund also provided new floral displays by Parklea within the town centre, improvements to shop fronts and signage and a new glass canopy structure for shoppers on Princes Street. In 2011/2012, Inverclyde Council and Riverside Inverclyde propose to maintain this programme of visual enhancements and economic support measures to Port Glasgow by undertaking further works, which will improve the appearance and perception of the town and increase the footfall of shoppers and visitors into the town centre.



NEXT STEPS

Following discussions with local community representatives and traders a number of further projects have been identified to help maintain the momentum of confidence enthusiasm and support, which has been generated by the improvements undertaken so far. These projects will be considered by Inverclyde Council's Regeneration Committee in the Autumn of 2011.

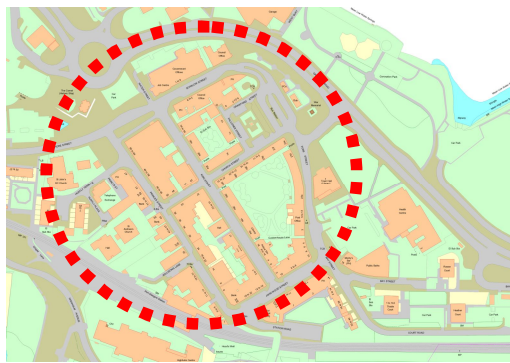


WESTERN ENTRANCE



CORONATION PARK

3. DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PROJECTS

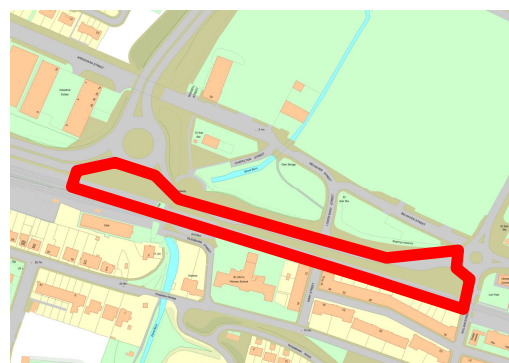


PROJECT 1 – Refocus the land uses within the Town Centre
 Port Glasgow town centre experiences significant levels of void and underused buildings within the retail/commercial centre and insufficient footfall. In order to address this issue it is proposed that when void retail/commercial buildings become vacant alternative uses will be considered and promoted through the emerging Local Plan. In addition, it is also proposed that opportunities will be explored within the town centre to increase the level of residential properties and emerging Local Plan Development plan will encourage this. It should be noted that this has proved a useful approach in regenerating town centres elsewhere through increased activity and footfall during the working day and into the evenings. An indicative allowance has been made to help owners undertake appropriate feasibilities. It is intended that this sum would be kept under review depending on take up.



PROJECT 2 - Bus Station Environs/Bus station Upgrade
 The bus station is due to be upgraded however there are areas around the bus station that currently appear neglected and poorly maintained. Walls and floorscape areas require to be cleaned, railings and lampposts require painting and trees and shrubbery require to be cut back. The area in front of the Town Hall has recently been improved.

SPT plans to upgrade the Bus Station and has made an initial allocation of up to £1.1m.



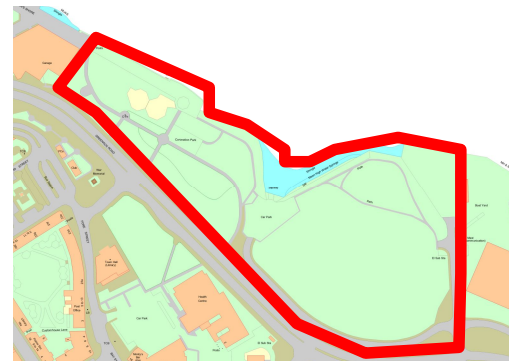
PROJECT 3 - New Western Entrance to Port Glasgow
 The eastern entrance to the town was upgraded with TCRF funding from its bland appearance to present a more distinctive, modern and welcoming image but the western entrance to the town displays no such distinguishing features or sense of arrival. It is proposed that this entrance is also upgraded and provided with an appropriate distinguishing feature marking the entrance to the town. This provides a significant challenge to the selected design team and it is therefore important that a platform is established whereby a range of diverse proposals can be brought forward for consideration, assessment and approval. A design brief is currently being assembled and will be advertised openly for submissions and proposals by appropriate professionals.



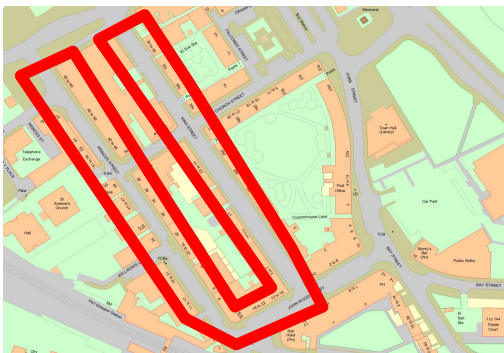
PROJECT 4 - New car parking for visitors within the Town Centre
 The main structure at 33-35 Princes Street is an empty and derelict two-story red sandstone building with shop premises below and former Coop Hall and office space above. To the rear there is a rough, un-surfaced site, which is currently inefficiently used for random car parking. Riverside Inverclyde and Inverclyde Council wishes to ensure that as much productive use as possible is made of land and buildings in an attempt to maintain the vitality and economic viability of the retailing and service core of the town. At the moment the town is busy during the day and it is often very difficult to find a parking space within the town centre. The provision of additional, easily accessible and more formal car parking at this location would serve to enhance the viability of shops and services within the town. Negotiations are currently well advanced with regards land acquisition for this site and it is proposed a planning application for selective demolition and the creation of a car park will be submitted to Inverclyde Council in the near future.



PROJECT 5 - New Park'n Ride Facility at the former Highholm School Site.
 In a further move to encourage commuters to use Port Glasgow's retail core a new Park and Ride facility is being developed at the former Highholm School with direct access to Port Glasgow railway station. This is a large site capable of accommodating hundreds of cars and will be developed in conjunction with the Strathclyde Passenger Transport.



PROJECT 6 - Upgrading of Coronation Park
 Coronation Park is a potentially extremely valuable community resource but is currently under-utilised due to a number of sub-standard elements such as the proximity of the unfenced, busy A8 trunk road, the poor condition of the footpaths and esplanade railings, the crumbling quay wall and slipway and un-drained and badly levelled condition of the playing surfaces. The park requires the above infrastructure and safety improvements implemented in order to render it capable of having the potential of increased, productive, community use. A consultants' brief is being prepared for competitive tender to design and implement these elements and to engage and involve the local community in the detailed design of further improvements.



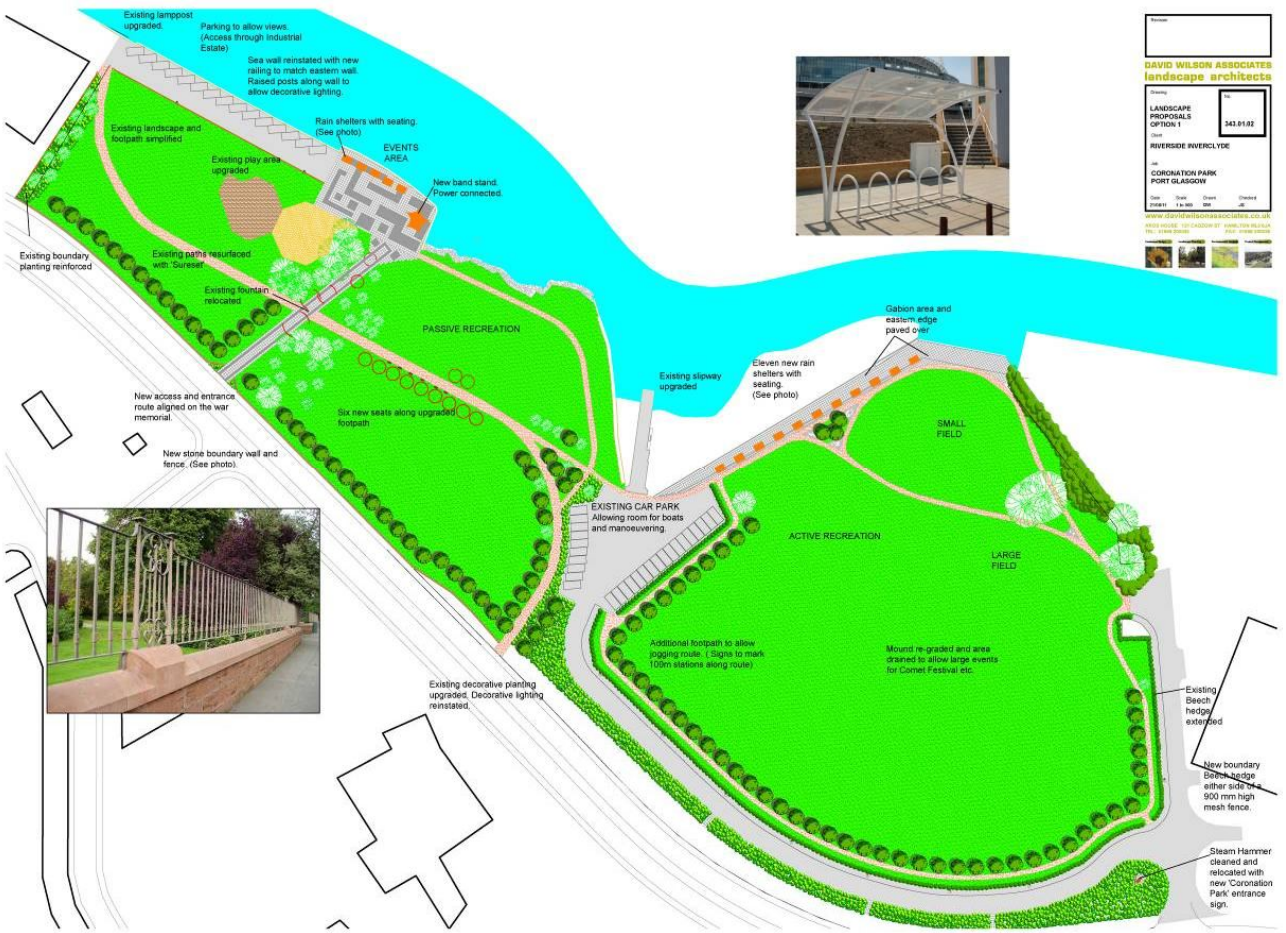
PROJECT 7 - Improvement of Town Centre Environs
 A series of architectural repairs were implemented as part of the TCRF and it is proposed to continue this effort on various buildings throughout the town centre. An architect has been engaged to identify the improvements required and implement this work as soon as possible once agreements with the affected owners have been concluded. Land purchase may also be involved.



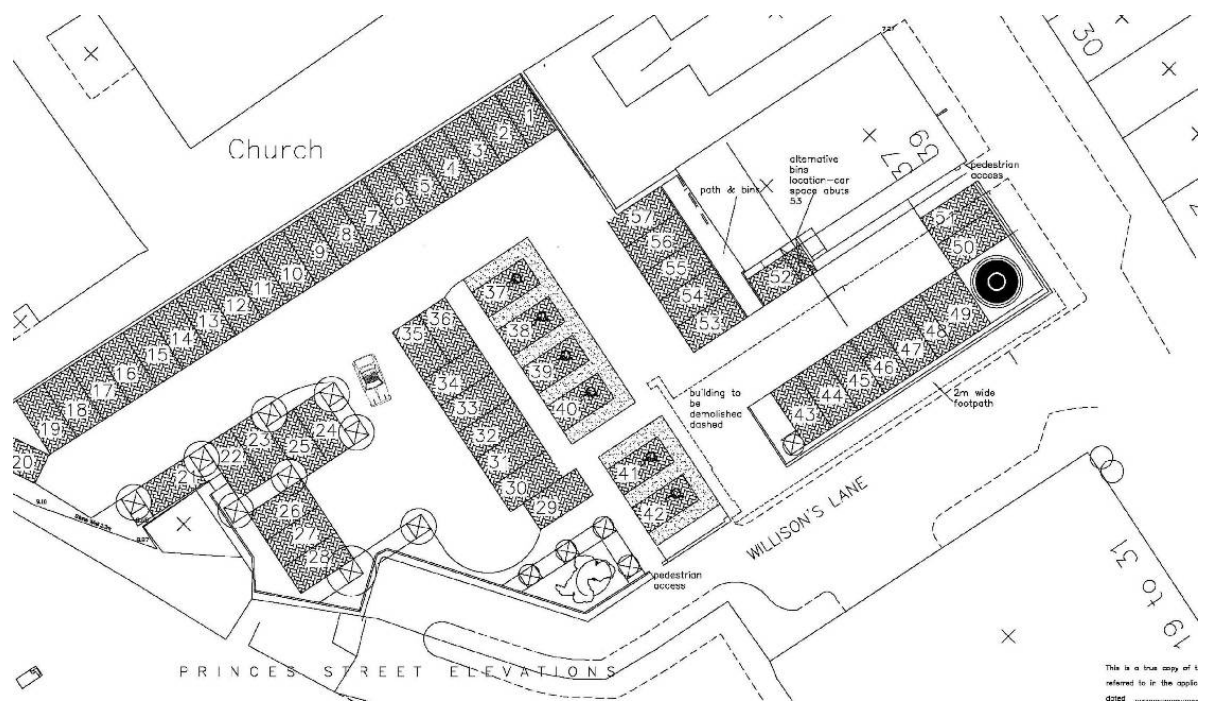
PROJECT 8 – Individual Sites in Town centre
 A range of sites have been identified as particularly run down or provide opportunity for future development. It is intended that RI and Council Officers will work with owners to bring forward proposals to regenerate these sites.
 Site A - Brown Street Bingo Hall Site
 Site B – Scarlow St, Office Buildings
 Site C – Montgomery's Bar Premises
 Site D – Star Hotel
 Site E – BT Telephone Exchange



PROJECT 9 – New Joint Services Centre
 The Council as part of its Asset Management Plan(AMP) agreed that 2 joint service centres be developed, one in Gourrock and one in Port Glasgow. RI and Council Officers area currently assessing the availability and suitability of properties to accommodate such a facility. Discussions are ongoing with a number of owners and a further report will be brought forward to Members at a later date.



CORONATION PARK



PRINCES STREET CAR PARK