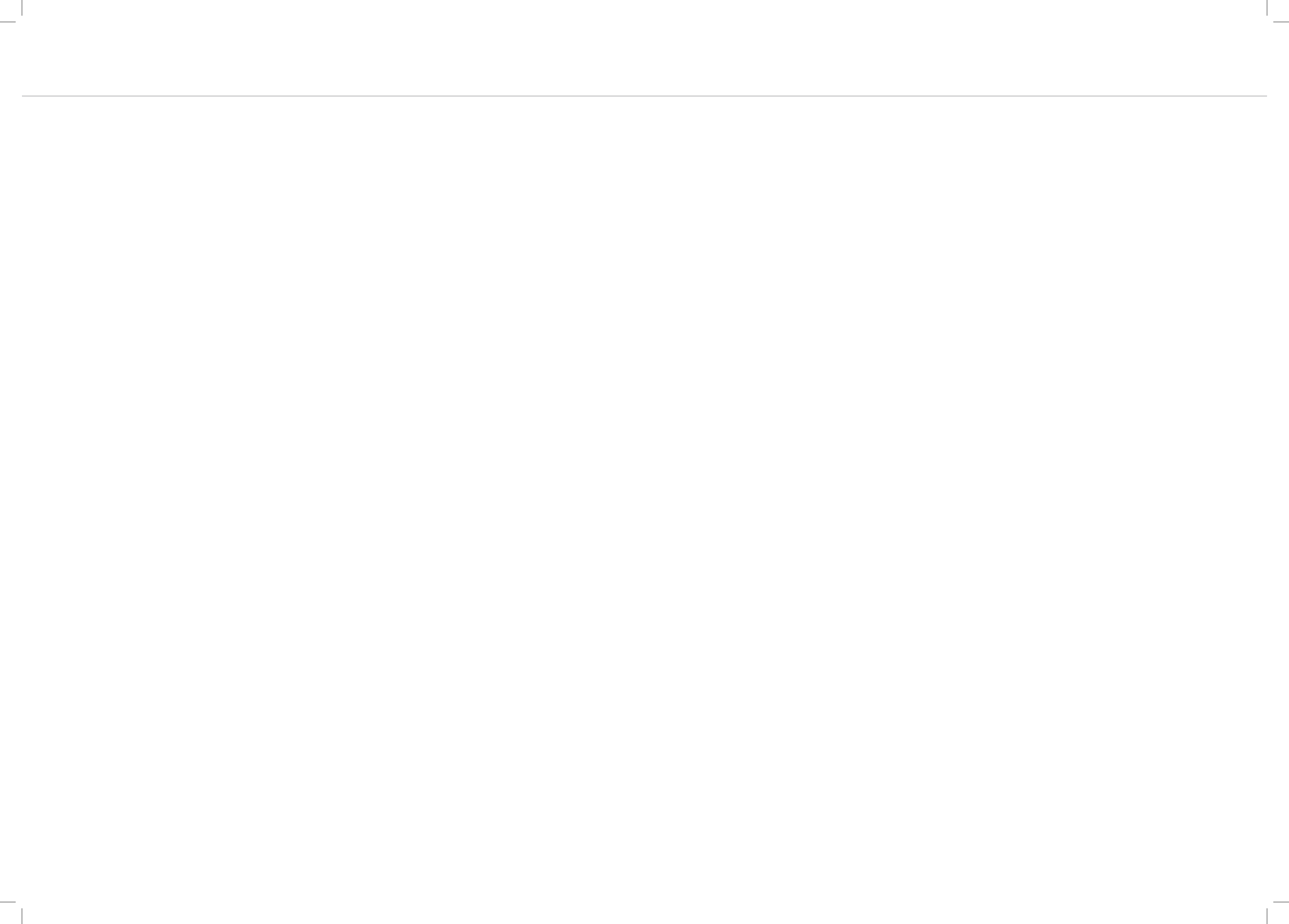


Helensburgh Pierhead
Masterplan Addendum
May 2012

Gareth Hoskins Architects



1. Executive Summary	5
2. Introduction	7
2.1 Key Principles of the approved Masterplan (2009)	9
3. Update on Current Situation	11
3.1 Current Site Uses	12
3.2 Condition of Existing Pool Building	12
3.3 Flood Risk Assessment	12
3.4 Helensburgh CHORD Project	13
3.5 Outline Business Case, Site Selection and Design of new swimming pool & leisure building to RIBA stage C	13
3.6 Retail Study Update	14
3.8 Public Consultation Process and Response	15
4. Proposals	17
4.1 Key Elements and Principles of the Masterplan	18
4.2 Masterplan proposal	20
4.3 Phasing	21
4.4 Example and Precedents	22
4.5 Strategic vision for regeneration of the town as a whole	24
4.6 Summary of proposals and aspirations	25

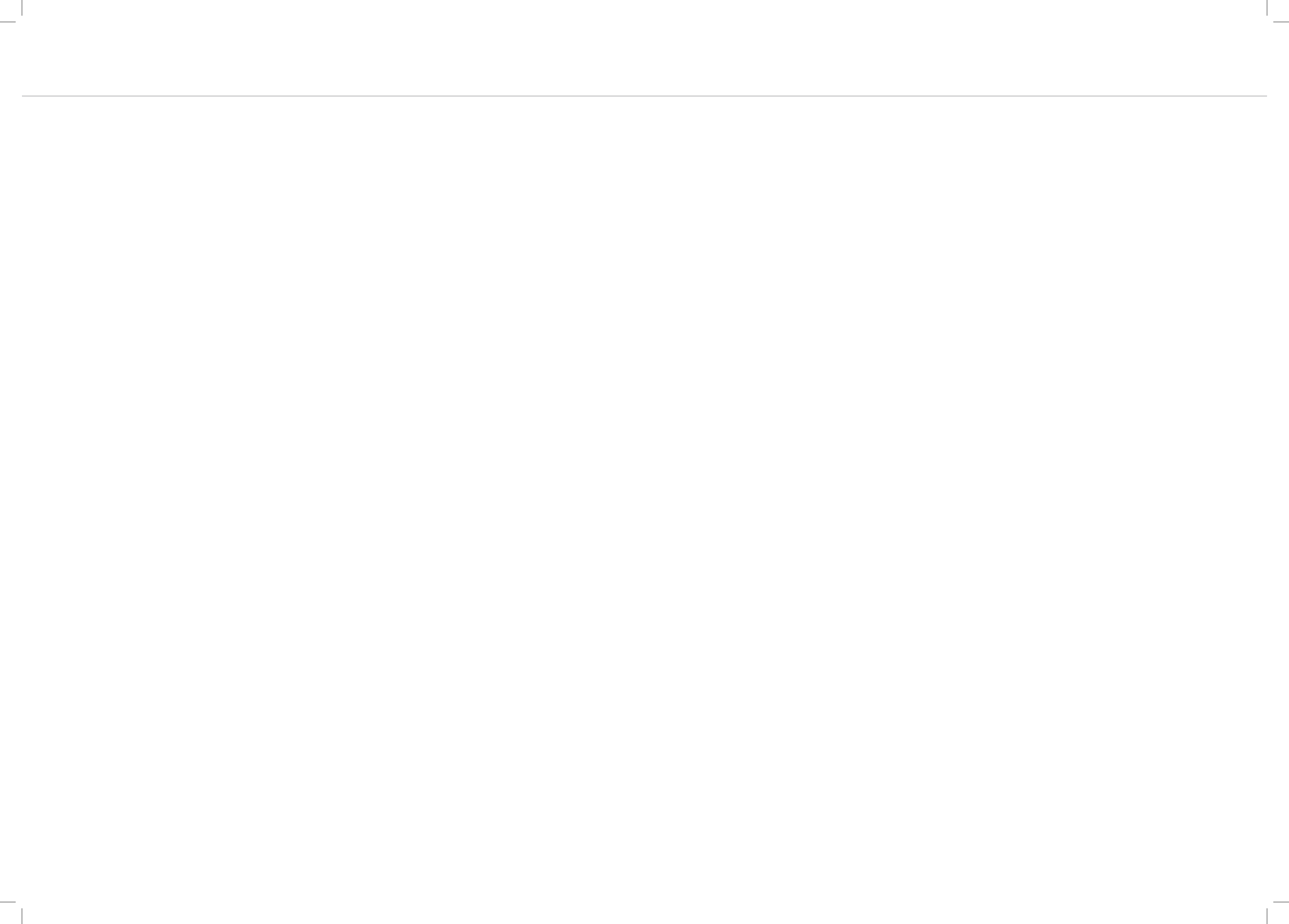


With the Pierhead recognised as the most important development site in the town centre of Helensburgh Argyll & Bute Council have identified the need to look in detail at the best way of developing this key site. A masterplan for the Pierhead was completed in 2009 by Turley Associates and was approved as Supplementary Planning Guidance. However economic conditions have changed and the Council considers there is a need to update the 2009 Masterplan, taking into consideration current market conditions and recent studies.

In parallel the Council has looked at the development of the former Hermitage Academy site and considered how both sites can be best utilised to meet the needs of the town.

In November 2011 the Council commissioned Gareth Hoskins Architects to produce Masterplans Addendums for both sites, with the first stage in this process being to publish draft proposals for public consultation. Following the public consultation these were amended taking into account feedback from the consultation process.

This document is the new Masterplan Addendum for the Pierhead and should be read in conjunction with the 2009 Masterplan Document which contains essential background information, site analysis, and reports on the stakeholder & community consultation carried out in 2009.



1. Executive Summary	5
2. Introduction	7
2.1 Key Principles of the approved Masterplan (2009)	9
3. Update on Current Situation	11
3.1 Current Site Uses	12
3.2 Condition of Existing Pool Building	12
3.3 Flood Risk Assessment	12
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3.6 Retail Study Update	14
3.8 Public Consultation Process and Response	15
4. Proposals	17
4.1 Key Elements and Principles of the Masterplan	18
4.2 Masterplan proposal	20
4.3 Phasing	21
4.4 Example and Precedents	22
4.5 Strategic vision for regeneration of the town as a whole	24
4.6 Summary of proposals and aspirations	25

2. Introduction

In 2000-2002 a planning application for a Safeway store on the Pierhead attracted a large number of objections on issues including loss of public amenity, inappropriate development on the waterfront site, loss of parking, flooding, traffic impact and possible closure of existing shops. When the application went to public inquiry the reporter's findings made clear that these issues were not the basis for rejecting the application, and the application was rejected due to inappropriate scale, design and materials out of character with the town.

In his report the reporter recognised the importance of the site, the importance of high quality design and, given its current condition, the need for redevelopment:

"Given its size, its waterfront location alongside and at the intersection of main roads in the centre of the town, its function, and its visual prominence, I find in visual terms that the pierhead is potentially the most important location in the whole of Helensburgh. The poor aesthetic appearance, lack of co-ordination of the existing buildings, vulnerability of the car park to flooding and overall low townscape quality combine to render the pierhead a suitable candidate for redevelopment. However I find it vitally important that any development proposals must recognise the aforementioned attributes, and the fact that they also produce constraints in terms of the quality of design and appearance, scale and layout of new buildings. Appropriate redevelopment has the potential to make a major contribution to the ambience of this vitally important part of Helensburgh."

Further to the reporter's findings Argyll and Bute Council commissioned a Town Centre and Waterfront Study (Yellow Book 2004). In 2009 the findings of the Public Local Inquiry (PLI) into the Local Plan resulted in the approval of a revised Development Plan with the Pierhead designated as a town centre site. A masterplan for the Pierhead was completed by Turley Associates later in 2009 and was approved as non-statutory supplementary planning guidance.

This document is an addendum to the 2009 Pierhead Masterplan, the purpose of which is:

1. To put an emphasis on deliverability in the current economic climate
2. To take into consideration information from studies and consultations carried out since 2009

The 2009 Masterplan included a large number of residential units in line with assessed demand and anticipated sales value at that time. More recent studies by Graham and Sibbald (Dec 2009) and an updated Retail Study by Colliers (October 2011) have shown that whilst there has been a downturn in the residential market, the demand for retail in the town has remained strong with the capacity for food retail increasing by 44% since 2007. As part of this process to update the masterplan GVA Grimmley carried out research into the requirements of key food retail operators in order to produce a realistic and robust basis for the masterplan informed by current market demand.

Since 2009 the following studies and projects have also been carried out :

1. Outline Business case for Swimming Pool and Leisure Facility 2009
2. Outline design (RIBA stage C) for the Swimming Pool and Leisure Facility 2010
3. Assessment of flood risk and sea defences 2008 & 2011
4. CHORD project town centre improvements (on site 2012-2013)
5. Town parking, park & ride & coach parking study (Dec 2011 - Feb 2012)

The proposals in this document have taken into consideration feedback from two community focus groups (Nov-Dec 2011), and a wider consultation process carried out Dec 2011 - Jan 2012.

It should be emphasized that this document should be read in conjunction with the 2009 Masterplan Document which contains essential background information, site analysis, and reports on stakeholder & community consultation. The 2009 Masterplan identified the Pierhead as the key development site in the town and the aspirations set out in the Masterplan for high quality design and placemaking remain key to the success of the development and regeneration of the town as a whole.

Gareth Hoskins Architects, April 2012



2.1 Key Principles of the approved Masterplan (2009)

The development on the Pierhead should be mixed use :

- 3Rs Recreation, Residential and Retail
- public realm allowing access to the waterfront and Pier
- a single retail operator not considered appropriate at this time
- pierhead identified as preferred site for a replacement swimming pool

Importance of Excellence in Design

- very prominent, waterfront site at town centre
- key to regeneration and attracting tourism to the town

Importance of Flexibility

- to allow for changing demands and requirements

Other recommendations of the approved Masterplan (2009)

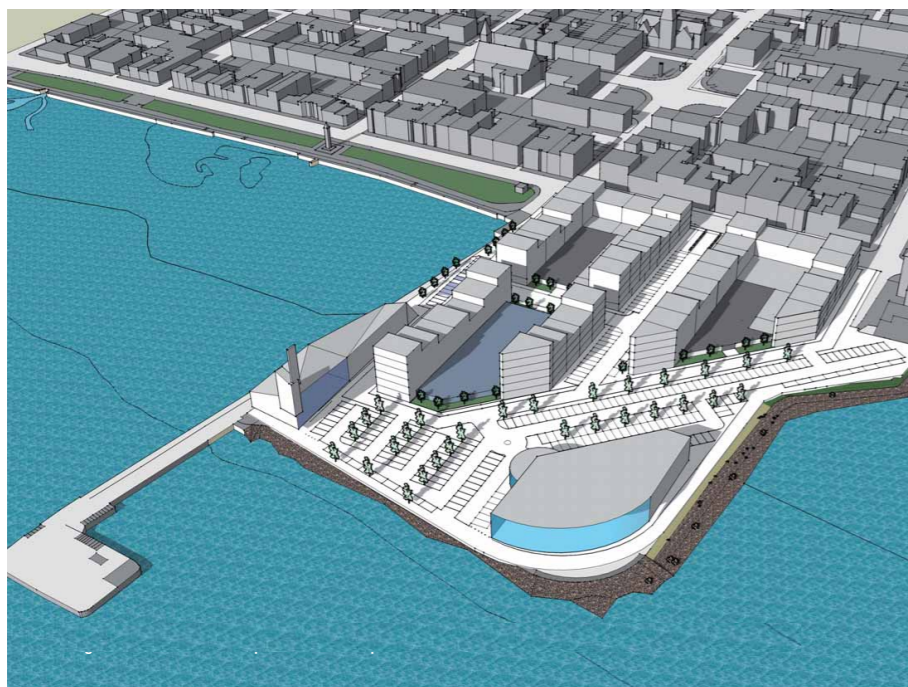
Local Plan : Town Centre Designation

- any development should be considered as an extension of the town centre

Parking

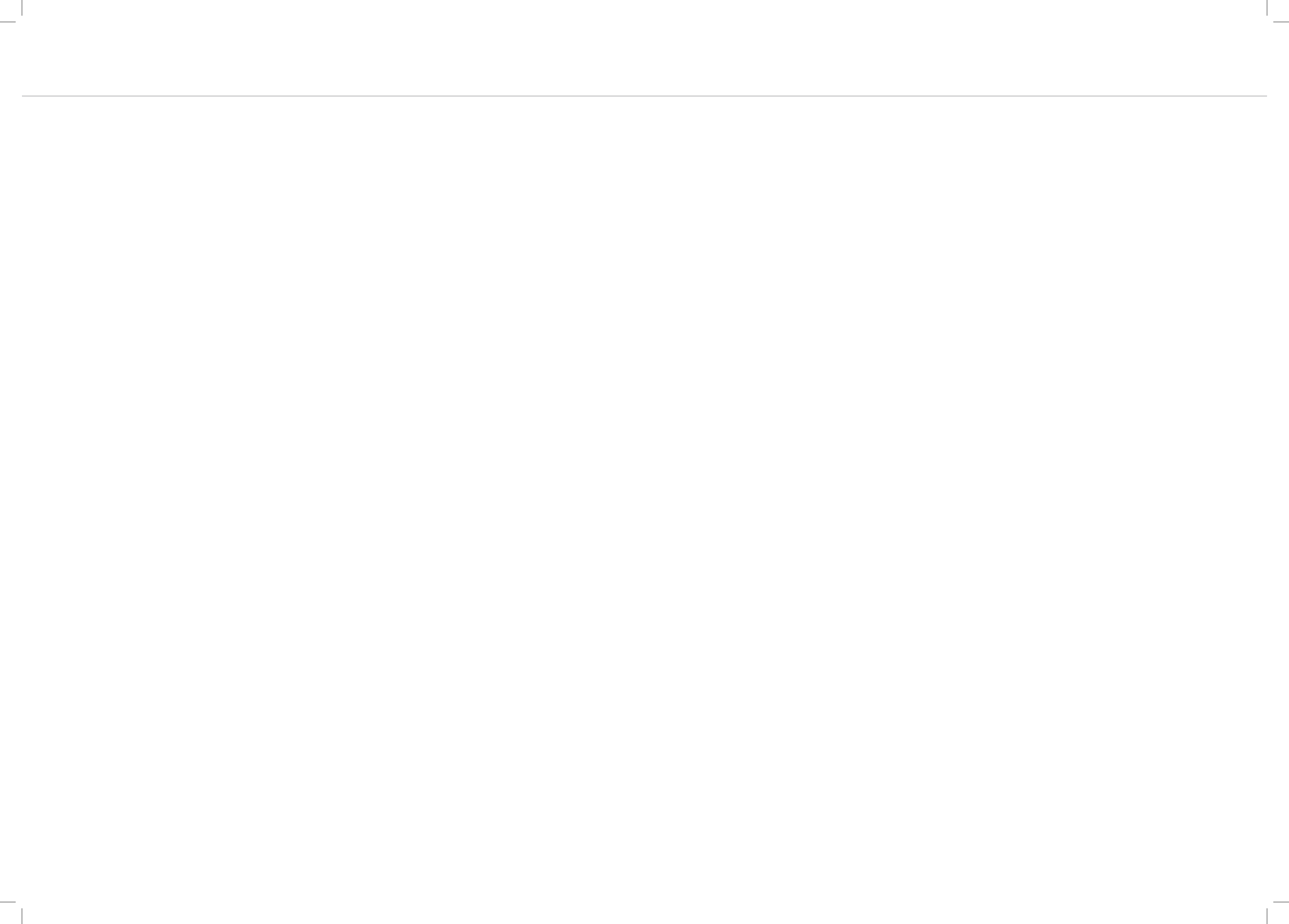
- parking provision should be made on the Pierhead for the proposed uses on the site
- general town parking, commuter parking and coach parking should be located elsewhere in the town.

Birde eye view of 2009 Masterplan



The 2009 masterplan proposed the following elements:

- A total of 7158m² ground floor retail space with the units sized between 250-450m² and one larger 1600m² unit for high quality food retail.
- High density housing with 138 apartments of 80-100m².
- Car parking for the uses on the site - surface parking (267 spaces), undercroft parking (75 spaces) and underground parking (480 spaces)
- A replacement swimming pool
- A boutique hotel



1. Executive Summary	5
2. Introduction	7
2.1 Key Principles of the approved Masterplan (2009)	9
3. Update on Current Situation	11
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3.6 Retail Study Update	14
3.8 Public Consultation Process and Response	15
4. Proposals	17
4.1 Key Elements and Principles of the Masterplan	18
4.2 Masterplan proposal	20
4.3 Phasing	21
4.4 Example and Precedents	22
4.5 Strategic vision for regeneration of the town as a whole	24
4.6 Summary of proposals and aspirations	25

3. Update on Current Situation (May 2012)

3.1 Current Site Uses

Little has changed on the Pierhead since 2009 with the majority site occupied by an expanse of surface car and coach parking alongside the swimming pool, skate park and amusement park. The former public house in the north east corner has been burnt down and the site sold. The Amusement Park is leased on an annual basis. With recent storm damage to the pool building and further deterioration of the hard landscaping the need for development and upgrading of the site as a whole is clear.

NB Although the former Mariners public house site (outlined in yellow) is not currently within Council ownership it is considered part of the Pierhead and is included in the overall masterplan. Consideration has been given to how the Pierhead could be developed excluding this relatively small site.

3.2 Condition of Existing Pool Building

In 2008 a number of specialist surveys were carried out which identified significant problems with the existing building including degradation of major structural elements and air handling plant, and as a result the building was judged to all purposes "life expired".

Essential repairs were carried out in 2010 to allow the building to remain operational for an estimated 4-7 years, with the aim of providing a new, replacement building within this extended lifespan.

3.3 Flood Risk Assessment

Preliminary ground investigations were carried out in 2010 and flood risk assessments carried out in 2008 and 2011. Following the recommendation of these reports the following work has been recommended as necessary to alleviate flood risk:

- raising the whole site by an average of approximately 1.5m to be level with West Clyde Street
- replacing failed Reno matting on east side of the site with rock armour

3.1 Current site uses



3.2 Existing pool building from the east



3.2 Existing pool building from the West Clyde Street



3.3 Pierhead during storm



3.4 CHORD project Colquhoun Square



3.4 CHORD project West Esplanade



3.4 Helensburgh CHORD Project

Improvements to the West Esplanade and the town centre are to be implemented in 2012 and include re-landscaping Colquhoun Square (Design subject to referendum result) and improving the connection between the square and the waterfront.

Repair of the existing public toilets at the start of the pier is to be included in the CHORD project to allow them to remain in use. The toilet building blocks the start of the pier and is unsightly, so it is assumed that it would be removed as part of the wider Pierhead site development and public toilets provided elsewhere on the site.

3.5 Outline Business Case, Site Selection and Design of new swimming pool & leisure building to RIBA stage C

An Outline Business Case carried out in 2008 identified the Pierhead as the preferred location for a replacement pool/leisure building. The report also identified a preferred option to accommodate a wider range of facilities in the building to create a “community hub”

3.5 Outline design for new pool & leisure building



3.5 Outline design for new pool & leisure building



In 2010 it was determined that the design should be developed to improve the certainty of the assumptions regarding the project and to facilitate the next stage of procurement, whether taken forward as a traditionally funded project led by the Council or as a joint venture developer led project as part of a wider pier development. Gareth Hoskins Architects were commissioned to carry out an outline design for the building to RIBA stage C. The distinctive design proposes a landmark building on the southern edge of the site taking advantage of the waterfront location. Placing the building on this location allowed the remainder of the site adjacent the town centre to be considered for other development. The main implications of the stage C for the masterplanning of the Pierhead site as a whole are as follows:

- the footprint of the new leisure building is significantly larger than shown in the 2009 masterplan
- given the town centre location the number of designated parking spaces for the leisure/pool building was reduced from 150 to 100 spaces

3. Update on Current Situation

3.6 Retail Study Update

The key findings of the Colliers 2011 study relevant to the masterplanning of the Pierhead are as follows:

- there is capacity in the town for an area of 2150 sq m (23,150 sqft) net of new convenience retail space
- there is capacity in the town for an area of 5,130 sq m net (55,200 sqft) of new comparison retail space
- opportunities for modern retail space in the town centre are limited and the Pierhead remains the major development site
- currently there is 50% leakage to surrounding towns for convenience shopping
- currently there is 76% leakage to surrounding towns for comparison shopping

The retail study identified capacity in the town for a significant areas of both food and non-food retail space. GVA undertook further research into market demand with the following findings:

- all of the major supermarket operators approached were interested in investing in the town
- although the Pierhead site presented challenges not found on an out of town site, most of the operators felt the site could meet their needs and be successfully be developed for food retail
- there was interest from operators in both medium and large foodstores
- operators recognised the need to take into consideration the design of the site as a whole and the need for integration with other uses on the site.
- the inclusion of food retail in the development had the potential to maximise revenue and increase economic viability

capacity identified by the retail study

food
2150 sqm
23,150 sqft

non-food
5,130 sqm
55,200 sqft

Small / Metro

food

net total 10,000 sqft
gross total 15,000sqft
parking 70 - 100

Medium

food
20,000 sqft
non-food
5,000 sqft
back of house
10,000 sqft

net total 25,000 sqft
gross total 35,000 sqft
parking 163 - 232

Large food

23,000 sqft
non food
7,000 sqft
back of house
24,000 sqft

net total 30,000 sqft
gross total 54,000 sqft
parking 250 - 357

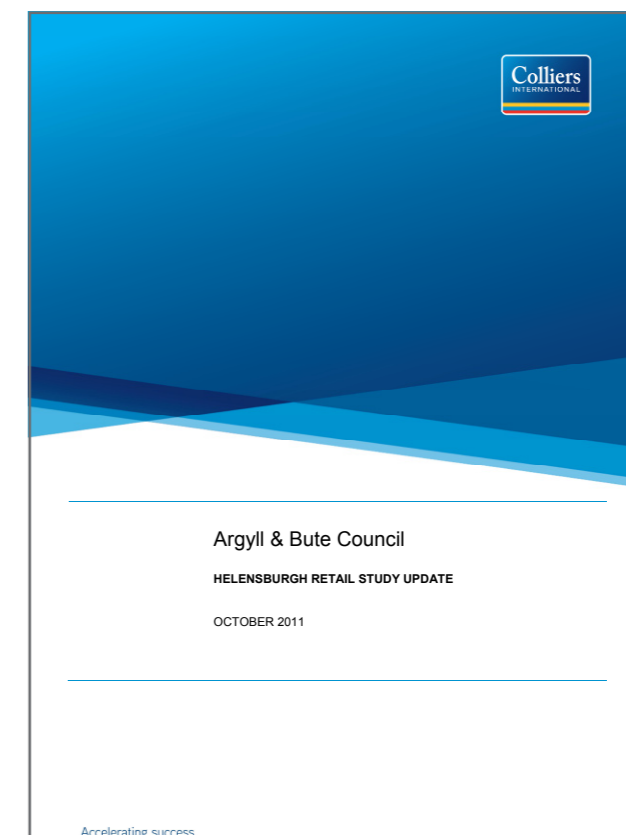
Superstore

food
non food
25,000 sqft
back of house
40,000 sqft

net total 60,000 sqft
gross total 100,000 sqft
parking 465 - 664

within capacity

exceeds capacity



3.8 Public Consultation Process and Response

Masterplan Consultation Proposals

The proposals which formed the basis of the public consultation included the following:

1. Mixed use development including food retail of 54,000sqft, other retail of 1100m2, and 16 housing units.

The development presents an active frontage onto West Clyde Street and aims to reflect the scale of the urban fabric of the existing town centre.

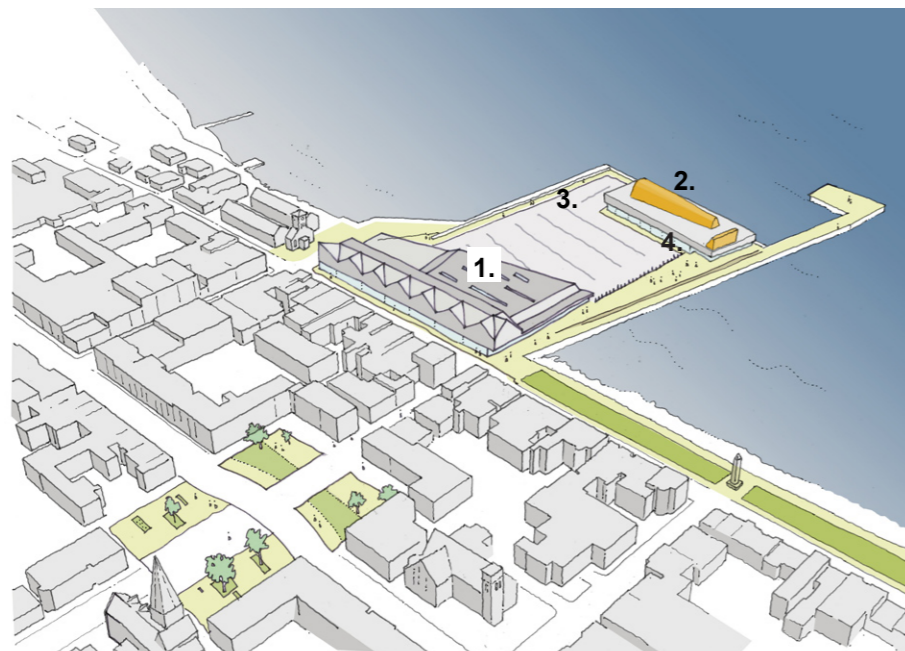
2. Pool and Leisure building

Landmark building acting as a focus and destination, distinct from the background urban fabric of the town

3. Parking for the food retail and pool/leisure building

4. Public realm.

Public space in front of the new pool building, with a public route continuing around the pierhead.



Masterplan Consultation Proposals

The proposals presented for public consultation were developed on the following principles:

- economic viability maximised by the inclusion of a large supermarket
- mixed use development and including, housing, public realm and public recreation (housing numbers reduced significantly from 2009 masterplan taking into consideration economic climate)
- parking should be provided for the proposed uses on the site with general town parking, commuter parking and coach parking located elsewhere in the town.

Public Consultation Process

The masterplanning process included a period of public consultation Dec 2011-Jan 2012, with a range of events, meetings and advertisements to inform people of the proposals and invite feedback.

- The consultation was advertised in the Helensburgh Advertiser, the local community newsletter and on the Council's web site.
- Paper copies of the Masterplans were deposited in Scotcourt House and the Helensburgh, Rosneath and Cardross libraries.
- A copy of the Masterplans and online survey were placed on the Council's web site.
- Two open days that were held in the Victoria Halls, Helensburgh with an exhibition and questionnaire/survey. During the open days presentations were also given to specific interest groups (i.e. business community, community groups, users of the existing pool, young people etc.).
- Hexagon Consultants conducted face to face interviews with 371 local people from a wide age profile.

A total of approximately 1200 responses were received.

Response from Public Consultation

A full report on the consultation responses can be found on the Council website with the main points as follows:

Pool / Leisure Building

The majority of people felt it was important that the new pool/leisure facility be located on the Pierhead and that a new recreational building would provide a focus and destination for both residents and visitors. If possible the new pool should be built whilst the existing pool remains in operation.

Large Supermarket

The majority of people (55%) did not feel it would be appropriate to locate a large supermarket (54,000 sqft) on the Pierhead for the following reasons:

- detrimental visual impact
- loss of public recreational space
- loss of public parking
- loss of coach drop off on waterfront
- increased congestion

The need for a large supermarket and additional petrol filling station in the town was evident, reflecting the findings of the retail study, but people considered the Waitrose proposals on the edge of town offered a preferable solution

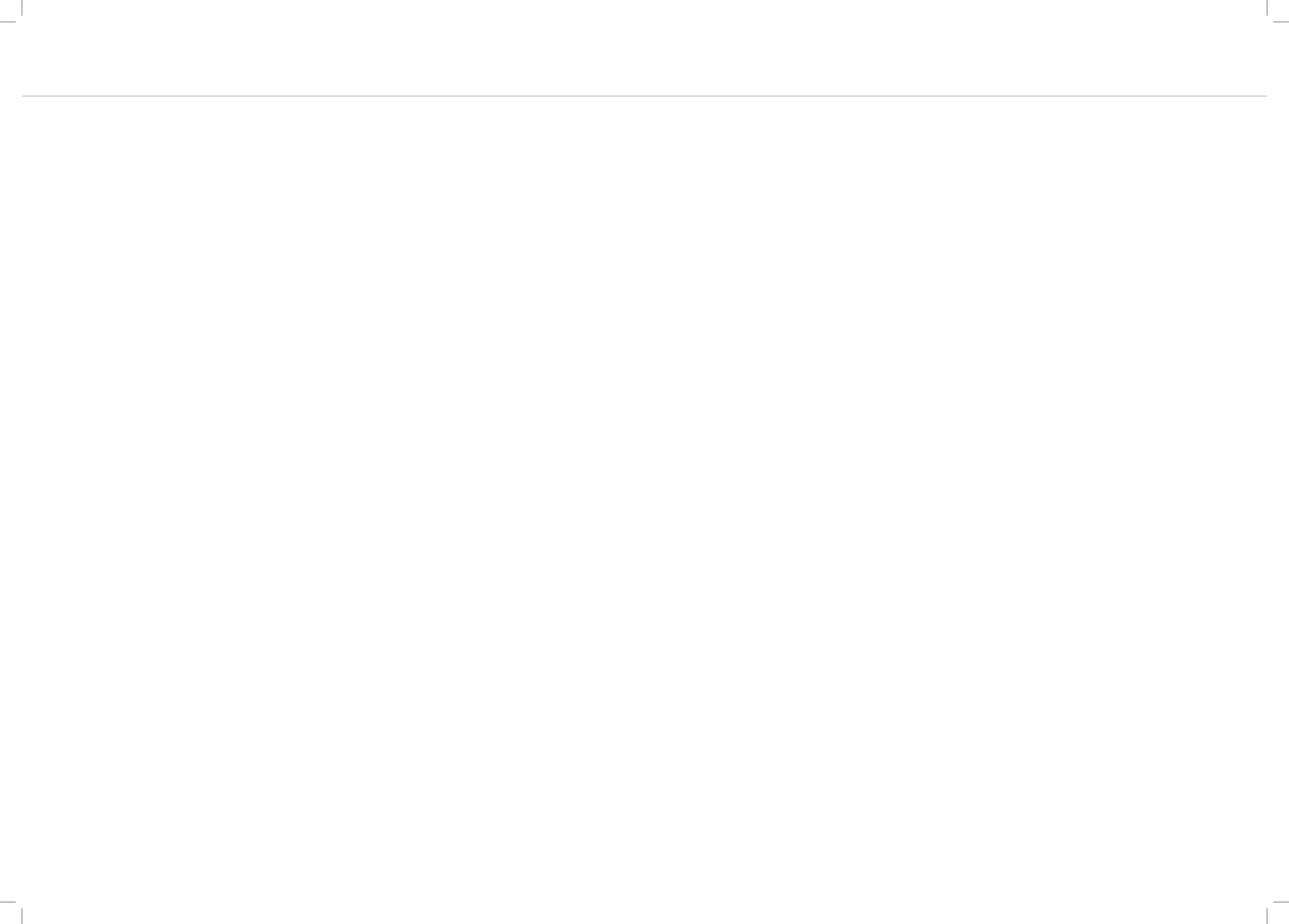
Residential

The majority of people (55%) did not think residential development appropriate on the Pierhead for the following reasons:

- 3-4 stories along West Clyde Street restricted open views across the waterfront
- parking issues
- housing did not fit comfortably above large retail unit

Public Realm, parking and coach drop off

- concern that the town centre would suffer from loss of convenient parking
- it was felt coach drop off should be central to waterfront and the town centre with the Pierhead the preferred location
- concern about loss of public realm and open views across waterfront



1. Executive Summary	5
2. Introduction	7
2.1 Key Principles of the approved Masterplan (2009)	9
3. Update on Current Situation	11
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3.5 Outline Business Case, Site Selection and Design of new swimming pool & leisure building to RIBA stage C	13
3.6 Retail Study Update	14
3.8 Public Consultation Process and Response	15
4. Proposals	17
4.1 Key Elements and Principles of the Masterplan	18
4.2 Masterplan proposal	20
4.3 Phasing	21
4.4 Example and Precedents	22
4.5 Strategic vision for regeneration of the town as a whole	24
4.6 Summary of proposals and aspirations	25

4. Proposals

4.1 Key Elements and Principles of the Masterplan

The proposals were developed taking into consideration the response from the public consultation, whilst keeping an emphasis on deliverability and market demand.

The proposals include the following elements:

Retail

Retail units forming an active frontage to West Clyde Street and the new public space with units relating in scale to the fabric of the town. Careful consideration should be given to the treatment of the back of house and the appearance from the car park and approach to the town from the east (and from the water)

New Pool and Leisure Building

A new landmark building on this highly visible site, acting as a community hub, attracting visitors and playing a role in the regeneration of the town centre. The facilities would include the wider community facilities identified in the 2009 Outline Business Case and developed in more detail in the stage C Design 2010.

Car parking

Car parking for the pool/leisure building and for general public use with a strong connection to the town centre and convenient to the waterfront. The viability of underground/undercroft carparking was researched, but proved prohibitively expensive.

Coach drop off and parking

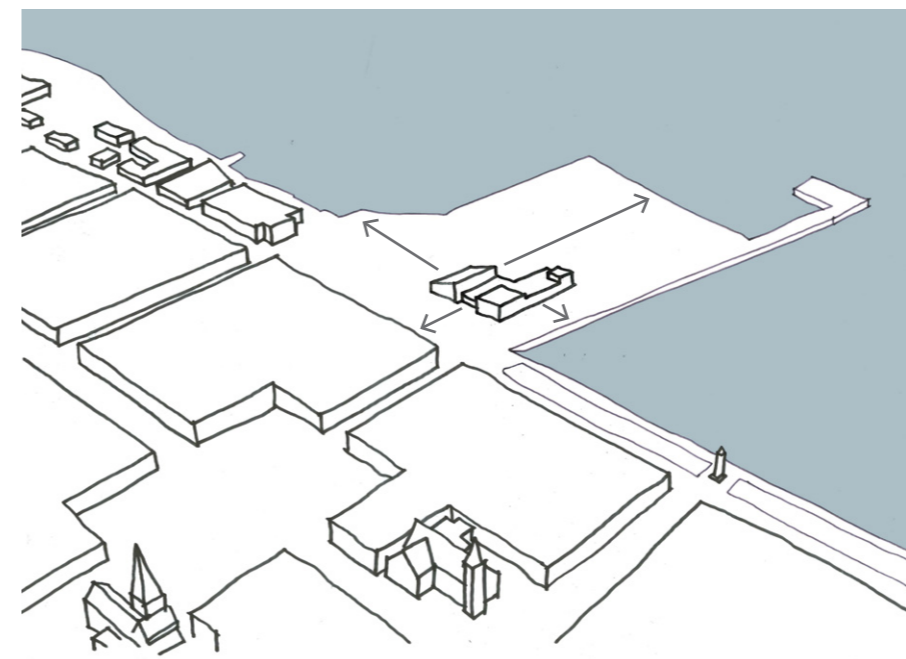
Coach drop off at the new public space on West Clyde Street, with parking provision on the pier.

Public Realm and open views

New high quality public outdoor space with a walkway continuous around the site. Open views across the waterfront maintained.

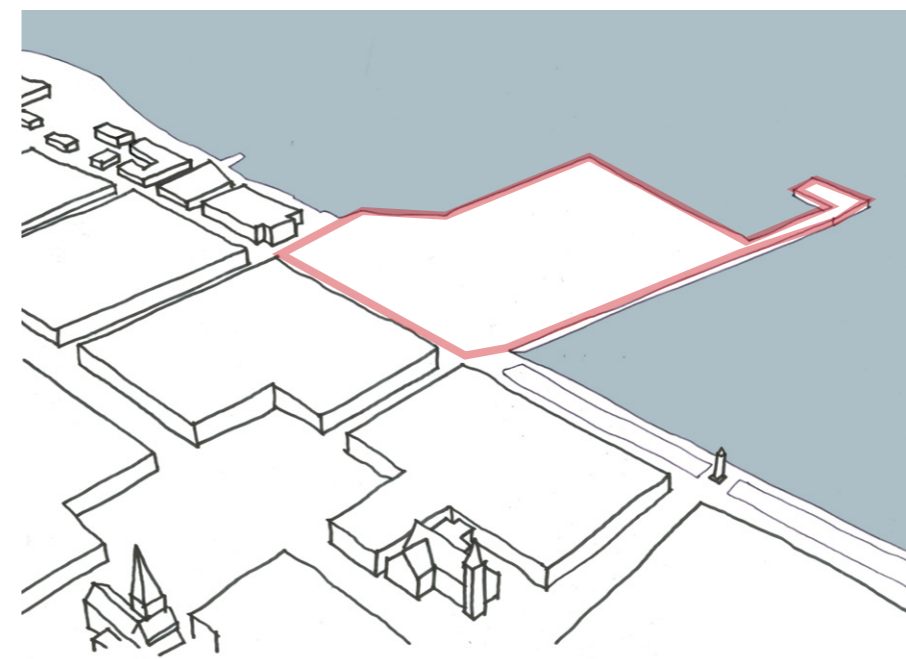
Flood Risk

The proposals allow for raising the entire site by approximately 1.5m and strengthening rock armour on the eastern site as recommended in the flood risk analysis.



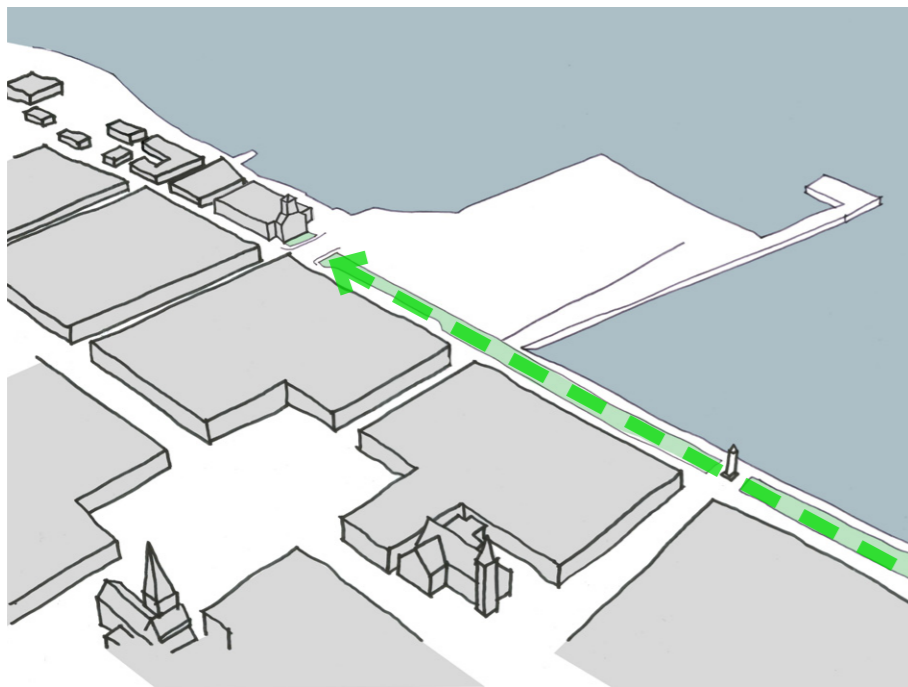
EXISTING

- current swimming pool on Pierhead in poor condition and nearing the end of its lifespan
- poor relationship to street, water and pier
- surrounded by underexploited and poor quality urban space



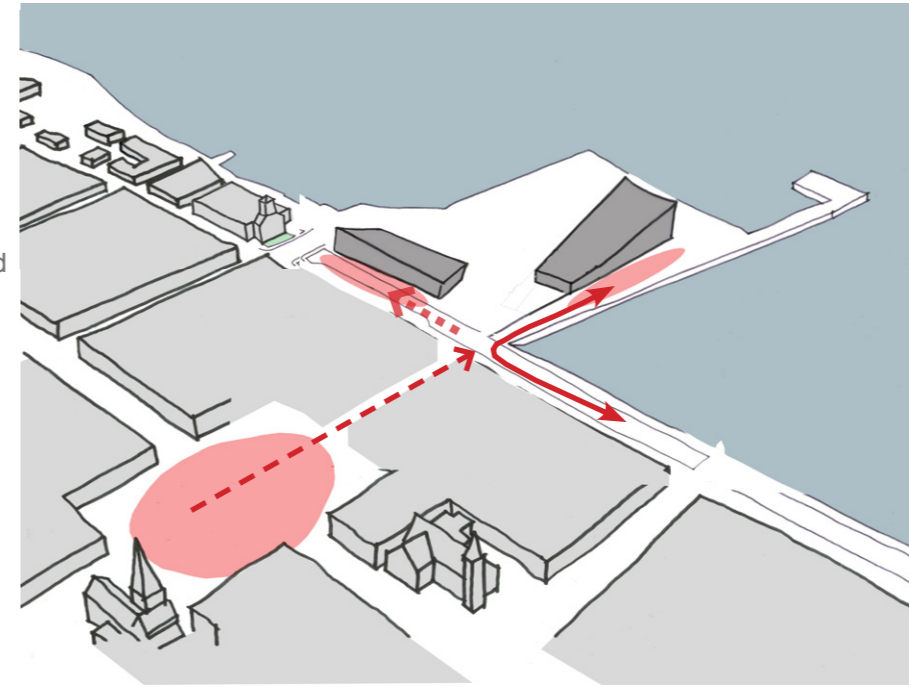
- extent of cleared site

NB Although the former Mariners public house site is not currently within Council ownership it is considered part of the Pierhead and is included in the overall masterplan. Consideration has been given to how the Pierhead could be developed excluding this relatively small site.



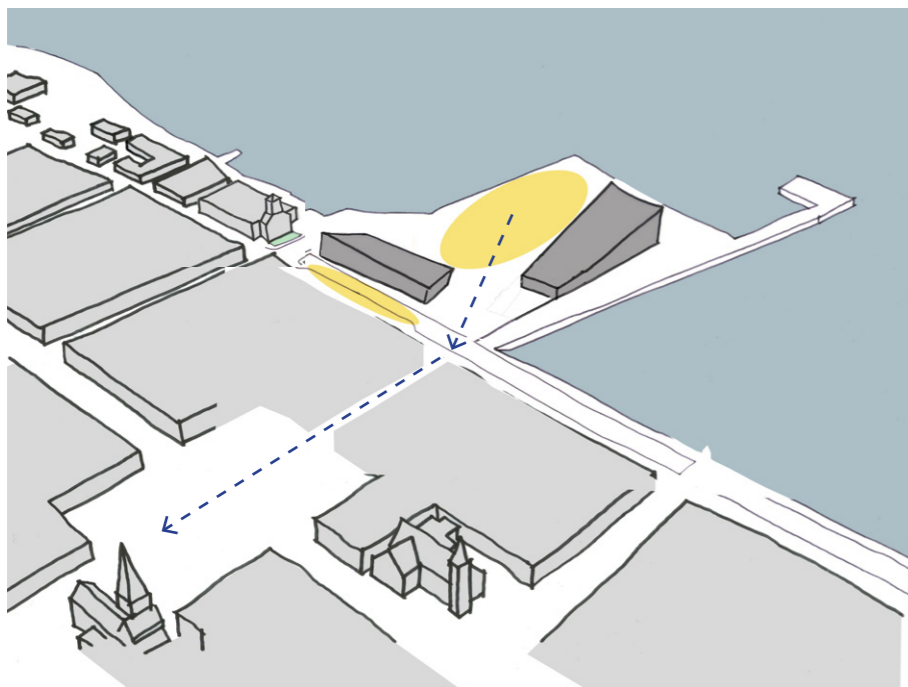
1

- extend length of esplanade eastwards, ending with tower of the tourist information
- CHORD development extended and concluded
- new open public space along sea front maintaining views



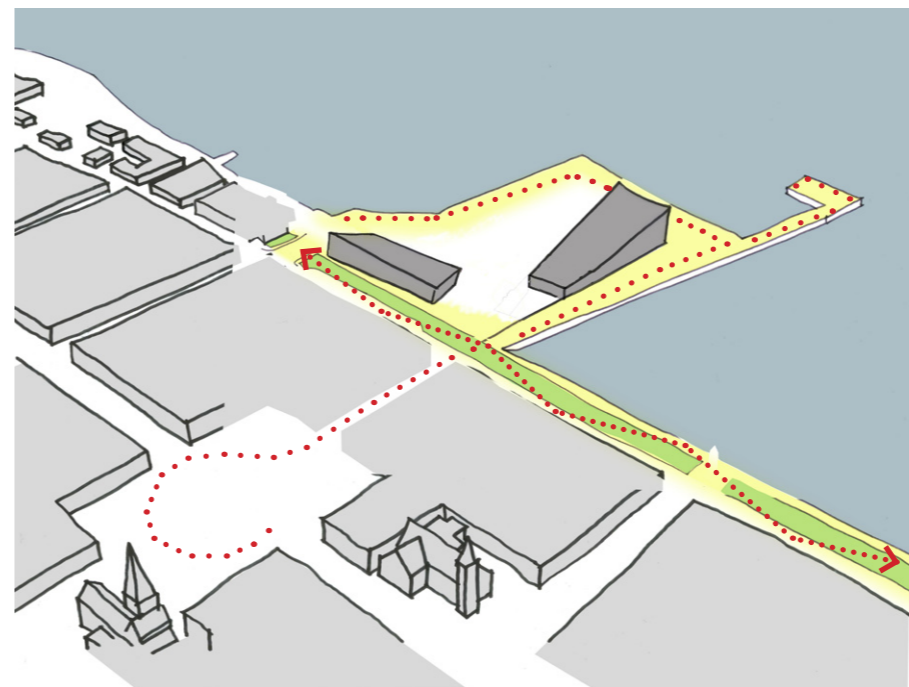
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- esplanade continued along pier to form a new public space in front of the new pool/leisure building
- axis from Colquhoun Square reinforced with clear sightlines down Colquhoun Street to the sea maintained
- retail/cafes opening onto the new public space along West Clyde Street



3

- car parking screened by the new buildings, but a good connection with the town centre is maintained
- coach and taxi drop off at the public space on West Clyde Street convenient for visitors both to the town centre and the waterfront



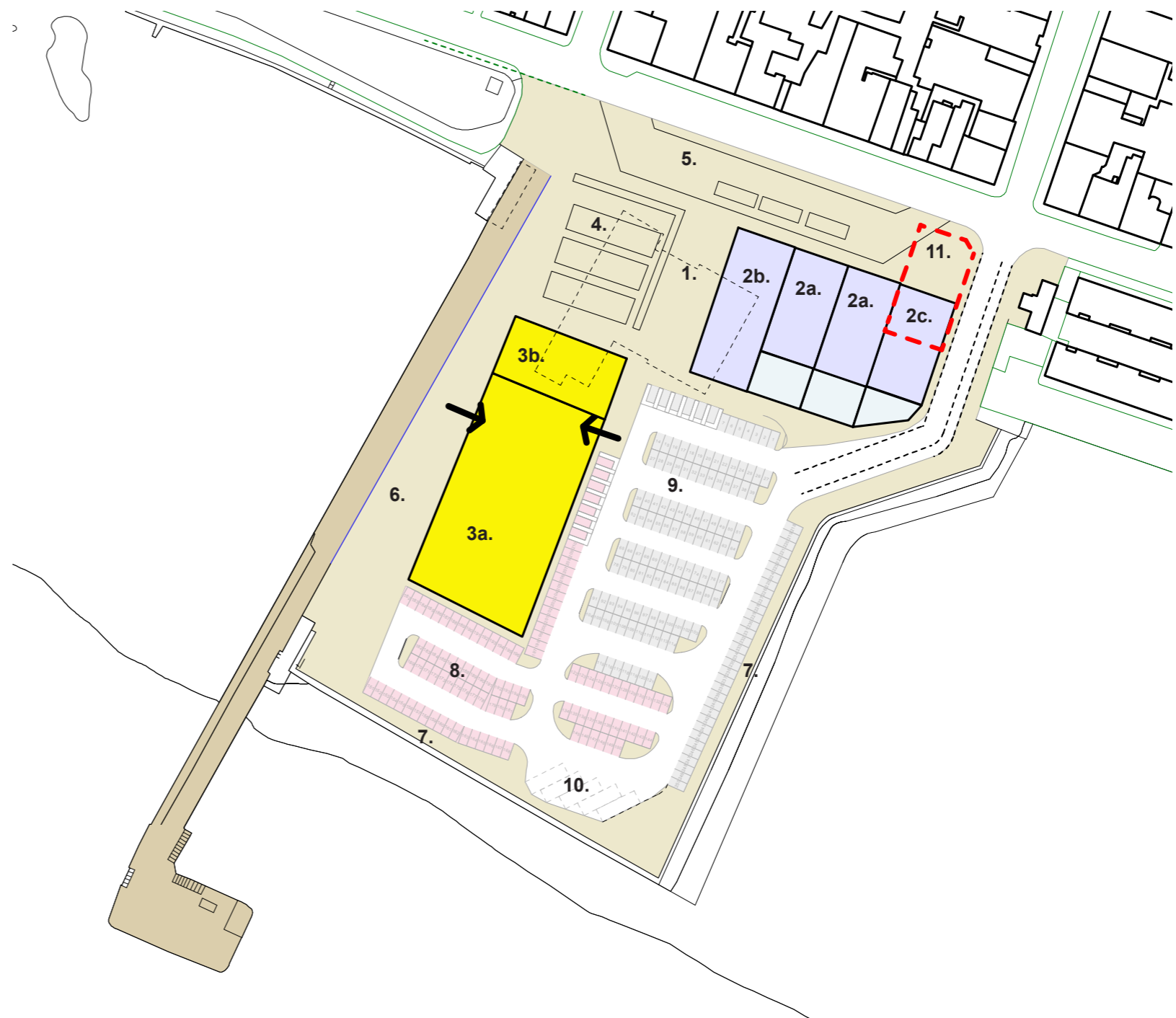
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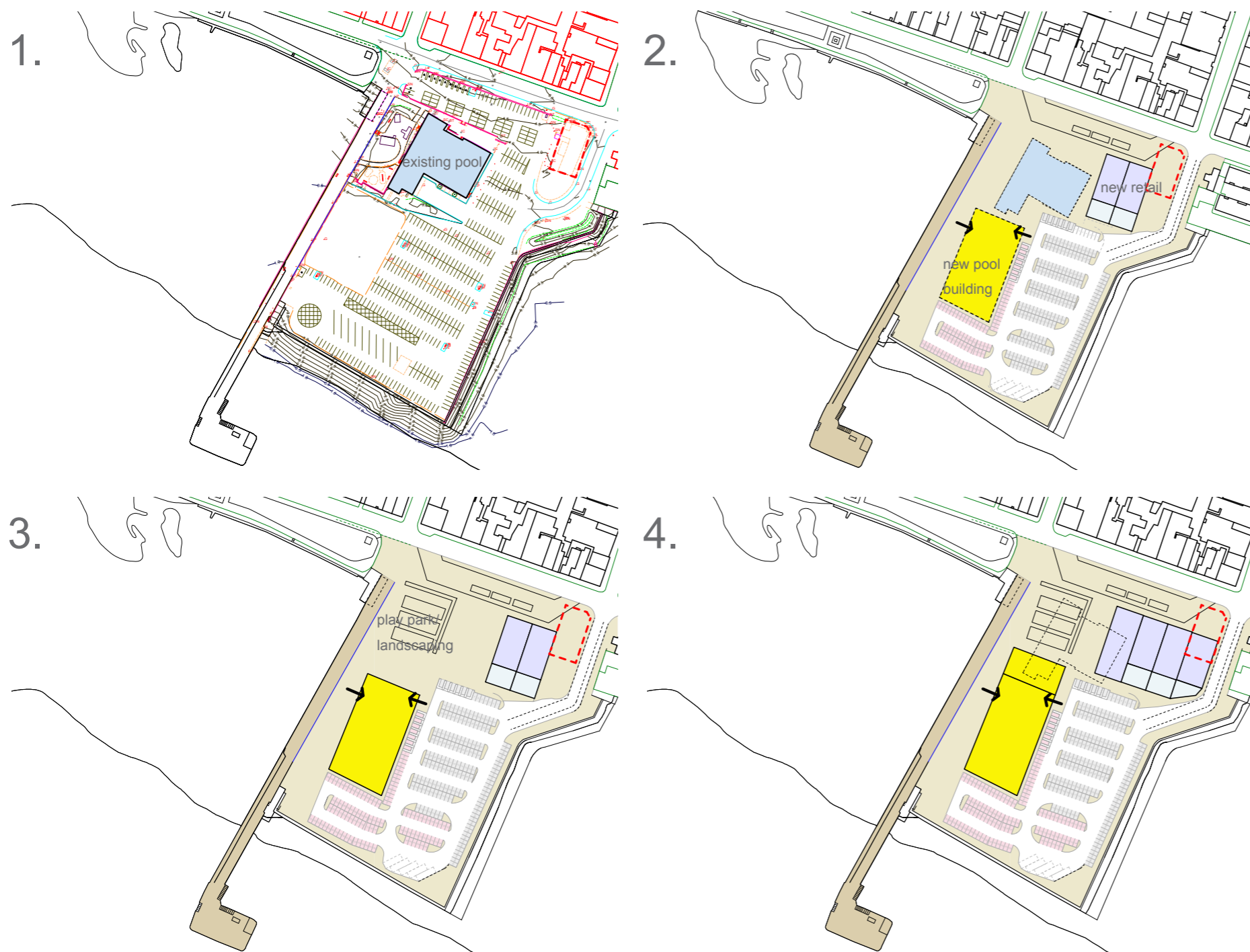
- Public access to the Pierhead and waterfront maintained with a public walkway around the site
- new public spaces formed by the the new buildings and connecting with the esplanade

4. Proposals

4.2 Masterplan proposal

1. Foot print of existing pool
- 2a. Retail units (1325m2 gross)
- 2b. Additional retail once existing pool demolished (720m2 gross)
- 2c. Additional retail unit if Mariners site developed (620m2 gross)-
- 3a. Pool and Leisure building 2250m2 footprint (as stage c report)
- 3b. Possible extension to pool building 600m2
4. Landscaping / skate park / play park
5. Coach and taxi drop off
6. Public space in front of pool building.
7. Public walkway round site
8. Parking for pool 100 spaces (shaded pink)
9. General public parking (shaded grey) 165 spaces
10. Coach parking (short- mid term)
11. Mariner's site (dotted red)





4.3 Phasing

1. Site as existing
2. New pool and leisure building built.
Initial phase of new retail built.
Flood alleviation & defences (raising of site and repair to rock armour on eastern side) .
3. Existing Pool demolished.
New landscaping / skate / play park
Completion of flood alleviation (raising site)
4. Possible extension of pool/ leisure building
Possible extension to retail building utilising previous pool site
Possible extension of retail utilising mariners site.

4. Proposals

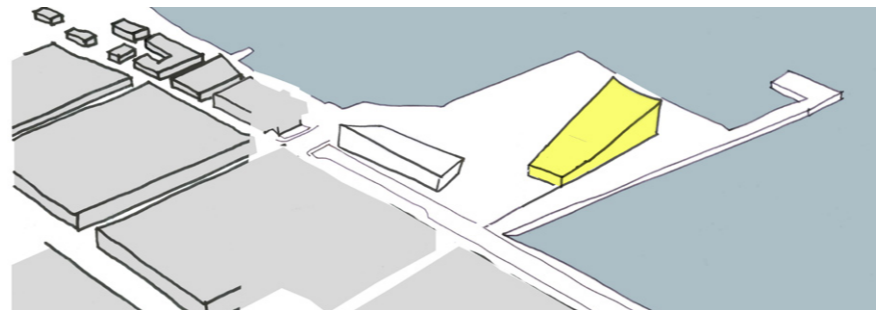
4.4 Example and Precedents

The following photographs showing examples and precedents of how the different elements proposed in the masterplan development could be realised :

- Landmark Building
- Public Space
- Car parking
- Appropriate retail / cafes
- Integrated building / public realm

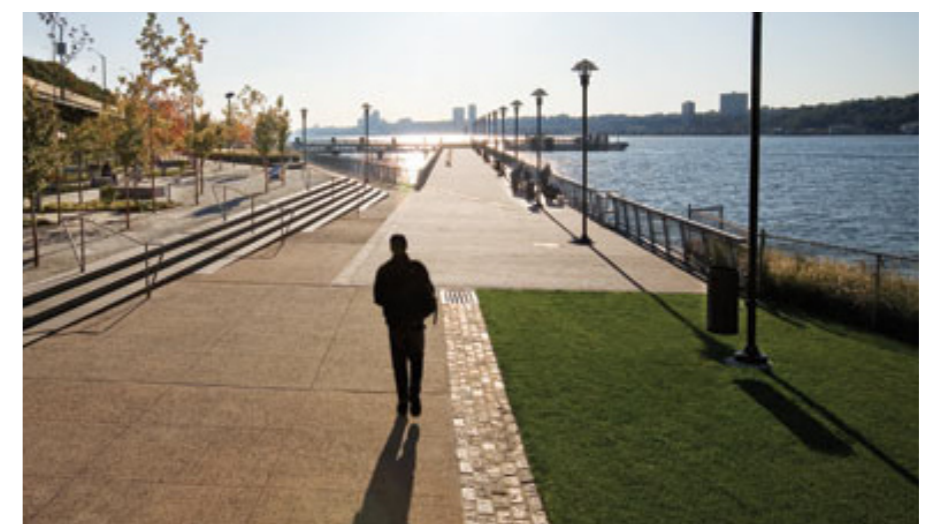
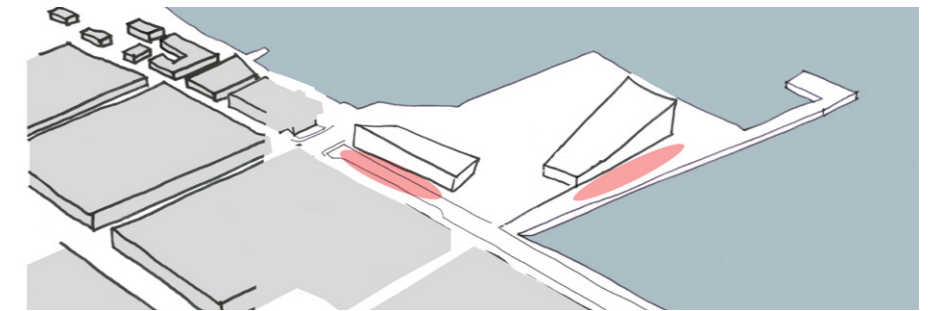
Landmark Building

Key landmark building on waterfront acting as focus and destination, distinct from background urban fabric of the town



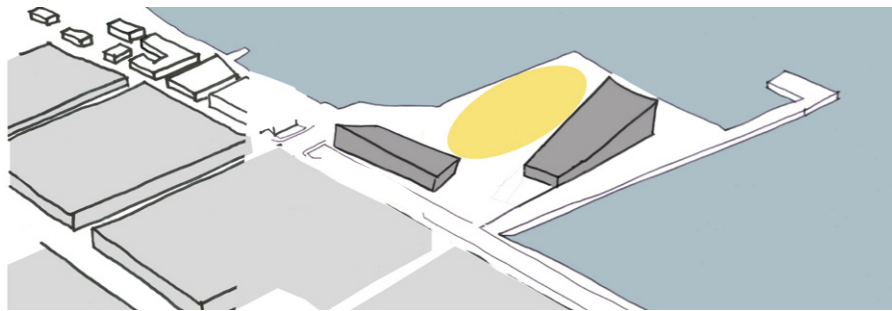
Public Space

High quality landscaping to public realm, appropriate to waterfront setting



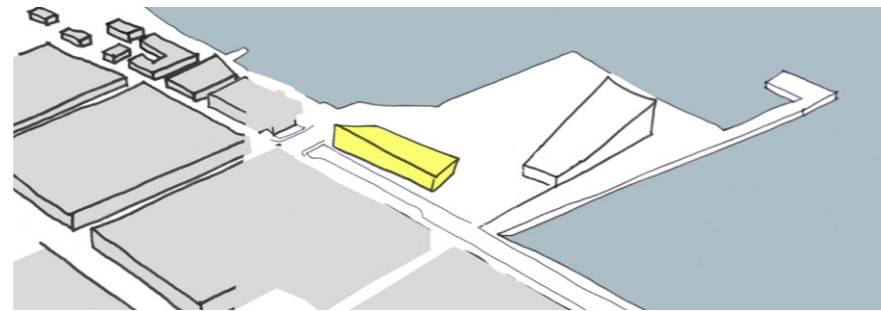
Car Park

High quality car park in terms of paving, street lighting, markings etc screened by low walls and/or planting appropriate to location. Separate and distinct from public space along pier



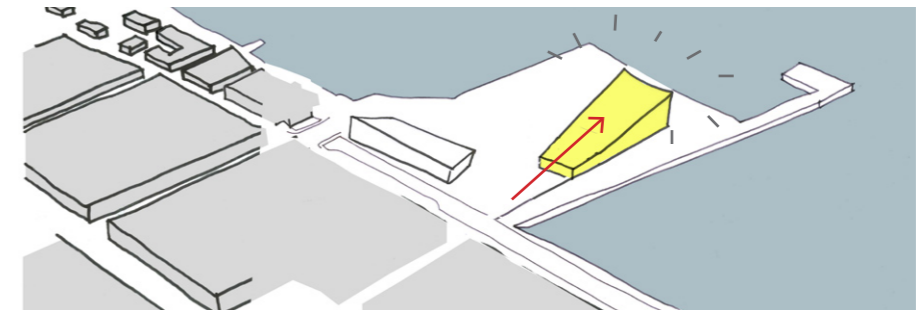
Appropriate retail

Retail development appropriate to waterfront setting and making the most of the location. Bringing street life and attracting visitors



Possible integration of landscape and built form

Utilising uniqueness of the waterfront location with the possibility the roof of the buildings become part of the public realm creating a unique attraction



4. Proposals

4.5 Strategic vision for regeneration of the town as a whole

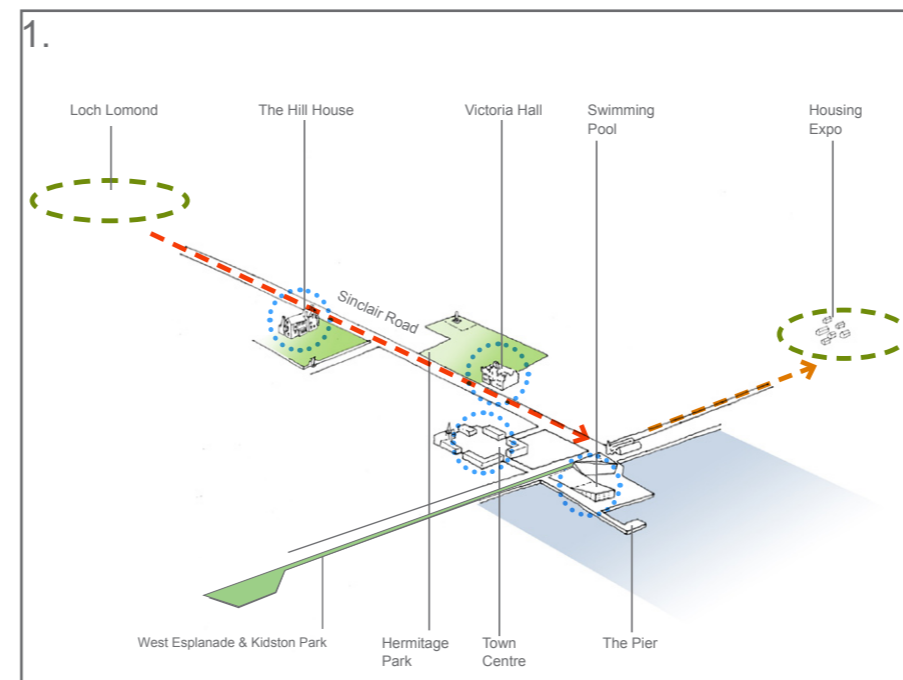
The redevelopment of the Pierhead should be considered within the context of a number of wider strategic improvements key to the regeneration of the town as a whole.

1. The core elements centre around the development of the central spine of Sinclair Street to create a draw pulls visitors from Hill House down towards Helensburgh's major asset, its waterfront.

2.. A transformed pierhead would become a destination in its own right completing the enhancements to the town centre.

3.. The west esplanade, redeveloped as part of the CHORD project, stretching out towards the new facilities at Kidston Park.

4.. The former Academy site redeveloped for housing centred on a community park. As an alternative to developer led housing there is the opportunity to instigate an 'Environmental Housing Expo' supported by the Scottish Government and focused on the realistic delivery of environmentally designed affordable family housing that continues Helensburgh's rich heritage as a place of high quality domestic architecture and creates a nationally publicised event and opportunity to both provide for a valuable need and increase the town's wider profile.





4.6 Summary of proposals and aspirations

1. Landmark pool and leisure building

A new pool and leisure facility acting as a focus for the community and a destination attracting visitors to the town.

2. Retail / Cafe

Development appropriate to the waterfront location, providing an active frontage onto the new public space on West Clyde Street, bringing vitality to the waterfront and contributing to economic viability

3. Public Realm

- High quality landscaped outdoor amenity space.
- Access to the pier and waterfront walkway around the site
- Reconfigured skate/play park and landscaping
- Open aspects and views enhanced

4. Parking and taxi / coach drop off

- Coach and taxi drop off in the new public space on West Clyde Street convenient to both the waterfront and the town centre.
- General public carparking screened by buildings, but convenient to both the waterfront and the town centre
- Flexibility of using parking area for larger public events