

Project 4. Oban South

Original Proposal - The Local Development Plan identifies an area which is being considered for master planning and development for primarily business and industrial use. The allowance within the TIF proposal is for the development of enabling road improvements and parking changes to regenerate large parts of the town centre. While no specific interventions are identified at this time, as the masterplan develops the specific priority investments and the appropriate use of TIF investment will be considered. The area included has historically seen development of various uses which now do not sit well together and there is an opportunity to re-organise and open up prime development sites close to the town centre and stimulate private sector investment.

Project total - £3m.

What Has Been Done - Analysis of the financial viability of the Lorn Arc TIF programme has been undertaken as demand for new business space has been less than anticipated in the original business case. A decision is yet to be made regards the best mix of enabling infrastructure for Oban South. Once Argyll and Bute Council decide on the proposed TIF Assets for Oban South, a Gateway Review Process must be followed as per the TIF Agreement. Approval to proceed will require unanimous approval from the Council, Scottish Futures Trust and Scottish Government. A bid was submitted for an Oban Charrette however this bid was unsuccessful. Instead internal workshops were held focusing on the key development sectors of Oban University Town, Tourism and Maritime.

Next Steps - Meetings with Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and Argyll College UHI have been held to discuss ways in which the redevelopment of Oban South could contribute to the ambition of Oban being widely recognised as a University town. Lorn Arc team are engaging with council officers to tease out the current issues facing expansion / development of these sectors and any perceived infrastructure barriers to such development. A 5 year HIE Action Plan is to be developed by the end of October 2017 and this is expected to identify infrastructure requirements which will need further investigation. These may require public sector funding. Until the infrastructure requirements are identified it is not possible to factor any projects into a business case for an alternative funding mechanism.