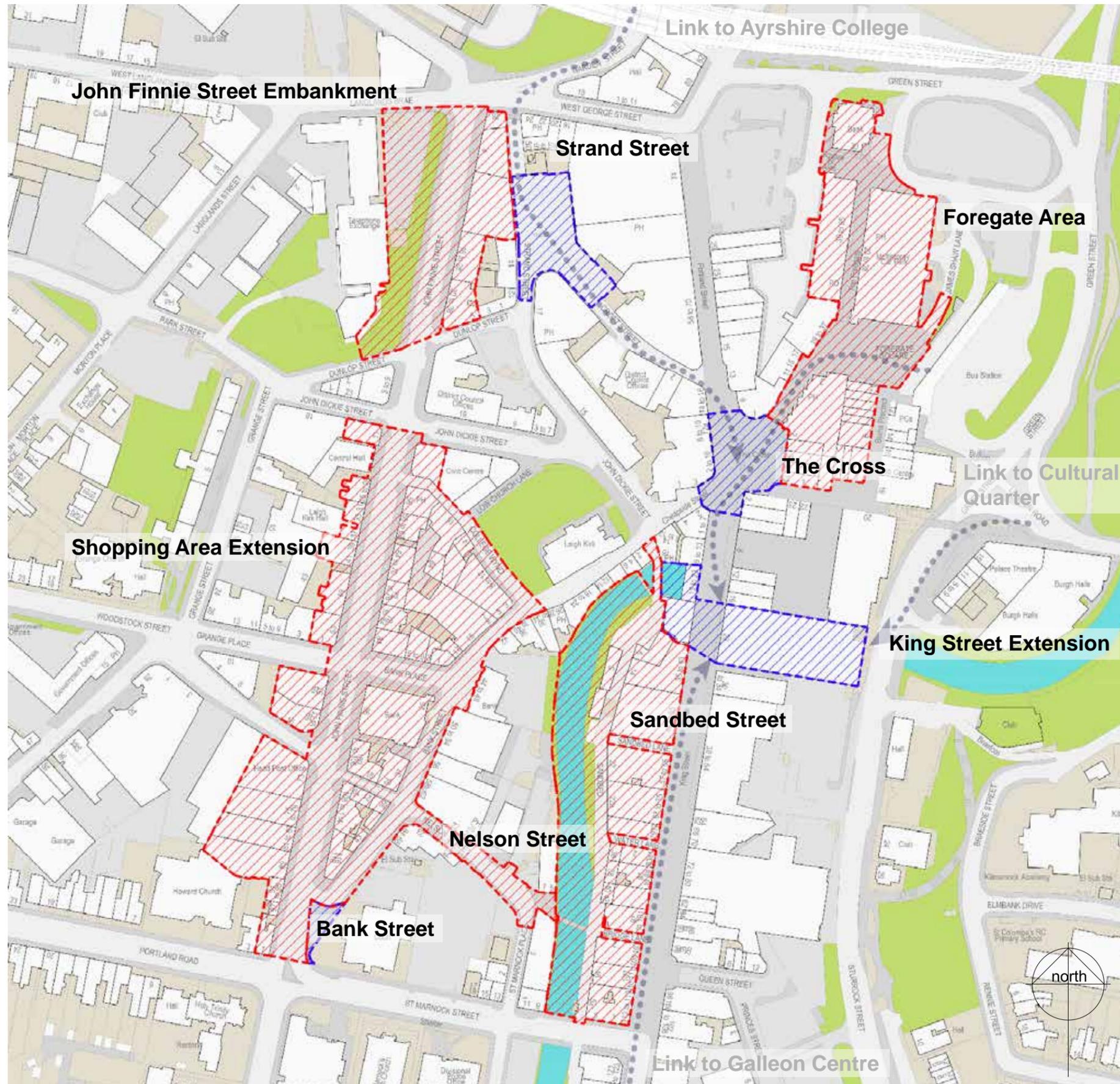


Kilmarnock Town Centre Study
Priorities for Action

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- Focused areas
- Additional areas
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Introduction and Background to the Report

This report was commissioned by East Ayrshire Council and has been prepared by TGP Landscape Architects Ltd. It provides an analysis of the existing town centre situation and provides a suite of proposals to address a number of issues throughout the town centre.

In addition, the development of this study forms part of a suite of initiatives being undertaken by and on behalf of the Council to revitalise the heart of Kilmarnock. These Strategies include;

- Kilmarnock Town Centre Study
- Galleon Recreation Centre
- Cultural Quarter and redevelopment works to the Dick Institute
- Proposals for the redevelopment of the Bus Station
- A76 Road Corridor Partnership Study (Kilmarnock to Dumfries)

However, Kilmarnock town is seeing considerable redevelopment including major new building projects such as ‘The Halo’ and expansion of the college campus. It is therefore important that the Council has a strategic overview to ensure that the town develops in a structured and holistically approached manner, to ensure that as the town expands and the town centre in particular evolves, the necessary resources and services are present and thriving.

TGP Landscape Architects have reviewed existing strategies and initiatives regarding the form of the town centre, including the Integrated Urban Development Plan and other pertinent guidance. We also looked at archive ordnance surveys of the town centre to gain an insight into how the existing town centre had developed over time.

Following formal appointment and an initial discussion with representatives of the Council, TGP undertook a thorough assessment of the four main areas and associated streets that influence the town centre environment, identified existing strengths and weaknesses and then reviewed the existing physical condition of the proposed areas.

TGP carried out two walks through the town, in particular to gain an understanding of both the existing state of the town and the Council’s aspirations for how the town could be revitalised.

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

The walks were extremely informative with respect to seeing at first hand, the four areas that were included in the original project brief, and allowed us to evaluate where de-cluttering could improve circulation and clarify directional guidance (such as signage and desire line identification) to enhance the user experience.

However, it also became clear that there were many associated areas that impacted upon and interfaced with the subject areas, that in order to correctly address the brief, would require consideration as part of the study.

This increased scope of work was assessed in light of discussions with the Council and the observations/outcomes of the two walks, to develop a draft set of proposals that were presented at a public consultation.

- Foregate

In the original brief, the Foregate area encompassed, the Foregate Centre, the Clydesdale bank building, James Shaw Lane and the Foregate Square with its accesses to Burns Mall and the Bus Station, the multi storey car park and Foregate Street. However, as was immediately evident on the first walk, the zone for consideration was expanded to include Ales Square, Foregate Street, and the extension area towards the Cross.

- Sandbed Street

Originally included in the brief as an assessment of the road and the building façades, this subject area was greatly expanded to include, areas of King Street and how Sandbed Street links through to Nelson Street.

- Shopping Area Extension

The Council brief included a review of how the town centre shopping area could be expanded into the southern section of John Finnie Street, extending from the Portland Road junction up to the John Dickie Street crossing. North of John Dickie Street, the buildings and public realm have already seen considerable improvements. Bank Street is one of the most successful shopping zones in Kilmarnock and the desire is to enhance the target section of John Finnie Street and revitalise this area by association with the Bank Street corridor.

- John Finnie Street Embankment

Presently the grassed embankment along the western side of John Finnie Street north of Dunlop Street, remains infested with Japanese knotweed, despite an ongoing eradication exercise. The brief sought alternative uses for this embankment and enhancement as a completion of the John Finnie public realm improvements.

As mentioned earlier, the target areas were extended as part of the outcomes of the site walks and now also include;

- The Cross

This is such a prominent location and a hub from which the various retail areas including Foregate, King Street and Bank Street are accessed. It is also a main exit from Burns Mall and a destination point

for most of the town centre car parks. Therefore, its attractiveness and its commercial viability set a precedence for the rest of the town.

- King Street Extension

King Street is the main retail corridor for the entire town centre. However, it is in decline, with an increasing number of voids and thrift shops. The major retailers are leaving the Street and this is having a detrimental effect on the entire town. The former Menzies building lies mostly vacant and is an eyesore in this prominent location. Its potential demolition, along with selected adjacent buildings, could enable the creation of a new and significant open space in the heart of the town centre, to recreate a focus for inward investment. The former BHS building has failed to attract any commercial interest from direct replacement retailers. Consideration of how this significant town centre unit might be repurposed would influence the future evolution of King Street.

- Strand Street

Though presently a car park and subject to limited infill development, Strand Street is an ideal location for a 'pop-up stage' and location for activities. It has excellent connectivity to the town centre, pubs and the train station. As a nexus of Croft and Strand Streets, the car park area could be easily closed off and used as such a venue for arts and music.

Draft proposals for all of these areas were presented at a number of public consultation events, to target the general public, traders and stakeholder groups. The purpose of the consultations was to identify which areas of the proposals were the most popular and of the highest priority to prospective shoppers, to understand what would improve the town as a retail destination and glean additional ideas for further improvements.

Contributions were also received through an online survey. These proposals incorporate the priorities, views and comments collected through community engagement. The results of the consultations and the online survey were quantifiably analysed and are appended to this report.

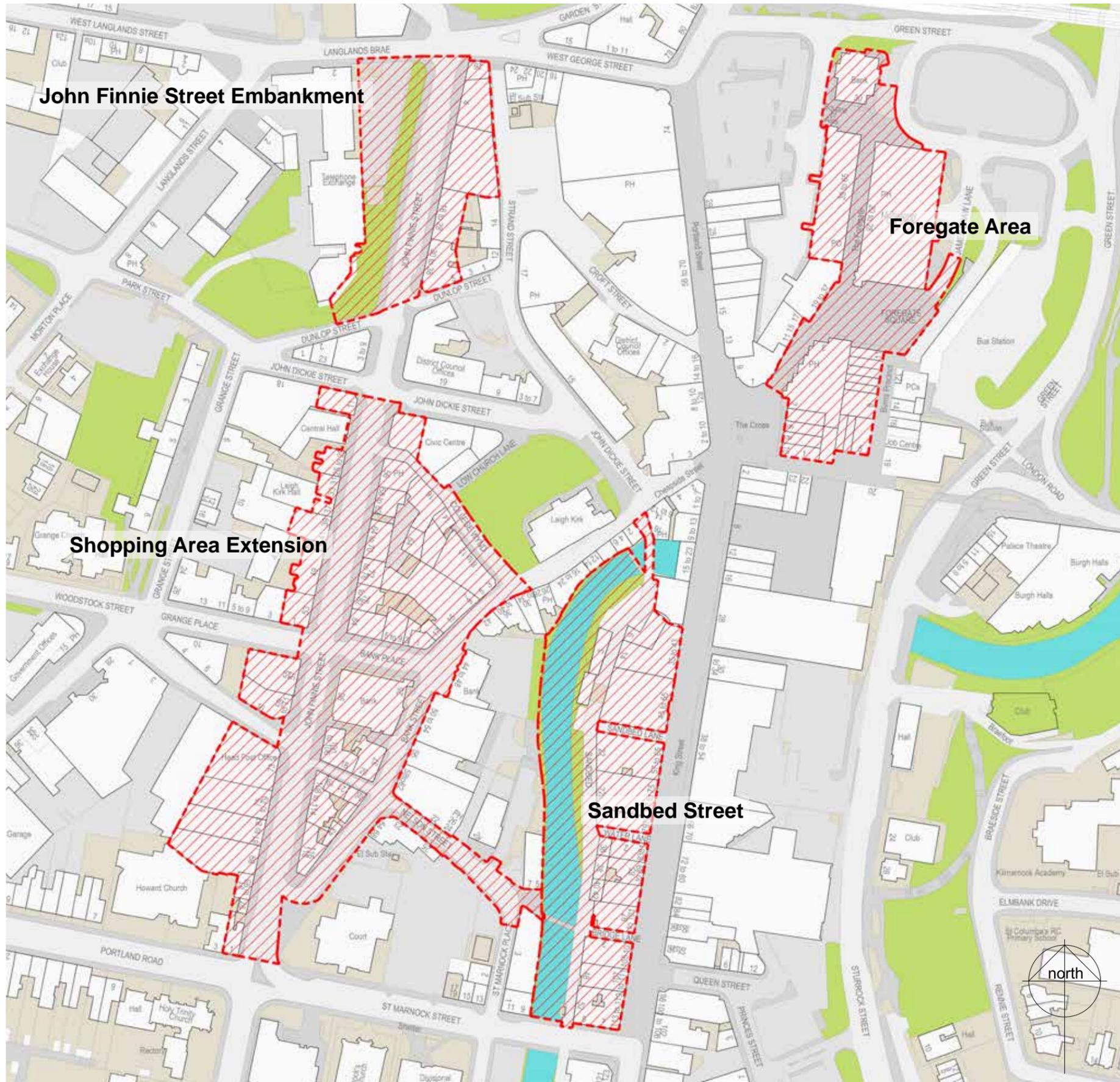
The designs and proposals included within this report identify opportunities to develop the various improvements. It is essential that following the completion of enhancements, a structured future maintenance programme will be required and properly funded to ensure that the town centre remains vital and commercially viable, guarding against the pressures imposed by 'out of town retail' and other nearby settlements.

Throughout the development of this report, draft proposals have been presented to East Ayrshire Council's Planning and Economic Development Service. This has ensured that the Council is fully aware and supportive of the proposals included in the report.

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2.0 Focused Areas

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



 Focused areas

This chapter addresses issues within the original focus areas within the Town Centre, including Foregate, Sandbed Street, John Finnie Street Embankment and the proposed Shopping Area Extension to incorporate a part of John Finnie Street, Bank Street and Nelson Street.

2.1 Focused Areas - Foregate Area

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

Foregate Square, southern car park façade, entrances to Bus Station and Burns Mall

The Foregate Area is to the north east of the Town Centre and is centred around Foregate Square. The Square has a confused user identity, partially due to the complexity of access points, uses, routes and desire lines, which often creates conflict between the various user groups, but also partially due to the changing user profile which is dependent upon which users are in the open space at any time.

The square is a major access point to the town's retail core, particularly for those using the bus station who exit into what is an expanded taxi rank. At the same time, the square is also the northern entrance into Burns Mall, a major pedestrian access route from the northern car parks and a major retail circulation area. There are many diverse user attractors, including shops, local council services, gathering spaces, public art and eating opportunities, all of which provide attraction to differing user groups.

Removal of the taxis from the square (Proposal 02) would enable the kerb line, which defines pedestrian and vehicular areas, to be moved into the roadway, thereby narrowing the carriageway and simultaneously increasing the pedestrian priority foot way to the front of the bus station. In turn, this would improve integration of the bus station entrance into the square, clarify desire lines and accentuate points of access to the station, Burns Mall and the larger pedestrian area in the western half of the square.

The bus station, its entrance and its circulation is the subject an associated redevelopment exercise, the proposals for which were jointly exhibited at the public consultation for this study held in the Citizens Advice Centre. This enabled the attendees to view both development proposals and gain a holistic understanding of the overall aspirations for this area.

To further increase complexity and confusion, the square is bisected, one half with vehicular priority and the other where pedestrians are dominant. Within the pedestrian area, there are external spaces cordoned off for use by a café, a very large stand-alone public convenience and the main entrance into the Gateway Centre and Citizen's Advice Bureau accessed across the vehicular turning and parking area. All of which creates confusion within the space and a lack of clarity between priorities and uses.

The pedestrian priority areas are dominated by over-sized street furniture; seating, tree enclosures, bins, lighting columns and bollards. Whilst there is notable public art both in the form of a Shona Kinloch sculpture and profiled screens to the Gateway Centre, and the prominent 'Kilmarnock' installation mounted on the external elevation of the car park, these are detracted from and often obscured by oversized furniture.

There is an existing consistency in furniture throughout the town centre, the general theme is of black, tubular steel units matched by high capacity waste bins and massive lighting columns. In specific areas such as Bank Street, where a more modern design has been adopted, the furniture complements the buildings and enhances the spaces.

Due to the need for a high amount of waste bins throughout the open spaces

and along the streets, there are numerous and sometimes double units along most of the streets and walkways. Though in larger spaces, these bins are simply obtrusive, along the narrower streets, the bin units take up much of the footpaths and in addition to leaking across the pavements, they make safe walking difficult within the limited pathway width.

Seating is provided in two forms, circular seats around trees and simple liner benches. In both cases, the seating units are massive and dominate the open spaces. The bench style linear seats have no 'arms or backs' and are therefore difficult for use by those whose physical movements are limited. The circular seating units are painted black, therefore they are subject to heat expansion and have warped considerably, giving the appearance that they are not suitable and are uncared for. The potential to resolve the warping could be investigated and along with the rest of the street furniture, the seats (assuming their retention) require painting.

The street lighting columns are of a similar heavy duty design to the seats and bins. The over-gauge columns, hanging bars and luminaires all contribute to the overwhelming dominance over the open spaces and detract from the buildings, surfaces and spaces themselves.

In summary, the existing suite of street furniture looks dated and dominates the spaces, it makes negotiating footpaths difficult and detracts from the appearance of the town centre. It is however consistent throughout the town and whilst the character of the spaces would benefit from its comprehensive replacement by a more simple and svelte suite of designs, this would be both expensive and not feasible in the short term. Therefore, the street furniture should gradually be replaced on an area by area basis (Proposal 04), remaining furniture will benefit from repainting and restoration where appropriate.

Overall a process of street furniture simplification would reveal the towns artistic elements.

The northern elevation of the Burns Mall building is finished in monolithic panels of facing brickwork which, along with the stark car park facade and 'dated' Foregate Centre buildings, does not engender a welcoming appearance to the Square. However, it would be possible to implement a green wall at first floor level, extending towards the entrance, that could create a common feature to the area, were a similar green wall be implemented on the car park stairwell, thereby creating unity across the square. (Proposal 30)

The Square has many positive aspects, but these are unfortunately overshadowed by the negative elements such as the street furniture and the confused open space layout. As with Ales Square to the north, though the area has been constructed using very high quality materials, the lack of cohesion and material selection fails to clarify desire lines and user priorities, particularly for those who are either visually impaired or partially ambulant.

Users report that their experience of the Square is frequently compromised by antisocial behaviour, particularly linked to methadone distribution by chemists in the Burns Mall. This has a negative impact on the attractiveness of the Square both as a transitory space and a destination in its own right. Subsequently, such activities also affect the square's appeal to traders looking to occupy units within this part of the town centre.

Rear aspect of Foregate Centre

Whilst demolition of the Foregate Centre buildings may be a long-term aspiration (Proposal 28), the building elevation to the west is presently a confused mixture of building profile, combined with simple, dated, fenestration and clumsy rear access security doors.(Proposal 12)

As this is a major entrance approach to the northern end of the town centre, it would be beneficial to address the rear aspect of the Foregate Centre, in order to both improve its appearance and the setting of the car park and pedestrian approaches, in particular the route from the Train Station to the retail area.

Obviously, any works to the buildings would need to be undertaken through agreement with the building owners and the tenants. (Proposal 15, 21 and 29)



Image: Green wall proposal



Potential use of open space following demolition of Foregate Centre

Improvements to the Foregate Street surfaces

The pavement surface is in generally excellent condition, having been resurfaced in 1996-1999 using high quality natural materials. The hierarchy of materials is consistent with their high quality, being larger flag modules in the main, with smaller sett sized modules adjacent to shop frontages and around street furniture.

In order to enhance the materials selection for those with impaired vision, a central feature band of red granite should be installed, linking the red granite edge at Foregate Square, as a visual guide along the centre of the street up to Ales Square. (Proposal 22)

Signage and street furniture

Though there is presently minimal street furniture along Foregate Street, there are many signs in different format and sizes, some on the wall, some within the streetscape and shop frontages. As this signage has been prepared for individual traders, there is no consistency to the shop front signage. (Proposal 04) In addition, behind the very interesting profiled steel screen providing interest to the lower levels of the car park building, there is a mural on the recessed wall, which should be made more prominent within the streetscape when the metal screen is repainted. (Proposal 23)

Street and building lighting

The existing under canopy lighting is almost all broken. As this is the only lighting except for light wash from the shop frontages, the damaged units add to the 'gloominess' of the areas beneath the overhangs. Replacement units will be bright, vandal resistant luminaires to increase visibility, particularly under the building cantilevers. (Proposal 11)

Complementary wall mounted street lighting should combine with a combination of units on both the car park façade and the cantilevered Foregate Centre, to create a light character to the Street corridor. Presently the suspended luminaires are both of little effect and difficult to replace should they be damaged. (Proposal 13)

The Council should be applauded for implementing the existing suspended lighting, though it would be better to implement this as a seasonal attraction, akin to the lighting net seen in George Street in Edinburgh and Merchant City in Glasgow. Fixings and supply points for such a 'net' should be installed as part of the street lighting improvements. The net itself can either replace or supplement the wall mounted street lighting units during the festive season. (Proposal 20)

Together this suite of proposed improvements will create a more pleasant environment within the narrow and enclosed Foregate Street, brightening the Foregate Centre buildings and reducing the feeling of oppressive enclosure.

As a long term aspiration, should occupancy continue to decline, partial or complete demolition of the Foregate Centre buildings along Foregate Street would significantly improve the northern entrance into the town centre, at once removing the present claustrophobic enclosure, and affording the opportunity to create an open approach combining with the open nature of the car park. (Proposal 28)



Ashton Lane Glasgow, West End

2.1 Focused Areas - Foregate Area

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



	No.	PROPOSAL
Foregate Area (Including Foregate Square, Foregate, Ales Square, Multi Storey Car Park and adjacent buildings)		
Short term proposals		
Foregate Square	01	Remove public toilet from Foregate Square
	02	Remove taxis from the open space, by relocating the taxi rank and restricting access to the Square for 'blue badge users' only.
	03	Reduce the number of seats to discourage loitering and antisocial behaviour
	04	Replace street furniture and signage for a more modern design.
Foregate	05	Cleaning of pedestrian bridge towards multi storey car park
	06	Installing planters along pedestrian bridge
	07	Repainting of concrete blades at the Foregate
	08	Removal of overhangs
	09	Repainting of steel panels
	10	Repaint of shop frontage
	11	Replacement of the soffit lights (LED)
	12	Improving car park security and replace security access doors to the car park stairwells
	13	Replacement of the existing street lighting with wall mounted LED lights
Ales Square	14	Bollards to control delivery access
	15	Upgrading facade of Clydesdale Bank
	16	Upgrading raised planters of Clydesdale Bank
	17	Maintenance of damaged surfaces, restore painting and grouting.
Mid term proposals		
	18	Rearrange bollards and traffic control infrastructure to restrict the impact of vehicles upon The Foregate
	19	Update the signage for the Bus Station and Burns Mall
Foregate	20	Lighting proposal eg. LED netting lighting
	21	Upgrading upper stories
	22	Installation of central red granite strip within the Foregate.
	23	Restoration of vane feature on the car park façade, incorporating artwork panels
	24	Installation of fixings and supply circuitry for seasonal feature lighting
	25	Use vacant shop fronts for displays or artwork to improve the streetscape
Long term aspirations		
Foregate Square	26	Improve access to the Bus Station through Foregate Square
	27	Relocation of the Shona Kinloch sculpture into a more central and prominent location
Foregate	28	Potential future demolition of the Foregate Centre along Foregate Street to create a pedestrian priority open space
	29	Shop front project to improve continuity in shop front design and unify the frontage design.
Multi Storey Car Park and Shopping Mall	30	Implement green wall treatment to the multi-storey SW car park stairwell and the northern.

Foregate Street and multi-storey car park

Presently the Street suffers from being an oppressive environment whose nature is defined by preventative measures, such as those to stop unauthorized access, the congregation of pigeons and the security measures required to control access to the car park. In addition, the narrowness of the street is compounded by unavoidable enclosure due to the overhanging Foregate Centre façade and the high multi-storey car park, resulting in an oppressive character to this major pedestrian access into the town centre. Potential for artwork introduction on vanes of carpark to add colour and interest to this extensive façade. (Proposal 23)

Improvements to the Foregate Street buildings

There are a number of treatments proposed for the existing Foregate Centre building, which together would deliver a considerable uplift in the quality and environment within Foregate Street. The treatments proposed are;

- Removal of the rain screen canopy and associated ironwork cantilever (which will remove the necessity for anti-pigeon spikes) (Proposal 08)
- Paint exposed concrete extensions in a light colour, consistently down the entire street (as can be seen at the pet store) (Proposal 29)
- Repair the soffit ceilings under the first floor overhangs of the Foregate Centre building. (Proposal 11)

Improvements to the multi-storey car park

There are a number of treatments proposed for the existing multi-storey Car Park building. The external façade is structured according to the area below the ground floor car deck, and the façade structure enclosing the car decks.

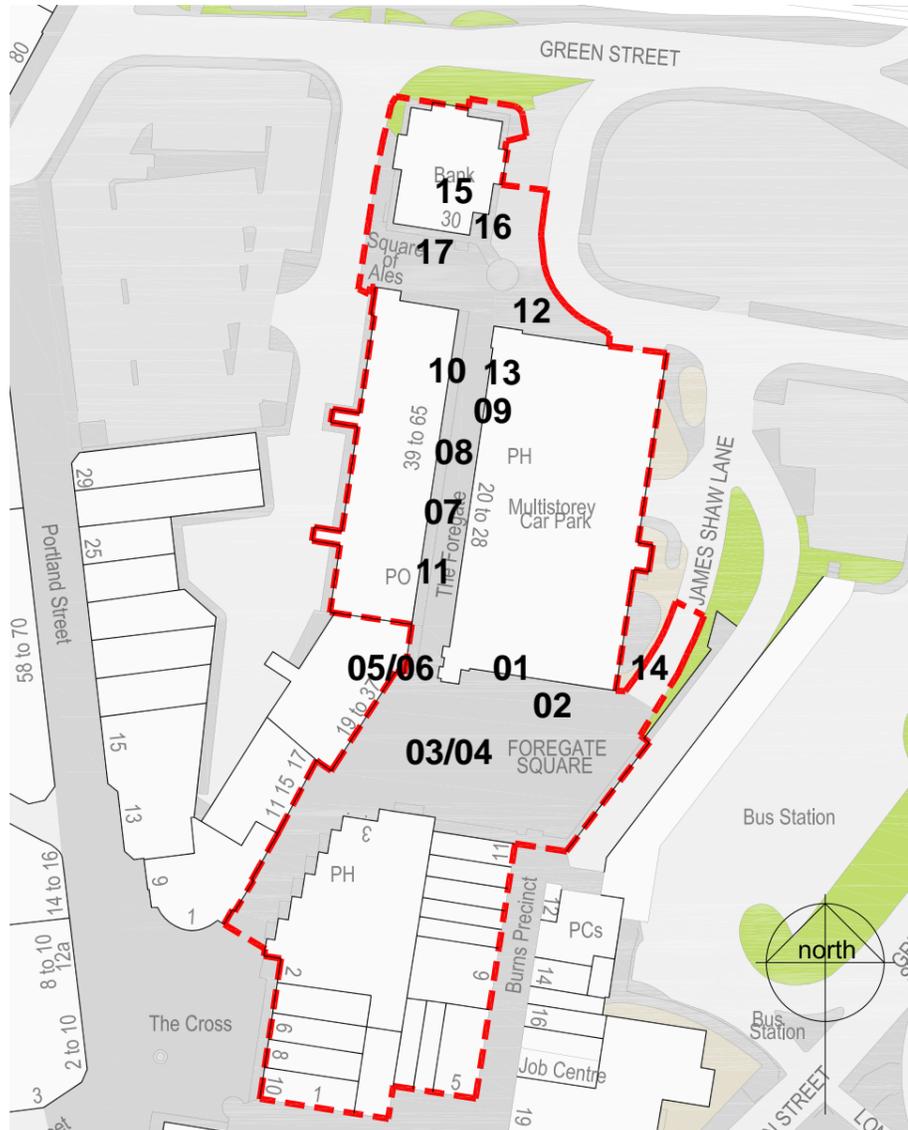
Below the car levels, the façade facing onto the Foregate Street corridor is dominated by a brick external leaf which includes variable coursing to effect a textured surface and though this is an interesting detail, it is dominated by the vanes above. The proposed treatments comprise;

- Clean and re-point the brickwork and the 3D coursing to improve the finish of the interesting brick coursing feature. (Proposal 17)
- Implement a store front improvement package, to create consistency of store frontage design, reflecting the improvements to the Foregate Centre shops on the other side of the Street. (Proposal 29)
- Strip and repaint the decorative metal screens (to recesses in the brick façade) and replace the existing steel car park access doors with controlled access security doors. (Proposal 12)
- Clean and replace as required, the rain screen vanes to the car levels. This is an opportunity to include public art, as different images (comprising vinyl strips adhered to each side of the vanes) would be visible whether the observer is at each end of the street, changing as the observer progresses up or down the street depending upon their perspective at the time. (Proposal 23)
- There is potential to improve the south west corner of the car park by installing a green wall up the brick stair column (shaped around the windows and CCTV units). (Proposal 30)

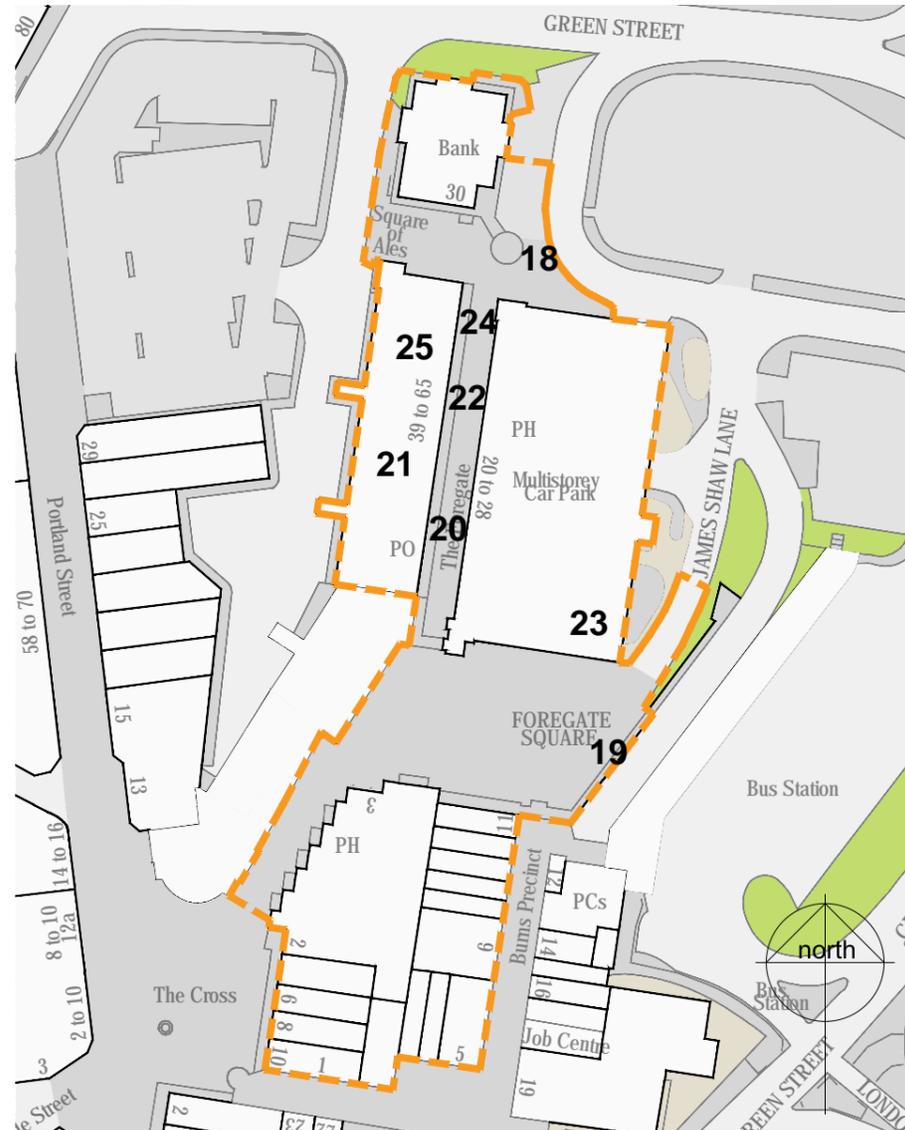
However, the Foregate Centre buildings can be significantly improved along with cleaning the elevated walkway and restoration of hanging baskets, to create a feature to the southern end of the Foregate Street corridor. (Proposal 05&06)

2.1 Focused Areas - Foregate Area

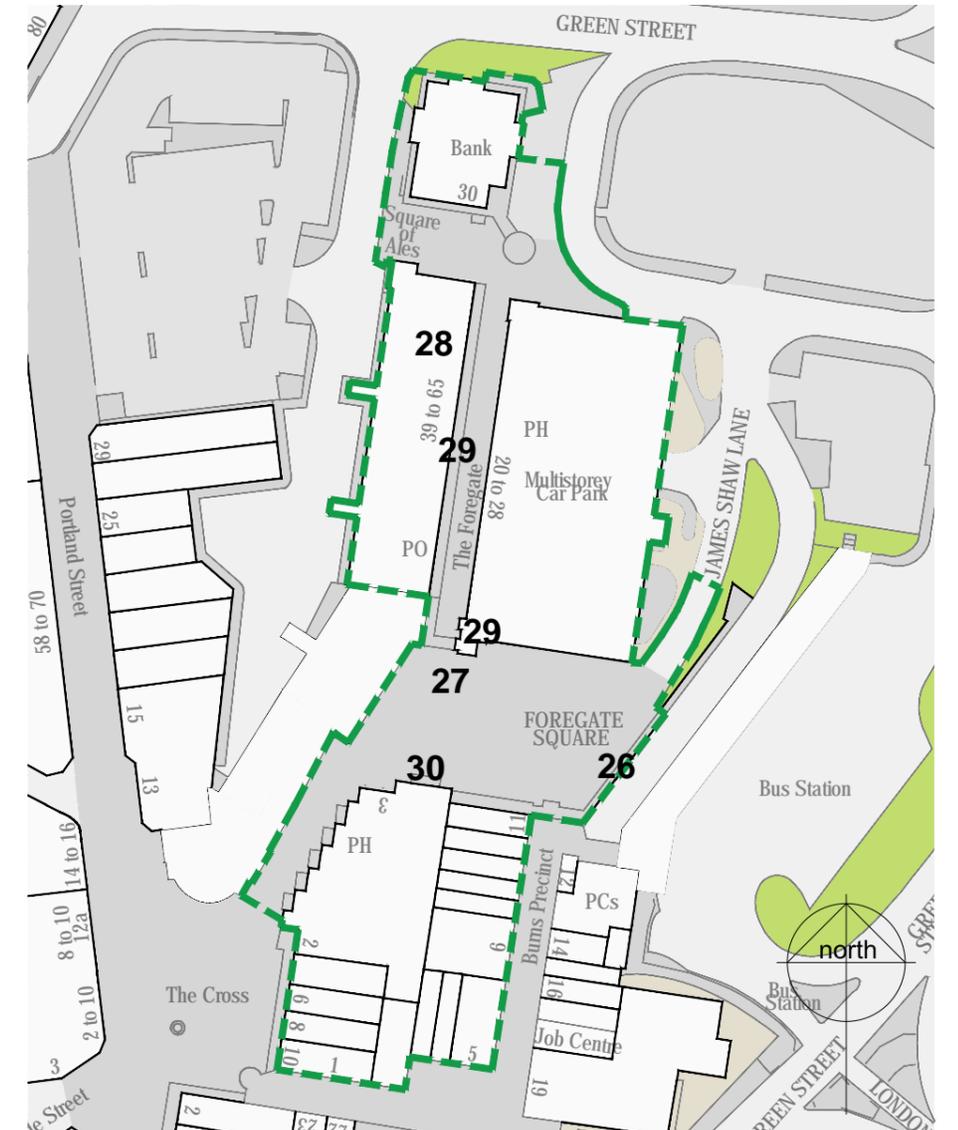
Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



Short term proposals



Mid term proposals



Long term aspirations

Existing situation



Photograph: Ales Square and Clydesdale Bank



Photograph: Gateway centre overhangs



Photograph: Gateway centre overhangs



Photograph: Car Park Vanes

2.1 Focused Areas - Foregate Area

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

Street furniture, access arrangements and surface treatments (Including improving contrast for the visibly impaired)

The Ales Square surfaces are in generally good condition, the paving is both recent and uses high quality materials. However, the square is dominated by the enclosing structures (Clydesdale Bank and Foregate Centre) and the excessively 'heavy duty' street furniture. As a main access into the town centre from car parks to the north and west, in addition to being the main pedestrian route from the train station, this access (and the associated rear west elevation of the Foregate Centre buildings) presents an unappealing first view for many of those visiting the centre.

Immediate improvements could be realised by repainting the existing street furniture and providing 'backs' to some of the benches to enhance their use. In addition, the existing brick built raised planters should be brought back into use. (Proposal 16) Mid-term improvements could be achieved by replacing the existing street furniture with a more appropriate suite of

equipment, in particular replacing the benches with seats and replacing the litter bins, as the existing units are inappropriate and poor for users with limited mobility. (Proposal 04)

Unauthorised vehicular access is both dangerous for pedestrians and difficult to control effectively. The existing static and removable bollards are easily bypassed by vehicles and careful repositioning is required to ensure that access can be correctly controlled. The use of an alternative removable bollard design and method of permitting access, such as using automatic raising bollards would enable effective management of permitted access for deliveries and emergency services, whilst preventing unapproved vehicles using the area without due care and attention. (Proposal 14)

Liaison with Clydesdale Bank regarding joint works to improve Ales Square

In the longer term, there are many improvements to this area that could

be achieved through agreement with the owners of the Clydesdale Bank building. These include replacement or replanting of the existing but redundant planter adjacent to the ATM, improvements to or replacement of the existing glazed brick used to surface the steps area, which can become dangerous when wet or iced.

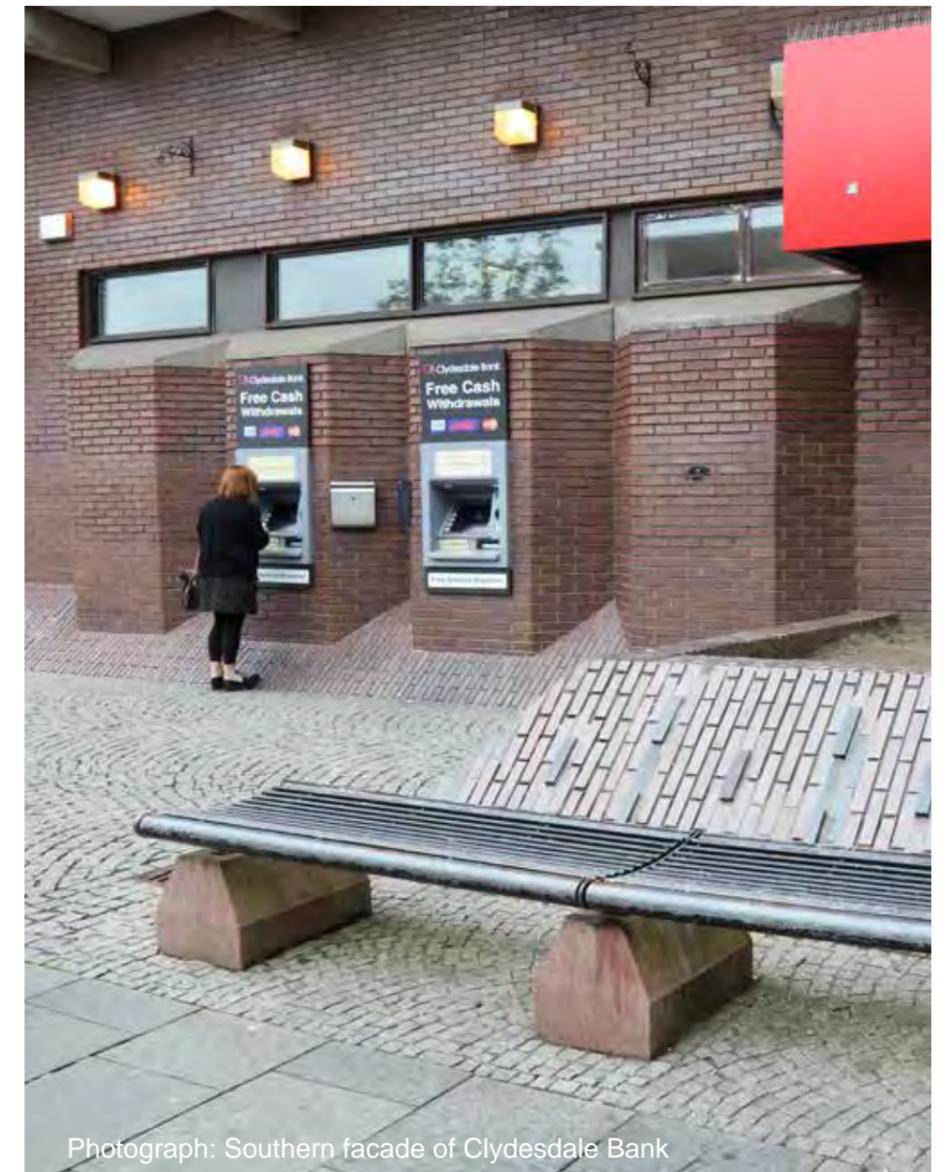
The Bank building itself is in need of a comprehensive uplift, through painting and some façade improvements. (Proposal 15) The main aspect of the frontage that requires treatment is the staircase tower, the removal of which would greatly enhance the entire area, including opening up significant views of the viaduct and the route north from Foregate Street to the car parks.



Photograph: Southern facade of Clydesdale Bank



Photograph: Western facade of Clydesdale Bank



Photograph: Southern facade of Clydesdale Bank

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2.2 Focused Areas - Sandbed Street

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

Sandbed Street is an important north-south link forming a clear interface between the river corridor and the shopping areas to the west and east of the river. Sandbed Street is largely unused as its orientation duplicates King Street, but without the retail opportunities. Public interaction is largely restricted to east / west links via the bridges allowing transition between shopping areas either side of the river.

The river and its corridor has also been neglected, the water course choked by rubbish and its banks either concreted utility water main structures or overgrown banks. When considered as a whole, the river and Sandbed are a significant and wasted opportunity upon which the town has turned its back. The forgotten nature of this corridor is illustrated by the rear elevations of the surrounding buildings largely being closed, screened or blocked up.

“One of Kilmarnock’s undiscovered gems is the Kilmarnock Water which flows through the town centre from north to south. Many attractive towns and cities are famous for their relationship with a river or waterway. Usually the town has embraced the river in some form and provides a means of accessing its banks or simply watching the water – this in turn attracts people to the river and often encourages the development of promenade cafes and social spaces.”

Kilmarnock Integrated Urban Development Plan (November 2011)

Sandbed Street is only used when road works elsewhere in the town require vehicles to be diverted down the road as a link from John Dickie Street to St Marnock Street.

In other European towns and cities, rivers within developed areas are celebrated and used as a focus to the area. Toward the northern end of Sandbed, the river is even built over at it passes underground beneath King Street before emerging east of Green Street.

The first action in improving the Sandbed Street environment should be to clean out the river course and address the overgrown nature of the eastern bank. (Proposal 31) The bridge at the Loudon Arms is a magnificent structure that is difficult to view because of the surrounding buildings;

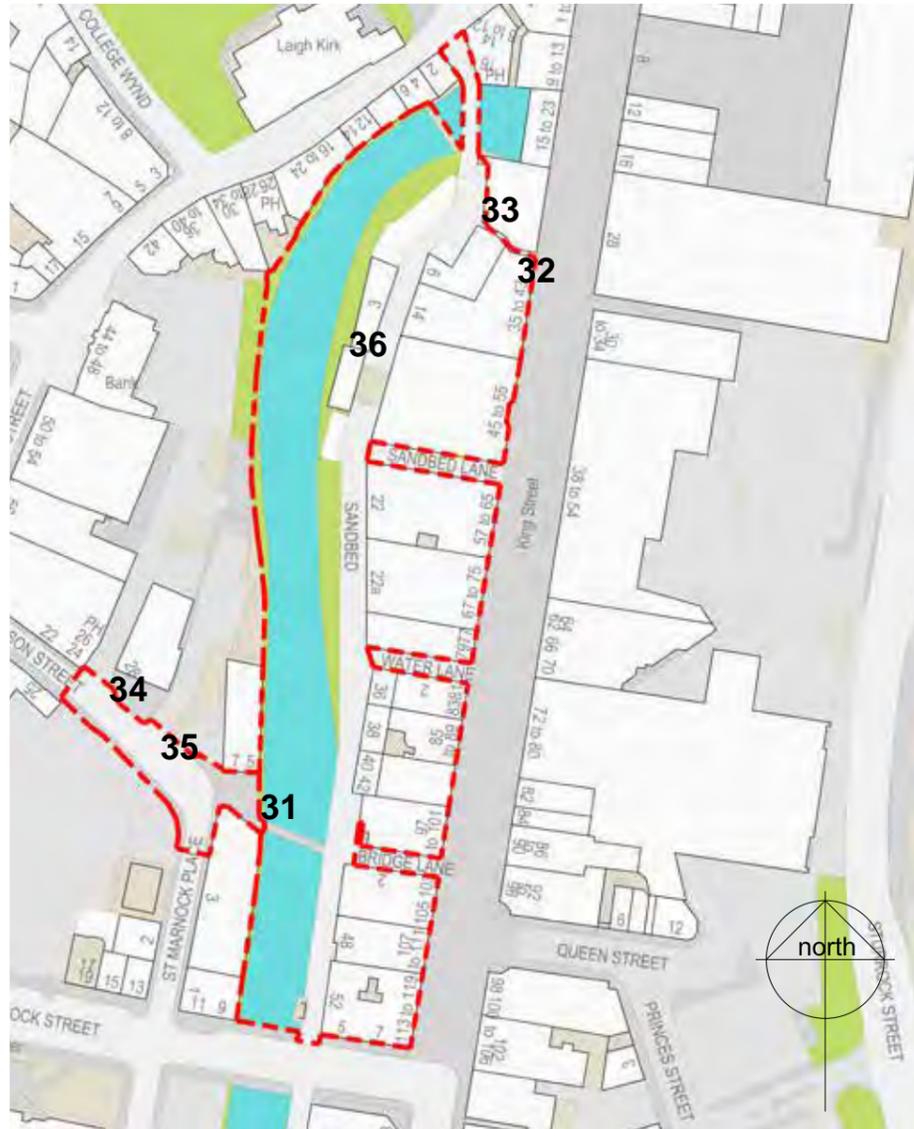
- Open space at northern end, allow resident parking
- Opening up rear aspects of buildings (Proposal 39)
- Investigate removal of bridge walkway over road (Proposal 38)
- Treatment of building rear elevations, painting, cables and dishes
- Treatment of road surface and crossings. (Proposal 36)

At the northern end of Sandbed is a small open space, that given an open space designed treatment, could provide an excellent opportunity to significantly improve the area and offer excellent views of the stone bridge. As the end property has been converted to residential use, a permitted parking space should be provided for the residents. However, this would not compromise the use of the space as a public domain. (Proposal 37)

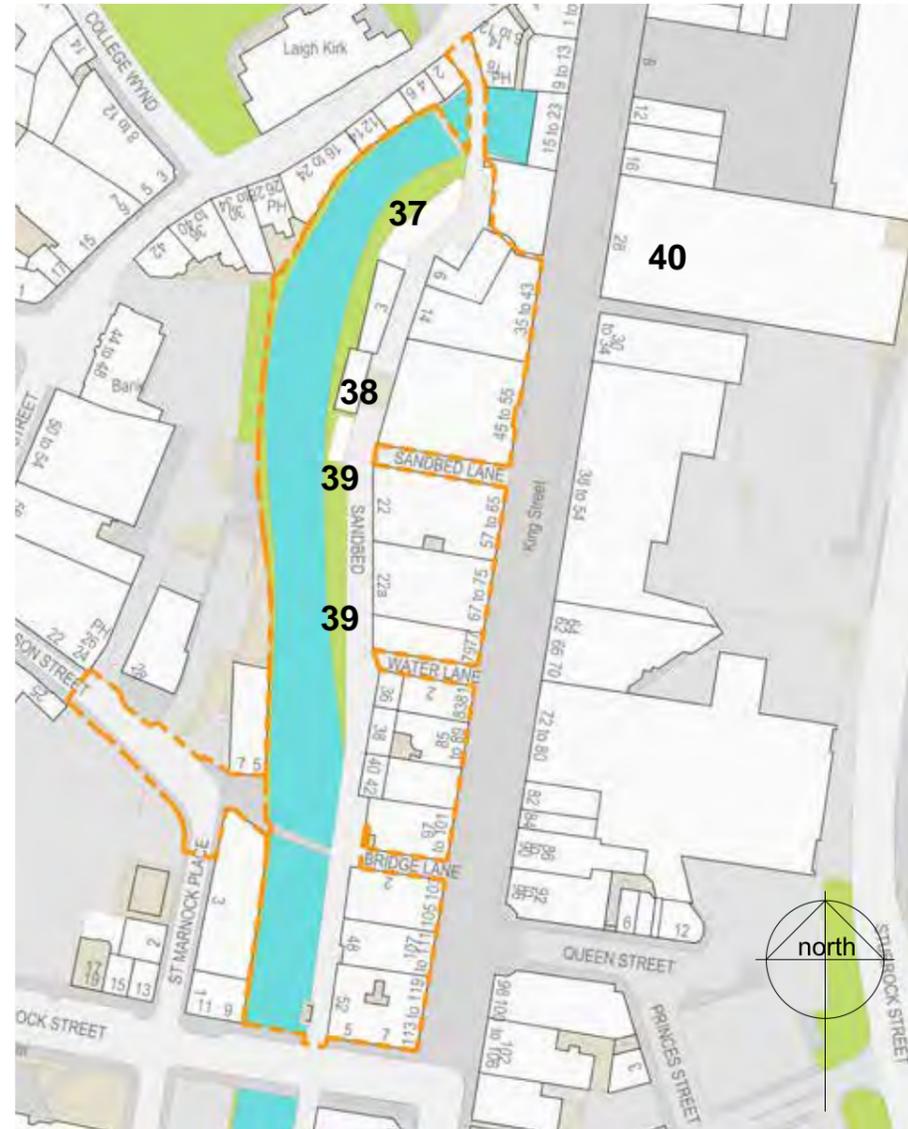
No.	PROPOSAL
Sandbed Street and King Street Extension (Including the river, Sandbed Street, footbridge and adjacent buildings)	
Short term proposals	
31	Clean out the river bed and the river banks and engage with the Wildlife Trust
32	Improving the attractiveness of ‘No name Lane’
33	Negotiate the selective demolition of buildings along King Street to create a public open space that benefits both Sandbed and King Street.
34	Repainting and removing galvanised street furniture
35	Reduce volume of street signage and assimilated signs into a reduced number of combined posts
36	Replace the existing tarmac surface with a fanned sett surface to improve the heritage aspect of the corridor.
Mid term proposals	
37	Develop the open space at the north of Sandbed and open up bridge aspect.
38	Removal of pedestrian bridge between the buildings.
39	Opening up buildings towards river frontage (cafés etc.)
King Street	40 Remodelling of former ‘BHS’ building

2.2 Focused Areas - Sandbed Street

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



Location Plan: Short term proposals



Location Plan: Mid term proposals



Location Plan: Long term aspirations

Existing situation



Photograph: Kilmarnock Water



Photograph: Sandbed Street parking



Photograph: Pedestrian walkway



Photograph: Sandbed Street

2.3 Focused Areas - John Finnie Street Embankment



Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

The existing grass slope opposite Opera House has already had an initial grant aided attempt at removing the invasive Japanese knotweed infestation. However, this initial application has failed to eradicate the infestation and should be repeated to completely kill the knotweed, rather than stop before the weed has been killed. (Proposal 43)

The retaining wall has been allowed to deteriorate and swift remedial action must be taken to ensure that the wall does not become dangerous to pedestrians, this includes re-fixing copings that are presently being dislodged by self-seeded shrubs. Undertaking works to the grass banks will be pointless if the instability of the wall is not addressed first. (Proposal 41)

East Ayrshire Council have taken great steps forward in delivering an extensive programme of major public art within open spaces across the town, exemplified by the many Shona Kinloch sculptures located throughout the town centre. The grassed banks above the wall provides two very different and complementary opportunities for artwork installations.

To the southern end of the grassed area, there is a good opportunity to develop a horizontal platform as a setting for a major installation. Along the northern section of the grassed area, there is an ideal location for a linear, possibly multi location installation. (Proposal 44)

The availability of two different format locations should allow diversity in the artwork installations, which should also be rotated so that over a time, the locations can host a number of diverse and creative installations, either in complementary pairs or as a sequential theme with other artworks in the town.

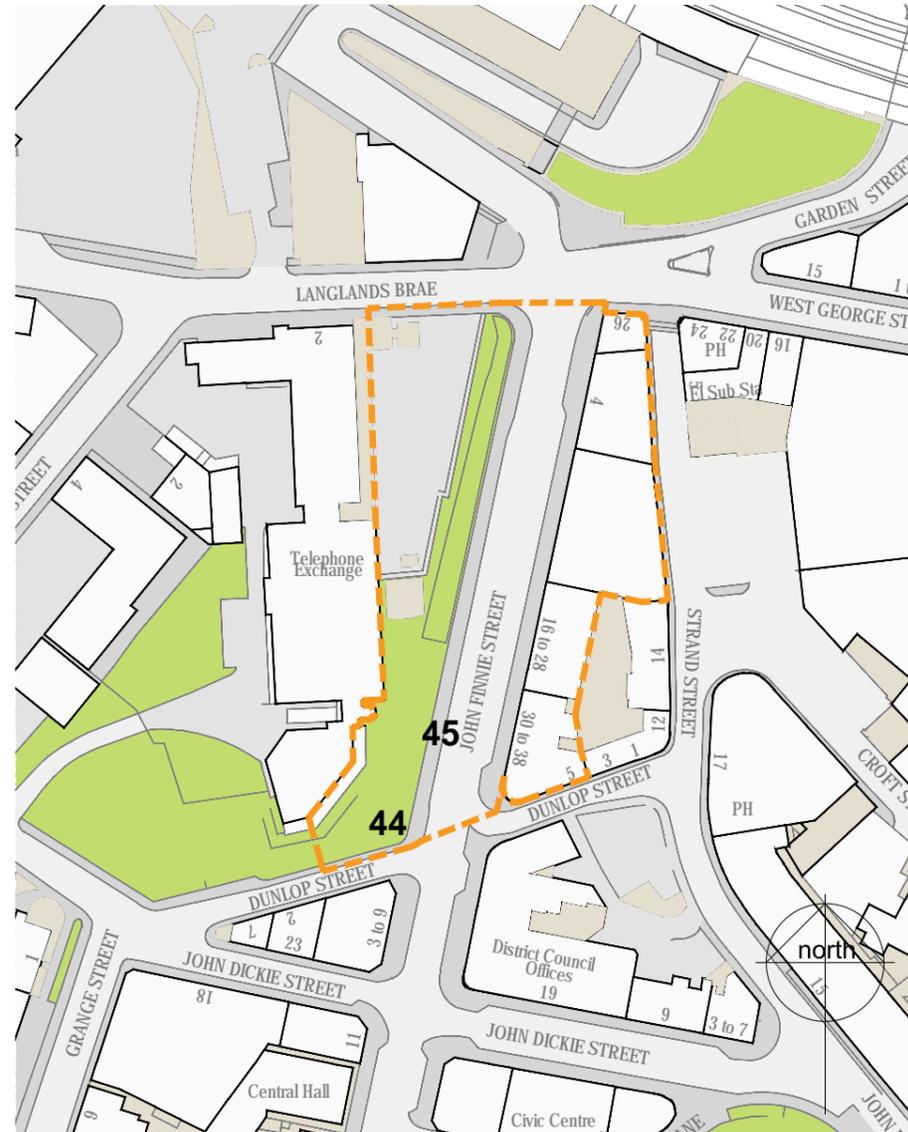
No.	PROPOSAL
John Finnie Street Embankment (Including retaining wall, embankment and surrounding streetscape on North of John Finnie Street)	
Short term proposals	
41	Repair wall
42	Footpath improvements
43	Eradication of Japanese Knotweed
Mid term proposals	
44	Provide two locations for artworks on the angled grass area
45	Re-bedding of existing kerbs
Long term aspirations	
	-

2.3 Focused Areas - John Finnie Street Embankment

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



Location Plan: Short term proposals



Location Plan: Mid term proposals

Existing situation



Photograph: Poor wall condition John Finnie Street



Photograph: Japanese Knot weed



Photograph: Embankment, John Finnie Street

2.4 Focused Areas - Shopping Area Extension

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

It is proposed to extend Kilmarnock's select shopping area from Bank Street westwards to include John Finnie Street, by extending the high quality aspects of the streetscape from Bank Street, into John Finnie Street.

John Finnie Street is renowned as being one of the finest examples of a Victorian street in Scotland, with its beautiful red sandstone buildings. Whilst the buildings are magnificent, their occupancy is in decline, which is a trend that will have to be reversed if this road is to become a major retail destination along with Bank Street and King Street.

Bank Street is a narrow cobbled street with a medieval layout, with New Laigh Kirk as a main feature. Historically, Bank Street has enjoyed strong trader desirability resulting in high occupancy. However, this high occupancy has recently come under pressure, with voids beginning to appear along the street. With improved growth along John Finnie Street, the increased footfall from the King Street corridor through to John Finnie Street, would significantly help Bank Street restore its strong retail performance and desirability.

Throughout the town centre retail occupancy is in decline. For the John Finnie Street expansion proposal to be viable it must be complementary to, rather than competition for, the established King Street and Burns Mall shopping area. Therefore, in addition to the physical improvements, ways of fostering new markets should be pursued so that there is an increased diversity of retail opportunities sufficient to sustain an expanded core shopping area.

Whilst the quality of Bank Street has already been established and its recent decline could be partially attributed to the lack of a 'destination' to draw new customers along the street, the viability of John Finnie Street has long been in doubt. In order to establish this credibility, a number of initiatives can be combined to promote John Finnie Street as a sustainable constituent of the expanded shopping area

1. Continue the upgraded footpath quality to the remaining area on both sides of the road corridor, (Proposal 50)
2. Identify retail sectors presently missing from the existing King Street retail area and actively promote them along JFS,
3. Develop a grant aided shop front revitalisation and structural improvement scheme to both occupied and vacant premises, (Proposal 52)
4. Identify a unique niche sector, such as 'arts related' that can be promoted along JFS, to diversify and broaden the customer base,
5. Further diversify retail delivery, such as combining coffee shops with book retail or gallery space,
6. Promote and aid property owners in developing and letting first floor premises to reduce voids at first floor level in addition to the ground floor accommodation, to increase vibrancy, and
7. Promote residential occupancy above ground floor to draw 24hr living back into the street. (Proposal 51)

It is obviously important to emphasise throughout this revitalisation process, that the John Finnie Street corridor is not in competition with Bank Street and King Street, but instead offers a complementary suite of services not presently delivered within the town centre. This will enhance the appeal of the town to presently unfulfilled market sectors, increase the potential customer

No.	PROPOSAL
Shopping area extension (Including both sides of John Finnie Street, College Wynd, Bank Place and Nelson street)	
Short term proposals	
46	Replace street furniture for a more modern design
47	Review the amount of necessary street furniture – replace lighting columns with fewer brighter and more energy efficient LED lights
48	Removal of vegetation from buildings
49	Extend public art installations
50	Upgrade walkway and kerbs
51	Liaise with property owners to foster first floor occupation
Mid term proposals	
52	Grant aided shop front improvements programme
53	Restoration programme for vacant properties
Bank Place	54 Positioning of artwork
South end of Bank Street	55 New features for triangle at the South entry to John Finnie Street.
	56 Revisit one-way system and potentially return roads to two-way traffic
	57 Review car parking strategy to improve pedestrian priority circulation
Long term aspirations	
58	Coordinate the use of vehicular signage to de-clutter the road corridors and enhance the pedestrian priority throughout the entire expanded core area.
59	Purchasing derelict buildings within John Finnie Street

base and;
"change the culture of the town as a user-friendly destination"
 (Kilmarnock Integrated Urban Development Plan, November 2011).

One factor common to John Finnie Street, Bank Street, Foregate and King Streets, is that they are all generally north – south orientated. Therefore, east - west linkages are even more important to the sustainability of an expanded core area than improvements to the main streets themselves. Linkage streets such as Nelson Street, Cheapside Street, Bank Place, John Dickie Street and Dunlop Streets, must also be fostered and included as integral parts of the core shopping area. Any area within this expanded core that becomes unsustainable or is omitted from the streetscape improvements will dilute the viability of the entire area and threaten the town.

Traffic

Kilmarnock is dominated by two traffic related factors; the one-way system and the sheer volume of car parking. The one-way system makes the town difficult to negotiate by motorists, particularly those unfamiliar with the town on a day-to-day basis, which inevitably reduces its attractiveness to an

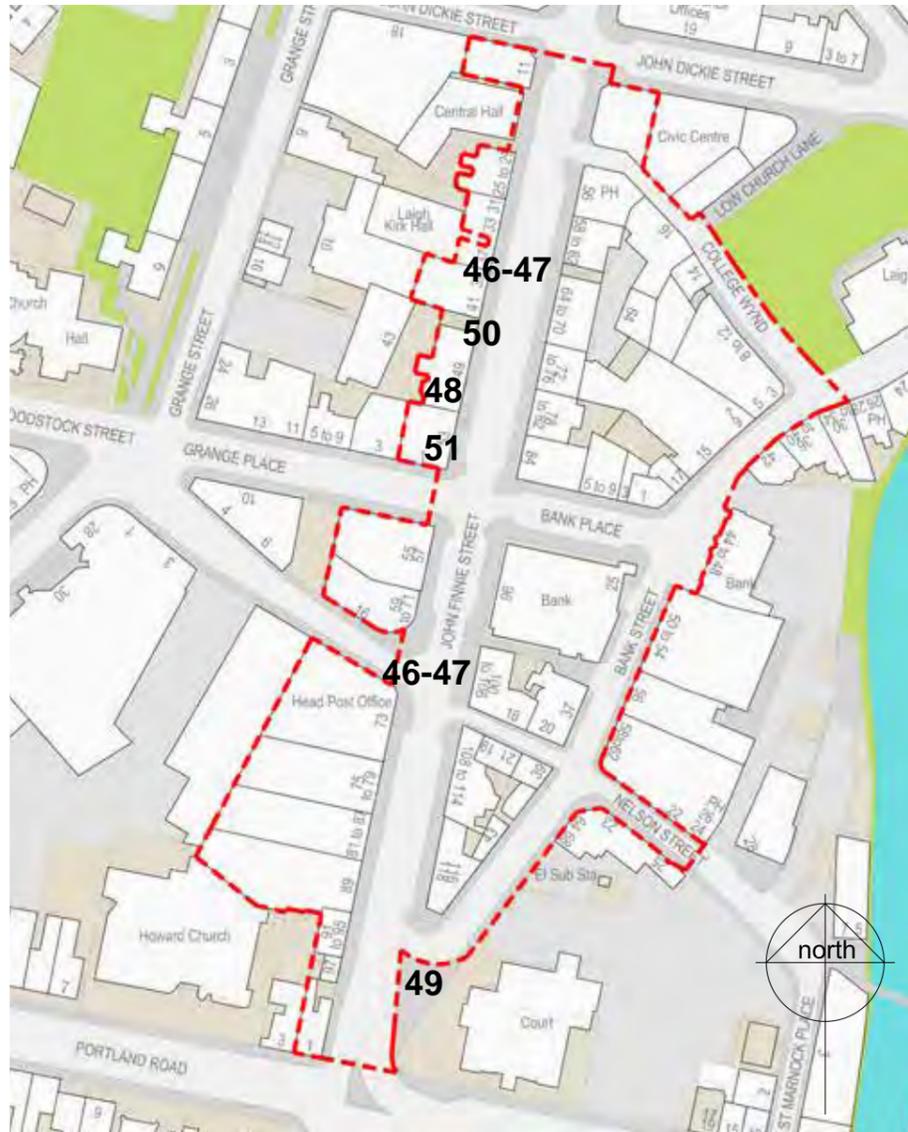
expanded retail population. (Proposal 56)

The extensive car parking within the town may be seen as being an opportunity for 'visitors' to access the town, but it also sterilises large areas of potential developable retail area. The car parking also compromises pedestrian circulation as it breaks the continuity, pedestrian flow and penetration through the town centre. It is interesting to note that when seen from anywhere in the town centre, the magnificent train viaduct is viewed over a car park. (Proposal 57)

It is unlikely that vehicular circulation will be changed in the short to medium term. The present one-way system is difficult to negotiate for visitors to the town and isolates the core retail area from the outer centre and the rest of the town. As the town has evolved and there is a greater importance given to non-vehicular access, making the town more attractive to pedestrians and cyclists must be considered. Therefore, as a long term aspiration, the outcomes of the Systra A76 Kilmarnock to Dumfries travel corridor and the way in which vehicles are allowed to penetrate the town should be reviewed, in order to foster improved circulation for both vehicles and pedestrians alike.

2.4 Focused Areas - Shopping Area Extension

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

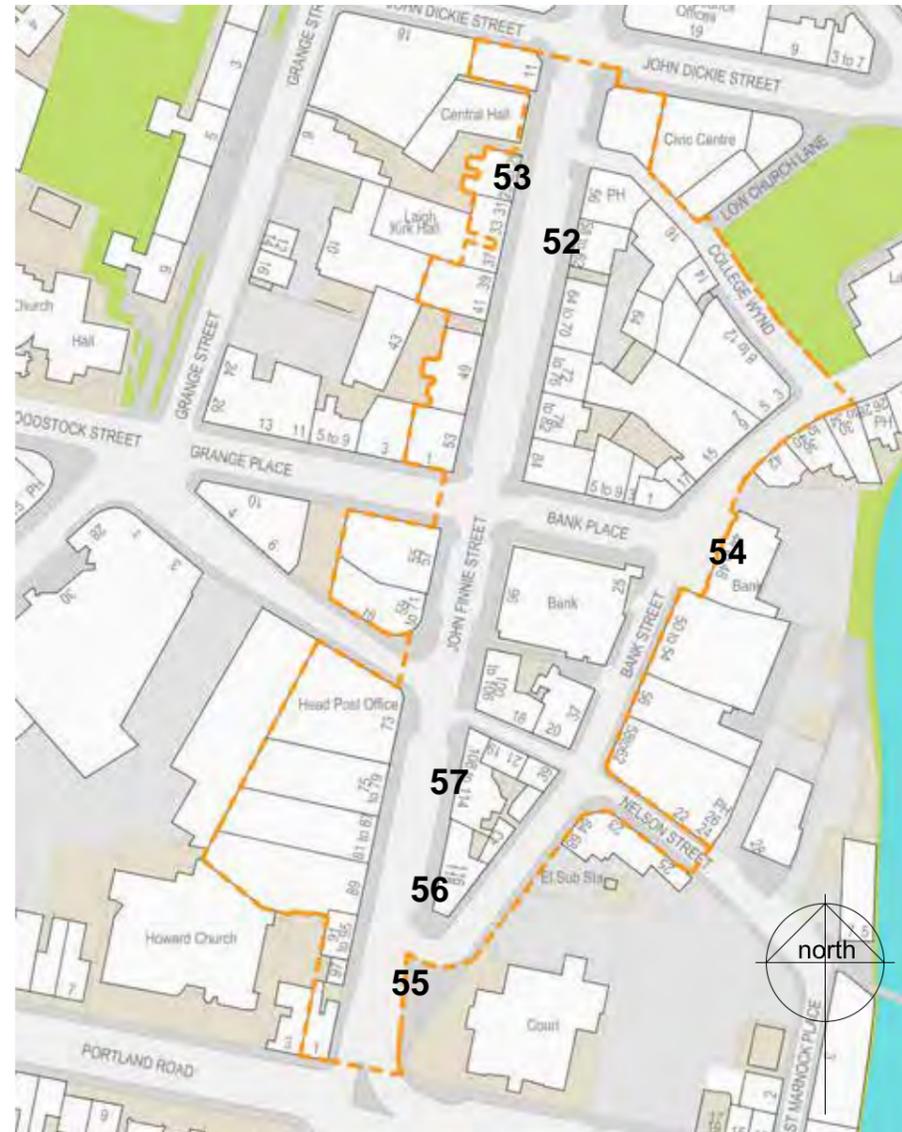


Location Plan: Short term proposals

Nelson Street

In some instances such as along Nelson Street, private property owners have installed their own bollards for security and these should be painted to match the existing and provide a contrast for those with visual impairments. (Proposal 46)

It will be important to unify and provide continuity for wall mounted signage, since the existing signage is incoherent and clutters the visual aspect of the road corridor in addition to impacting adversely on the quality of the buildings. (Proposal 47) The existing footpath surfaces are generally in a good condition, but could be improved as the viability of the entire retail area within the town is considered to be of the highest priority. (Proposal 50)

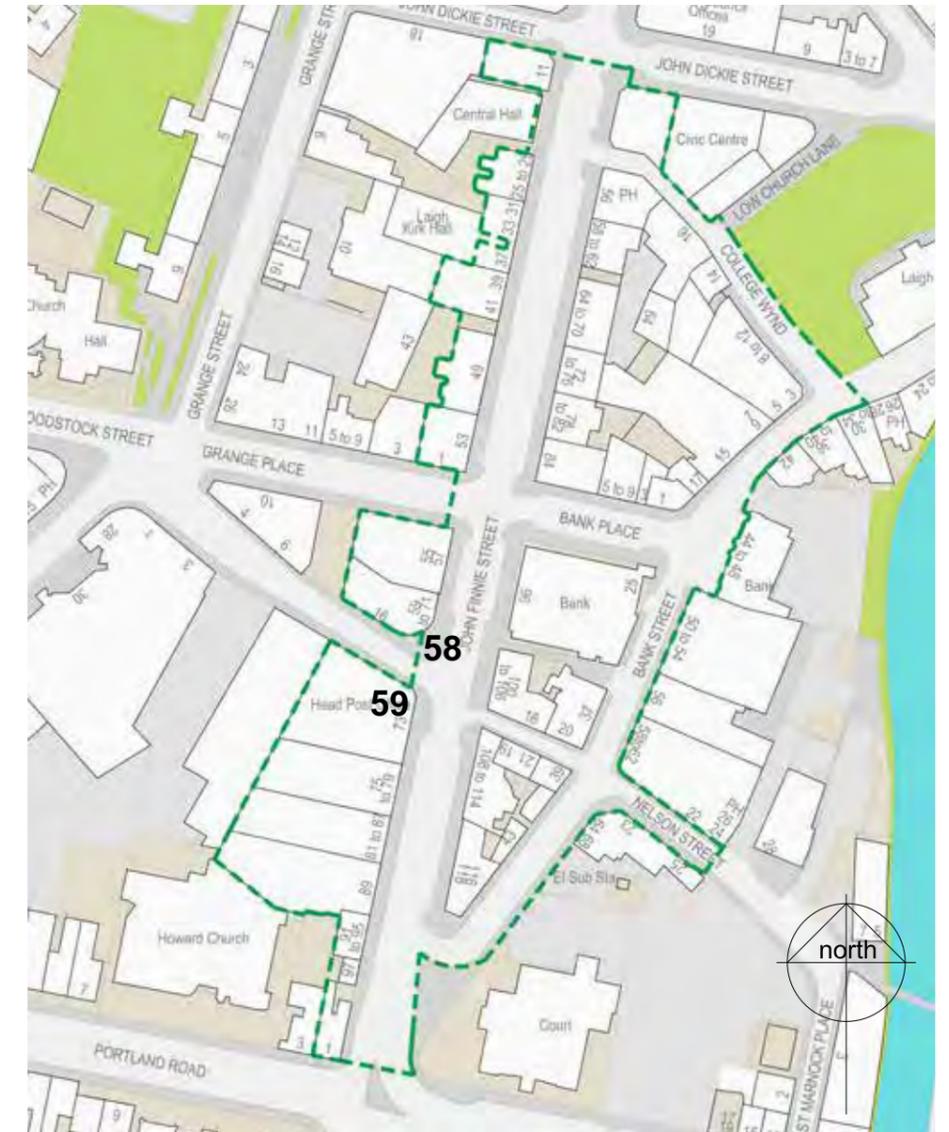


Location Plan: Mid term proposals

Existing situation



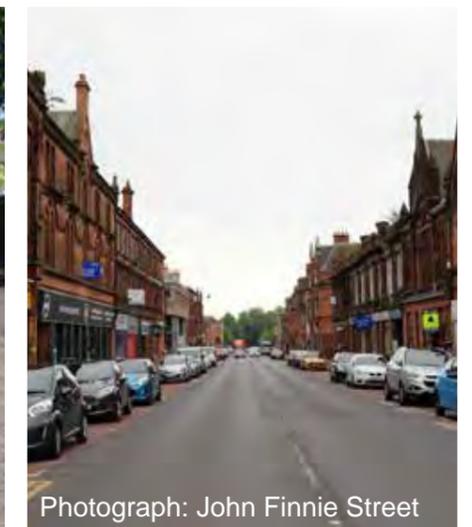
Photograph: Vegetation growth on buildings



Location Plan: Long term aspirations



Photograph: Bank Street Square

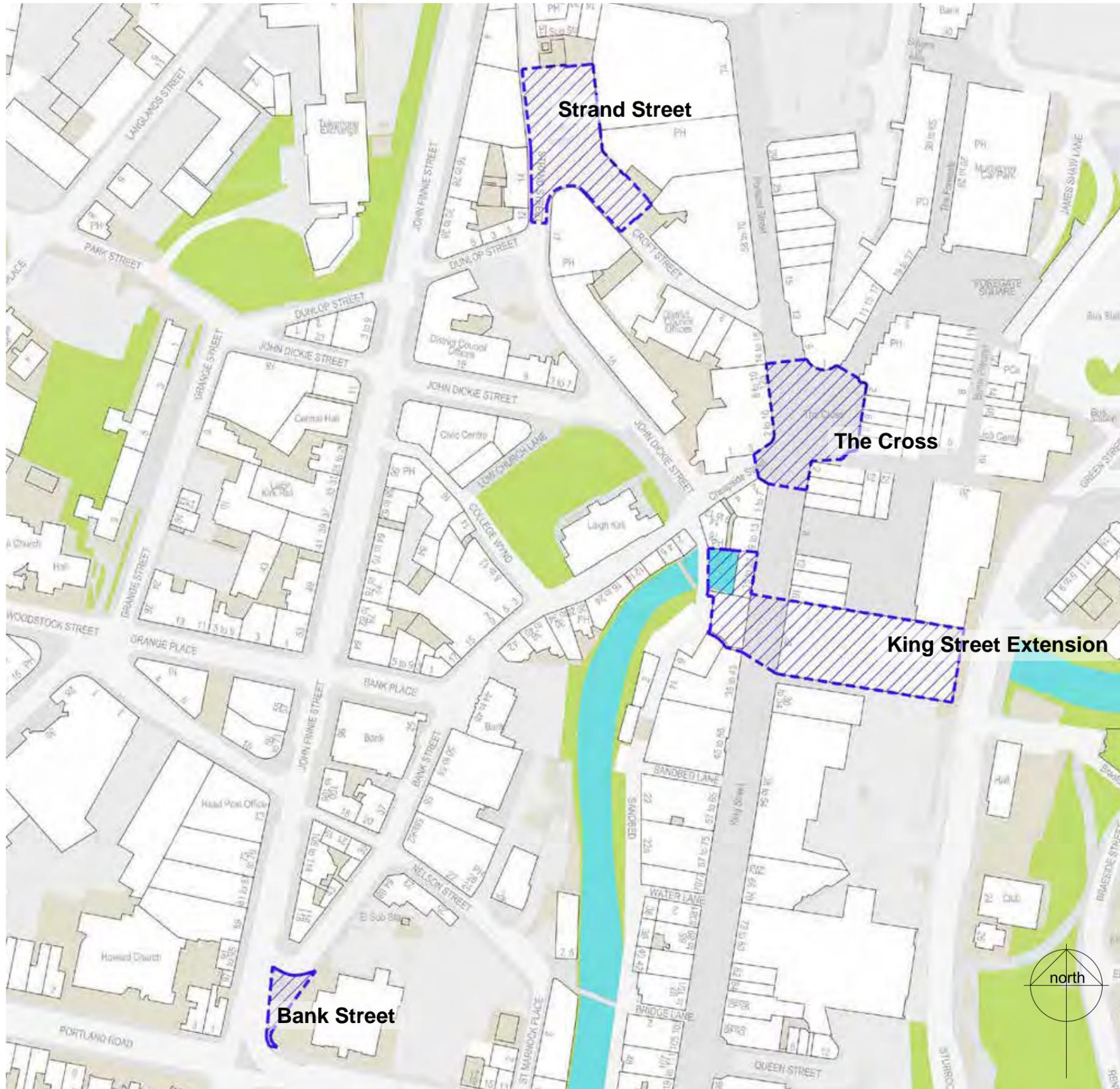


Photograph: John Finnie Street

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3.0 Additional Areas

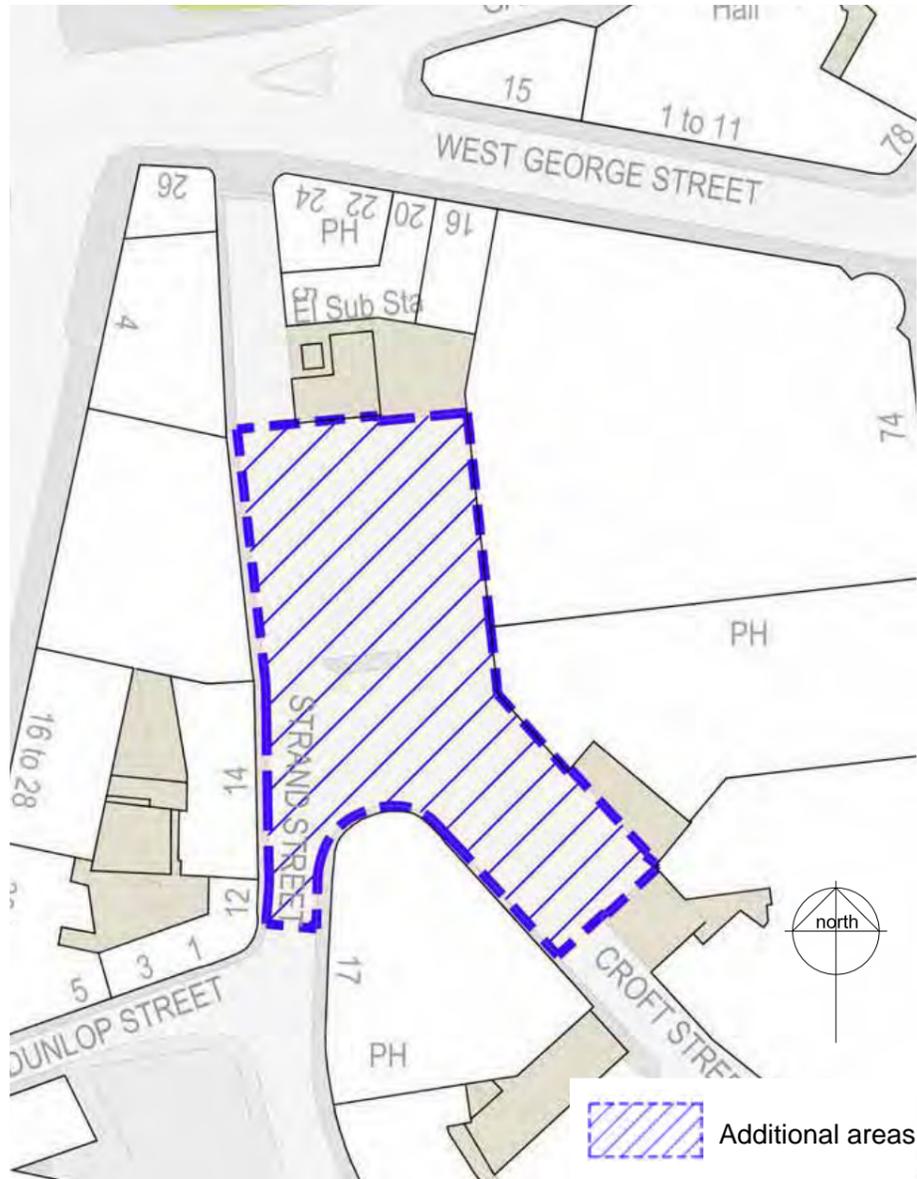
Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



 Additional areas

3.1 Additional Areas - Strand Street

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



Location Plan, Strand Street Car Park



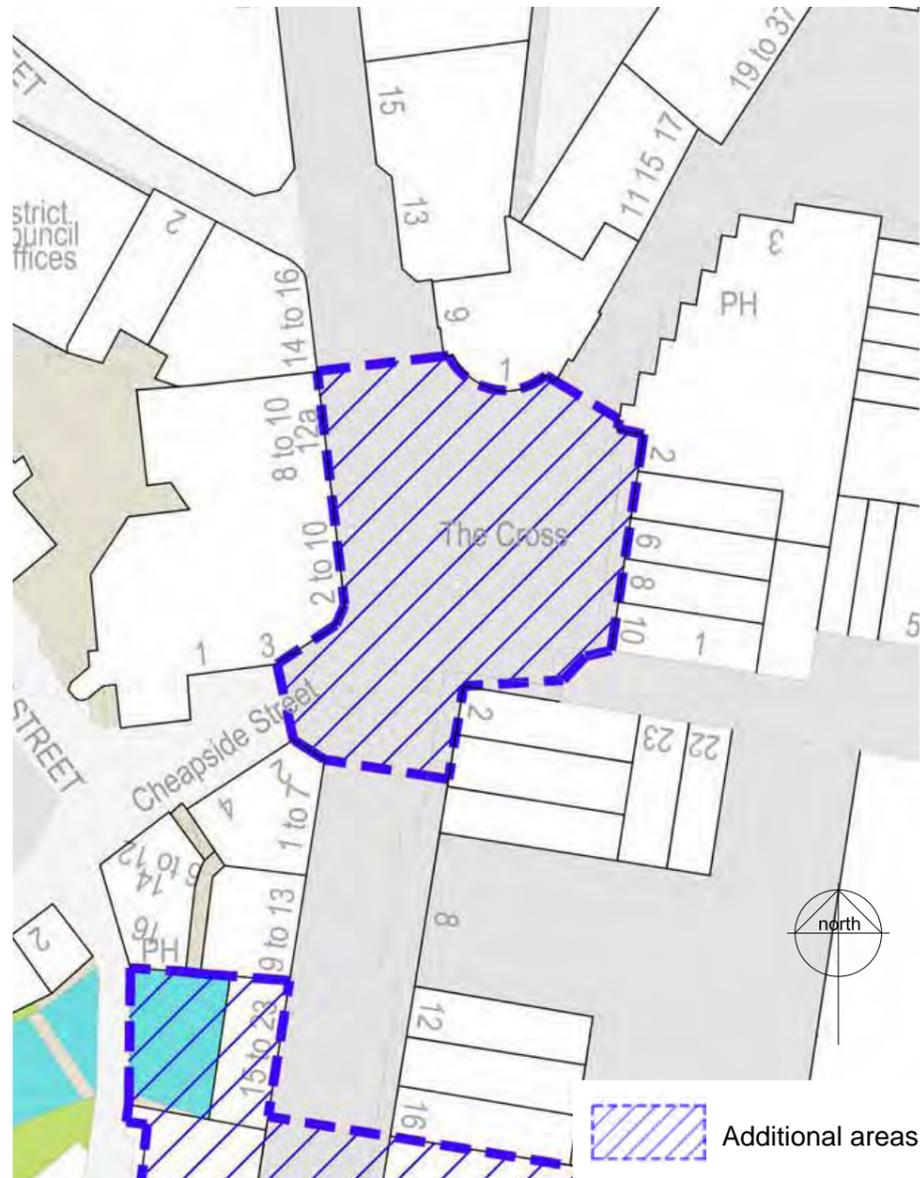
Open Space at junction of Strand St and Croft St.

The existing space behind the opera house offers great potential for staging temporary events. Due to its location so close to the town centre this area would be ideal for such events and a main venue for the town's Music Festival.

The existing car park could be closed off and used as a temporary stage as a venue for open air theatres and music concerts, in addition to an outdoor cinema, where the rear of Opera House could provide a projection Screen.

The area is surrounded by parking possibilities that could be used as alternative parking space when events are taking place at other locations in the town centre. However, the required infrastructure could be installed relatively easily so that the space is ready for use when required.

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



Location Plan, The Cross

'The Cross' Civic Square and Burns Mall entrance

The existing Cross open space is the major civic square area within the town centre, dominated by the Robert Burns statue. However, whilst the statue is extremely prominent and serves as a central focal point, its prominence is reduced by the over structured street furniture, including the massive street lighting columns and circular seating around the trees in the square.

As an important open space, The Cross is an excellent performance venue for arts and music, which is a use that should be fostered where possible, as it is important for County towns to provide such festival opportunities.

There are a number of other sites of varying sizes that could provide complementary venues at car park areas such as Foregate Square, Strand Street north (where video could be projected onto the Opera House wall), the junction of Bank Street and Bank Place and Nelson Street car park.



Photograph: The Cross

Should the proposed King Street demolitions take place, this would provide an ideal location for a major venue in close proximity to The Cross.

- Rationalise street furniture and signage, with a view to providing a more 'slender' suite of furniture with less impact upon the space
- Attempt to ensure that corner buildings remain occupied
- Review lighting within the area
- Restrict vehicular deliveries to times outside of retail hours
- Enhance the Burns Mall facade and entrance

3.3 Additional Areas - King Street extension

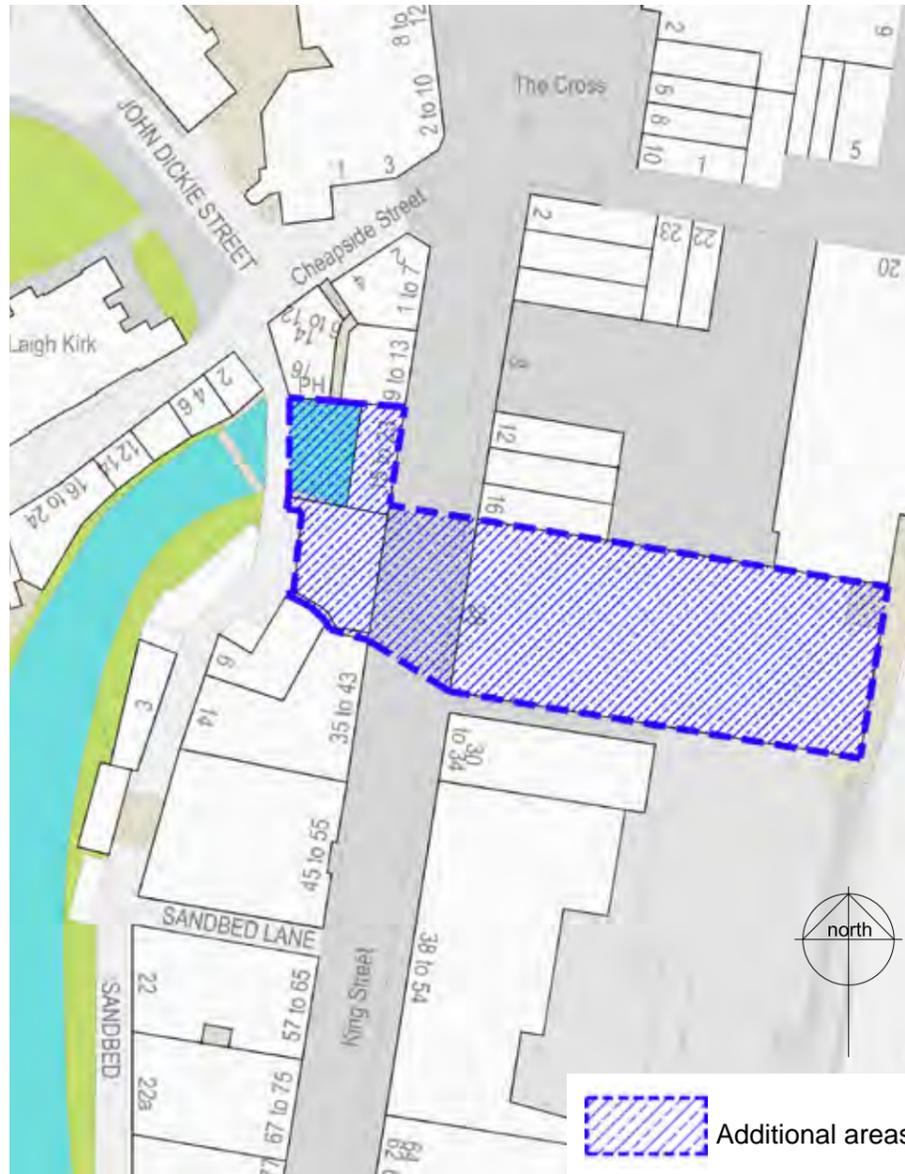
Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



Images: Kilmarnock Integrated Urban Development Plan, November 2011, produced by Kevin Murray Associates

3.3 Additional Areas - King Street Extension

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



Location Plan, possible link from King Street to Sandbed Street

Potential to create new civic space by selected demolitions north of 'No Name Lane'

The demolition of the largely vacant but extremely prominent 'Lusa / Tech Doctor' (Formerly 'Menzies') building would create an excellent opportunity to remove an 'eyesore' building in an extremely important location. Not only would this demolition and that of the smaller Killie Gold / Claire's building open up a new public open space, but it would bring visibility of the river corridor into the King Street shopping area.

The continuity afforded by unifying the Sandbed and King Street corridors would have a massively beneficial effect for the entire area, particularly when the Laigh Kirk tower would also be prominently visible from the northern section of King Street as it is already envisaged within the Kilmarnock Integrated Urban Development Plan (November 2011).

- Main building (Lusa/Tech Doctor) demolition
- Demolition of main building and associated small units (Killie Gold / Claire's) over river bridge
- Relationship between Sandbed and the King Street corridor, with the potentially re-purposed 'bhs' building ground floor to east (and access to Cultural area)

Sandbed Street Connection

The structure over Sandbed that joins the King Street buildings to those west of Sandbed should be demolished with the agreement of the building owners. The bridge creates a visual obstruction that significantly obstructs the aspect of the road corridor and is an unwelcoming encroachment into the road corridor.

The rear aspects of the buildings facing over Sandbed to the newly cleaned river would benefit from being opened up, giving the interior spaces a more impressive aspect.

The rear elevations of the buildings have been improved to some extent by the murals, but the opportunity afforded by the river corridor is presently wasted. Bricked up doors and windows should be opened up and the owners of the units encouraged to use Sandbed as a major access into their properties. In addition, more of the pubs could adopt the balconied use shown by the 'Rock Hard Café'. Beer Gardens could also open up onto the river and make more of the open aspect.

The road surface should be updated and the fan sett treatment implemented along the carriageway, to provide consistency with the remainder of the town centre. The surface treatment used at Bridge Lane across Sandbed to the footbridge has been successful, but would be emphasized by the remainder of the carriageway being paved with whin setts.

3.3 Additional Areas - King Street extension

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

Present location of pedestrian bridge and upper stories



Present condition of pedestrian bridge and upper stories

Images: Kilmarnock Integrated Urban Development Plan, November 2011, produced by Kevin Murray Associates

3.3 Additional Areas - King Street Extension

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



Kilmarnock Integrated Urban Development Plan

Within the Kilmarnock Integrated Urban Development Plan there are various proposals for the areas around Sandbed Street and King Street, which TGP have incorporated into our programme of proposals.

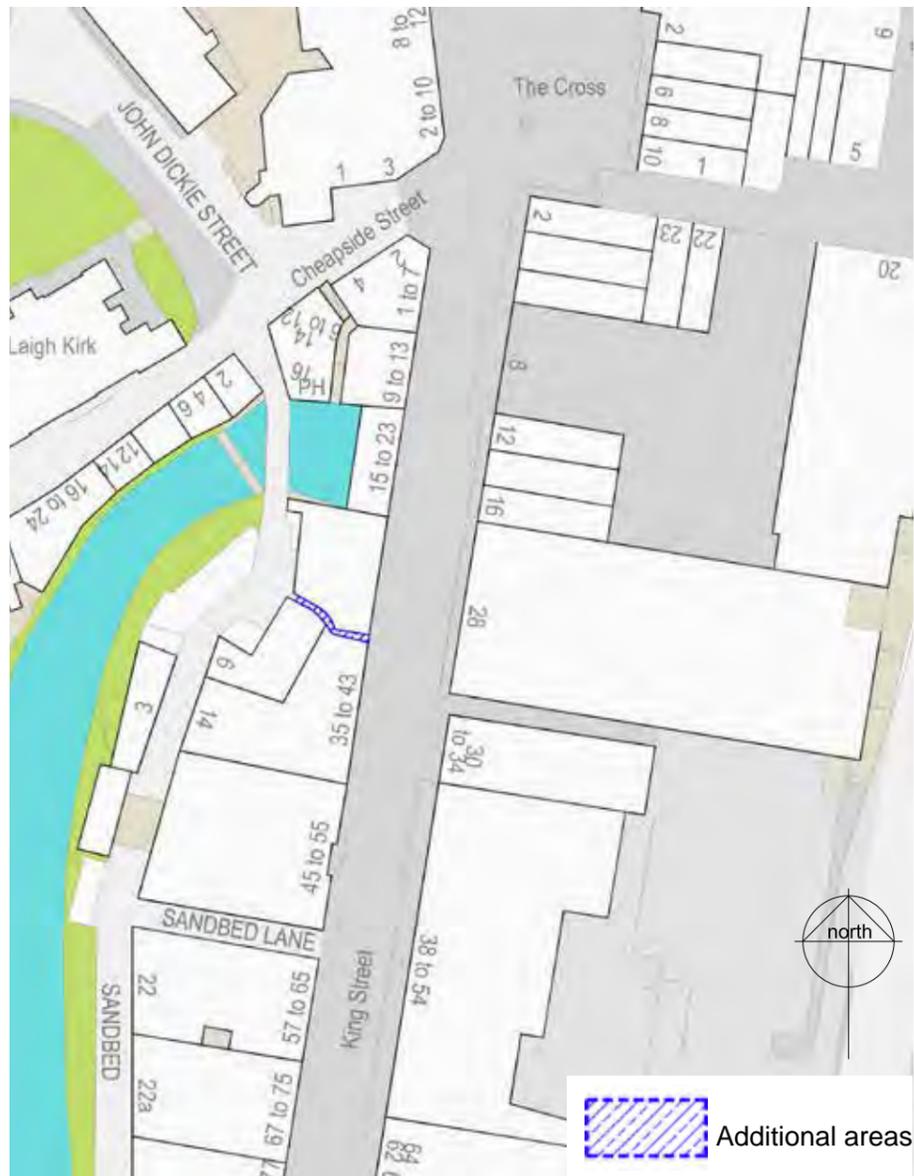
It should be noted (as will be referred to in the later section regarding the outcomes of the Consultation exhibitions) that the demolition of the Menzies building and the Killie Gold/Claire's building were universally welcomed by the public, as was the potential re-use of the 'bhs' building ground floor, for a covered market style retail unit, linking King's Street with the southern end of Burns Mall.



Images: Kilmarnock Integrated Urban Development Plan, November 2011, produced by Kevin Murray Associates

3.3 Additional Areas - King Street Extension / Option 1

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



Location Plan, 'No-name Lane'

King Street - Option One

Should no demolitions be realised, the existing condition of 'No name lane' must be addressed, including improvements to lighting, wall painting and floor surfaces, to discourage the present misuse of the lane.

The lane has great historic significance for Kilmarnock, with its links to Robbie Burns and his poetry. Therefore, should nothing else happen in this location, the lane must be improved and interpretation added, to make users aware of its significance.

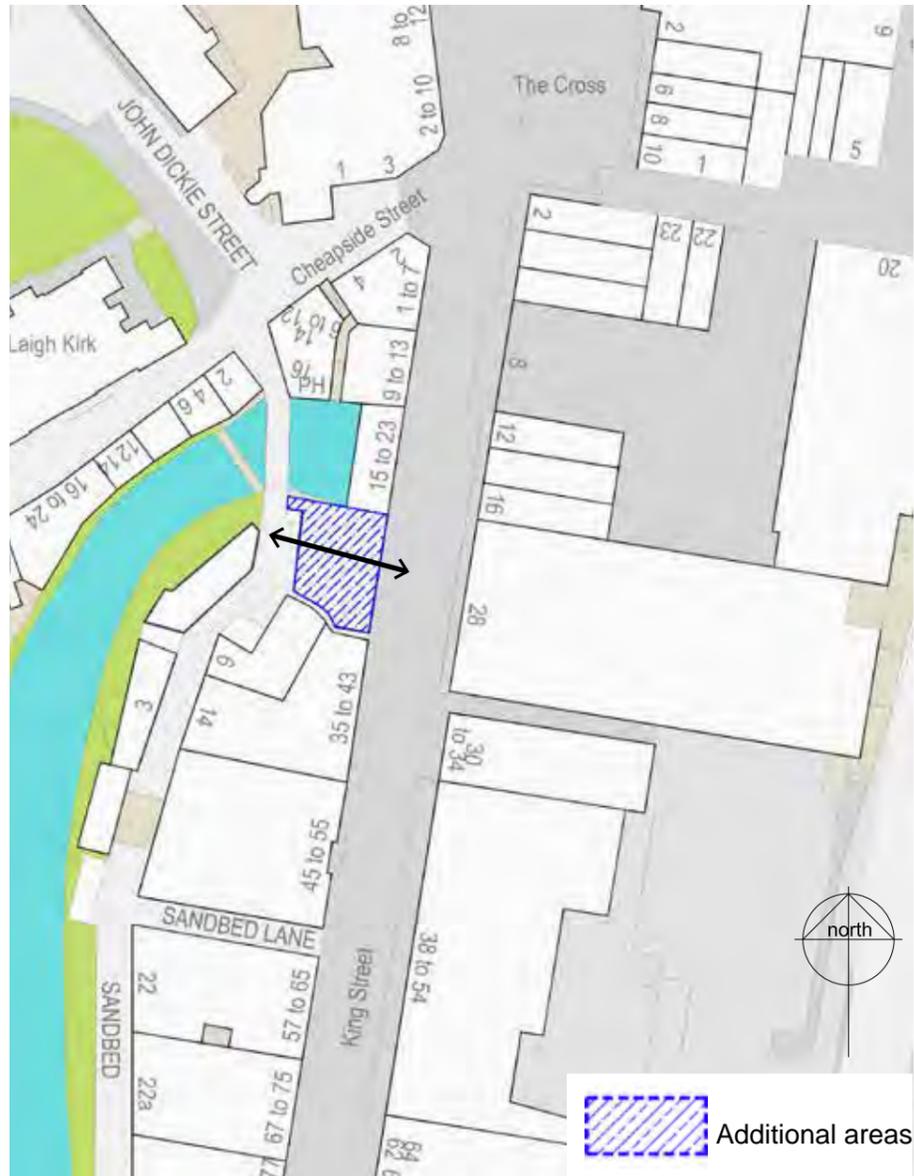
3.3 Additional Areas - King Street Extension / Option 2

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



3.3 Additional Areas - King Street Extension / Option 2

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



Location Plan, Menzies building .

King Street - Option Two

Should the proposed demolition of the Menzies building take place, this open space would become part of a conjoined area that links Sandbed Street to King Street. In addition, this would create a significant open space contribution towards bringing the river corridor into the King Street shopping corridor.

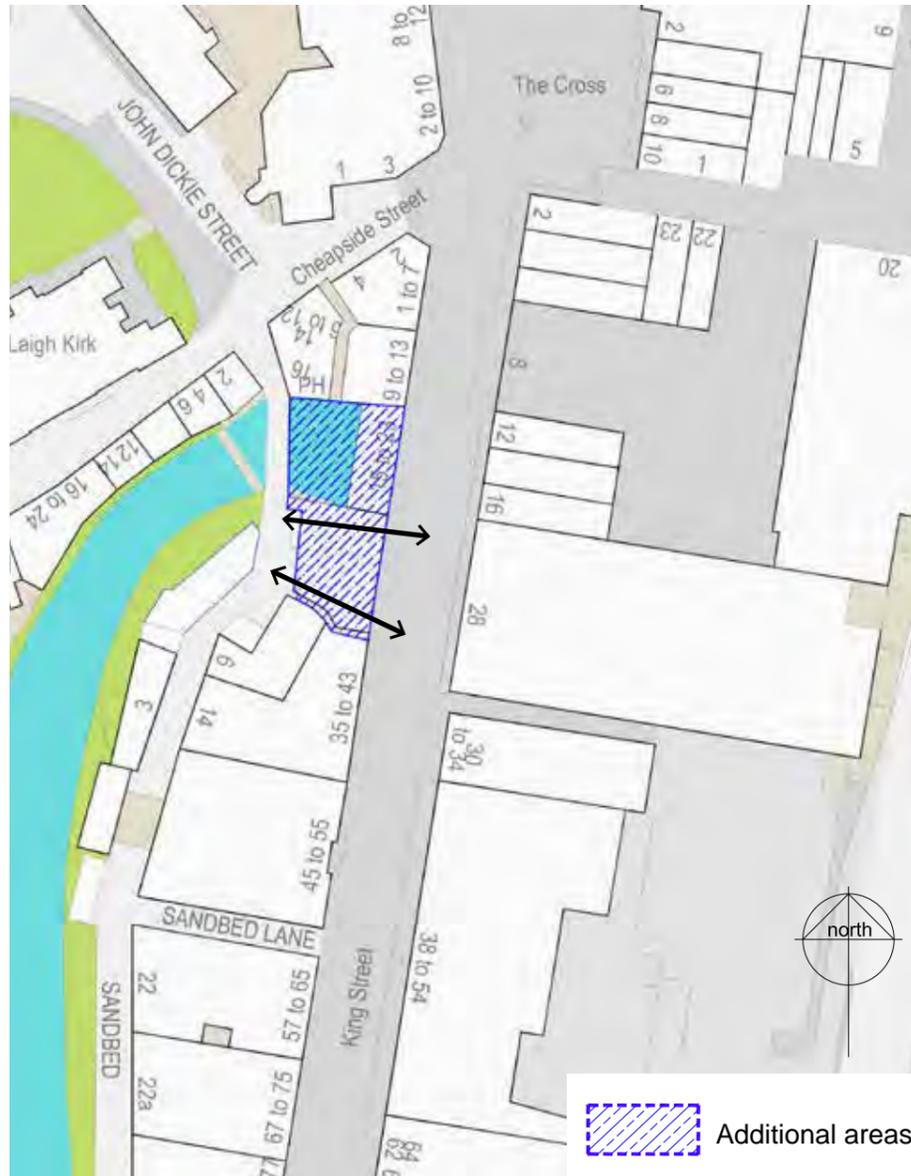
The demolitions would also open up vistas of the Laigh Kirk from King Street, vastly improving the visibility and the ability of users to negotiate the town centre, by notable viewpoints and markers. The presently vacant lot on Sandbed Street would unify with and extend the new King Street open space all the way to the river, also opening up a view of the historic bridge.

3.3 Additional Areas - King Street Extension / Option 3

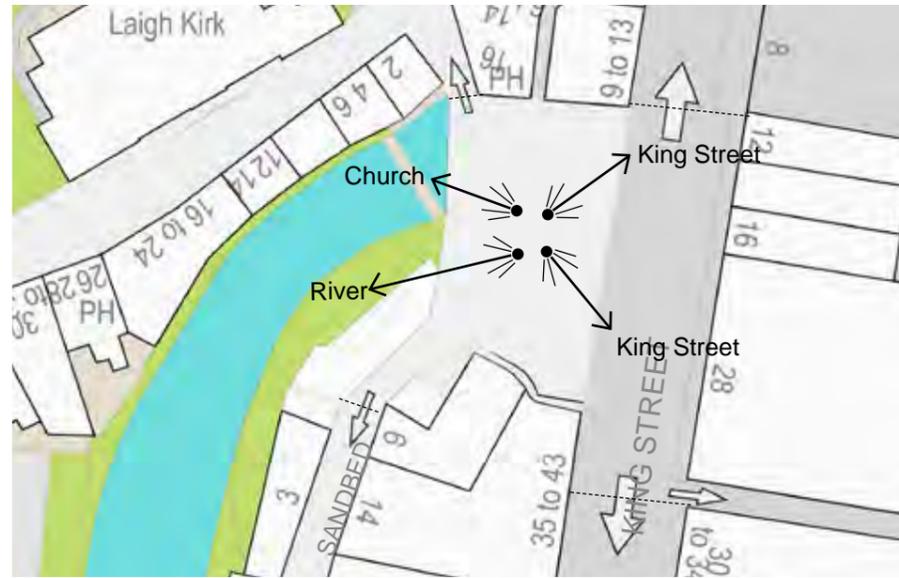
Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



Location Plan, Menzies building and Killie Gold/Clares building.



Location Plan, potential views from open space.

King Street - Option Three

Further demolitions of the entire Menzies building and Killie Gold/Clares buildings would maximise the potential for developing this area. Such expansive removal would open up vistas of the church and the bridge, whilst creating a new prominent open space that combines the northern end of Sandbed Street and King Street. To open up this space would enable views of the river from the newly created open space as it runs beneath the new space.

In addition, the rear aspects of the Bank Street properties adjacent to Laigh Kirk would become more prominent and the entire river corridor would become a prominent feature from the shopping area.

Potential linkages with re-used ground floor of the bhs building and links to the Cultural Quarter, would emphasise and revitalise this space as a major 'heart' area for the town.

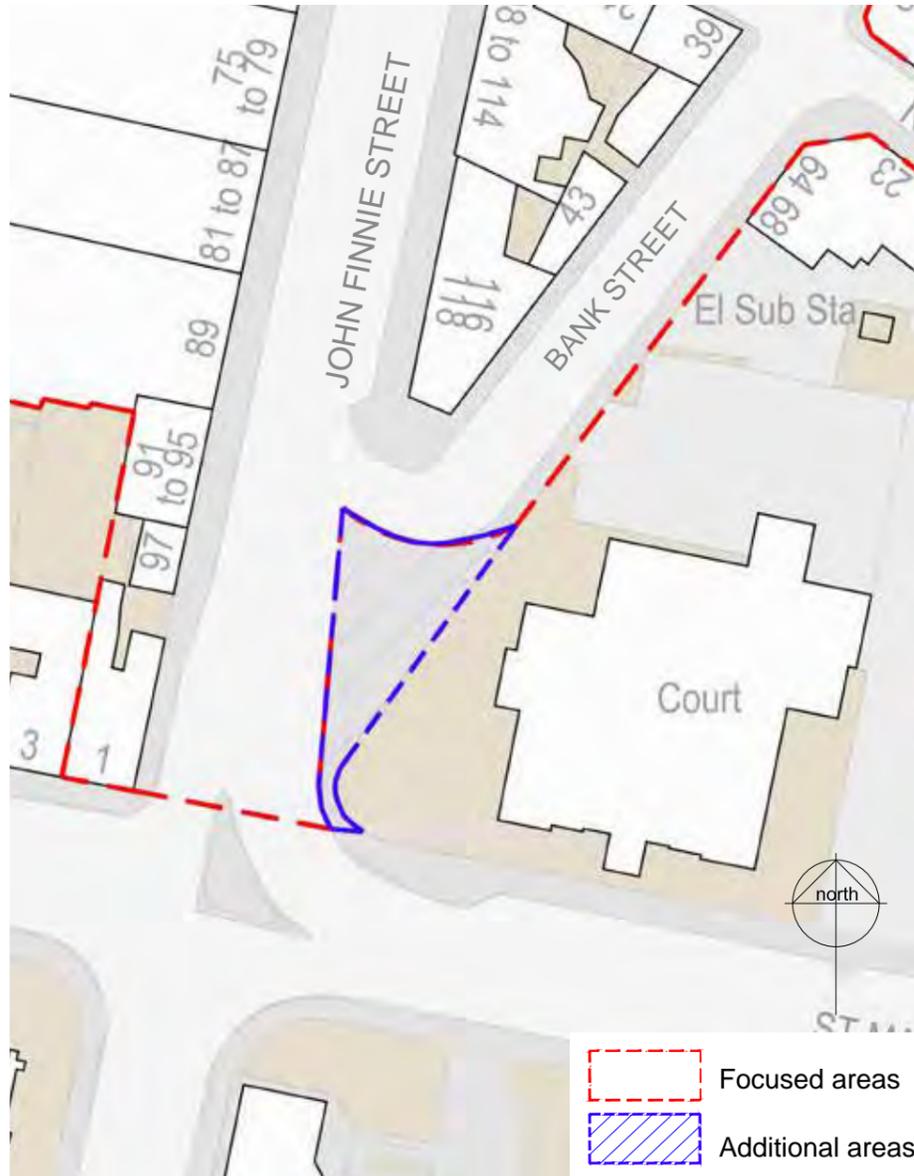
Not only would the new open space vastly improve the King Street corridor and reposition the river into the central town centre area, it would create an entirely new dynamic to the way that users circulate within this core area. Along with 'The Cross' area, the new open space would establish an open and welcoming character to the town centre, an aspect which is presently lacking and contributing to the decline in retail viability.

One of the more important aspects would be that the new open space and greater numbers of shoppers, would improve the attractiveness of the presently vacant bhs building to inward investment, which would in turn, encourage investment into the smaller vacant units along King Street.

Therefore the opportunities offered by this larger demolition programme should not be ignored, as the potential return could be a comprehensive revitalisation of the entire shopping area, reversing the present decline in shopping and occupancy trends.

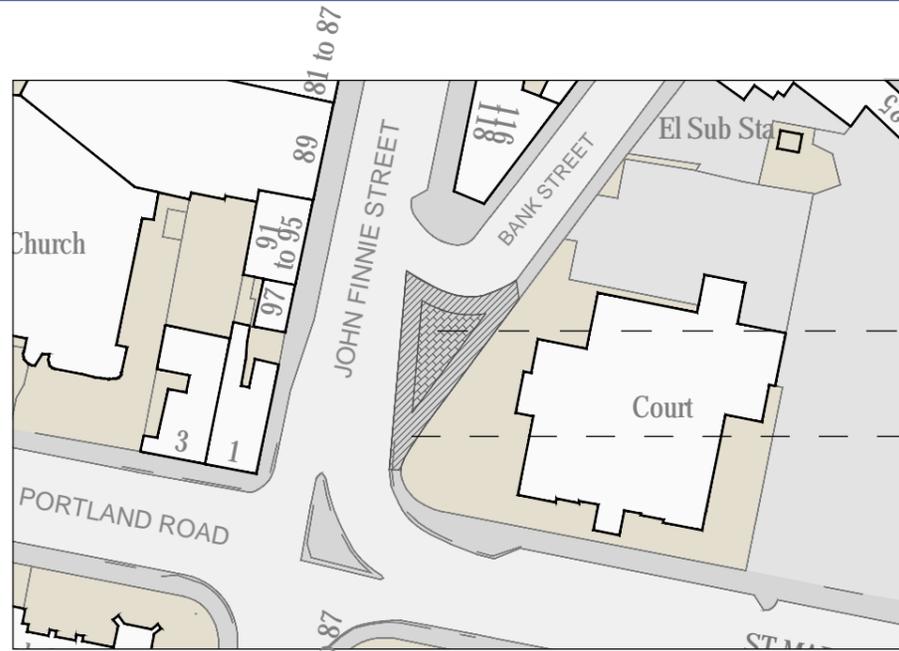
3.4 Additional Areas - Bank Street

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



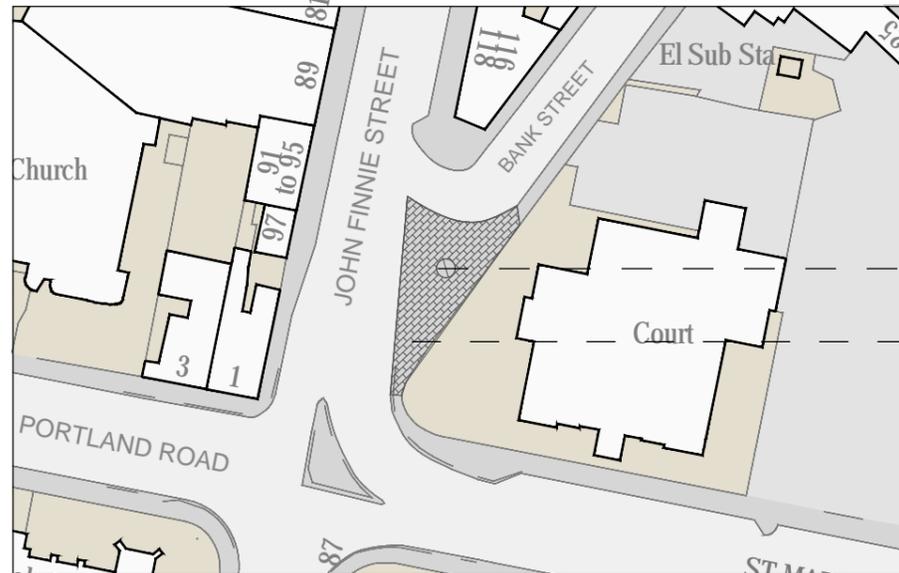
Location Plan. Bank Street square.

The open space at the extreme southern end of the Bank Street and John Finnie Street corridors should be designed to develop a gateway and seating feature area. TGP have prepared design options to provide a quality gateway into the road corridor. This area has the potential to be a well-used congregating area for schoolchildren and young parents, particularly at lunchtime. Therefore, access across the associated roads should be safe and controlled, as it is a major part of the one-way road network.



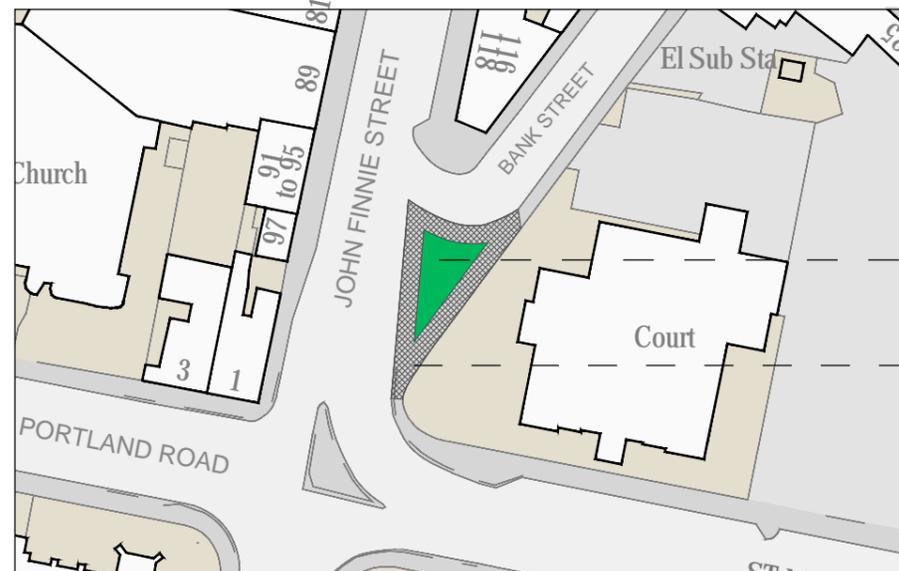
Proposal 1

- — — Paving Type 1 in centre of open space
- — — Paving Type 2 along edge of open space, footpath width



Proposal 2

- — — Potential location for artwork
- — — Uniform paving across public space



Proposal 3

- — — Planting bed within centre of open space
- — — Paving Type 2 along edge of open space, footpath width



Photograph. View looking south across The Cross.

Replacement of Street Furniture palette

Kilmarnock has a distinct palette of street furniture throughout the town centre. Whilst this provides consistency, the present suite is over-engineered, bulky and can be oppressive in areas where there is a lot of furniture within a confined area. The dimensions and impact of the street furniture are also inappropriate to some of the more sensitive areas such as around Laigh Kirk and along John Finnie Street.

The town has adopted the use of Shona Kinloch's excellent artworks, which feature extensively throughout pedestrian areas. This brings the public into daily contact with artworks and the Council should be applauded for this. However, these installations are often in close proximity to street furniture which, rather than being subservient and providing a foil for the art, overpowers and detracts from the installations.

A simplification of the street furniture palette, in combination with a 'de-cluttering' exercise to reduce the volume of street furniture and simplify/combine/reduce the amount of signage within the town centre, will further clarify the environment. Excessive signage can be counterproductive in helping users understand their purpose. However, it is a factor that is often prevalent in town centres, leading to a confused environment, with signs often obscuring or detracting from the very things they are attempting to illustrate.

Whilst certainly not being as excessive as some other towns, Kilmarnock would still benefit from a reduction in the volume of signs. Along with a simplification of the street furniture palette, a reduced volume of signage would greatly enhance the streetscape, affording greater clarity and making the shop fronts more prominent within the streetscape.

The introduction of a more slender suite of street furniture throughout the extended core shopping centre will unify the extended retail area with the existing core area and enhance its overall identity. The existing palette contributes towards slightly overbearing and claustrophobic character of some open spaces, particularly on narrow side streets and road corridors, where the large street furniture encroaches into footways, compromising pedestrian movement.

The material composition of the street furniture should also be reviewed. Whilst the existing black finish is usually common in heritage areas, in particular when used on cast iron. However, the stainless steel street furniture used in Bank Street has already proven very successful and could be considered as a more comprehensive material for use throughout the town centre.

The Council should consider incorporating their 'EA' emblem into the design of a replacement palette. The Bank Street area already has its own character and whilst the materials may be adopted for the larger town centre, the unique 'Bank Street' designs should be protected and kept as a contrasting design.

Examples of possible alternative street furniture palettes are shown on the following pages;

4.1 Overall Elements - Street Furniture

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

Existing bins



Existing benches



Existing lighting columns



Existing bollards



Existing tree grills



Existing cycle stands



Existing guardrail



4.1 Overall Elements - Street Furniture

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

Proposed bins



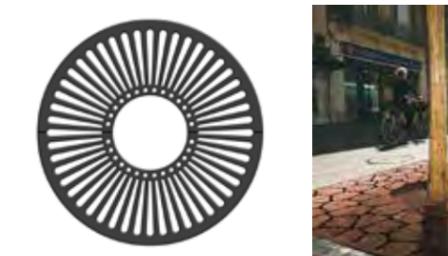
Proposed benches



Proposed bollards - as existing



Proposed tree grills



Proposed cycle stands

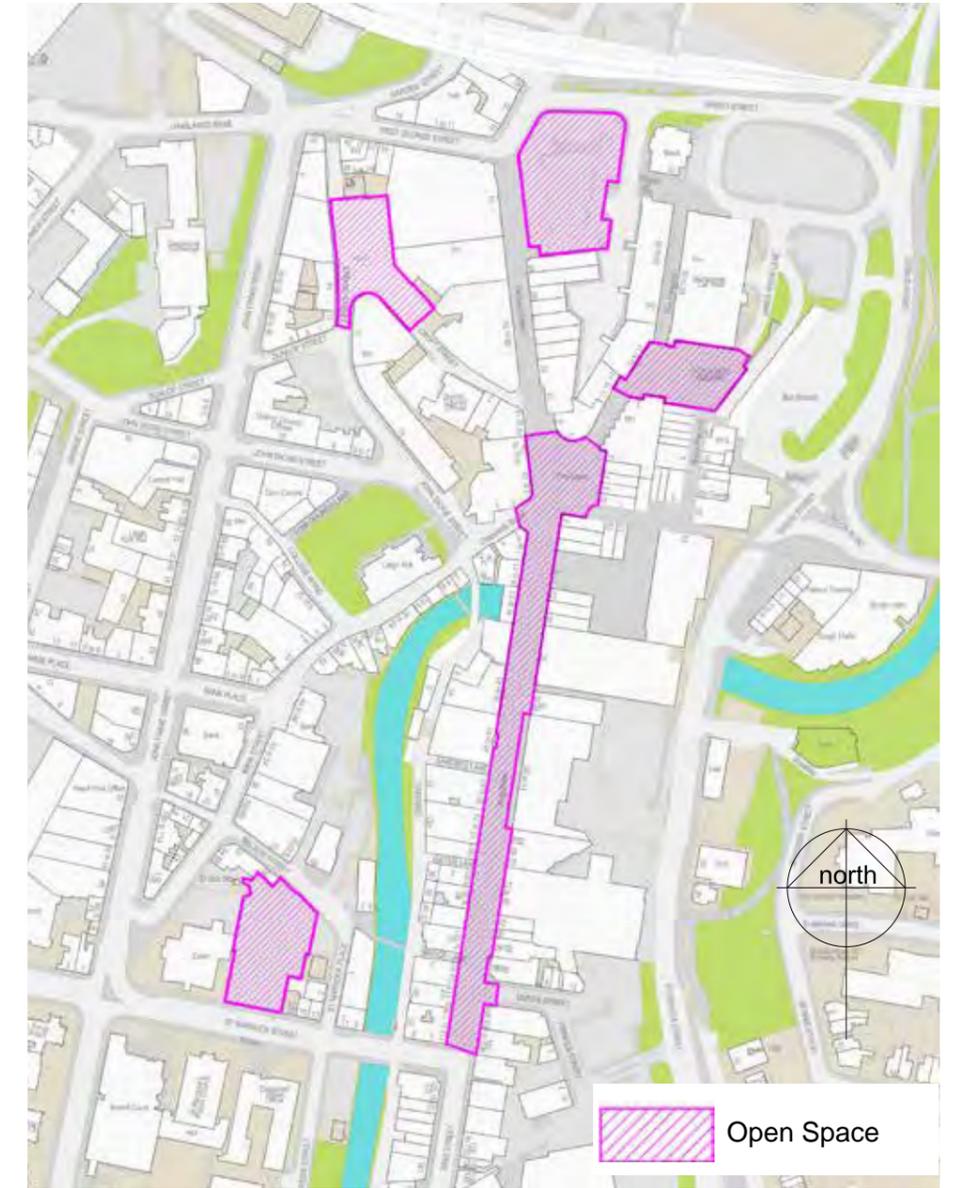
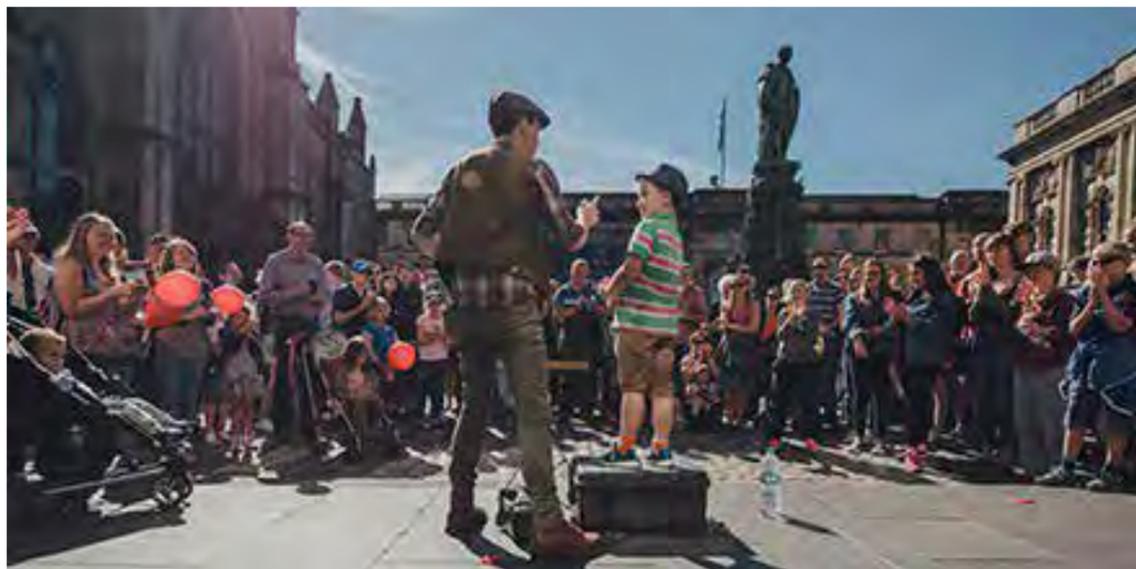


Proposed lighting columns



4.2 Overall Elements - Music Venue

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study



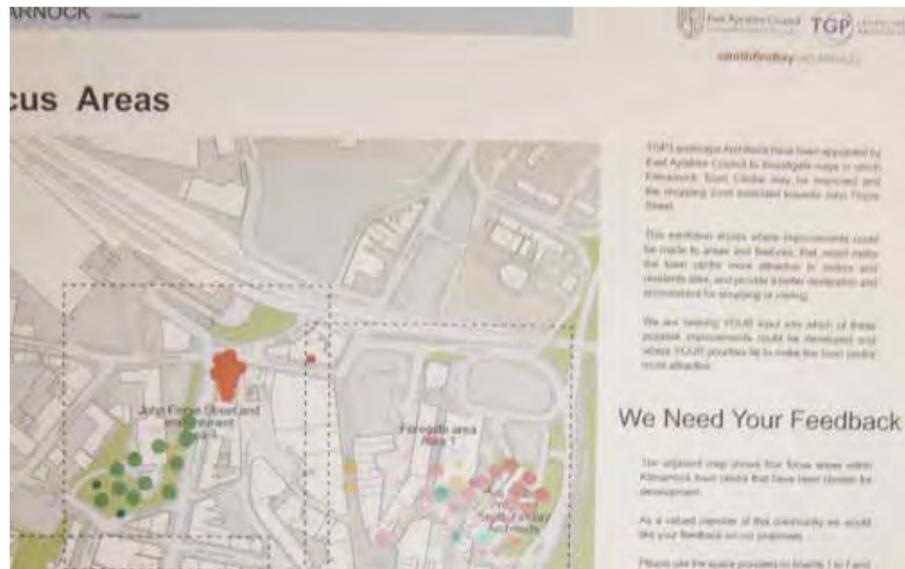
Location Plan, potential open air music venues/events space.

As mentioned earlier, Kilmarnock has many open spaces within the town centre of Kilmarnock which could be used for public event venues. In addition to the new proposed open spaces next to Sandbed Street and King Street, there are numerous locations with a high potential for diverse activities.

From small pocket stages within King Street, to multifunctional, flexible spaces for mid to large stages for bigger concerts and theatre, the centre of Kilmarnock has open areas that would cater for performances of all kinds. As an attraction to draw new users into the town, festivals, events and similar open air events could play a large part in fostering the proposed revitalisation of the retail sector.



Photograph. View looking north-east from Ales Square.



Photograph. Shona Kinloch sculpture.

Associated proposals

During the study process the following proposals were taken into account as suggested by the Council.

- **Cultural Quarter**
Enhancement of links to the Cultural Quarter, particularly from the northern end of Sandbed Street to the 'bhs' building as a major access point from the town centre to the Cultural Quarter. Connections to associated Council strategies, including the Sculpture Walk and the Cultural Quarter proposals should be fostered to ensure that there is continuity between Council strategies and initiatives, and the general public.
- **Interactive media**
Implementation of embedded hearing loops and informative communication through mobile phone apps, alert links to the Council website points of interest etc., for a variety of uses; Guided walks information could also be streamed via mobile phone applets, triggered by proximity to items of interest such as particular artworks, gateways between areas of the town or areas of historic interest.
- **Access for all**
Kilmarnock is already very good at implementing the physical side of 'access for all', such as dropped kerb and crossings, provision for partially sighted or ambulant users. However, a wider implementation of technological aids could be implemented, for instance hearing loops for deaf drivers when purchasing parking permits etc. or information on elements triggered by proximity to a feature such as a sculpture. These information links could be web based and accessed via smart phone applets or included links to the Council's website.
- **Music and Arts Festivals**
Fostering recreation initiatives such as music or arts festivals, in addition to providing venues for other activities should be welcomed, by embedding links to associated areas of interest or upcoming news.
- **Use of open space**
There is potential to provide opportunities for local businesses to have interaction with the adjacent open spaces, such as outdoor areas for cafés and pubs, perhaps with temporary permission or relaxation of alcohol consumption within these outdoor areas during festival dates. Alternative development proposals are provided for the open space at the southern end of John Finnie Street and the potential demolition areas at King Street, to maximise the visual character of this important gateway area.
- **Orientation**
Give greater prominence to views of major buildings and structures including the viaduct and Laigh Kirk from locations within the town. Such structures provide orienting visual markers, when visible they offer an additional factor to help users whether resident or visitors to negotiate their route within the town.

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

KILMARNOCK Overview



Focus Areas



TGP Landscape Architects have been appointed by East Ayrshire Council to investigate ways in which Kilmarnock Town Centre may be improved and the shopping zone extended towards John Finnie Street.

This exhibition shows where improvements could be made to areas and features, that would make the town centre more attractive to visitors and residents alike, and provide a better destination and environment for shopping or visiting.

We are seeking YOUR input into which of these possible improvements could be developed and where YOUR priorities lie to make the town centre more attractive.

We Need Your Feedback

The adjacent map shows four focus areas within Kilmarnock town centre that have been chosen for development.

As a valued member of this community we would like your feedback on our proposals.

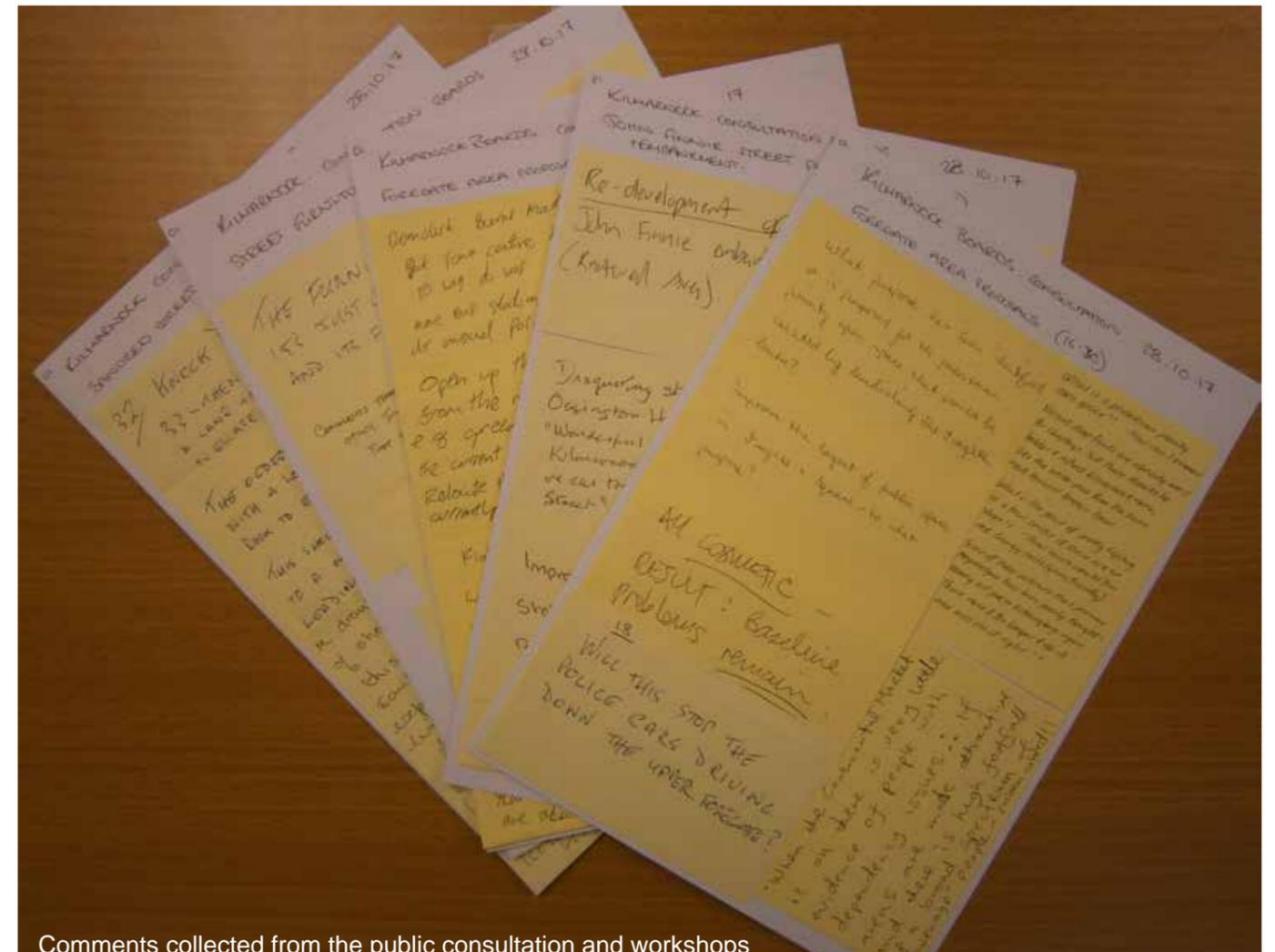
Please use the space provided on boards 1 to 7 and place your sticky dots beside the proposals that you think are of relevance to you and in relation to your priorities:

- High Priority
- Mid Priority
- Low Priority

TGP Landscape Architects and the Council have held a series of consultation and workshop events to capture the views of interest groups, traders and the public, including visiting shoppers. These events proved very successful and as can be seen in this Section, centred around a proposal board display, upon which the attendees were asked to illustrate their thoughts and priorities.

The events were very well attended and we received considerable feedback both interesting and positive. Some of the views were that our proposals need tempered with real world issues such as timing and funding. Some of the feedback suggested that the public would be receptive to more extreme solutions, with more extensive demolitions in favour of the creation of larger open spaces.

The most prominent feedback centred on anti-social behaviour being perceived as the main root problem that prevents a good user environment and so turning away prospective new shoppers to the retail areas.



Comments collected from the public consultation and workshops

6.1 Consultation Results - Public Consultation and Workshops

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

Public Consultation Summary of Results

Proposals ranked by priority

Methodology

Participants in the public consultation and workshops were asked to place coloured dots (red to represent high priority proposals, yellow to represent mid priority proposals and green to represent low priority proposals). The coloured dots representing public priority were then counted and recorded allowing for the proposals to be ranked. They were also asked to attach any comments to the boards that have been included in the appendices and considered in the recommendations section of this report.

Total Number of Participants: 155

Foregate

General Public:

Proposal

High Priority 28. Potential future demolition of the Foregate Centre along Foregate Street to create a pedestrian priority open space



17. Improve the layout of the public space in The Foregate and the Foregate Square



- 03. Reduce the number of seats to discourage loitering and antisocial behaviour
- 26. Improve access to the Bus Station through Foregate Square
- 02. Remove taxis from the Foregate Square by relocating the taxi rank and restricting access to the Square for 'blue badge users' only
- 12. Improving car park security and replace security access doors to the car park stairwells.
- 25. Use vacant shop fronts for displays or artwork to improve the streetscape

Mid Priority

- 07. Repainting of concrete blades at the Foregate.
- 01. Remove public toilet from Foregate Square
- 15. Upgrading facade of Clydesdale Bank.
- 08. Removal of overhangs
- 05. Cleaning of pedestrian bridge towards multi storey car park.
- 14. Bollards to control delivery access.
- 16. Upgrading raised planters of Clydesdale Bank
- 21. Upgrading upper stories
- 10. Repaint of shop frontage.
- 29. Shop front project to improve continuity in shop front design and unify the frontage design.
- 13. Replacement of the existing street lighting with wall mounted LED lights.
- 20. Lighting proposal eg. LED netting lighting. (example: Ashton Lane, Glasgow)
- 30. Implement green wall treatment to the multi-storey SW car park stairwell and the northern elevation of the Burns Mall
- 15. Upgrading facade of Clydesdale Bank
- 04. Replace street furniture and signage for a more modern design.
- 06. Installing planters along pedestrian bridge
- 09. Repainting of steel panels.
- 18. Rearrange bollards and traffic control infrastructure to restrict the impact of vehicles upon The Foregate
- 24. Installation of fixings and supply circuitry for seasonal feature lighting
- 11. Replacement of the soffit lights
- 27. Relocation of the Shona Kinloch sculpture into a more central and prominent location.
- 19. Update the signage for the Bus Station and Burns Mall
- 22. Installation of central red granite strip within the Foregate

Low Priority

Disability groups and local stakeholders:

Proposal

High Priority 28. Potential future demolition of the Foregate Centre along Foregate Street to create a pedestrian priority open space



03. Reduce the number of seats to discourage loitering and antisocial behaviour

Mid Priority



- 25. Use vacant shop fronts for displays or artwork to improve the streetscape
- 29. Shop front project to improve continuity in shop front design and unify the frontage design.
- 17. Improve the layout of the public space in The Foregate and the Foregate Square
- 09. Repainting of steel panels
- 07. Repainting of concrete blades at the Foregate
- 12. Improving car park security and replace security access doors to the car park stairwells.
- 08. Removal of overhangs
- 26. Improve access to the Bus Station through Foregate Square
- 10. Repaint of shop frontage
- 11. Replacement of the soffit lights
- 06. Installing planters along pedestrian bridge
- 02. Remove taxis from the Foregate Square by relocating the taxi rank and restricting access to the Square for 'blue badge users' only
- 13. Replacement of the existing street lighting with wall mounted LED lights.
- 01. Remove public toilet from Foregate Square
- 14. Bollards to control delivery access
- 15. Upgrading facade of Clydesdale Bank
- 20. Lighting proposal eg. LED netting lighting. (example: Ashton Lane, Glasgow)
- 30. Implement green wall treatment to the multi-storey SW car park stairwell and the northern elevation of the Burns Mall
- 21. Upgrading upper stories
- 27. Relocation of the Shona Kinloch sculpture into a more central and prominent location.
- 05. Cleaning of pedestrian bridge towards multi storey car park.
- 14. Bollards to control delivery access
- 16. Upgrading raised planters of Clydesdale Bank
- 18. Rearrange bollards and traffic control infrastructure to restrict the impact of vehicles upon The Foregate
- 19. Update the signage for the Bus Station and Burns Mall
- 22. Installation of central red granite strip within the Foregate
- 23. Restoration of vane feature on the car park facade, incorporating artwork panels.
- 24. Installations of fixings and supply circuitry for seasonal feature lighting

Low Priority

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

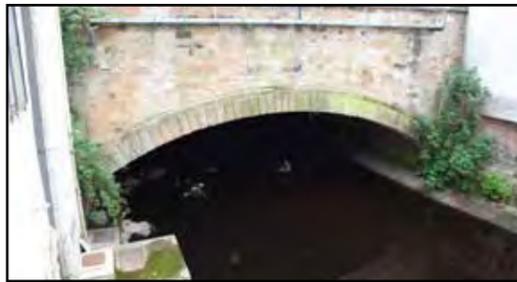
Sandbed Street

General Public:

- High Priority** **Proposal**
 33. Negotiate the selective demolition of buildings along King Street to create a public open space that benefits both Sandbed and King Street



31. Clean out the river bed and the river banks and engaging with the Wildlife Trust.



39. Opening up buildings towards river frontage (cafés etc.)
 37. Develop the open space at the north of Sandbed and open up bridge aspect.
Mid Priority 32. Improving the attractiveness of 'No name Lane'
 40. Remodelling of former 'BHS' building
 35. Reduce volume of street signage and assimilated signs onto a reduced number of combined posts
 38. Removal of pedestrian bridge between the buildings.
 34. Repainting and removing galvanised street furniture.
Low Priority 36. Replace the existing tarmac surface with a fanned set surface to improve the heritage aspect of the corridor

Disability groups and local stakeholders:

- High Priority** **Proposal**
 31. Clean out the river bed and the river banks and engage with the wildlife trust..



39. Opening up buildings towards river frontage (cafés etc.).



Mid Priority

40. Remodelling of former 'BHS' building
 32. Improving the attractiveness of 'No name Lane'
 33. Negotiate the selective demolition of buildings along King Street to create a public open space that benefits both Sandbed and King Street.
 37. Develop the open space at the north of Sandbed and open up bridge aspect
 38. Removal of pedestrian bridge between the buildings.
 36. Replace the existing tarmac surface with a fanned set surface to improve the heritage aspect of the corridor
 35. Reduce volume of street signage and assimilated signs onto a reduced number of combined posts
Low Priority 34. Repainting and removing galvanised street furniture

Low Priority

John Finnie Street and Embankment

General Public:

- High Priority** **Proposal**
 42. Footpath improvements



43. Eradication of Japanese Knotweed



Mid Priority

45. Re-bedding of existing kerbs

Low Priority

41. Repair wall
 44. Provide two locations for artworks on the angled grass area

Disability groups and local stakeholders:

- High Priority** **Proposal**
 41. Repair wall



42. Footpath improvements



Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

- Mid Priority 43. Eradication of Japanese Knotweed
- ▼ 45. Re-bedding of existing kerbs
- Low Priority 44. Provide two locations for artworks on the angled grass area

Shopping Area Extension

General Public:

- High Priority Proposal 59. Purchasing derelict buildings within John Finnie Street



- 56. Revisit one-way system and potentially return roads to two-way traffic



- 48. Removal of vegetation from buildings
- 53. Restoration programme for vacant properties
- 51. Liaise with property owners to foster first floor occupation
- 52. Grant aided shop front improvements programme
- Mid Priority 57. Review car parking strategy to improve pedestrian priority circulation
- 54. Positioning of artwork
- 50. Upgrade walkway and kerbs
- 58. Coordinate the use of vehicular signage to de-clutter the road corridors and enhance the pedestrian priority throughout the entire expanded core area
- 49. Extend public art installations
- 47. Review the amount of necessary street furniture replace lighting columns with fewer brighter and more energy efficient LED lights
- Low Priority 46. Replace street furniture for a more modern design
- 55. New features for triangle at the South entry to John Finnie Street.

Disability groups and local stakeholders:

- High Priority Proposal 48. Removal of vegetation from buildings



- 56. Revisit one-way system and potentially return roads to two-way traffic



- 51. Liaise with property owners to foster first floor occupation
- 52. Grant aided shop front improvements programme
- 53. Restoration programme for vacant properties
- 46. Replace street furniture for a more modern design
- Mid Priority 47. Review the amount of necessary street furniture replace lighting columns with fewer brighter and more energy efficient LED lights
- 49. Extend public art installations
- 50. Upgrade walkway and kerbs
- 54. Positioning of artwork
- 55. New features for triangle at the South entry to John Finnie Street.
- 57. Review car parking strategy to improve pedestrian priority circulation
- 58. Coordinate the use of vehicular signage to de-clutter the road corridors and enhance the pedestrian priority throughout the entire expanded core area
- Low Priority 59. Purchasing derelict buildings within John Finnie Street

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

Survey Monkey Summary of Results

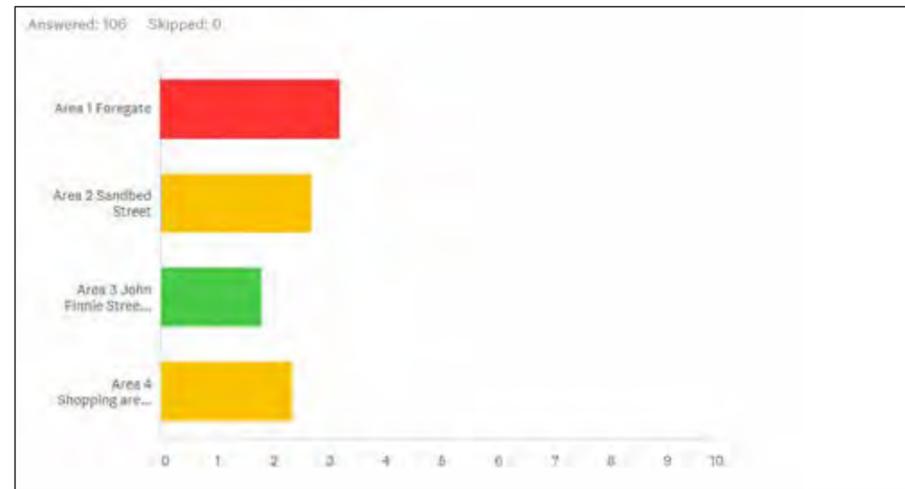
Participants were asked to rank the defined focus areas by priority and then asked a further 4 questions to ascertain which proposals for each area they felt to be of the highest priority. The results of which are summarised below.

Total Number of Participants: 107

Question 1:

Please take a look at the four areas included in the proposal which you can view here. Which area do you see as being the highest priority for action with 1 being highest and 4 being lowest

Results:



Proposed Areas by Priority:

- 1 **Foregate**
48.11% - voted high priority
30.08% - voted mid to high priority
10.38% - voted low to mid priority
9.43% - voted low priority
- 2 **Sandbed Street**
24.53% - voted high priority
30.19% - voted mid to high priority
32.08% - voted low to mid priority
13.21% - voted low priority
- 3 **Shopping Area Extension**
21.70% - voted high priority
19.81% - voted mid to high priority
30.19% - voted low to mid priority
49.06% - voted low priority
- 4 **John Finnie Street and Embankment**
21.21% - voted high priority
21.21% - voted mid to high priority
30.30% - voted low to mid priority
27.27% - voted low priority

Proposals ranked by priority

Methodology

The online survey results were gathered and the proposals ranked based on the number of votes cast to each and the priority rating they were given.

Foregate

Question 2:

Area 1 Foregate - We've identified and numbered 30 different items for improvement. Please view our Foregate proposals here and tell us your top 6 choices (where 1 is highest and 6 is lowest)

High Priority Proposal

03. Reduce the number of seats to discourage loitering and antisocial behaviour



02. Remove taxis from the Foregate Square by relocating the taxi rank and restricting access to the Square for 'blue badge users' only



12. Improving car park security and replace security access doors to the car park stairwells.

28. Potential future demolition of the Foregate Centre along Foregate Street to create a pedestrian priority open space

01. Remove public toilet from Foregate Square

26. Improve access to the Bus Station through Foregate Square

30. Implement green wall treatment to the multi-storey SW car park stairwell and the northern elevation of the Burns Mall

29. Shop front project to improve continuity in shop front design and unify the frontage design

14. Bollards to control delivery access.

Mid Priority

Low Priority

13. Replacement of the existing street lighting with wall mounted LED lights
11. Replacement of the soffit lights
20. Lighting proposal e.g. LED netting lighting. (example: Ashton Lane, Glasgow)
04. Replace street furniture and signage for a more modern design.
10. Repair of shop frontage
07. Repainting of concrete blades at the Foregate.
09. Repainting of steel panels.
23. Restoration of vane feature on the car park facade, incorporating artwork panels
19. Update the signage for the Bus Station and Burns Mall
25. Use vacant shop fronts for displays or artwork to improve the streetscape
18. Rearrange bollards and traffic control infrastructure to restrict the impact of vehicles upon The Foregate
15. Upgrading facade of Clydesdale Bank
08. Removal of overhangs
17. Improve the layout of the public space in The Foregate and the Foregate Square
05. Cleaning of pedestrian bridge towards multi storey car park
16. Upgrading raised planters of Clydesdale Bank
21. Upgrading upper stories
06. Installing planters along pedestrian bridge
24. Installation of fixings and supply circuitry for seasonal feature lighting
22. Installation of central red granite strip within the Foregate
27. Relocation of the Shona Kinloch sculpture into a more central and prominent location

6.1 Consultation Results - Online Survey

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

Sandbed Street

Question 2:
Area 2 Sandbed Street proposals - These are numbered 31 - 40. Please view our Sandbed Street proposals here and tell us your top two priorities where 1 is the highest

- High Priority**
- Proposal**
33. Negotiate the selective demolition of buildings along King Street to create a public open space that benefits both Sandbed and King Street
- 
39. Opening up buildings towards river frontage (cafés etc.)
- 
- Mid Priority**
31. Clean out the river bed and the river banks and engaging with the Wildlife Trust
40. Remodelling of former 'BHS' building
37. Develop the open space at the north of Sandbed and open up bridge aspect.
32. Improving the attractiveness of 'No name Lane'
38. Removal of pedestrian bridge between the buildings.
35. Reduce volume of street signage and assimilated signs onto a reduced number of combined posts
36. Replace the existing tarmac surface with a fanned set surface to improve the heritage aspect of the corridor
- Low Priority**
34. (Repainting and removing galvanised street furniture)

John Finnie Street and Embankment

Question 2:
Area 3 John Finnie Street and Embankment. These are numbered 41 - 45. Please view our proposals here and tell us your number one priority for this area, using the check-box (please check one box only)

- High Priority**
- Proposal**
43. Eradication of Japanese Knotweed
- 
42. Footpath improvements
- 
- Mid Priority**
44. Provide two locations for artworks on the angled grass area
45. Re-bedding of existing kerbs
- Low Priority**
41. Repair wall

Shopping Area Extension

Question 5:
Area 4 Shopping Area Extension - we have numbered these 46 - 59. Please view our Shopping Area Extension proposals here and tell us your top 3 priorities for this area with 1 being highest and 3 being lowest

- High Priority**
- Proposal**
48. Removal of vegetation from buildings
- 
56. Revisit one-way system and potentially return roads to two-way traffic
- 
- Mid Priority**
50. Upgrade walkway and kerbs
52. Grant aided shop front improvements programme
57. Review car parking strategy to improve pedestrian priority circulation
47. Review the amount of necessary street furniture replace lighting columns with fewer brighter and more energy efficient LED lights
55. New features for triangle at the South entry to John Finnie Street.
49. Extend public art installations
59. Purchasing derelict buildings within John Finnie Street
51. Liaise with property owners to foster first floor occupation
46. Replace street furniture for a more modern design
58. Coordinate the use of vehicular signage to de-clutter the road corridors and enhance the pedestrian priority throughout the entire expanded core area
- Low Priority**
54. Positioning of artwork

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

Methodology of Results

The results from both the public consultation in Kilmarnock Town Centre and the online survey have been collated and compared. Each proposal was ranked by priority as expressed by the public, focus groups and online survey results. The ranking allowed each proposal to receive an inverse value, whereby the proposal ranked first received the highest value. This could then be compared to those from each feedback opportunity, this revealed an overall scoring and resultant ranking as shown on the following page.

Total Number of Participants: 262

Example:

	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3
	3 points	2 points	1 point

Public Consultation	Proposal 28	Proposal 17	Proposal 03
Focus groups	Proposal 28	Proposal 03	Proposal 25
Online	Proposal 03	Proposal 02	Proposal 12

Example results:

Results:	
High Priority	Proposal 28: 6 points Proposal 03: 6 points
Mid Priority	Proposal 02: 2 points Proposal 17: 2 points
Low Priority	Proposal 12: 1 point Proposal 25: 1 point

Proposals Ranked by Priority

Combined Consultations and Online Survey

Foregate

High Priority

Proposal

28. Potential future demolition of the Foregate Centre along Foregate Street to create a pedestrian priority open space



03. Reduce the number of seats to discourage loitering and antisocial behaviour.



- 12. Improving car park security and replace security access doors to the car park stairwells.
- 26. Improve access to the Bus Station through Foregate Square
- 02. Remove taxis from the Foregate Square by relocating the taxi rank and restricting access to the Square for 'blue badge users' only
- 29. Shop front project to improve continuity in shop front design and unify the frontage design.
- 25. Use vacant shop fronts for displays or artwork to improve the streetscape
- 17. Improve the layout of the public space in The Foregate and the Foregate Square
- 07. Repainting of concrete blades at the Foregate.

Mid Priority

Low Priority

- 01. Remove public toilet from Foregate Square
- 10. Repaint of shop frontage.
- 08. Removal of overhangs
- 13. Replacement of the existing street lighting with wall mounted LED lights
- 14. Bollards to control delivery access.
- 09. Repainting of steel panels.
- 30. Implement green wall treatment to the multi-storey SW car park stairwell and the northern elevation of the Burns Mall
- 15. Upgrading facade of Clydesdale Bank.
- 20. Lighting proposal eg. LED netting lighting. (example: Ashton Lane, Glasgow)
- 11. Replacement of the soffit lights.
- 04. Replace street furniture and signage for a more modern design
- 05. Cleaning of pedestrian bridge towards multi storey car park.
- 21. Upgrading upper stories
- 06. Installing planters along pedestrian bridge
- 16. Upgrading raised planters of Clydesdale Bank.
- 19. Update the signage for the Bus Station and Burns Mall
- 23. Restoration of vane feature on the car park facade, incorporating artwork panels.
- 18. Rearrange bollards and traffic control infrastructure to restrict the impact of vehicles upon The Foregate
- 27. Relocation of the Shona Kinloch sculpture into a more central and prominent location.
- 24. Installation of fixings and supply circuitry for seasonal feature lighting
- 22. Installation of central red granite strip within the Foregate.

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

Sandbed Street

- High Priority** Proposal 31. Clean out the river bed and the river banks and engaging with the Wildlife Trust.
- 
39. Opening up buildings towards river frontage (cafés etc.)
- 
- Mid Priority**
33. Negotiate the selective demolition of buildings along King Street to create a public open space that benefits both Sandbed and King Street.
40. Remodelling of former 'BHS' building
37. Develop the open space at the north of Sandbed and open up bridge aspect.
32. Improving the attractiveness of 'No name Lane'
38. Removal of pedestrian bridge between the buildings.
35. Reduce volume of street signage and assimilated signs onto a reduced number of combined posts
36. Replace the existing tarmac surface with a fanned sett surface to improve the heritage aspect of the corridor.
- Low Priority** 34. Repainting and removing galvanised street furniture.

John Finnie Street

- High Priority** Proposal 42. Footpath improvements.
- 
43. Eradication of Japanese Knotweed
- 
- Mid Priority** 41. Repair wall
45. Re-bedding of existing kerbs
- Low Priority** 44. Provide two locations for artworks on the angled grass area.

Shopping Area Extension

- High Priority** Proposal 48. Removal of vegetation from buildings.
- 
56. Revisit one-way system and potentially return roads to two-way traffic.
- 
- Mid Priority**
53. Restoration programme for vacant properties.
52. Grant aided shop front improvements programme.
51. Liaise with property owners to foster first floor occupation.
50. Upgrade walkway and kerbs
59. Purchasing derelict buildings within John Finnie Street
57. Review car parking strategy to improve pedestrian priority circulation
47. Review the amount of necessary street furniture – replace lighting columns with fewer brighter and more energy efficient LED lights
49. Extend public art installations
46. Replace street furniture for a more modern design
54. Positioning of artwork
55. New features for triangle at the South entry to John Finnie Street.
- Low Priority** 58. Coordinate the use of vehicular signage to de-clutter the road corridors and enhance the pedestrian priority throughout the entire expanded core shopping area.

6.3 Consultation Results - Combined results

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

Comparing Ranking and Time-scale

The following table allows for comparison between the proposals ranked by priority and their anticipated time-scale for implementation as set out on pages 8-17 of this report.

Foregate:

Rank	Proposal	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term Aspirations
1	28. Potential future demolition of the Foregate Centre along Foregate Street to create a pedestrian priority open space.			X
2	03. Reduce the number of seats to discourage loitering and antisocial behaviour.	X		
3	12. Improving car park security and replace security access doors to the car park stairwells.	X		
4	26. Improve access to the Bus Station through Foregate Square			X
5	02. Remove taxis from the Foregate Square by relocating the taxi rank and restricting access to the Square for 'blue badge users' only.		X	
6	29. Shop front project to improve continuity in shop front design and unify the frontage design.		X	
7	25. Use vacant shop fronts for displays or artwork to improve the streetscape.	X		
8	17. Improve the layout of the public space in The Foregate and the Foregate Square.		X	
9	07. Repainting of concrete blades at the Foregate.	X		
10	01. Remove public toilet from Foregate Square.	X		
11	10. Repaint of shop frontage.	X		
12	08. Removal of overhangs.	X		
13	13. Replacement of the existing street lighting with wall mounted LED lights	X		
14	14. Bollards to control delivery access.	X		
15	09. Repainting of steel panels.	X		
16	30. Implement green wall treatment to the multi-storey SW car park stairwell and the northern elevation of the Burns Mall.			X
17	15. Upgrading facade of Clydesdale Bank.		X	
18	20. Lighting proposal eg. LED netting lighting. (example: Ashton Lane, Glasgow)	X		
19	11. Replacement of the soffit lights.	X		
20	04. Replace street furniture and signage for a more modern design.		X	
21	05. Cleaning of pedestrian bridge towards multi storey car park.	X		
22	21. Upgrading upper stories.		X	
23	06. Installing planters along pedestrian bridge.	X		
24	16. Upgrading raised planters of Clydesdale Bank.	X		
25	19. Update the signage for the Bus Station and Burns Mall.		X	
26	23. Restoration of vane feature on the car park facade.		X	
27	18. Rearrange bollards and traffic control infrastructure to restrict the impact of vehicles upon The Foregate		X	
28	27. Relocation of the Shona Kinloch sculpture into a more central and prominent location.			X
29	24. Installation of fixings and supply circuitry for seasonal feature lighting		X	
30	22. Installation of central red granite strip within the Foregate.		X	

6.3 Consultation Results - Combined results

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

Sandbed Street:

Rank	Proposal	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term Aspirations
1	31. Clean out the river bed and the river banks and engaging with the Wildlife Trust.	X		
2	39. Opening up buildings towards river frontage (cafés etc.)		X	
3	33. Negotiate the selective demolition of buildings along King Street to create a public open space that benefits both Sandbed and King Street.			X
4	40. Remodelling of former 'BHS' building		X	
5	37. Develop the open space at the north of Sandbed and open up bridge aspect.		X	
6	32. Improving the attractiveness of 'No name Lane'	X		
7	38. Removal of pedestrian bridge between the buildings.			X
8	35. Reduce volume of street signage and assimilated signs onto a reduced number of combined posts	X		
9	36. Replace the existing tarmac surface with a fanned sett surface to improve the heritage aspect of the corridor.		X	
10	34. Repainting and removing galvanised street furniture.	X		

John Finnie Street:

Rank	Proposal	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term Aspirations
1	42. Footpath improvements.	X		
2	43. Eradication of Japanese Knotweed.	X		
3	41. Repair wall.	X		
4	45. Re-bedding of existing kerbs		X	
5	44. Provide two locations for artworks on the angled grass area.		X	

Shopping Area Extension:

Rank	Proposal	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term Aspirations
1	48. Removal of vegetation from buildings.	X		
2	56. Revisit one-way system and potentially return roads to two-way traffic.		X	
3	53. Restoration programme for vacant properties.		X	
4	52. Grant aided shop front improvements programme.		X	
5	51. Liaise with property owners to foster first floor occupation.	X		
6	50. Upgrade walkway and kerbs.	X		
7	59. Purchasing derelict buildings within John Finnie Street.			X
8	57. Review car parking strategy to improve pedestrian priority circulation		X	
9	47. Review the amount of necessary street furniture – replace lighting columns with fewer brighter and more energy efficient LED lights.	X		
10	49. Extend public art installations.	X		
11	46. Replace street furniture for a more modern design.	X		
12	54. Positioning of artwork.		X	
13	55. New features for triangle at the South entry to John Finnie Street.		X	
14	58. Coordinate the use of vehicular signage to de-clutter the road corridors and enhance the pedestrian priority throughout the entire expanded core shopping area.			X

7.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

Conclusions

General:

It is clear that the residents and all of those who attended the various consultations, are both passionate about their town and welcome the Council's conviction to improve the town both as a place to live and as a destination for inward investment.

However, it was also clear that those same attendees were disheartened that the town is in decline. The proliferation of 'down-market' retail, bookmakers etc., along with a lack of good restaurants, and the loss of quality retail chain stores, all points towards a town that is unappealing to inward investment.

When seen in the context of easy transport to major centres such as Glasgow, or retail complexes out of the town centre, then Kilmarnock needs to foster competition for retail floorspace in the town centre. Therefore, the town needs to have a new unique selling point in order to once more become attractive for investors.

A reversal of this downward trend is essential to the town having a vital and sustainable future. Initiatives that attempt to address this downturn are universally welcomed, with the caveat that these initiatives must be realised by physical action.

The most prominent example of this attitude was that the consultation event attendees thought that the demolition proposals were not 'going far enough'. Some of the attendees thought that the proposals were 'playing safe' because they needed to be realistic and were therefore tempered by funding concerns.

Therefore, it is little surprise that some of the more radical proposals, particularly the demolition of the Menzies/Killie Gold/Claire's units, the former Bhs building and the potential future demolition of the Foregate Centre, were those that received universal support.

Pride in the town:

There is a general concern that anti-social behaviour is a genuine contributing factor to the decline in the town centre. Whilst there are already many pleasant areas within the town centre, which could be improved and made more attractive, a concentration of anti-social behaviour linked with methadone distribution is rendering those open spaces threatening and therefore unusable. This is obviously a particular issue at Foregate Square.

Consideration should be given to how the impact of dispensing methadone from a central location can be mitigated and if there are alternative dispensing practices which would improve outcomes both for those prescribed methadone and the vitality of the town centre.

Kilmarnock has many exemplary buildings, many concentrated along John Finnie Street and the associated side routes, including John Dickie Street, Bank Street etc. However, many of these buildings are vacant at first floor level and are structurally showing signs of neglect.

The Council has already implemented programmes of grant aided improvements and these are welcomed, but usually rely on the building owners (some of whom are absentee) contributing match funding. There is a public perception that compulsory purchase and regulatory enforcement should be used to ensure that problem buildings are improved.

The Council has recently completed work on the Ingram Enterprise Centre which is a good example of how a building which no longer had a sustainable town centre role has been renovated and restored to provide much needed small business space and new footfall to the town centre. Other such initiatives should be taken forward.

However, the fact that the public see the condition of these buildings as being of high importance, shows that they are genuinely concerned the appearance of their town is having an adverse impact upon the long term viability. In addition, there is a need to bring together the work of the Council in drafting this and other town centre studies into a collaborative, forward thinking, strategy for Kilmarnock Town Centre, which seeks to implement these and other associated proposals, to offer a wider, more sustainable prospect for the future.

Combined with the proposed King Street demolitions and opening up of Sandbed Street, the potential presented by the river was seen as being an opportunity that should not be missed. The presence of the river running through the centre of the town should be an amazing opportunity, as is shown by towns and cities around the world. However, Kilmarnock largely turns its back on their river, illustrated by the poor condition of the watercourse, its banks and that the river is lost underground as it passes through the town.

The railway viaduct was seen as another presently wasted asset, which is mostly visible only to drivers and not seen from within the town centre. Part of this is due to the Clydesdale Bank building and stairwell, which blocks views of the viaduct from Foregate. Demolition of the Foregate Centre, the Clydesdale Bank stairwell and works to the multi-storey car park would open up views of the viaduct, which would be a significant benefit to the town.

Most supported proposals:

Top of the list for almost every user were the following;

- Address anti-social behaviour

- Grant aided shop front improvements programme
- Improve building conditions, particularly those near the train station.
- Fill vacant units and first floor accommodation
- Demolish vacant units where feasible, particularly;
 - Menzies building
 - Killie Gold / Claire's
 - Access bridge over Sandbed Street (and possibly buildings)
 - Foregate Centre
- Repair the wall along the west footpath on John Finnie Street
- Clean out the river and improve the banks, open up windows

The results and comments received at the public consultation showed that the public are desperate to see real change in the town. The level of support shown for the proposals was quite surprising to those who have attended many similar consultations. Even proposals that received medium or low results (in comparison to the headline proposals) received support, including a simplification of the street furniture and de-cluttering road signage.

As has already been seen from the high consultation attendance for this initiative and the Cultural Quarter, there is a real public desire for change and an expectancy that the Council need to source funding to deliver upon this anticipation.

Partnership redevelopment such as the upgrading the bus station, improvements that could be made to both the Burns Mall and the presently vacant 'bhs' building, in addition to volunteer help in cleaning out the river, could ease some of the financial pressures on the Council.

BT were singled out for criticism in not maintaining their building on John Finnie Street, as were the owners of the Ossington Hotel and the Furniture and Beds warehouse, making the northern end of JFS unwelcoming, which is particularly poor considering that this is the first experience of the town for visitors arriving by rail.

In summary, the public are proud of their town, which has significant heritage, great transport connections, and see that Kilmarnock should be the centre for trade in East Ayrshire. However, there are concerns over its decline and long-term sustainability as a commercial town. The public understand that funding for the necessary works - particularly the demolitions, will be challenging, but are determined that it must be found in order to reverse the town's decline and once again make Kilmarnock a thriving centre.

The Council should also consider how the various packages of work required to progress the priorities identified within this study should be taken forward. Appendix D identifies 8 separate work packages grouping priorities of a similar nature together for the delivery of

7.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

Kilmarnock Town Centre Study

these, where appropriate. Work Package 1 will require further more detailed work as part of a longer term strategy, Work package 2 identifies quick wins which could be progressed with relatively little cost. It is important to maintain the momentum developed during the development of this project, by delivering the projects and aspirations identified in this report. Other associated work packages could be taken forward as part of dedicated schemes led by specific council departments or partner organisations.

