

FORT WILLIAM TCAP

Workshop process and outputs

On 15 and 16 May 2014, a charrette was held to develop an action plan for Fort William town centre. The charrette was a stakeholder engagement workshop that promoted a collaborative approach to considering the issues facing Fort William town centre. It focused on delivery and implementation.

The charrette for Fort William town centre ran at the Alexandra Hotel, The Parade in Fort William. It provided a process to build shared outcomes for regenerating the town centre. The approach promoted meaningful collaboration. By working together stakeholders developed solutions jointly and found common ground that allowed pragmatic and deliverable proposals to be developed.

The charrette provided a framework for developing a culture of collaboration, with stakeholders acting jointly to find solutions for the issues facing the Fort William town centre.

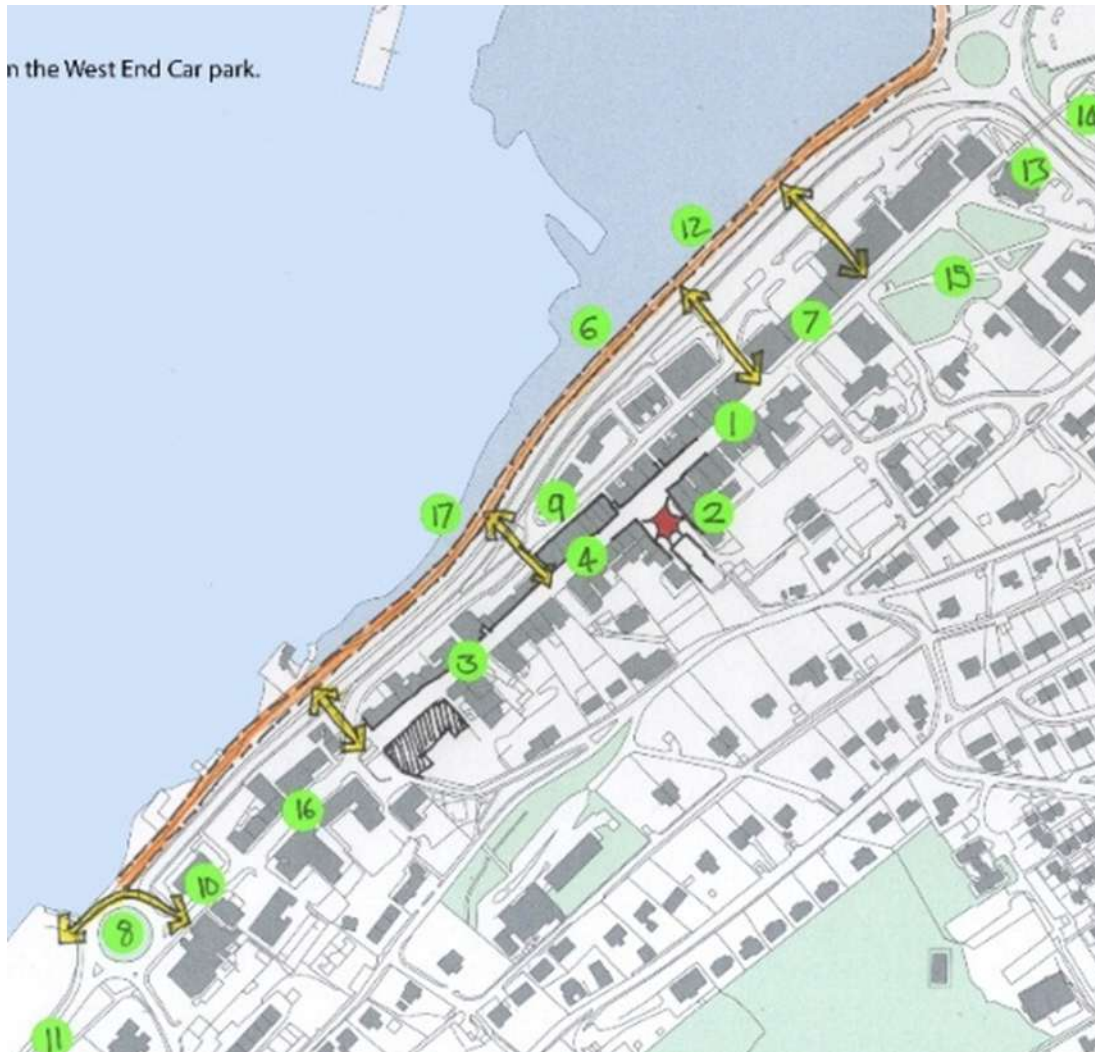
The charrette worked over two sessions where parallel events were held for stakeholders from:

- The Highland Council (THC).
- Local residents.
- Local groups.
- Elected members of THC.

Session 1 - Option Development – held on 30 April introduced and established the background to the charrette. Constraints and opportunities were examined. Stakeholders registered their expectations and requirements. The Town Centre Brief was briefly reviewed. Ideas and proposals were generated by the stakeholders. Principles and vision were developed. In developing proposals, stakeholders suggested that The Highland Council could lead on publishing information about what businesses and property owners can do for themselves, including potential sources of funding.



Stakeholder Ideas and Proposals: Residents



Vision *'An accountable action plan led by the Council but developed, monitored, & evaluated by residents. Proposals should be targeted at the short, medium & long term with clear reporting for delivery.'*

Proposals

Focused around a *green* High Street with improved linkages to an improved waterfront.

Suggestions:

- Equitable accessibility & walkability
- Improve appearance of buildings (green High street)
- Improve links between the town centre & the water/ yacht club
- Shops for local people as well as visitors
- Review of traffic management
- Cover Cameron Square
- Quick wins as well as longer term actions

Stakeholder Ideas and Proposals: Local Interest Groups



Vision 'Let's work with what we have & make it better'

Proposals

The least interventionist set of suggestions seeking to build on the existing assets of the town centre and make them better. Does promote promenade suggestion at waterfront

Suggestions:

- Make Fort William attractive:
Attract people, shop tidying up, remove dilapidation, maintenance/management
- Working with what's there :
Heritage, Culture, Infrastructure
- Waterfront promenade.
- Supportive governance & leadership
- Reduce rates

Stakeholder Ideas and Proposals: Local Business Interests



Vision: *'Outdoor capital ambition: Harnessing talent'*

Proposals

Focused around reclaiming the waterfront, increasing footfall and providing cruise ship berthing.

Suggestions:

- Benefits for business, increase foot fall
- Shops that serve local people
- Clear vision 'Fort William Hub'
- Improve town centre environment
- Quick wins = temporary closure for part of A82
- Build relationships between private & public sector
- Change default = Yes we can!

Stakeholder Ideas and Proposals: High School Students



Proposals

Focused on taking advantage of the waterfront and the town centre's setting, this proposal sought to connect the High Street with the waterfront and create an anchor in the form of a leisure pier.

Suggestions:

- Improve shops on the High Street: Better shops, Shops for locals
- Connect water front with the High Street with a feature pedestrian bridge
- Create an additional pier with attractions such as restaurants & DJ
- Utilise & regenerate the Parade Square Landscape interventions such as water features
- Create a cinema
- Better linkages to supermarkets
- A youth centre where young people can gather

Stakeholder Ideas and Proposals: Council Officials



'Fort William - at the heart of the Loch, the Glen & the Ben'

Proposals

Ambitious proposals focused around a new waterfront promenade, waterfront development at Middle Street and attractive linkages into High Street

Suggestions:

- Ease the barrier effect of the A82, by reducing the dual carriageway to single carriageway
- Create a wide & attractive promenade along the water extending to the Fort
- Introduce tree planting along the High Street to add colour & soften appearance
- Encourage new mixed use developments along Middle St, orienting towards the water
- Improve accessibility between the High Street & the water, by creating clear and attractive linkage through side streets
- Find suitable uses for vacant (or soon to be vacant) buildings

Informing the Action Plan

A **second session** held on 1 May assessed the ideas and proposals conceived in Session 1. This applied an appraisal to consider issues relating to accessibility, economy, community and environment – a sustainability appraisal.

Working in new groups the stakeholders considered the suggestions made for improving the town centre. The ideas were discussed. This resulted in the most attractive ideas being brought forward. These schemes and proposals formed the basis for Fort William town centre's action plan.



Priorities recorded at the workshop

