

DRAFT Fort William Town Centre Action Plan: Theme 1 - Improve Town Centre Environment and Gateway

Priorities identified during evening workshop discussions:

- Bring empty shops back into use
- Improve gateway roundabouts, including signage for drivers
- Create attractive pedestrian route from the Old Fort to the town centre

PROPOSAL	CONSULTATION FEEDBACK	RECOMMENDED RESPONSE
<p>1. Tidy-up High Street and improve the public realm</p>	<p>Priority: Bring empty shops back into use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to meet new fire regulations • Town Team has taken over tidy up: In hand! A magnificent job • Business contribution • Quality mark for businesses • Partnership: Town Team/Business/Council • Potential for pop up shops – Artists’ Exhibition; WASPS? • Shopfronts: Town Team would like to gain access to undertake improvements • Wider issues that should be considered relate to national policy for rates/rents /penalties. • 	<p>Priority noted and highlighted under “Issues and Actions” in Section 2, Theme 1.</p> <p>The Action Plan will be amended to highlight Town Team action and achievements since April 2014.</p>
<p>2. Make town centre gateways more welcoming and attractive</p>	<p>Priority: Improve gateways, including signage to direct drivers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential role for Town Team • Role for public art: Room 13 - shortlisting for Creative Scotland award • Concern over condition of gateway roundabouts and need to create a better impression for visitors; Town would support roundabout improvements and Transport Scotland haven’t said no to community project to improve appearance; • Transport Scotland’s responsibility: Inverlochy junction. • West end roundabout – good; Morrisons – not so good • Road to Isles – occasionally barren / wild flowers • Signage currently v poor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Main road through only, shows the back of the town. Motorists would have no idea there is a High Street there. 	<p>Priority will be highlighted under “Issues and Actions” in Section 2, Theme 1.</p> <p>Feedback will be summarised under “Issues and Actions” in Section 2, Theme 1.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “What’s on” signs needed for visitors at each of main gateways. 	
3. Improve the pedestrian environment between the Rail Station and the High Street	<p>Priority: Improve pedestrian route from the Old Fort to the town centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Currently a disgrace! – PEX X needed at star on diagram (linking waterfront to High Street at north end of bypass) – Double Journeys: R H turn being introduced by Transport Scotland following TS traffic modelling – Need for Transport Scotland to engage with this priority. • Connection from waterfront to Morrisons a priority • Underpass – lighting? Possibly too dark; busker during summer • Area around dual carriageway – dangerous • A Community Rail Fund/Partnership • Need to increase cyclists’ footfall on High Street; Issues: safety, bike racks • Underpass and Railway Station: Tidy up bushes etc 	<p>Priority will be highlighted under “Issues and Actions” in Section 2, Theme 1.</p> <p>Proposal 3 amended to: Improve the pedestrian environment between the Old Fort and the High Street</p>
4. Install a canopy at Cameron Square to promote all-weather use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary canopy possibly popular; a comfortable solution but: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Canopy extremely expensive fee to hire-in: options to buy one? – Fee to Council to hire Cameron Square – forcing people out to other locations – Not benefitting surrounding businesses; + noise issues – Keep walkways clear in front of shops • Events a big success. • Fixed (if possible) canopy in square 	<p>Feedback will be summarised under “Issues and Actions” in Section 2, Theme 1.</p>

DRAFT Fort William Town Centre Action Plan: Theme 2 - Improve movement networks between town centre and surroundings

Priorities identified during evening workshop discussions:

- Make it easy for pedestrians to get from the town centre to the waterfront
- Improve traffic management – particularly during summer months
- Create circular walking route from both ends of High Street with interpretation along the way

PROPOSAL	CONSULTATION FEEDBACK	RECOMMENDED RESPONSE
<p>5. Promote better walking and cycling links between the town centre and the waterfront</p>	<p>Priority: Make it easier for pedestrians to get from the town centre to the waterfront.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create circular walking route from both ends of High Street with interpretation along the way • Bridge over dual carriageway, combined with improved gateways (Proposal 2) • Carry out a survey of people trying to cross the dual carriageway to identify why they are crossing at specific points • Create Heritage Trail (covering all aspects) to include Morrisons car park (link to Proposal 3) • Safety barriers a deterrent to crossing the bypass • A82 partnership campaign Group could use TCAP to add weight to campaign • Proposal to install traffic lights at end of Middle Street and pedestrian crossing (Transport Scotland responsibility) • Pedestrian signposting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Currently poor - needs to be better for unfamiliar – LH had difficulty wayfinding from B&B to tonight’s venue – Car park signage to Town Centre should be improved • Role for Town Team • Local Clubs: Walking Group; Cycling – West Island Wheels • Worth investigating similar project in Callander by Living Streets • Contact Sustrans (national charity for walking and cycling) to raise crossing question. • Questions for Transport Scotland and Sustrans: What would work? 	<p>Priority will be highlighted under “Issues and Actions” in Section 2, Theme 2.</p> <p>Feedback will be summarised under “Issues and Actions” in Section 2, Theme 2.</p> <p>Council Service action to pursue Transport Scotland will be</p>

	<p>What is permissible?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council officials (Development Plans) to submit enquiry to Transport Scotland about improving pedestrian access across the A82 to the waterfront • Zip wire from Mackintosh Memorial Church to Loch-side • Temporary canopy • Cantilevered walkway extending 2M over Loch 	<p>added to “Issues and Actions”, Section 2, Theme 2.</p>
<p>6. Create attractive pedestrian links to the fort</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure action to deliver Proposals 3 & 5 includes improving link to fort • Pedestrian access to Fort currently a disgrace! • Pavement runs out – cobbles are a big obstacle; should be removed by Fort and Morrisons • Fort wall update • Artificial beach at Fort – Glasgow University study 	<p>Feedback will be summarised under “Issues and Actions”, Section 2, Theme 2.</p>
<p>7. Review and improve traffic management on the High Street</p>	<p>Priority: Improve traffic management on the High Street; summer traffic problems discourage local residents from using town centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential improvements to parking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Make parking available on one side of the High Street from Oct – May – Open up High Street to traffic by making parking available from 16.30 	<p>Priority will be highlighted under “Issues and Actions”, Section 2, Theme 2.</p> <p>Council Service action to improve traffic management and parking will be updated in “Issues and Actions”, Section 2, Theme 2.</p>

DRAFT Fort William Town Centre Action Plan: Theme 3 - Develop new uses for redundant space and buildings

Priorities identified during evening workshop discussions:

- MacRae's Lane improvements
- Find alternative uses for Police Station
- Create more good quality greenspace in the town centre

PROPOSAL	CONSULTATION FEEDBACK	RECOMMENDED RESPONSE
Priority for all proposals:	Create more greenspace for community use in town centre.	Priority will be highlighted under "Issues and Actions" in Section 2, Theme 3.
8. Convert Tweeddale House to residential use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval for proposed development of residential accommodation on the High Street (Tweeddale House, planning application for 21 units; Whisky Centre- LHA/HC) • Bringing Tweeddale frontage back to life will make a huge difference to the High Street • New West Highlands and Islands Local Development Plan could set criteria for development at Tweeddale House • Belhaven – sheltered housing 	<p>Noted</p> <p>Council action to include sites in WHILDLP will be added to "Issues and Actions" in Section 2, Theme 3.</p>
9. Promote appropriate redevelopment of Fort William RC Primary School site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospital move now much more likely – disposal of site • Concern as to whether the school should be developed separately, or collectively with Belford Hospital. 	Noted
10. Ensure redevelopment of Police Station site enhances town centre's western gateway	<p>Priority: Find alternative uses for Police Station</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses could include WASP studios, benefitting creativity and making it more accessible at this High Street location • Re-develop as a bunkhouse? • West End of town centre has been improved by Wetherspools development • New West H&I Local Development Plan could set criteria for development at former Police Station. 	<p>Priority will be highlighted under "Issues and Actions" in Section 2, Theme 3.</p> <p>Council Service action to include sites in WHILDLP will be added to "Issues and Actions" in Section 2, Theme 3.</p>
11. Make better use of area surrounding MacRae's	Priority: MacRae's Lane improvements	Priority will be highlighted under "Issues and Actions" in Section

<p>Lane</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patchwork of private / public land ownership could be a problem. Getting 7 or 8 businesses to work together is the challenge - harness owners' goodwill. • What about community ownership of lane? • Vacant and derelict land fund • Town Team needs information on land ownership • Join forces with other groups e.g. Community Council to bring pressure to bear on lazy property owners • Partnership: Lottery/ Community Group /Private owners • Environmental clear-up by community • Potential for new Business Improvement District: worth looking at again, putting aside past differences? Potential project for Town Team? • Pedestrian access to town centre will be improved if lane becomes a thru-route; also potential to provide informal parking. • Tidy up backlands: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Travelodge to supply/empty bin. – Business contribution – Signage 	<p>2, Theme 3.</p> <p>Feedback will be summarised under "Issues and Actions", Section 2, Theme 3.</p>
--------------------	--	---

DRAFT Fort William Town Centre Action Plan: Theme 4 - Maximise the potential of the waterfront

Priorities identified during evening workshop discussions:

- Repair town pier and bring it back to use (Short term)
- Develop new pier/marina

PROPOSAL	CONSULTATION FEEDBACK	RECOMMENDED RESPONSE
<p>12. Create an attractive waterfront promenade</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate adding to shoreline to provide further parking and promenade + pedestrian bridge at Middle St / Ossian Hotel, in addition to pursuing Transport Scotland about A82 improvements • Need to bear in mind that bypass was a response to 3 mile tail backs • Council officials to submit formal enquiry to Transport Scotland about A82 promenade potential. 	<p>Council Service action to pursue Transport Scotland will be added to “Issues and Actions”, Section 2, Theme 4.</p>
<p>13. Develop new west pier and marina</p>	<p>Priorities: Repair town pier and bring it back to use Develop new pier/marina</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a proposal to bring old pier back to life; tourism asset; leisure facility; • What could be done to restore Waverley visits? • Regeneration potential: Marina and breakwater, moorings, hammerhead for visiting ships - all under review/ discussion. Leg off roundabout unofficially approved; need for carpark; visual impact a very important consideration; new pier = brilliant idea • Marina and shoreline association; • Plans prepared for marina at west end – community needs to see drawings /costs. • Interest from Corpach group • Cruise ships need somewhere to shuttle passengers; T-Bar and berthing facilities; product development; • Other similar community ventures worth investigating: Lochaline pontoon; Arisaig, Mallaig; old/new (Alan Henderson) • Sail West (Northern Ireland; Harris; Scalpay) • Crown Estate changes will unleash potential? • Create a new Harbour Authority from the Corran Ferry north? 	<p>Priorities will be highlighted under “Issues and Actions”, Section 2, Theme 4.</p> <p>Feedback will be summarised under “Issues and Actions”, Section 2, Theme 4.</p> <p>Council Service action to scope potential for new Harbour Authority will be added to “Issues and Actions”, Section 2, Theme 4.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council officials to investigate what funding is available and what potential exists for improving Crannog Pier. 	
14. Develop appropriate new cultural attraction at east end of Promenade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create visitor centre at Fort with limited parking? • Maintain contact with Historic Scotland regarding Fort. 	Noted