

Report

Report to:	Community and Enterprise Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	29 August 2023
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	Hamilton Town Centre Masterplan
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ inform the Committee of the work being undertaken to prepare a masterplan for Hamilton Town Centre
- ◆ inform the Committee of the status of Hamilton Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the contents of the report be noted.

3. Background

3.1. Like most town centres across the UK, Hamilton has seen a change in customer behaviour over the past 20 years with resultant vacant retail space. The continued growth of online shopping, mobility of customers and move towards “click and collect” has changed retailer’s requirements with less demand in business models for town centre locations.

3.2. Hamilton is a town centre with strong assets and a strong sense of identity. This is evident through the strong civic presence, business base, historical architecture, and investment to date. These provide the foundations for Hamilton to reassert its role as a strong and vibrant town centre. Recognition of the change in retail requirements allows focus on other key aspects of the town centre including leisure and cultural offering, services, and town centre living. As one of Lanarkshire’s largest towns, Hamilton is well placed to provide a variety of functions to a large catchment area.

3.3. Due to a number of commercial factors, such as a decline in retail provision and loss of key town centre anchors (vacancy rates in our shopping centres sit at 27.2% against a national average of 17.8%), the opportunity has arisen to review a number of prominent town centre sites as a whole with the view to creating a masterplan which will meet the needs of today and tomorrow. The masterplan will bring underutilised areas of the town centre back into use helping to maintain the vibrancy and viability of Hamilton town centre. South Lanarkshire Council, as landowner, landlord or when carrying out our statutory functions, is a key participant in the town centre and as such will take the lead on this project while working alongside our partners and other key town centre stakeholders.

4. **Hamilton Town Centre Masterplan Process**

4.1. Following a procurement exercise, Enterprise and Sustainability Development has appointed 360 Architecture to undertake a masterplanning exercise involving key sites within the south-eastern quarter of the town centre. The vision is for the creation of a high quality, high-density, mixed-use development. This is an opportunity for innovative place-making solutions which will attract developer interest and ensure best value for the site. The vision and framework produced will identify where investment will have the greatest benefit and demonstrate the ambition for the town centre to the community and investors. It will set the context for public and private sector investment over the next 10+ years. The masterplan reflects aspirations for a resilient mixed-use economy which repositions the town centre to meet the needs of 21st century living in a high quality and sustainable manner. Sites identified include:-

- ◆ Keith Street Car Park
- ◆ Townhead Street Car Park
- ◆ Regent Shopping Centre
- ◆ New Cross Shopping Centre
- ◆ Duke Street Car Park
- ◆ the former Bairds Department Store
- ◆ Hamilton Police HQ

The work may identify further sites which will be considered. A plan is available in Appendix 1.

4.2. Key components of the masterplan exercise are as follows:-

Analysis of Market Potential

- ◆ The sites are of a scale and within a location that will require a clear development strategy to maximise development value and the development legacy of the site. A sound understanding of the current market and developer/investor interests will be critical in ensuring a mix of uses which will deliver best value through independent market appraisal.

Land-Use Strategy

The Council and partners are seeking to attract a mixed-use development to support various Council strategies. The land-use strategy will explore a range of land uses including:-

- ◆ town centre living (residential) which will support the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan
- ◆ leisure/retail
- ◆ Public Realm/Green Network/Parking

Demolition and Site Clearance

- ◆ A programme of demolition is likely and could take place in advance of securing sale/disposal to facilitate investment.

Neighbouring Uses

- ◆ The sites identified sit within Hamilton's core town centre. The masterplan must be mindful of neighbour sensitivities, minimise potential conflicts and seek to optimise the functionality of the town centre as a whole.

Sustainable Place-Making/Urban Design

- ◆ Finding the best solutions for the town centre.

Creation of a Development Prospectus

- ◆ A high-quality development prospectus will be produced to enable SLC and partners to share the vision with potential partners and investors and inform investment decisions.

4.3. The development of the masterplan is a unique chance to deliver transformational change to the town centre. The plan will reduce the town centre's reliance on retail and instead focus on the needs and wants of the users of today and the future.

4.4. The masterplanning process will follow a 12-week programme. A period of consultation and community engagement will follow to share and engage on the vision and recommendations for the town centre.

5. Hamilton Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan

5.1. The Hamilton Town Centre Strategy and Action plan was approved by the Community and Enterprise Committee in October 2018 and is due to be renewed in 2023. Progress on the key actions of the 2018 plan are detailed in Appendix 2.

5.2. The Strategy presents a town centre action plan which captures the priorities for Hamilton and illustrates where resources and activities should be focused. The action plan will remain a live document with projects and priorities evolving over time.

5.3. Although the Strategy includes areas not covered by the masterplan, the masterplan is a key component with the outcomes shaping the direction of the Strategy over the next few years. It is deemed prudent to delay publication of the Strategy until such time as it can be updated with key elements of the masterplan. Hamilton Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan and the outcomes of the masterplan will therefore be brought back to Committee at the earliest opportunity.

6. Next Steps and Timescale

6.1. Development of the masterplan follows a 12-week programme with completion due early October 2023. It is intended that the Hamilton Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan will be updated accordingly. Both projects will be brought back to Committee at the earliest opportunity thereafter.

7. Employee Implications

7.1. The development and implementation of the masterplan will be taken forward by officers within Enterprise and Sustainable Development Services.

8. Financial Implications

8.1. Masterplan development will be funded through the Place Based Investment Programme. Both the masterplan and Strategy will identify a number of actions and projects which will require funding. Each will be considered on an individual basis with future approvals being sought by Committee.

9. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

9.1. Both the masterplan and Strategy have sustainability at the forefront. Projects will be taken forward in line with the Council's sustainability objectives.

10. Other Implications

10.1. The risks associated with not supporting the proposal is that Hamilton Town Centre will not have a coordinated approach to the challenges it faces. The Council's

reputation could also be damaged if it is not seen to actively support and encourage innovative investment in Hamilton Town Centre. There is the risk that the town centre will further decline if no action is taken. Further, as landowners of town centre property there is a risk of decline and inactivity if no action is taken,

11. Equality impact assessment and consultation arrangements

- 11.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no Impact Assessment is required.
- 11.2. Consultations have been co-ordinated by Economic and Sustainable Development Services with a range of other council services who have an ongoing role in delivering services and initiatives in our town centres. This consultation and cooperation will continue throughout the duration of the initiative.

David Booth

Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

7 August 2023

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

- ◆ Focused on people and their needs
- ◆ We will work towards a sustainable future in sustainable places
- ◆ Good quality, suitable and sustainable places to live
- ◆ Caring, connected, sustainable communities
- ◆ People live the healthiest lives possible

Previous References

- ◆ Hamilton Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan – Community and Enterprise Resources Committee – 30 October 2018
- ◆ Town Centre and Place Based Investment Programme Update - Community and Enterprise Resources Committee – 30 May 2023

List of Background Papers

- ◆ None

Contact for Further Information

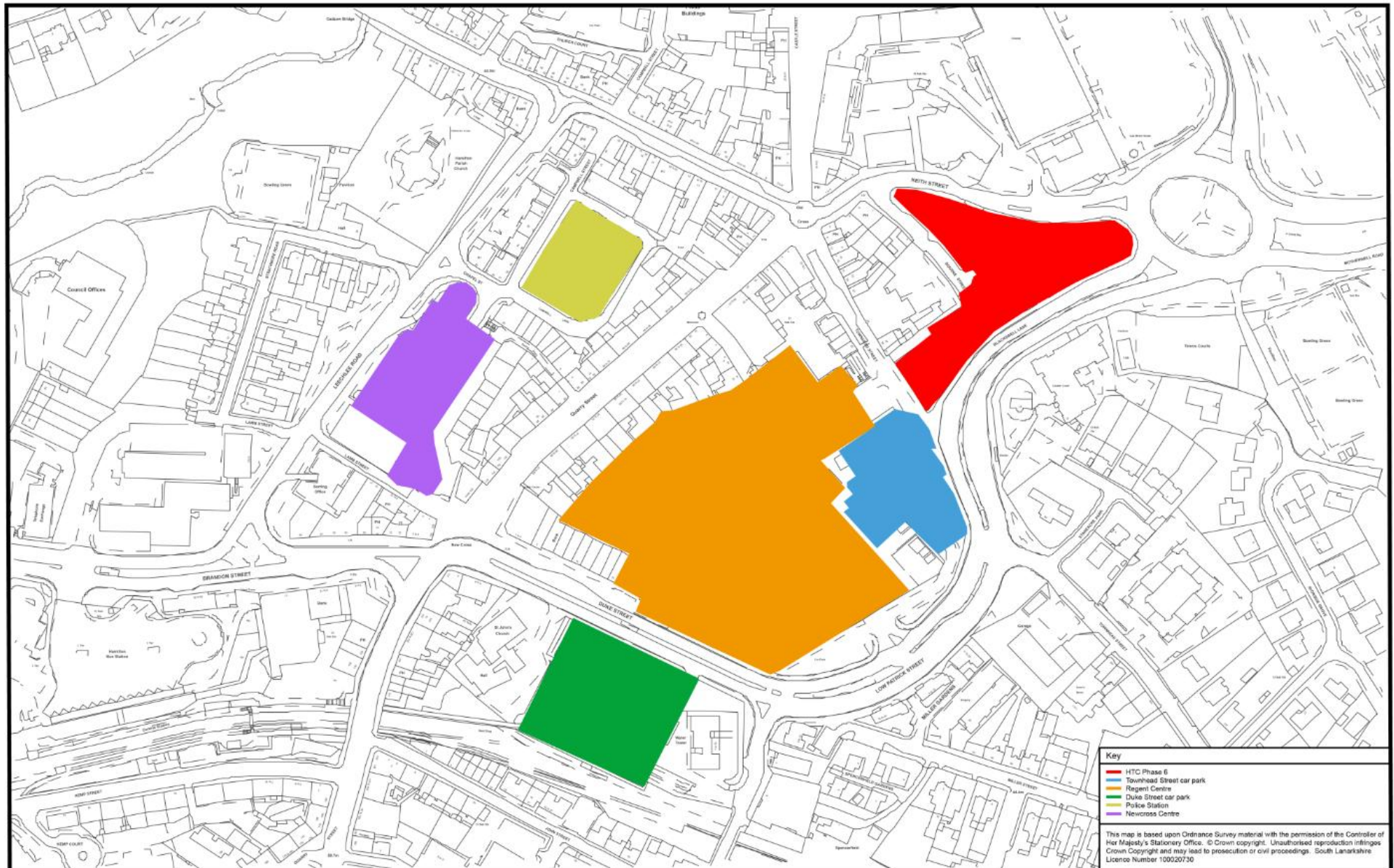
If you would like further information, please contact: -

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Appendix 1 - Masterplan study area



Hamilton Town Centre Action Plan 2018 to 2023 Outcome Summary

The Hamilton Town Centre Action Plan 2018 to 2023 was formally adopted by the Community and Enterprise Resource Committee in October 2018. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, substantial investment was generated to complete the goals of the action plan.

Progress on the plan is as follows:

Action	Outcome
Consult on the delivery of the action plan	SLC works directly with Hamilton Business Improvement District, the Community Participation team and our third sector partners to deliver and oversee the strategy. Each of these organisations represent the local community and business community and give access to a wide cross section of stakeholders.
Townhead Street – Town Hotel and 37-41. Derelict properties which require investment and redevelopment.	Properties at 37-41 Townhead Street were condemned due to structural issues and, therefore, required demolition. Survey work also concluded that the Town Hotel was also in such as state of disrepair that demolition would be the preferred option. 37-41 Townhead Street was owned by the Council and the Town Hotel by a private individual. The Council worked with developers to secure the building of the Premier Inn and Beefeater restaurant. This development has significantly improved the look and vibrancy of this area as well as bring visitors and business tourism to the town centre transforming Townhead Street.
Castle Street – fitting out shop units and providing dedicated business support to create innovative business incubation space.	SLC's Business Support Team has successfully supported both retail and office-based businesses in this area. There has been some turnover in retail units due to the current economic climate.
Former Bairds Unit	As a prominent town centre building SLC is fully invested in the redevelopment of the formers department store and have played an active role in secure its sale to the JD Wetherspoon Group. Development was delayed due to COVID-19 and the Council continue to communicate with the new owners to secure development of this site.
18-22 Quarry Street – regeneration of a derelict area of land.	SLC erected temporary hoardings around this site while discussions were held with owners. Owners confirmed the intent to develop. This was delayed during the pandemic. Work is now starting on clearing the site for development and a planning application granted for food retail provision.
Streetscape Review	Maintenance work has been carried out.
Wi-Fi	SLC worked with Hamilton Business Improvement District to secure free Wi-Fi throughout the town centre.

Campbell Street	The establishment of external seating to create an “evening economy quarter” was trialled by Hamilton Business Improvement District with support from SLC. Feedback was good, and the BID are considering making this more permanent over the summer months with support from SLC.
Gateway Site	Electric car charging points have erected on this site.
Former Salvation Army Building	This building has been sold and is undergoing development into a Harvest Church with works expected to be complete by the end of summer 2023.
Former Vogue Building	Through SLC’s Town Centre Regeneration Fund, SLC worked with Hamilton Business Improvement District and Clyde Valley Housing Association to secure funding to purchase the site. Clyde Valley housing association will now develop the site into 18 flats while retaining the facade.
Former Hamilton Advertiser Building	Through SLC’s Town Centre Regeneration Fund, SLC worked with Hamilton Business Improvement District and Clyde Valley Housing Association to purchase the site. The site has now been developed into 18 flats. This project helps to meet the Scottish Government’s objectives of increasing town centre living and, therefore, footfall in the centre.
Hamilton Towers Phase Six Development	A tender exercise was carried out seeking development proposals for this site. No suitable proposal was submitted. Work is continuing to secure suitable development on this site as part of a larger masterplanning process for the town centre as a whole.
Parking	A consultation exercise was carried out resulting in the Ringo parking system being introduced into town centre car parks. The app allows users to park for a period of time which can easily be extended through the app.
Review town centre accessibility by car and public transport	The Hamilton Active Travel Survey was carried out in 2020. This has informed the Active Travel Study which is in the process of being implemented.
Signage	This project has been put on hold as concurrent projects such as the Active Travel study and reintroduction of traffic to Quarry Street will need to be considered within the review.
Introduction of traffic to Quarry Street	Consultation with business was carried out and a temporary traffic regulation order was prepared for this project with the trial reopening scheduled for the summer of 2020. Due to the pandemic this did not go ahead. Since 2020 more importance has been given to the value of car free space and more outdoor eating areas have been established on Quarry Street. Hamilton BID surveyed businesses on behalf of SLC. Businesses have confirmed that they would like the trial to go ahead. The street will now open to vehicles on a trial basis mid-late 2023.
Public Transport Review	This was considered through the Active Travel Study.

Healthy High Streets	This programme is no longer in operation.
Town Centre Cleansing	Alongside scheduled cleansing works, deep cleans of the centre have been undertaken. This has including clearing fly tipping from private land, gum removal and removal of graffiti and flyposting. A South Lanarkshire Litter Strategy and action plan has now been developed that will see concentrated action on litter prevention and fly tipping across South Lanarkshire.
Festive Sponsorship	At the request of Hamilton Business Improvement District, the Festive Lights Switch On Event is now organised by Hamilton BID with sponsorship from SLC. Hamilton BID has developed a robust sponsorship package for events with sponsors secured for summer events. They will continue to seek sponsorship for Christmas events.
Shape Future Vision through Young People Engagement	A valuable townscape exercise was carried out with a selection of young adults prior to the pandemic. This project will be renewed for the 2023 to 2028 strategy where input from younger generations will be actively sought.
Hamilton Racecourse	Connections with Hamilton Racecourse continue to be built through Hamilton BID and the Lanarkshire Tourism Strategy
University of the West of Scotland	Dialogue continues with UWS to maintain connections with the university and town centre.
Promote the town centre	Actively promoting the town centre is key and several initiatives have taken place in tandem. These include the excellent work carried out by Hamilton Business Improvement District to build a strong social media following and promote businesses and events throughout Hamilton, the development of the insideout app which acts as a digital noticeboard for town centre businesses, events and community organisations and adoption of the new Lanarkshire Tourism Strategy which promotes town centres assets and amenities.

The 2018 to 2023 Action Plan has proven to be successful and has given us a strong grounding which helped to access funding to facilitate regeneration in the town centre.