



Milngavie Public Realm Strategy Proposals



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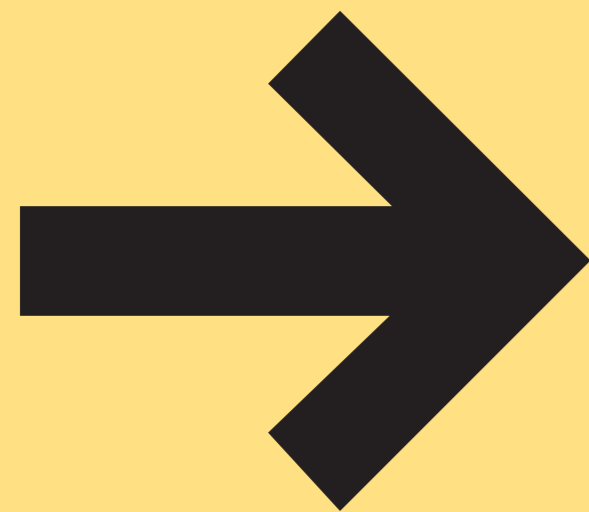
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Since 2018, Page\Park have been working closely with Milngavie BID to strategise and deliver a series of incremental projects in Milngavie Town Centre. BID are a community organisation formed of stakeholders and representatives of local businesses, dedicated to oversee improvements to their shared public realm.

Since 2020, Page\Park has been working develop a public realm strategy for Milngavie. This strategy is supported by comprehensive **analysis** and **public consultation**, both of which are outlined in full in the accompanying report. However, as context for these proposals, a summary of the findings can be found on the following pages.

Analysis

Our analysis of the town comprises historical, contemporary, and experiential aspects, where we have endeavoured to walk and record every aspect of the town 'experience', to more accurately assess how it functions. We have analysed circulation, transport, and use of public space, in addition to undertaking an extensive audit of the public realm.

Public Consultation

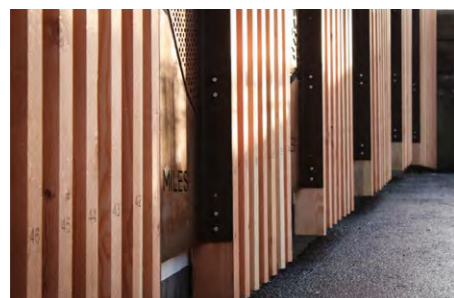
In April 2021, we ran a public consultation exercise to gather feedback on the existing town centre and pedestrianised precinct, and invite suggestions for improvements, with the benefit of local knowledge and experience. This exercise had a strong response rate – 333 persons in total – and gave us a reliable impression of patterns of movement in the town.



1.1 Project Context

Streetscape Phase 1

In 2018, Page\Park were appointed to develop proposals for the start of the WHW; which at that point was an inauspicious tarmac ramp and blank gable wall, leading through a service yard. The initiative was community-led, driven by the vision of a group who understood the value of the asset in their town. Working to a small budget, we designed and detailed a 25m long modular artwork installation. Timber posts with demountable corten artwork panels screen the gable from view, and guide walkers around the service yard. Since widely photographed and shared online, the completed project has exceeded the constraints of its budget, creating a memorable moment in Milngavie's public realm.



Streetscape Phase 2

Following the completion of the WHW project, Page\Park were asked by Milngavie BID to prepare a visioning document for the wider town centre, proposing a phased strategy of public realm improvements. From this emerged two parallel projects: this public realm strategy, and a second phase of streetscape improvements.

We proposed two elements: firstly, a new gathering area located at a key town centre node which will enhance sociability for walkers and the community alike, while providing interpretation on the town and its context. Secondly, the first in a series of modular artwork panels with integrated seating will improve wayfinding and encourage active travel. Illustrated with stories from its history, the units will crystallise the identity of Milngavie in a new 'Heritage Trail'. These works completed in late 2021.

This public realm strategy has been developed in parallel with Phase 2 of the streetscape improvements, and the proposals described above are encompassed within this wider vision for Milngavie.



Conclusions from Analysis

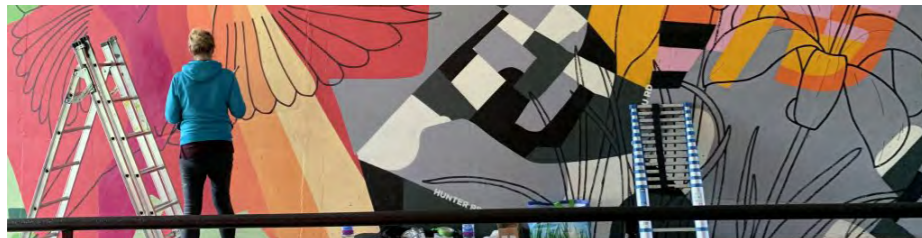
The following is a summary of conclusions from the analysis, and our impressions of the town centre, which have been formed through spending time in the town and developing an intricate knowledge of how it functions. These conclusions are expanded in the accompanying report:

A Cluttered Setting

The streetscape of Milngavie – planters, benches, wayfinding – is the product of an enthusiastic community looking to play a part in the betterment of the town centre. However, the resultant streetscape is too busy, visually uncoordinated, and can be confusing for visitors. Furthermore, tired and damaged pieces of street furniture in the town centre lessen the beauty of the setting in places.

Small Projects, Big Impacts

The cluttered setting does not diminish from the achievement of the community in delivering numerous small projects, which each have an impact in their part of Milngavie. However, the impact of these could be amplified with a more co-ordinated overarching strategy.



The Pedestrian Precinct

Bucking the trend of the diminished high street, Douglas Street appears consistently busy and commercially well serviced. There are few apparent gaps or vacant units, and the centre is busy throughout the day.

Over Reliance on Parking

Despite good public transport links, Milngavie town centre is populated by car parks of various sizes, which occupy several interesting potential development sites. It should be considered whether its availability encourages driving rather than use of public transport or active travel.

Underpass Links

The pedestrianised precinct north of the bypass road is connected to the south via 3no. underpasses. These vary in quality and appearance but are a functional necessity. These are key components of circulation and should be prioritised in any improvement projects.

Neglected River Connection

The river is Milngavie's most important historical asset. The streetscape has a very close physical relationship with the river today, however, the riverside areas are the most neglected parts of the town centre, and a missed opportunity in continuing the positive relationship that exists to the north and south of the centre.

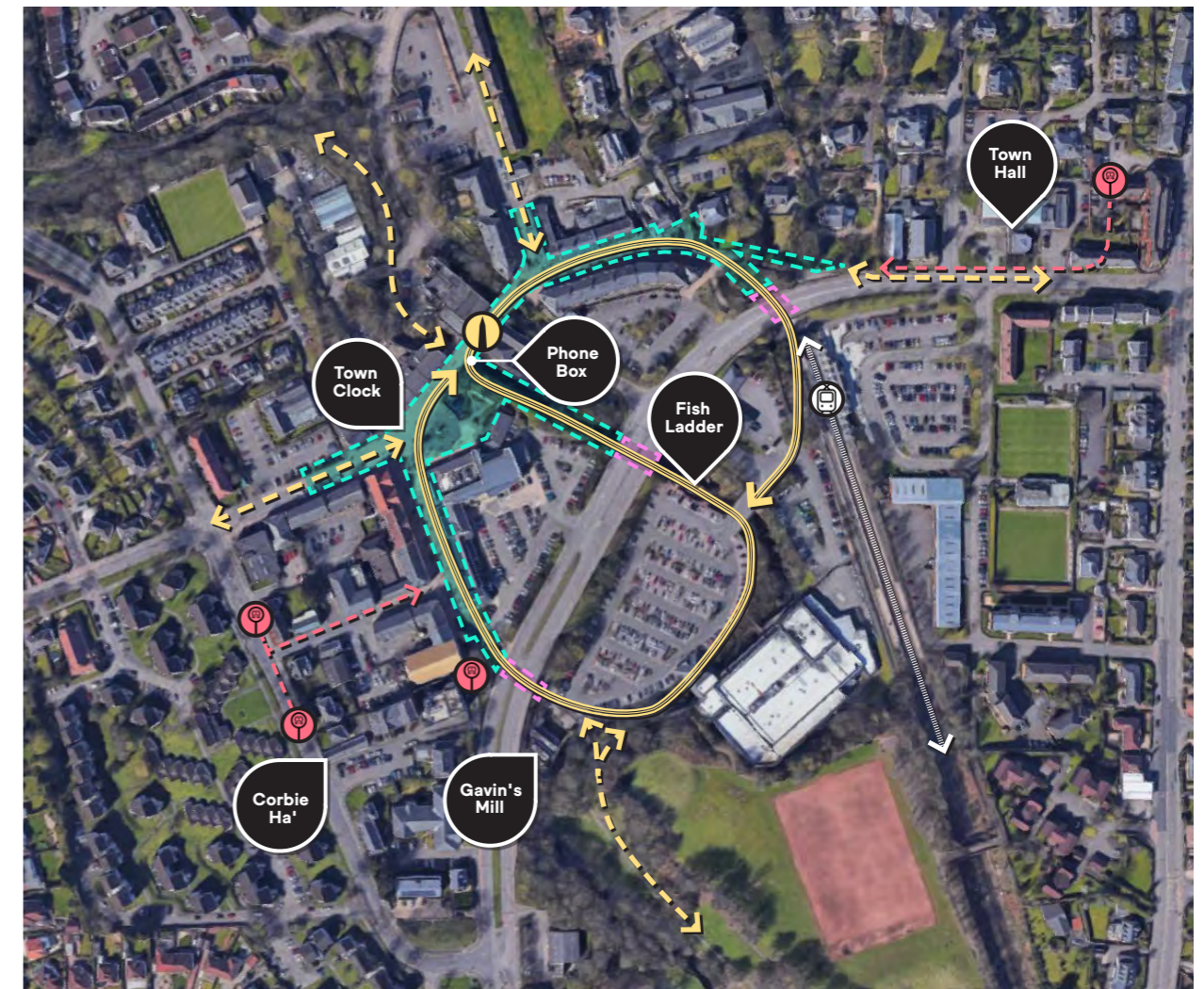
Loss of Historical Form

As evidenced in the historical analysis, Milngavie's town plan has been shaped by the boundaries of the old estates, the reservoir, and the growth and decline of industry in the centre. The public realm strategy presents an opportunity to safeguard as much of Milngavie's identity as possible, through interpretation, artwork and the strategic identification of development sites.

Figure of Eight Loop

The key circulation nodes in the town centre are connected by a figure-of-eight loop. Some parts of this loop function effectively, and some are neglected as pedestrian connections (i.e the riverside underpass). Circulation in this loop is fed at key nodes: from the train station, and from the north, south, east and west. In general, journeys east-west across the river are likely to pass through this figure-of-eight.

The loop is a device that gathers visitors and locals in the town centre, but it also holds them there. **How can this loop better distribute pedestrians to other assets in the town?** (including newly identified ones) And **how does the circulation in and out of this loop help define new sites and opportunities for development?**



Conclusions from Public Consultation

The following are a summary of the conclusions prepared following the public consultation, reflecting the responses, trends and themes identified. These conclusions are expanded in the accompanying report.

Town Centre Usage

At least 87% of each demographic told us they visited the town centre at least once or twice a week. Moreover, in a number of demographics the number of daily visitors exceeded 50%. Across 333 responses, no one told us they 'never' visited the centre.

This demonstrates that the town centre is well-used, and that the locations of services – e.g for shopping, commuting, etc. – are effective in bringing residents into the precinct. Proposals should consider ways to increase the frequency, attract people in the evenings, and to increase dwell time.

General comments on Tired Spaces

Responses in general communicated a feeling that the public realm felt tired/dated, and was in need of modernisation. The architecture, street furniture, and paving surfaces all received some negative feedback. The 1981 pedestrianisation of the precinct has resulted in a lot of public realm to be maintained. Proposals should consider where careful strategic investment would boost the public perception of the public realm, while being deliverable within the short to medium term as incremental projects.

Pedestrianisation

Pedestrianisation was a common theme among responses, with a number of conflicting comments made. Some considered pedestrianisation to have made the centre safer for families and an effective congregation point, while others felt it was the "death of the town". Proposals should consider what investments might diversify the use of the precinct, and amplify the benefits of its pedestrianisation as much as possible.

The Playpark is the Town's Heart

The comments received were almost universally positive about the playpark in the precinct. Its central location and proximity to the town's main tourism attraction – the start of the WHW – has created a natural centre of activity and energy in the town. Some suggestions were received to extend the play area for other age groups. Proposals should consider the opportunity to replicate the magnetic qualities of the existing play area elsewhere in the centre, hopefully to the same positive effect.

Increased Use of Green Spaces

The survey results tell us the community have engaged more with their outdoor settings and green spaces during lockdown. Over 80% of respondents reported visiting Mugdock Part and the Reservoirs during lockdown, and at least 40% said they had visited each of other main parks and green spaces in and around the town. 71% of those surveyed said they have been visiting these places more than before, and an overwhelming majority of 93% anticipate this will continue once lockdown restrictions are eased. This majority might waver when normality returns, but there is a clear intent from the residents to utilise their green spaces more in the long-term. With that directive in mind, any proposals should safeguard green spaces and endeavour to increase visibility and accessibility for

all user groups. This strategy should begin in the town centre, which has been identified in feedback as the 'heart of the town', and a natural point of congregation. Key requirements identified in responses were: better connections, clear wayfinding, and improved/more accessible core paths.

Active travel and Avoiding Conflict

Responses to the survey identified conflict between pedestrians and cyclists as an issue in the town centre. The 'no-cycling' signs on the precinct were subject to opposing positive and negative responses. Although the percentage of users who chose cycling as their primary method of transport into town was relatively low at 4%, the comments demonstrated there is a significant community of leisure cyclists in Milngavie.

Comments identified that there is currently insufficient cycling infrastructure in and around the town. As part of the wider active travel picture, this should be reviewed, and steps identified to improve the provision for safe cycling. Proposals should consider whether clearly delineated areas for cyclists and pedestrians would prevent conflict, and make the town centre a safer place for all users.

Car Usage

25% of those surveyed normally travel into town by car, and many of the comments received stressed the importance of maintaining (and in some cases improving) this provision. While the majority of respondents preferred active travel (walking and cycling), the strength of feeling around car-travel and parking tells us the requirements of this demographic and their patterns of use must be carefully considered in any proposals.

The West Highland Way as an Asset

Overall, respondents were receptive to the visitors the town receives as the start of the West Highland Way. The reputation of the town as a walking tourism destination was recognised in the comments, and several felt a warmer welcome for tourists, a better first impression, and clearer connection to the start of the WHW was important. Responses highlighted the service yard at the start of the walk and the initial stretch out of Milngavie as having potential for improvement.



Four Areas for Improvement

At the conclusion of our analysis and the public consultation, we started to identify more specific opportunities, and considered how these might be categorised, and how they might fit into a long term programme of investment. We concluded that there are four overarching principles for the public realm strategy:

Circulation in the heart of the town is fundamental

Almost all circulation in Milngavie flows in some way through the figure of eight in the town centre. It links almost all the cultural, leisure and historical assets, and is well served in the wider public transport network. However, it currently functions below its potential. With strategic incremental investment in targeted areas, the loop has the potential to attract and then effectively distribute locals and visitors to all major points of interest in Milngavie, opening up the wider town to investment.

Protect and enhance the green spine along the river

West and east Milngavie are separated north and south of the centre by a green corridor of parkland. This green corridor is a busy arterial route for walking, connecting the town to Mugdock Park and the WHW to the north, and to Glasgow in the south. The riverside setting is beautiful in places, but is under-utilised as an asset in the town. Improved connections into the green spaces from the centre and from the surrounding residential areas would stimulate use. There is little positive engagement between town and river as it passes through the centre. As the town's most important and fundamental asset, improving this should be a priority.

Make the green leisure assets accessible to everyone

An overwhelming majority of residents told us both that they have been using their local green spaces more during lockdown, and that they expect these habits to continue in the long term. With that directive in mind, we should safeguard green spaces and endeavour to increase visibility and accessibility for all user groups, with better connections, clearer wayfinding, and improved core paths.

The wider town's ribs of circulation are equally important

Milngavie has a hierarchy of circulation. Its primary routes converge in the centre, but equally important are the secondary roads and paths that connect the large swathes of residential development into the main arteries of the town. We have to look after these individual segments. The junctions where these routes meet are key in ensuring that the wider network of streets maintain a healthy two-way relationship with the primary circulation.

The following pages identify specific sites and opportunities for investment. Some are long term aspirations with more complex delivery, but we believe that many should be deliverable incrementally at a scale comparable to recent small projects in the town centre. We recognise the energy that the community has in improving the town, and believe a public realm strategy that they can take ownership of would be the most effective end result from this project.



Overarching Aspirations

Four principles, or zones, for improvement have been identified, each with their own opportunities, and challenges. However, we believe all of these should share and reflect a set of overarching aspirations for the complete public realm project. These aspirations are:

To improve the visual aesthetic and comfort of the existing settings

This aspiration can be advanced through incremental or wholesale improvements to aspects of the public realm, such as the replacement of paving surfaces, upgrades to street furniture, and landscaping of neglected areas – picking up on comments from users about the space feeling dated and tired.

To improve 'comfort', we should consider how the public realm is experienced by different user groups. For example, providing more inclusive and varied seating typologies democratises use, and encourages families, the elderly, children, walking groups, and so on, to stay longer in the shared public spaces.

Improve the functionality of the place

This concerns both function in terms of movement of users and efficiency of day-to-day use, and the functionality of the town centre to handle larger one-off events and its well-established programme of community activities. Improvements in day-to-day functionality addresses identified issues such as the crossover of pedestrians and cyclists, and the clarity of the wayfinding strategy.

'Bigger' moves to improve the function of the town includes consideration of how flexible the precinct is for larger events, and whether sensitive relocation of the existing war memorial might enable the town centre to function better year-round.

Identify potential vacant or underused sites

Milngavie has several pockets of vacant or neglected space in the vicinity of its centre, some in favourable positions for development. This aspiration seeks to identify sites which can be developed both to improve the quality and functionality of the public realm, and to provide new or enhanced community facilities.

Supplement the existing offer to serve all users

This final aspiration builds on our observations of the town, and also from responses to the public consultation, where lots of interesting suggestions were made to improve the commercial, leisure, and tourism offers in Milngavie. One of our primary focuses in this study has been to increase dwell time for town centre visitors, and stimulate use outwith its current 'peak times'. These speculations consider which new or improved offers might achieve this, while also demonstrating the BID are listening to the community feedback.

We believe there are three additional aspirations, that while not applicable in every area for improvement, should be considered where there are opportunities to do so:

To celebrate the River Allander

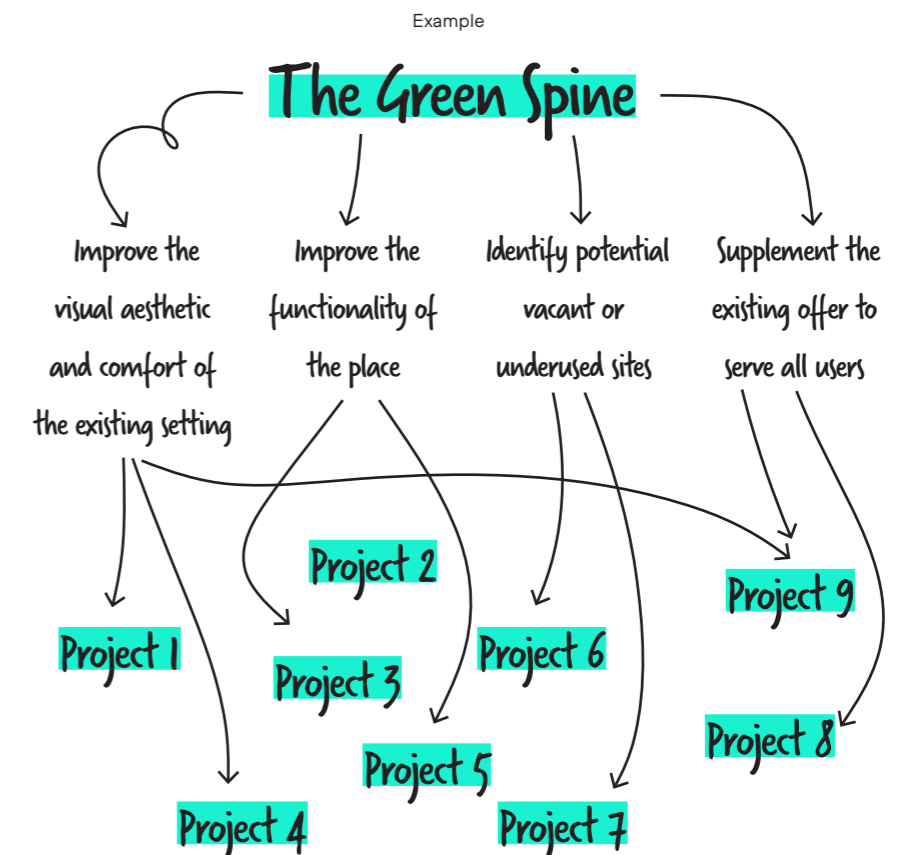
To celebrate the West Highland Way

To celebrate the heritage of the town

Projects

By considering how each of these aspirations might be achieved in each of the four areas for improvement, we have generated a list of over fifty public realm (or adjacent) projects, that together form a public realm strategy for Milngavie. These are detailed in the following chapters.

The projects vary in scale, value, and complexity, with different delivery partners or stakeholders in each. They are also still considered at high-level only, and each would need to be developed and designed in its own right. However, the shared aspirations across all the projects means that regardless of how or when each is delivered, fundamentally they all pull in the same direction.



2

Improvement Area 1

The Town Centre



2.1 Town Centre Axo

1.05
Introduce improved evening lighting to core paths

1.11 **WHW Service Yard**

Redevelop the service yard at the bottom of the WHW ramp to improve the launch of the WHW, create a new riverside setting, a gathering area, and reinforce links to the north of the town centre.

1.22 **Heritage Trail**

Celebrate Milngavie's heritage with a trail, integrated into the public realm and furniture. Consider the possibility of a permanent base. This project would be developed in partnership with the Milngavie Heritage Group

1.07
Use wayfinding to create clear circulation and distribution from the precinct

1.19 **Rethink Parking**

A number of car parks around the centre are good sized spaces, in locations that connect easily to the precinct. These car parks might be rethought as semi-permanent parts of the public realm, open and closed to parking depending on activities in the precinct.

1.04
Use murals and artwork to refresh tired surfaces

1.22
Occupy vacant units

1.14 **Underpass Links**

The 3no. underpasses are critical to circulation in the town. Continue to improve all three, with particular focus on making the riverside underpass a safer, more comfortable and more effective connection.

1.13 **Town Hall Plaza**

Redevelop the public realm at the Town Hall and Lillie Art Gallery to facilitate outdoor performance, extensions of internal use - particularly in the evenings - and become a shared asset with the church.

1.12 **New Event Space**

A new events space in the town centre, approx 1200m², with the flexibility for a stage set-up and associated infrastructure. Facilitated by sensitive relocation of the War Memorial.

1.01 - 03 & 1.27 **Precinct Refresh**

- Upgrade precinct surfaces
- Replace and consolidate furniture
- Introduce new typologies
- Bring in sensory elements

1.15 **Fish Ladder**

Improve the setting around the riverside, including at the existing fish ladder, a unique asset in the town. Create new public realm to stimulate use of the riverside path.

1.06
Increase tree planting to soften hard landscaping

1.19 & 1.25 **Use the Back Courts**

Consider how the back courts could join up to create sheltered areas to be occupied during public events and festivals. This might form part of a strategy to redevelop these existing car parks into semi-permanent parts of the public realm, with improved surfaces and infrastructure, closed for parking during town events.

1.26 **Dedicated Cycleway**

Investigate creating a clearly delineated cycleway connecting into the precinct, and supplemented by provision for bike hire.

1.18 **Gavin's Mill Plaza**

Creation of an extended public realm at Gavin's Mill, befitting the significance of the historic building, and improving the connection to Lennox Park.

1.16 **Lennox Park Playing Fields**

Redevelop the playing fields in Lennox Park to permit more flexible community use.

1.20 - 25 **Increase the Offer**

- Increased accessible WC provision
- New walking shop
- Bookshop or community depositories
- Pre-school play park
- Improved outdoor recreation (outdoor gym, skate facilities etc)

1.07
Use wayfinding to create clear circulation and distribution from the precinct

1.17 **Lennox Park Flagpole**

Redevelop the area around the old flagpole into a new parkland setting, with improved links to the precinct. Possible location for the War Memorial.

Town Centre Project Matrix

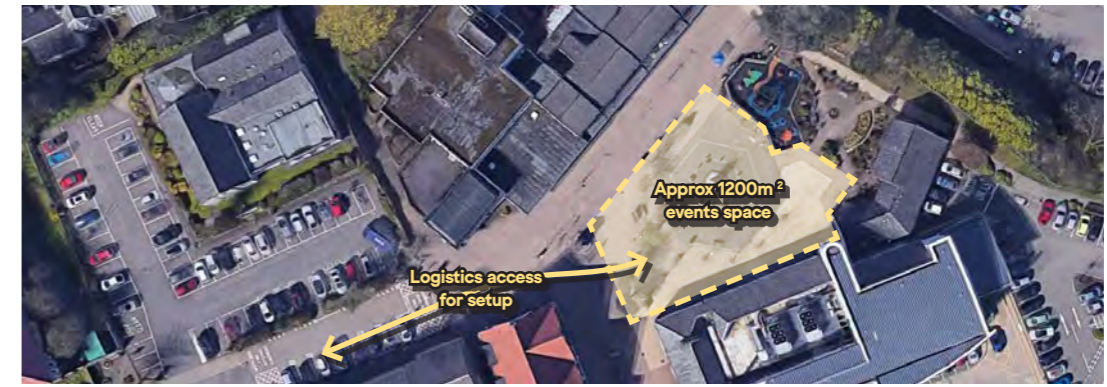
Categorised using the aspirations outlined in 1.5, the following potential projects have been identified in the town centre:

The Town Centre					
Overarching Aspiration	No.	Project	Description	Justification	Timescale
Improve the visual aesthetic and comfort of the existing setting	1.01	Upgrade paving surfaces in pedestrianised areas	Continue the incremental upgrading of paving surfaces that has commenced at the train station and adjacent to the Fraser Centre.	Consultation feedback	Long term (incremental)
	1.02	Consolidate and replace tired street furniture	Remove poor quality and outdated street furniture from around the town to reduce maintenance load and consolidate visual style.	PP conclusions & consultation feedback	Long term (incremental)
	1.03	Introduce new furniture typologies	Introduce picnic furniture / group seating / 'quiet' seating to the town centre catering for a wider range of demographics, and to encourage dwell time.	Consultation feedback	Medium
	1.04	Use murals and artwork to refresh tired surfaces	Consider potential of prominent 'blank' surfaces within the centre for murals and artwork, similar to projects completed at the underpasses.	PP conclusions & consultation feedback	Short
	1.05	Dynamic evening 'safety' lighting	Review the evening lighting strategy for the town to promote increased 'safe' evening circulation and facilitate more evening trade for businesses.	Consultation feedback	Medium (incremental)
	1.06	Increased tree planting to soften setting	Use tree planting in the town centre to soften the setting, increase biodiversity, and visually join up the 'green spine' north and south of the pedestrianised precinct.	PP conclusions & consultation feedback	Medium
Improve the functionality of the Town Centre	1.07	Unify the wayfinding to create clearer circulation and distribution from town centre	Use wayfinding to increase the functionality and effectiveness of the figure of 8 in the town centre as a distribution device.	PP conclusions	Short
	1.08	Use surfaces and visual markers to define clear pedestrian and cycle zones	Address conflict in the precinct between pedestrians and cyclists by clearly demarcating zones for cyclists. Review this against the 'cyclists dismount' signage and consider alternative strategies for co-habiting precinct space. Review possibility of creating a dedicated cycleway between Lennox Park and the precinct.	Consultation feedback	Medium
	1.09	Consider relocation of the War Memorial to permit larger events and a better setup for markets to co-exist with existing units	While critical to the town's heritage, the position of the War Memorial restricts use of the town centre for events. Consider alternative locations that would balance the year-round use of the precinct with the importance of events during remembrance .	PP conclusions	Long
	1.10	Permanent 'bandstand' infrastructure	Introduction of permanent events or bandstand infrastructure would support year-round use and provide a focal point in the centre.	PP conclusions	Long
	1.11	Service yard at the start of the West Highland Way	Develop the site at the bottom of the West Highland Way ramp as a mini-park; to create a better setting for the walk, improve safety and comfort, and supplement the existing green corridor north-south. This is an opportunity to create a setting that reflects the diversity of visitors undertaking the walk.	PP conclusions & consultation feedback	Medium
	1.12	Precinct events space	Linked with the potential relocation of the War Memorial, consider how the increased flexibility in the precinct can be utilised. Consider the potential of a new events space in the town centre, approx 1200m2, with the flexibility for a stage set-up and associated infrastructure.	PP conclusions	Long

Identify potential vacant or underused sites	1.13	Town Hall plaza	Redevelop the public realm at the Town Hall to facilitate outdoor performance, extensions of internal use - particularly in the evenings - and become a shared asset with the church.	PP conclusions	Medium
	1.14	Underpasses	The 3no. underpasses are critical to circulation in the town. Continue to improve all three, with particular focus on making the riverside underpass a safer, more comfortable and more effective connection.	PP conclusions	Short
	1.15	Fish ladder	Improve the setting around the riverside, including at the existing fish ladder, a unique asset in the town. Create new public realm to stimulate use of the riverside path.	PP conclusions	Short
	1.16	Lennox Park football pitches	Modernise the pitches at Lennox Park and consider additional amenity uses for the wider site. Include the space as part of the town's events strategy. Outdoor cinema, concerts, Christmas markets, festivals all potential uses.	PP conclusions	Medium
	1.17	Lennox Park Flagpole	Redevelop the area around the old flagpole into a new parkland setting, with improved links to the precinct. Possible location for the War Memorial.	PP conclusions	Long
	1.18	Gavin's Mill Public Realm	Creation of an extended public realm at Gavin's Mill, befitting the significance of the historic building, and improving the connection to Lennox Park.	PP conclusions	Medium
	1.19	Car Parks	A number of car parks around the centre are good sized spaces, in locations that connect easily to the precinct. These car parks might be rethought as semi-permanent parts of the public realm, open and closed to parking depending on activities in the precinct.	PP conclusions	Medium
Supplement the existing offer to increase dwell time and serve all users (inc. tourists)	1.20	Accessible public WCs	Review suitability of existing toilet provision, proximity to main assets, and upgrade if required to ensure appropriate levels of accessibility.	Consultation feedback	Medium
	1.21	Walking shop	Target attracting an independent walking shop tenant to the town centre. Public consultation feedback identified this as a significant opportunity.	Consultation feedback	Medium
	1.22	Heritage trail or heritage centre	Create a heritage trail in the town centre, joining up the existing assets and encouraging pedestrian movement. Consider feasibility of a permeant 'base' or centre.	PP conclusions & consultation feedback	Short
	1.23	Bookshop or community depositaries	Consultation feedback identified a desire for a bookshop in the town. Consider initiatives with the library to have a presence in the TC. Develop 'little library' community book swap model.	Consultation feedback	Short
	1.24	Pre-school play park	Create additional areas of children's play to meet demand, including for different age groups. Consider likely high traffic in identifying possible locations.	Consultation feedback	Medium
	1.25	Outdoor eating and drinking areas (inc. for evening use)	Work with existing and new businesses to strategise an outdoor and evening dining model for the town centre. Potentially a pilot scheme between businesses.	Consultation feedback	Medium
	1.26	Bicycle hire, repair, and secure storage	Improve infrastructure for cyclists in the town centre. Potentially for a training scheme / workshop in maintenance and repair.	Consultation feedback	Medium
	1.27	Sensory elements	Work with access groups to incorporate sensory elements in the public realm and in future projects.	Consultation feedback	Medium (incremental)
	1.28	Outdoor recreation – improved skate facilities, outdoor gym.	Improve existing provision in key locations	Consultation feedback	Medium (incremental)

Project: New Event Space (1.12)

Sensitive relocation of the War Memorial to a new setting, with full prior input from the community and other interested groups, would unlock the potential of the town centre, and create an area free of obstructions that could be configured in different ways and for different events. With a clear hard landscaped area of approximately 1200m², the plaza could comfortably accommodate a small stage for a concert-style setup. In this scenario, accompanying stalls or infrastructure might overspill onto the surrounding precinct, with a clear spine of circulation maintained.



Project: WHW Service Yard (1.11)

The existing service yard site at the bottom of the West Highland Way artwork is a key opportunity to improve links northwards from the centre. Located close to the water, the site could be a key circulation node, both for local leisure and community purposes, and for tourism – the first steps of the WHW crossing what is currently an unattractive, inaccessible, and cluttered space. Circulation through the site could be widened to become more of an avenue, with benches and tree planting, creating an ideal environment for people-watching and waving walkers on their way.



Project: The Fish Ladder (1.15)

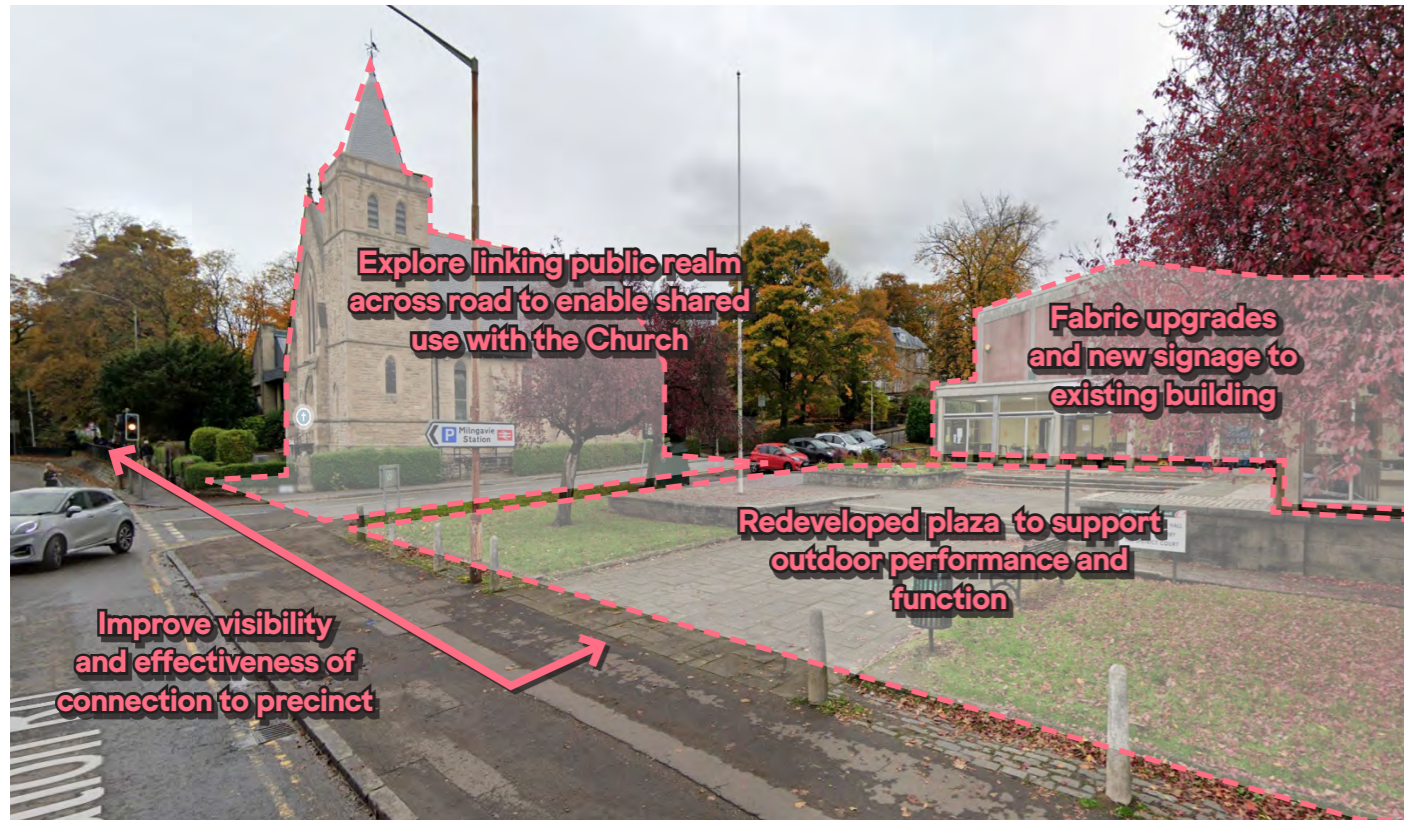
Today, the areas of the town centre closest to the river Allander are some of its most underdeveloped and neglected. The setting, particularly at the fish ladder, could be improved to celebrate the river through interpretation, arts projects, and new seating configurations. The riverside setting is also an important link between the town centre and Lennox Park and is part of East Dunbartonshire Council's recognised cycle routes. Creation of a delineated cycle way at the upper level (altering the parking layout) would reinforce this link, while providing improved visibility to the lower parts of the path.



1.26
Dedicated Cycleway
Investigate creating a clearly delineated cycleway connecting into the precinct, and supplemented by provision for bike hire.

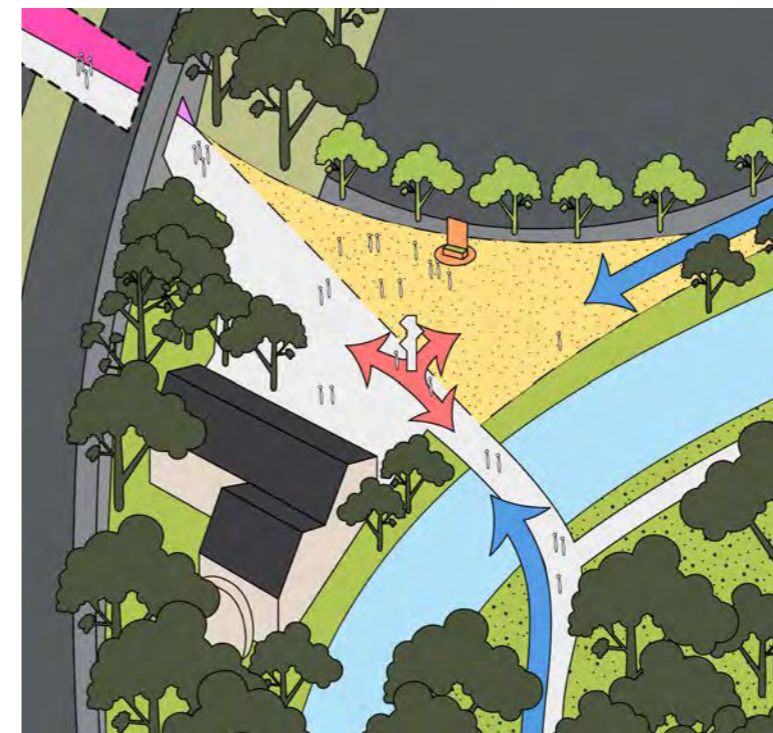
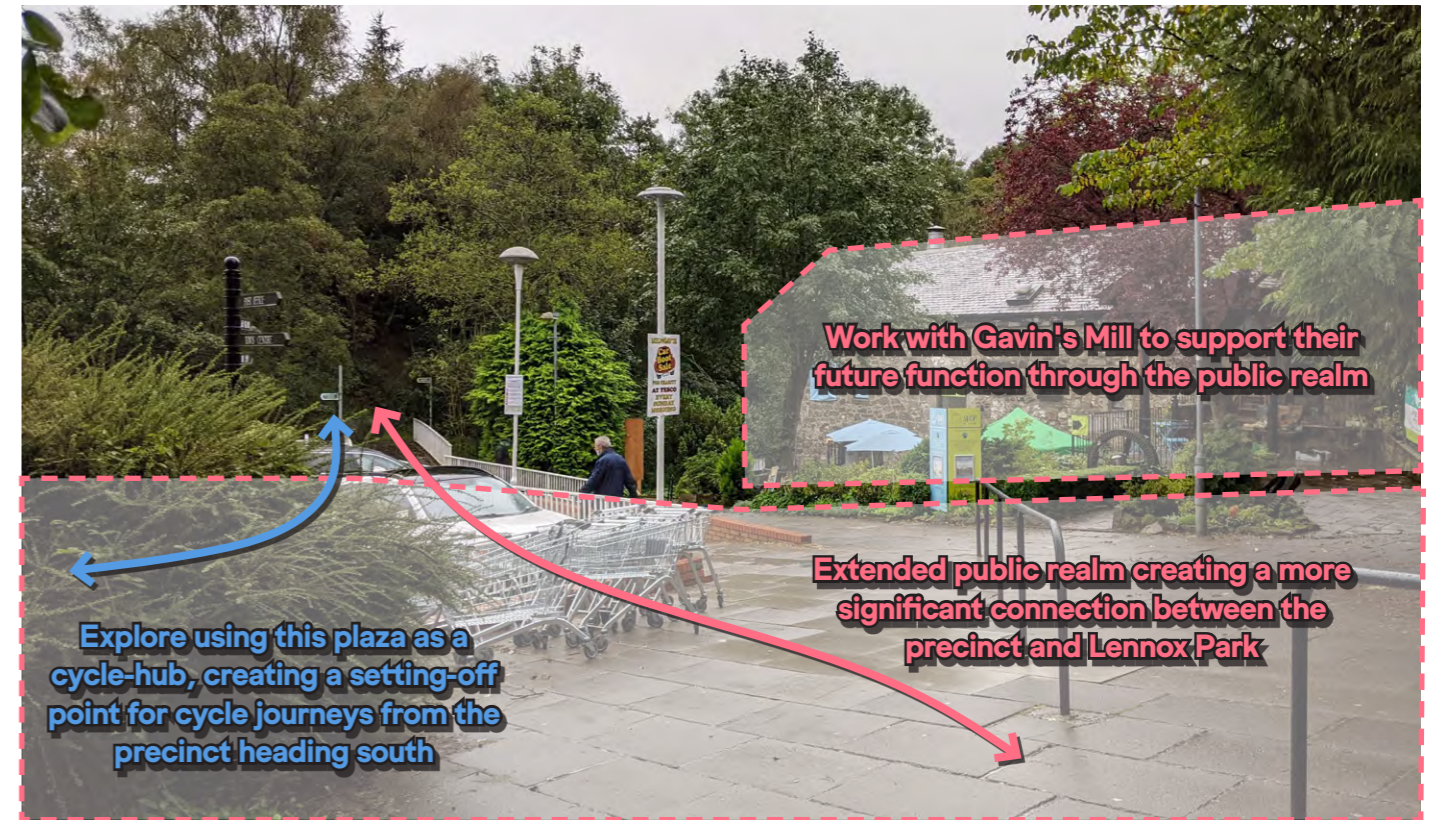
Project: Town Hall Plaza (1.13)

Plans for the Town Hall to perform an increased community function in the future will place a renewed focus on the plaza at its front. The existing plaza is pleasant, but does not encourage users to dwell or linger, nor does it support use of the Town Hall itself. Redevelopment of the area could support outdoor performance and extensions of the functions from within the hall – informal fixed seating, raised areas etc – and also encourage users to gather and dwell before and after events. This is particularly relevant for evening events, where community feedback noted the town lacks an evening atmosphere.



Project: Gavin's Mill Plaza (1.18)

Gavin's Mill is a key asset and has itself been subject to studies centred on improving its functionality and public facing offer. It is also located on one of the key circulation nodes, where the precinct connects to Lennox Park. Despite this, the public realm is dominated by the adjacent car park, and the connection becomes squeezed and less effective as a result. Widening the public realm here to create a new setting for Gavin's Mill and clearer connection south would better connect the precinct to the park, and support the possibility of relocating the War Memorial there.



(above) Sketch prepared by Page\Park for historic Gavin's Mill study, suggesting increased engagement with the Public Realm.

3

Improvement Area 2

The Green Spine



3.1 Green Spine Overview

2.11
Clober Road Park
Consider how light-touch investment can maximise the community use of the park.

2.10
Allander Road Underpass
The underpass at Allander Road should be considered for decoration, creating a special moment on the WHW journey.

2.08
The Library Setting
The pond setting should be redeveloped as a destination in its own right. This can include new furniture for groups gathering, a focal point on the water, features to support wildlife, and interpretation, perhaps about the town's industrial heritage. Alongside this, fabric upgrades should be considered for the building itself.

2.18
Celebrate the Start of the WHW
The WHW attracts walkers from all over the world. Capitalise on this significance, using interpretation and artwork to create a send-off to the walk that sets the WHW in its global context.

2.04
Soften Edge Treatments
Protective barriers along the river create a hard edge. Create openings, relocate the barriers to make usable space, and replace the railings with more aesthetically pleasing alternatives.

2.03
Improve Lighting
Upgrade the existing lighting provision to make routes safer and more comfortable to use year-round. Consider dynamic options such as feature up lighting to greenery, bollard lighting, and ground based schemes.

2.01
Clear Overgrowth
The areas adjacent to the river are heavily overgrown, particularly north of the precinct. Clearing this will make the river more visible and lessen the disconnect.

2.17
New West Highland Way Information Centre

2.15
Increased Planting
Create overlap the green spine and precinct with increased planting in hard-landscaped areas.

2.02
Upgrade Surfaces
Upgrade surfaces to make the green spine through the town more accessible and usable year-round.

2.05
Wayfinding
The green spine connects with Mugdock Park to the north, the Allander Way to the south. Improving wayfinding could increase footfall in all directions.

2.12 - 16
Celebrate the River

- Decorate and improve the hard industrial surfaces along the river bank.
- Make the crossings into focal points, and places to pause.
- Educate on the significance of the river through interpretation.
- Promote closer interaction with the river through the placement of picnic areas, seating, etc.

2.07
River Crossings
Review existing crossings to understand local connections, and improve connectivity between both banks. Ensure the river is at no point a barrier to use of amenity on either side.

2.06
Cycle Infrastructure
Improve cycle infrastructure along the green spine, including at connections into the precinct.

Green Spine Project Matrix

Categorised using the aspirations outlined in 1.5, the following potential projects have been identified along the Green Spine:

The Green Spine					
Overarching Aspiration		Project	Description	Justification	Timescale
Improve the visual aesthetic and comfort of the existing setting	2.01	Clear overgrown areas	The areas adjacent to the river are heavily overgrown, particularly north of the precinct. Clearing this will make the river more visible and lessen the disconnect.	PP conclusions	Short
	2.02	Upgrade surfaces	The quality of surfaces through the green areas are inconsistent and should be reviewed with the aim of improving accessibility.	PP conclusions	Long (incremental)
	2.03	Upgrade lighting to promote use throughout the year	Lighting along the green spine is outdated in places. The overall provision should be reviewed and upgrades considered to improve comfort and aesthetic. Consider dynamic options such as feature uplighting to greenery, bollard lighting, and ground based schemes .	PP conclusions	Medium (incremental)
	2.04	Upgrade and soften edge treatments	Protective barriers along the river create a hard edge. Create openings, relocate the barriers to carve out habitable space, and where possible replace the railings with more aesthetically pleasing alternatives.	PP conclusions	Medium (incremental)
Improve the functionality of the Green Spine	2.05	Introduce wayfinding to increase footfall	The green spine connects the precinct with Mugdock Park to the north, the Allander Way to the south, and residential areas in each direction. Improving wayfinding could increase footfall and link the green spine with the aesthetic of the precinct.	PP conclusions	Medium
	2.06	Improve cycle infrastructure along the spine	Improve cycle infrastructure along the green spine, including at connections into the precinct.	PP conclusions & consultation feedback	Long
	2.07	Use effective crossing points to encourage use of/from both banks	Review existing river crossings to understand local connections, and improve connections between both banks. Ensure the river is at no point a barrier to use of amenity on either side.	PP conclusions	Long (incremental)
Identify potential vacant or underused sites	2.08	The library and pond	The pond setting should be redeveloped as a destination in its own right. This can include new furniture for groups gathering, a focal point on the water, features to support wildlife, and interpretation, perhaps about the town's industrial heritage. Alongside this, fabric upgrades should be considered for the building itself.	PP conclusions & consultation feedback	Medium
	2.09	The immediate overgrown stretch north of the precinct	There are several pockets of overgrown space immediately outside the precinct heading north. Some of these are behind protective railings. Clearing, planting and utilising these would improve the aesthetic, encourage dwell, and reduce feelings of abandonment.	PP conclusions	Short
	2.10	Underpass at Allander Road	The underpass at Allander Road should be considered for decoration, creating a special moment on the West Highland Way journey. Bring it into the suite of underpasses in the town.	PP conclusions	Short
	2.11	Park by Clober Road	The open green amenity by Clober Road is another unique setting emerging from the densely forested path. Consider how this area can be maximised for community use and dwell - new benches, light-touch infrastructure for outdoor activities and gathering etc.	PP conclusions	Medium

Celebrate the river through positive engagement	2.12	Decorate the vertical concrete/industrial surfaces	Immediately leaving the precinct, the bare concrete surfaces adjacent to the river are very prominent. Safely clean and decorate these to improve aesthetic. New murals, applied metal artworks, and feature lighting are all possibilities.	PP conclusions & consultation feedback	Short
	2.13	Make crossings into focal points	Bridges can be scenic locations and places where people naturally gravitate to pause, look over, take photographs etc. Upgrade the crossings to make them more memorable focal points in the green spaces.	PP conclusions	Medium (incremental)
	2.14	Educate on the significance of the river through interpretation	Milngavie exists fundamentally because of the Allander Water. Celebrate the heritage of mills and industry in Milngavie through interpretation and educational resources.	PP conclusions	Short
	2.15	Overlap the green spine and precinct with planting and surface treatments	The green spine is interrupted by the hard surfaces of the town centre. Use surface treatments and planting in the precinct to bridge between the green areas to the north and south. Allow the greenery to naturally flow through the centre.	PP conclusions & consultation feedback	Medium
	2.16	Promote closer interaction with the river – picnic benches, seating etc.	The river is the town's primary asset. Closer community and visitor interaction with the river along its length is critical to the success of all river-centric improvement projects. Remove barriers where possible.	PP conclusions & consultation feedback	Medium
Celebrate the WHW	2.17	A West Highland Way information centre	Community feedback was universally positive on the presence of the WHW in Milngavie. A WHW information point would be a positive inclusion to the precinct.	Consultation feedback	Short
	2.18	Use artwork and interpretation to promote international walking context and welcome/send-off multicultural visitors	The WHW attracts walkers from all over the world, and is Scotland's main representation in the global walking context. Capitalise on this significance to create a send-off to the walk that sets the WHW in this global context.	PP conclusions	Medium

Project: The Library Setting (2.08)

The future of the library is uncertain, but the lake setting is a unique feature within the town, with lots of potential. Redevelopment of the setting to be more accessible and more attractive as a destination should be a high priority project for the town in the medium term. The hard landscaped side could be softened with planting, and a variety of seating configurations and outdoor learning spaces created. On the lake itself, artwork would create a focal point, or a water feature integrated that were sensitive to local wildlife.

Project: Celebrate the River (2.12 - 16)

A network of core paths north of the town centre connect the precinct to the library, Mugdock Park, and the residential community east and west. However, despite the key connections these paths make, their significance is undermined by overgrown areas and poor signage. As a result, there is nothing currently to encourage use of these core paths over the more visible roadside pavements. A more visible river connection, improved surfaces, wayfinding, children's play, and more pleasant edge treatments would give these key routes more character in their own right, with an aim to stimulate use.



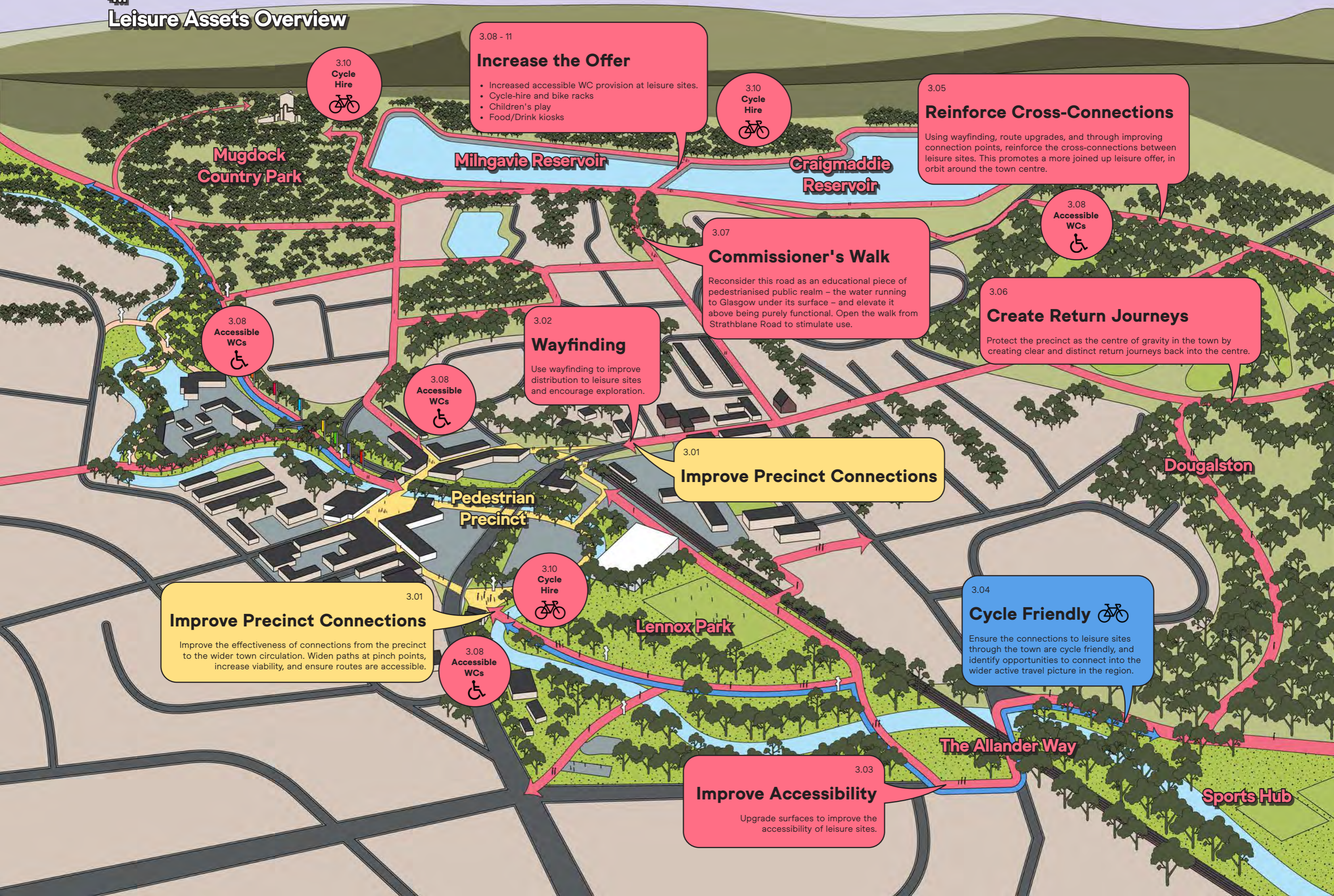
4

Improvement Area 3

The Leisure Assets



4.1 Leisure Assets Overview



3.08 - 11
Increase the Offer
• Increased accessible WC provision at leisure sites.
• Cycle-hire and bike racks
• Children's play
• Food/Drink kiosks

3.05
Reinforce Cross-Connections
Using wayfinding, route upgrades, and through improving connection points, reinforce the cross-connections between leisure sites. This promotes a more joined up leisure offer, in orbit around the town centre.

3.07
Commissioner's Walk
Reconsider this road as an educational piece of pedestrianised public realm – the water running to Glasgow under its surface – and elevate it above being purely functional. Open the walk from Strathblane Road to stimulate use.

3.06
Create Return Journeys
Protect the precinct as the centre of gravity in the town by creating clear and distinct return journeys back into the centre.

3.02
Wayfinding
Use wayfinding to improve distribution to leisure sites and encourage exploration.

3.01
Improve Precinct Connections

3.01
Improve Precinct Connections
Improve the effectiveness of connections from the precinct to the wider town circulation. Widen paths at pinch points, increase viability, and ensure routes are accessible.

3.04
Cycle Friendly
Ensure the connections to leisure sites through the town are cycle friendly, and identify opportunities to connect into the wider active travel picture in the region.

3.03
Improve Accessibility
Upgrade surfaces to improve the accessibility of leisure sites.

3.10
Cycle Hire

3.10
Cycle Hire

3.08
Accessible WCs

3.08
Accessible WCs

3.08
Accessible WCs

3.10
Cycle Hire

3.08
Accessible WCs

Mugdock Country Park

Milngavie Reservoir

Craigmaddie Reservoir

Pedestrian Precinct

Lennox Park

Dougalston

The Allander Way

Sports Hub

Leisure Assets Project Matrix

Categorised using the aspirations outlined in 1.5, the following potential projects have been identified along the Leisure Assets:

Connect the Leisure Assets					
Overarching Aspiration		Project	Description	Justification	Timescale
Improve the functionality of the wider town connections	3.01	Improve physical effectiveness of connection points to precinct	Ensure the transitions from trafficked streets to the pedestrianised precinct are functional, visually clear, and act as positive first impressions coming into and leaving the town centre. (See entry pinch-point to precinct from Woodburn Way as an area for improvement).	PP conclusions	Medium (incremental)
	3.02	Use wayfinding to improve distribution to leisure sites and encourage exploration	Condensed wayfinding in the precinct will reduce as you leave the centre for leisure sites around the wider town. Use wayfinding as the points of leaving the precinct to ensure leisure assets are clearly marketed and appropriately signed.	PP conclusions	Short (incremental)
	3.03	Upgrade surfaces to improve accessibility of leisure sites	Review and upgrade core paths at leisure sites to maintain accessibility for all demographics and abilities.	Consultation feedback	Long (incremental)
	3.04	Make the connections more cycle-friendly	Ensure the connections to leisure sites through the town are cycle friendly, and identify opportunities to connect the routes into the wider active travel picture in the region.	PP conclusions	Long (incremental)
	3.05	Use the same steps to reinforce cross connections between locations, promoting an endless circuit of sorts.	Using wayfinding, route upgrades, and through improving connection points, reinforce the cross-connections between leisure sites. This promotes a more joined up leisure offer, in orbit around the town centre.	PP conclusions	Long (incremental)
	3.06	Create clear journeys back into the town centre	Protect the precinct as the centre of gravity in the town by creating clear and distinct return journeys back into the centre.	PP conclusions	Long (incremental)
Identify potential vacant or underused sites along the routes	3.07	Commissioner's Walk	Reconsider this road as an educational piece of pedestrianised public realm – the water running to Glasgow under its surface – and elevate it above being purely functional. Open the walk from Strathblane Road to stimulate use.	PP conclusions	Medium
Supplement the existing offer to serve all users	3.08	Accessible public WCs	Review the provision in the wider town and create/upgrade the provision around leisure sites.	PP conclusions & consultation feedback	Medium (incremental)
	3.09	Café kiosks	Increased footfall around leisure sites creates increased demand for food and drink offers. Kiosks (potentially shared use, seasonal, operated as satellites from the town centre) might be considered.	PP conclusions	Medium
	3.10	Cycle-hire	A network of cycle-hire pick-up and drop-off points would encourage active travel to some of the more distant leisure sites.	PP conclusions	Medium
	3.11	Children's play	Sensitively incorporate children's play areas to encourage use of the leisure sites for family days out. This would support the justification for improved WC provision and increased demand for food and drink offers.	PP conclusions	Medium (incremental)

Project: Commissioner's Walk (3.07)

The Reservoirs are one of the most important features in the greater Glasgow area, having brought fresh water to the city since the Victorian era. They are accessible from the town centre, by a curious understated road which is closed to traffic. It is functional, but its character is undermined by the prevalence of tarmacked areas. An opportunity exists to reconsider this route as an educational tool – the water running to Glasgow under its surface – and elevate it above being purely functional. The route has a processional quality, which might make it an asset in Milngavie's programme of events.



5

Improvement Area 4

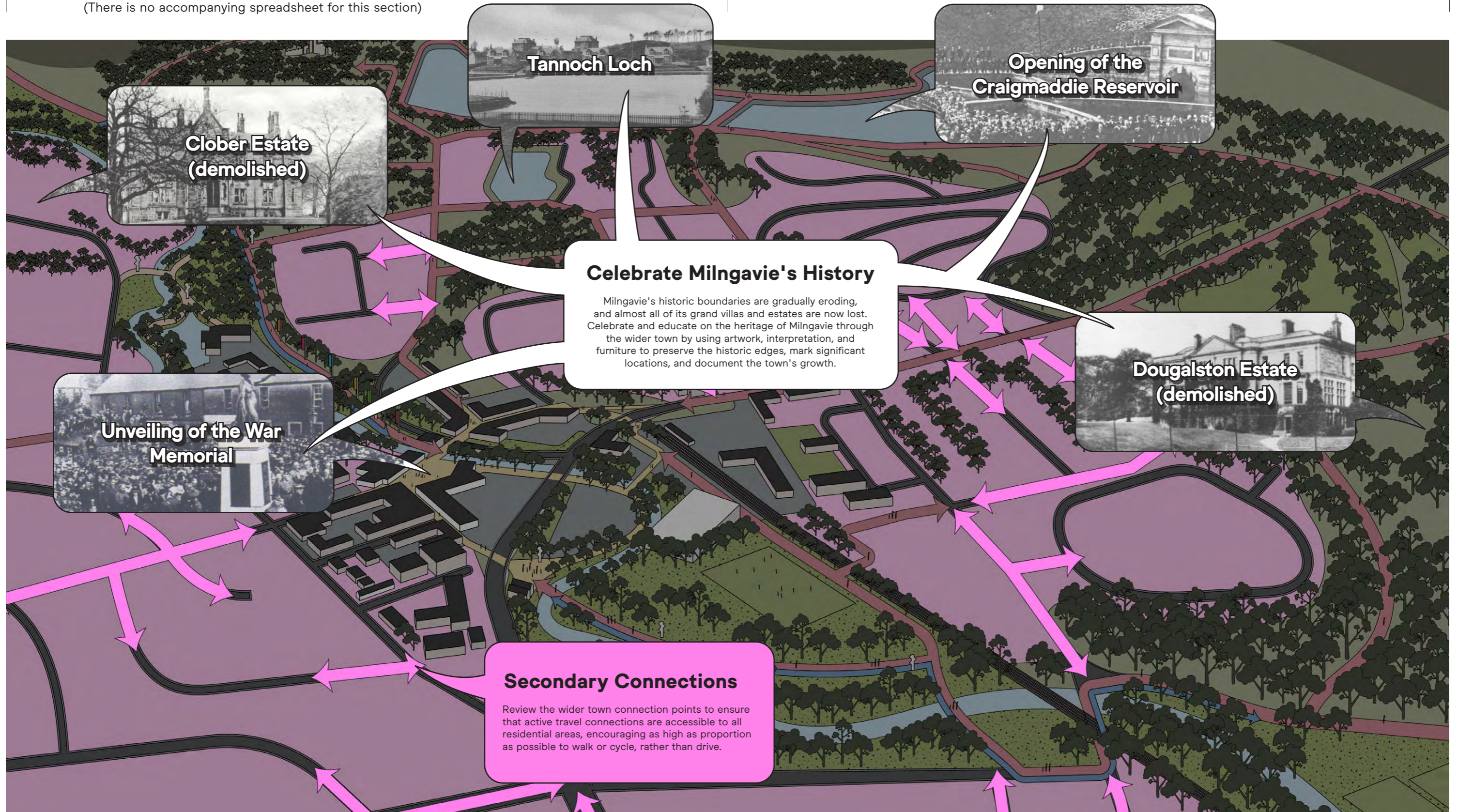
The Wider Connections



Wider Connections Overview

Milngavie has a hierarchy of circulation. Its primary routes converge in the centre, but equally important are the secondary roads and paths that connect its residential developments into the main arteries of the town. We have to look after these individual segments. Furthermore, it is around the edges of the town that many of its stories are told, and historical fragments embedded.

(There is no accompanying spreadsheet for this section)



Clober Estate (demolished)

Tannoch Loch

Opening of the Craigmaddie Reservoir

Celebrate Milngavie's History

Milngavie's historic boundaries are gradually eroding, and almost all of its grand villas and estates are now lost. Celebrate and educate on the heritage of Milngavie through the wider town by using artwork, interpretation, and furniture to preserve the historic edges, mark significant locations, and document the town's growth.

Dougalston Estate (demolished)

Unveiling of the War Memorial

Secondary Connections

Review the wider town connection points to ensure that active travel connections are accessible to all residential areas, encouraging as high as proportion as possible to walk or cycle, rather than drive.

6

Next Steps



6.1
Visual Overview



Next Steps

The proposals outlined in the preceding pages are a high-level vision of Milngavie's public realm, that we believe is within the capacity of the BID and their partners to achieve. This would be delivered incrementally, and the form of each individual project will shift and change as the context changes around it. However, we believe that the areas identified for improvement, and overarching principles for improving the public realm, together provide a flexible framework for delivery of future projects. In our experience, there are some key considerations as to how this vision will be delivered:

Project Implementation

Each project will require a unique combination of professional consultants, funding partners, stakeholders, and community representatives, in order to be successfully delivered. The BID has already delivered several projects this way, most recently the streetscape works in the precinct. The range of project scales contained within these proposals mean that while the parties involved might vary project-by-project, each one should take cognisance of this public realm study and ensure that the overarching aims identified in the study are respected and represented in the final form of the work.

Recent works in the precinct have benefited from continuity of design team, and an aesthetic style has been maintained that reduces some of the inconsistency currently found in the precinct's signage and furniture. While it is expected that different designers will be involved in these projects over the lifespan of the masterplan, sensibly grouping projects together and maintaining continuity in designers over several projects helps to create a more joined-up aesthetic.

In the matrix accompanying each chapter, projects are assigned with a short, medium, or long term designation. This is a high-level determination based on factors including complexity of site, land ownership issues, and anticipated project value. These are not fixed, and do not prohibit a different sequence of delivery. However, it should be noted that each project successfully delivered then changes the context for the projects that follow, and therefore it is important that the masterplan is reviewed with each finished project, to determine whether it has created new opportunities, or made other projects more or less critical to the overall vision.

External Partners and Funding

BID should consider what opportunities exist for involving new partners in delivering aspects of the vision. For example: Sustrans for the cycle infrastructure; Lomond and Trossachs National Park for elements involving the West Highland Way; or Scottish Water for the Reservoirs and surrounding area. Partnering not only involves stakeholders (such as Scottish Water) from an early stage, smoothing project delivery, but can also open up new funding streams. In the case of organisations such as Sustrans, who manage the National Cycling Network, there is an opportunity to embed Milngavie in a national context and ensure the town benefits from improvements and funding distribution at a higher level.

Other smaller initiatives might also be approached, such as the 'Archifringe' – who run short-term programs of design-led events centred on the built environment – or 'Scenic Routes' who's built projects delivered in the Lomond and Trossachs National Park have generated national press coverage. Initiatives such as these afford the opportunity to generate more interest in what's happening in the town, and promote the image of Milngavie as a town with a forward-thinking and inclusive attitude to its public realm.

The streetscape works delivered in recent years by the BID have been through a mix of private funding and Government grant funding. BID should continue to explore different funding routes and mechanisms, and consider the benefits of speculatively developing chosen projects to a sufficient level of detail for funding applications to be made.

Steering Group

It is Page\Park's experience that establishing a steering group to monitor and advise on delivery of the public realm strategy is an effective means to maintain project momentum and manage issues such as changes in personnel, or similar circumstances that can disrupt and slow down the delivery of any long-term incremental project.

In the case of this project, we would recommend establishing a steering group with representation from the BID, East Dunbartonshire Council (as the most frequent long-term funding and delivery partner), and a professional organization with experience of delivering masterplans, a role Page\Park would be well positioned in this case to play.

The steering group would meet on an agreed timetable, be it quarterly or six-monthly, to monitor progress, review new opportunities, and ensure the masterplan is kept up-to-date and cognisant of the surrounding context. Establishing review points at the outset will set effective goals and ensure the momentum of the project is maintained as much as possible.

Maintenance

Comments in the public consultation reflected the desire for increased levels of upkeep in the public realm. BID should consider implementing a long-term maintenance strategy to compliment ongoing council cleaning and maintenance, so that the lifespan of projects delivered under the public realm strategy is maximised.

The BID and Milngavie's community have demonstrated their ability to successfully deliver small projects, and shown their collective ambition to create a more welcoming and functional town centre. It is the aim of this public realm study to give this shared enthusiasm a common direction of travel, with a framework document that establishes an overarching set of principles, and a joined-up way for the community to think about it's public realm. However, fundamentally, it recognises the success to-date in delivering these projects, and encourages the BID and local community to continue with the mantra of:

Small Projects Big Impact



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Thank you

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