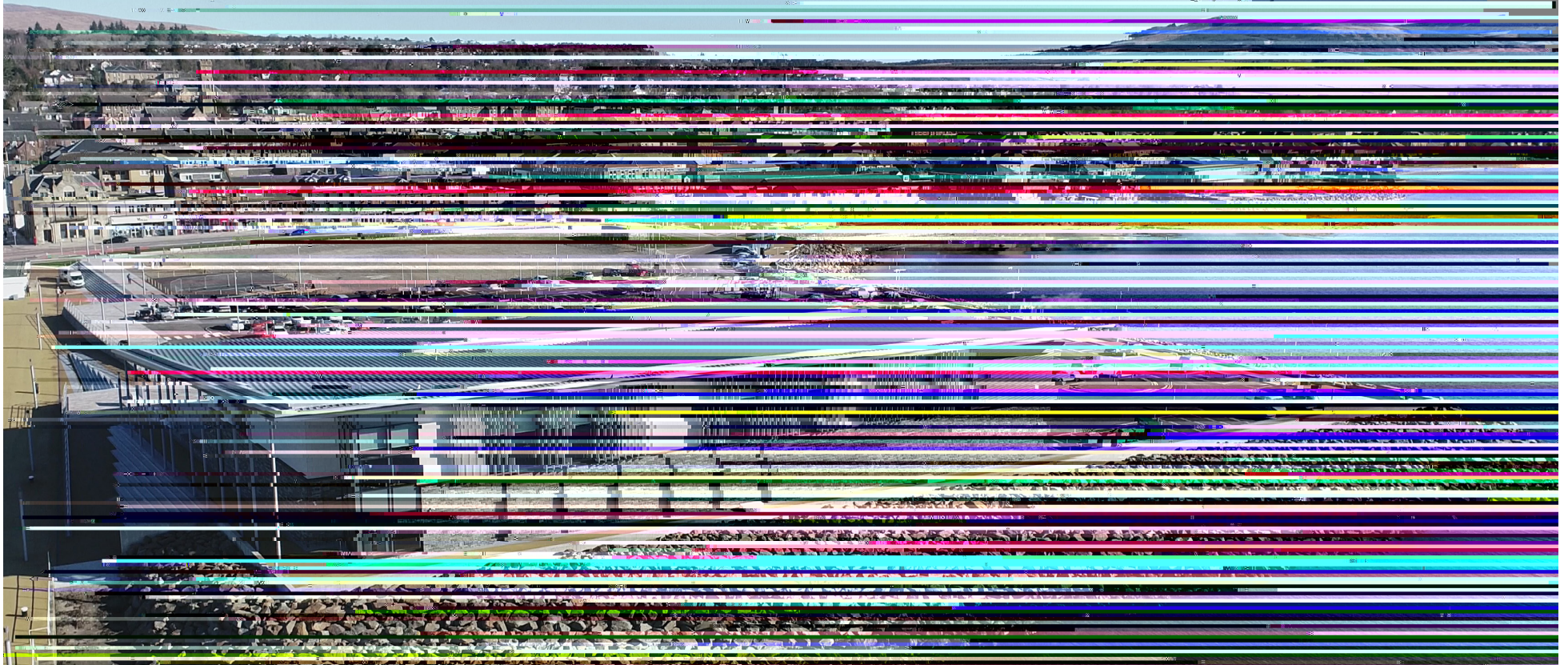


Ryder



Helensburgh Waterfront Community Engagement

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Introduction and Methodology

In order to gather opinions and feedback on potential development options for the Helensburgh Waterfront site, stakeholder engagement was held over the course of a week from 17 to 23 June 2023. This included both drop in sessions and targeted sessions to cover a variety of age groups and interests. This activity was not a formal public consultation, but was targeted engagement to help achieve an inclusive approach.

Invites were sent to 63 community groups, eight Community Councils and published several times on social media to broaden the reach and generate interest. This was to ensure people with a variety of interests, and those who may be lesser heard voices or who tend not to get involved with engagement activities, had the opportunity to have their say.

In total, 83 people participated in the engagement events.

With the exception of the schools engagement, at each session

images to aid discussion. These sets were grouped to represent the range of options currently being put forward for the Waterfront site, in terms of broad function or type. It was explained to all attendees upon arrival that the images were for illustrative purposes only, and were not intended to represent any particular brands, size or design of building.

Attendees were invited to identify any images they particularly liked or disliked, and discuss the pros and cons of each option (or individual

Engagement Sessions

Date	Times	Session Type	Location / Venue	Invites
Saturday 17 June	10:00 – 16:00	Drop in session	HLCC Annex	Community Groups
Monday 19 June	09:30 – 15:30 17:00 – 20:00	Schools Drop in session	Hermitage Academy Confe508 Tm(.1697	m(17:00 –17:00 ISQ 1 0 0 1 57.1929 298.1378 cm

Key Findings

options, with each generating a range of pros and cons.

Several attendees felt strongly that anything much higher than a **single storey** building would not be desirable, as it would block the views across the water. The site is felt to be a prime spot to attract visitors and enjoy the open aspect so, whilst many are not averse to some kind of building or units on the site, they would like an attractive design that is in keeping with the existing leisure centre.

Overall there was a strong preference for an option with at least some **outdoor recreation** space, ideally with

Key Findings (Cont'd)

Suggestions ranged from indoor sports courts to activities such as bowling and climbing walls, as well as some kind of art space or museum dedicated to local history, such as John Logie Baird.

The option including a general **community space** received mixed feedback. People were generally positive about such a space in theory, however some pointed out that there are already many such spaces available in Helensburgh in church halls and private buildings. There was positive feedback for an event / exhibition space, if perhaps it could be combined for community use.

Likewise, the prospect of a **hotel** received mixed feedback. It was considered by some attendees to be a

for friends and family. The Waterfront site could provide a very attractive spot for visitors to enjoy the view, perhaps with associated restaurants and bars. For others, there

a new hotel would take away customers from local businesses.

The issue of a **skate park** was discussed at every session, and is clearly a subject close to the hearts of many Helensburgh residents. There are strong feelings both for and against having the skate park at the

Waterfront site, but most agree a park would be an asset.

Those who would like to see it at the Waterfront argue that the views, central accessibility, nearby facilities such as cafes and the leisure centre, and the ability for the community to passively supervise the park due to its open aspect, make it the ideal location with the potential for a park that attracts national visitors. Those who would like to see it elsewhere (such as Hermitage Park) argue that the skate park would cause noise and

more space than can be afforded at the Waterfront.

Coach parking was also a hot topic, with many people observing the need for Helensburgh to maintain its visitor

Feedback by Option

Convenience Retail / Fast Food

Pros

Outdoor seating was very popular, with many people commenting that the site is a prime spot to attract visitors and locals with the right mix of food, coffee and pleasant seating to take in the view.

Several people thought more felt to be lacking in the town centre.

The prospect of a tea / coffee stand is appealing, perhaps an independent local brand.

The opportunity to incorporate local businesses or pop ups, rather than established chains only, was a welcome idea to make the most of retail and food offering.

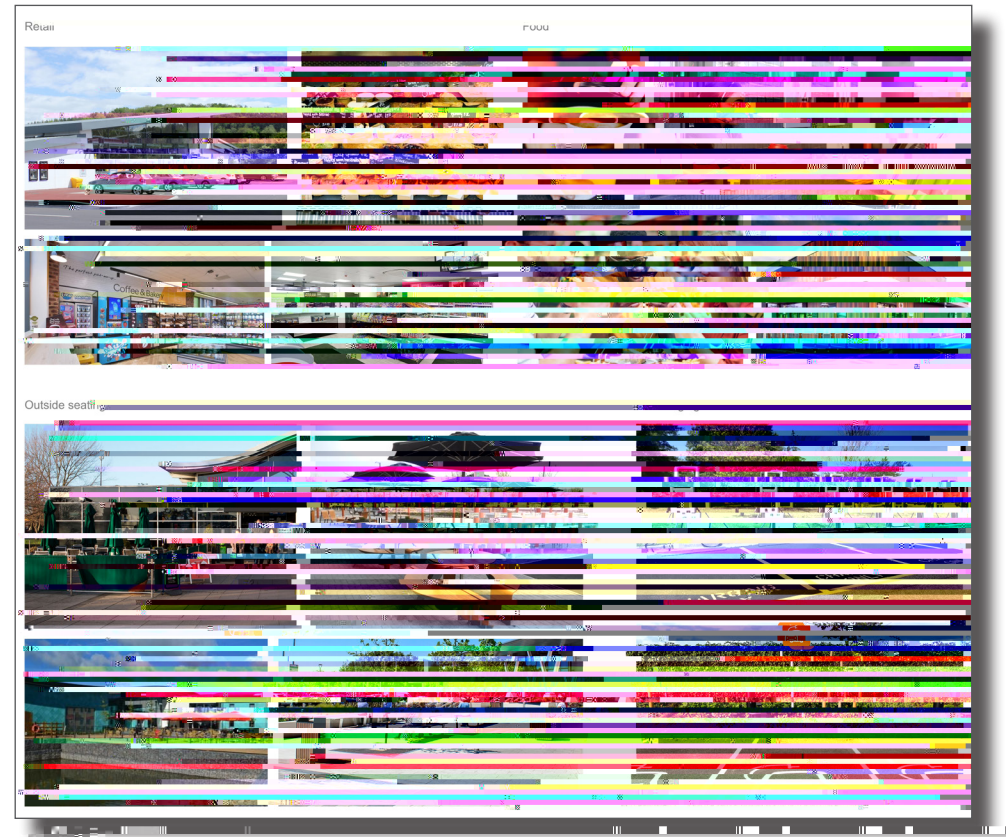
Cons

Helensburgh is perceived to already have plenty of good quality food outlets offering a wide choice, with several people commenting that more food outlets are not needed.

Potentially poor sustainability credentials of fast food and convenience retail, such as packaging and air miles.

A general negative perception of fast food and large chains, which are not felt to be in keeping with a town like Helensburgh or contributing towards the community and its existing businesses.

Potential for litter and attracting gulls around seating areas.



Convenience Retail / Fast Food

“Whatever it is, make it an attractive, sustainable, high quality build.”

“A vibrant, independent retail, food and craft boutique [offering], to be a social and tourist attraction.”

“Small local businesses are unlikely to be able to afford this type of development.”

“Food retail of this sort [convenience] is not

Open Space / Community Use

Pros

Attractive to both locals and visitors. Could blend nicely with the existing leisure centre if outdoor activities were on offer, such as the outdoor gym.

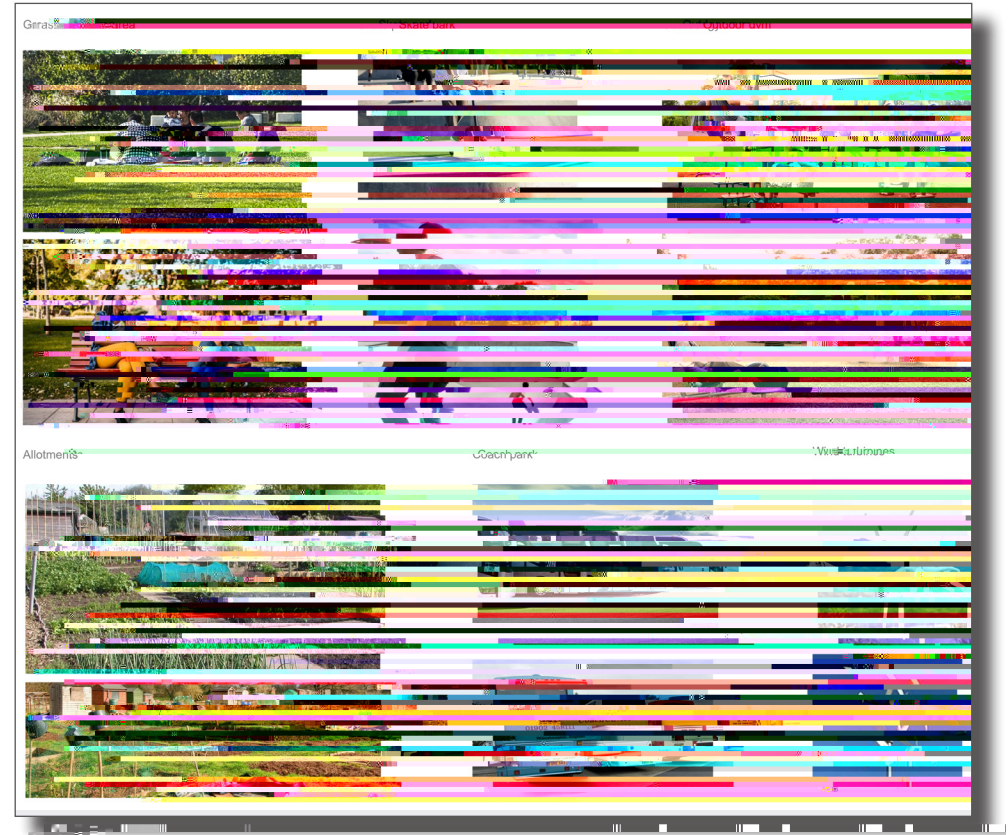
Providing a large open space for events throughout the year, such as music festivals and food markets – but it was noted that this type of facility is available at the Civic Centre (hosting the recent gin festival and street food Sunday events) along with the redeveloped Colquhoun Square and Hermitage Park multi use area.

A number of attendees felt that, with the right investment, a skate park could be a considerable draw for tourists and sports enthusiasts on a national level, drawing in tourism and money to local businesses.

Attendees noted the support of internationally renowned BMX rider Kriss Kyle, who lives in Helensburgh.

It was felt that a skate park in this location would be easy to supervise, helping to keep any potential antisocial behaviour to a minimum. It could provide a central facility for young people centred around healthy hobbies – something that is felt to be lacking in Helensburgh.

In relation to coach parking, a drop off and pick up point could be attractive for visitors on tours and arriving / leaving by boat. This could be tied in with pier redevelopment. Some people commented that older visitors need to go back and rest during the day, therefore coaches should be able to stay on site if a drop off point is provided, however note that most thought coaches should park elsewhere to free up space on the Waterfront site.



The prospect of outdoor community space also opened up discussion about an outdoor pool, which was not part of the options but some people would like to see reinstated.

Open Space / Community Use

Cons

Whilst the skate park was a very popular offering, there was mixed feedback about its location. Some people do not think the Waterfront site is the right place for it, with concerns about noise and lack of space.

Allotments were almost unanimously felt to be a poor idea on this site as

to grow plants. There are felt to be plenty of other suitable places for allotments.

This option would have limited use in inclement weather – most people thought outdoor space would need to be complemented by at least some shelter, and many suggested it be combined with indoor recreation space.

Whilst coach parking is felt to be much needed in the town, many feel the Waterfront is not a suitable place – too many vehicles taking up too much space.

Outdoor gyms received mixed reviews as a concept – although the idea is felt to be good, some people do not think they are well used in practice. Wind turbines were not thought to be a compelling offer. Few people seemed particularly concerned about the aesthetic appearance, rather they felt they would not be especially functional nor cost effective in this location.

“A multi use seasonal site, eg ice rink in winter, mini golf in the summer, skate park and soft play all year round.”

“Ideally a mix of indoor and outdoor things to do.”

“I would use an outdoor gym, but it wouldn't really appeal to visitors.”

“A skate park would be young people in the area

“A skate park – it needs to be in the right place, though. We wouldn't put it there – it needs to be in a park somewhere so the noise doesn't affect people relaxing nearby. Could it go in Hermitage Park?”

“We don't want the skate park in Hermitage Park – the people using it are

environment attracts antisocial behaviour. We don't want to create more of a problem with that.”

“We do need coach parking, and it would be useful in the centre of town, but you don't want to stare at a load of coaches there. Could it be a drop off point, and park coaches elsewhere?”

“You can't have allotments there – nothing will grow!”

Multi Storey Retail / Residential / Exhibition

Pros

The prospect of some exhibition space was very welcome, provided it does not impact negatively on existing businesses. Some people suggested a heritage or civic space, such as a John Logie Baird exhibition, which could be rotated for different events.

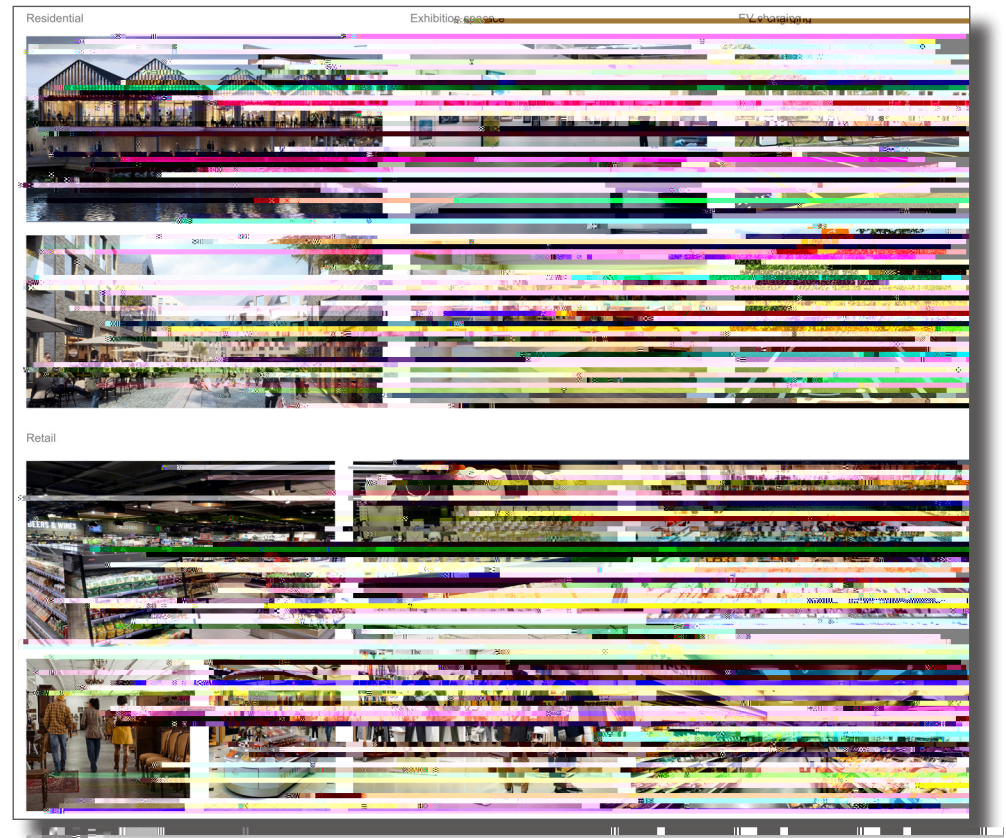
Some attendees liked the idea of pleasant shops and galleries combined, creating a destination for people to relax, shop and eat – attractive to tourists and locals.

Overall, few people seemed to have strong opinions on the prospect of residential development on the site. Positive comments related to the possibility of an aesthetically pleasing, high quality development

the local economy.

Cons

A development of more than



Multi Storey Retail / Hotel

"Three or four storeys [for a hotel] would be out of scale with the town."

"No multi storey – a low level development would be more appropriate."

"I've struggled to get hotels for family. A nice hotel, with some nice shops and restaurants, would be lovely. It's such a nice spot looking out over the bay – people who visit want to look out over the sea, and that's a perfect spot for it. People will pay a premium to sit and look out over the bay."

"A hotel would be nice for a few people taking rooms, but spoils the view for everyone else."

"An assessment should be made of existing hotels to see if it's viable. The people who come here to visit are usually day trippers."

"There's a massive demand for hotel rooms, but this is not the right location – it would be too high and spoil the views."

"There's not enough demand for a hotel."

"A hotel would be acceptable, and could be a conference centre etc. It would bring people into

for businesses."

Retail / Community Space

Pros

A community space was particularly appealing to many attendees, particularly if it provided facilities for young people, families and visitors.

Retail / Community Space

“Something like an Aldi or Next would be ideal – people need cheaper food options and there are no clothes shops. You could even put a leisure offering above it on a second

“We are lacking supermarkets, but that’s not the place for it. It would be sacrilege to put

EV Charging

Please note, most of the options were presented alongside EV charging to gauge reactions to buildings of various types with parking. Overall it was positively received, with many attendees

sustainable options and the possibility of bringing in visitors to use the charging points. Several commented that more parking in general is needed in the town centre.

A counterpoint to this was an argument that Helensburgh should be trying to reduce car usage and parking, to increase the use of active travel and reduce pollution.

“EV charging can bring people to the town who can then spend their money on the existing businesses and support the town.”

“EV parking can help with people’s decisions on their destinations for days out.”

“If you were going to put multiple chargers you’d need fast charging ones, and I don’t think the grid there would support it.”

“Additional parking would be a waste of space and

General Comments

Throughout the course of the engagement, attendees provided additional comments and suggestions that were not directly related to a particular option, but touched on their broader perceptions of Helensburgh and its needs. Below is a summary of these comments and conversations.

Sale or Lease?

Schools Engagement

Schools Engagement

Primary and high school pupils were asked to tell us what they would like to see in Helensburgh, and discuss the reasons behind their suggestions. The exercise generated a wide range of ideas, from parks and community gardens to cafes and shops, via trampoline parks and bowling alleys.

A key theme for many young people was the lack of things to do in Helensburgh, with many travelling to Dumbarton for shopping trips or activities. For some, this is a negative as they would prefer to have shops and familiar chain stores

Schools - Pictures

