

Ayr Riverside

Development Framework

March 2016



south
AYRSHIRE
C O U N C I L

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1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 Purpose of this Document

This Development Framework document has been prepared by Ayr Renaissance LLP (Ayr Renaissance) to inform all stakeholders and decision makers on the vision and development brief for the Riverside Block development area (the site) in Ayr. It identifies the current policy and legislative framework (Section 2) as well as the strategic and local context of the site (Section 3). Within this context the document goes on to set the appropriate uses, design framework and phasing for the future development on the site (Sections 5-6).

The Development Framework document will become Council-approved Non-Statutory Planning Guidance. Scottish Government Planning Circular 6/2013: Development Planning states in paragraph 147 that non-statutory planning guidance could *address 'various issues, for example in relation to emerging technology which the authority wants to provide some planning guidance on, or in relation to a windfall site for which the Council wish to provide a design framework or masterplan'*. Paragraph 148 of the Circular goes on to state that *'this non-statutory guidance should not be termed Supplementary Guidance and will not form part of the development plan. However, the Council's adoption of it will give it a degree of authorisation and it may be a material consideration in decision making.'*

It is intended that the Development Framework document will be a material consideration in the consideration of planning applications within, and adjacent to, the site. As such, applicants are encouraged to consult this guidance when preparing planning applications for the site. The Development Framework does not in itself provide the basis for demolition, this should be achieved through the submission of an appropriate application for Conservation Area Consent meeting the relevant statutory provision relating to demolition in a Conservation Area.

The South Ayrshire Council (the Council) adopted development plan remains the primary document for the determination of planning applications. The policies within the South Ayrshire Local Development Plan should be considered when preparing any planning application.

1.2 The Design Team

The preparation of this Development Framework document has been led by Ayr Renaissance, and prepared in conjunction with The Prince's Foundation for Building Community (The Prince's Foundation) and South Ayrshire Council.

Ayr Renaissance is a limited liability partnership which was formed by the Council in 2009 to deliver the strategy for regeneration of Ayr Town Centre. The objective of Ayr Renaissance is to:

'Assist, promote, encourage, develop and secure regeneration in the social, physical and economic environment of Ayr Town Centre, by implementing the adopted strategy known

as Ayr Renaissance, focussing on physical development in the North and South Hubs and the Backlands areas.’

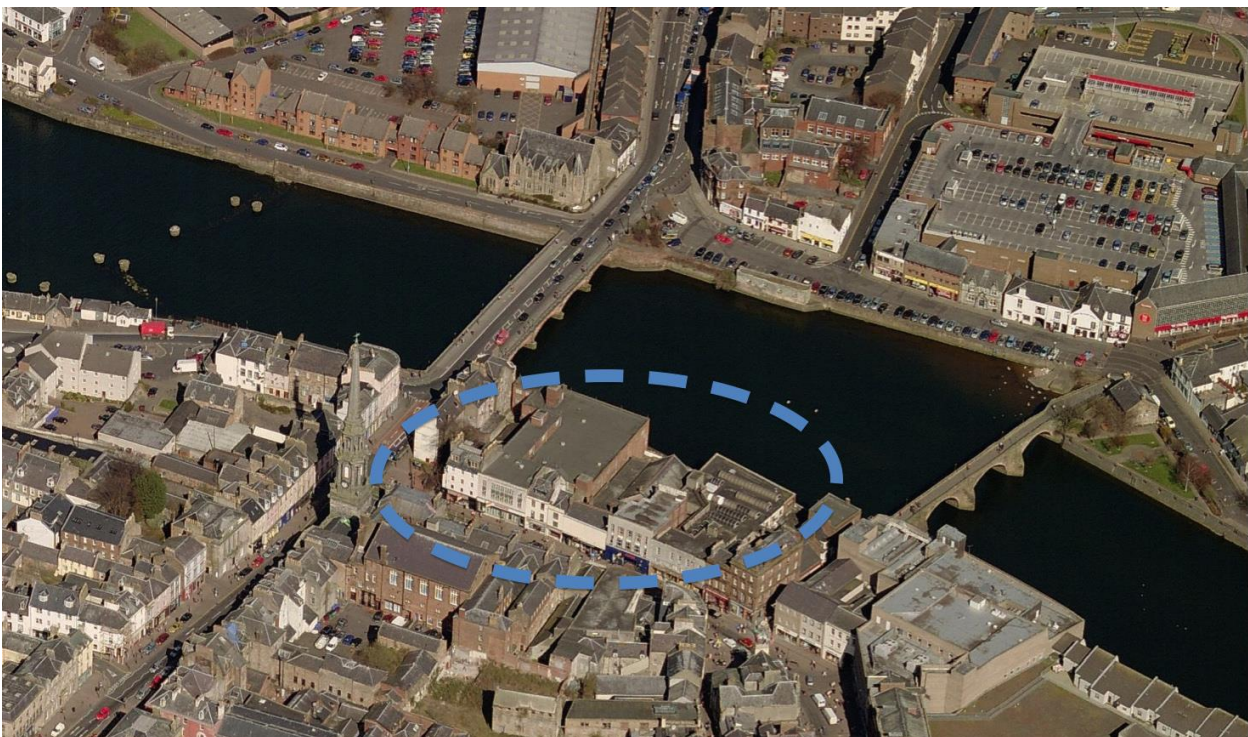
1.3 Background and Objectives

The Riverside Block site forms a key component of the North Hub as identified by the Council’s 2007 document “Ayr Town Centre Strategy: The Renaissance of Ayr Town Centre” (the 2007 strategy), and is an integral element in meeting the regeneration aspirations of the town.

To further develop the findings of the 2007 strategy, Ayr Renaissance and the Council hosted three summits on the future of the town centre in 2013. These summits, facilitated by Architecture and Design Scotland, again reiterated the importance of the site in the regeneration of the town centre.

In January 2014 Ayr Renaissance appointed The Prince’s Foundation to develop concept designs for the site and to undertake public consultation events. This Development Framework is the outcome of this process. Section 4 provides further details of the outcomes of the public events and the broader design evolution process.

The Riverside Block site sits within the historic core of Ayr Town Centre, with a prominent position along the High Street and the River Ayr. The location means that an important opportunity exists for redevelopment which would bring about significant benefits to both the immediate locality, but also the wider town. It is recognised that the location within the Ayr Central Conservation Area, and adjacent to a number of prominent heritage landmarks, presents notable challenges, as well as opportunities.



The Riverside Block site is located within the historic core of the town.

The objective of this document, and the consultation process it is built upon, is to review the constraints and opportunities present at a local and strategic level, and develop Design Principles to guide future development on the site in a way that supports the vision.

Alongside the Design Principles, the Development Framework document provides information for future applicants on current site conditions, policy context, technical studies which may accompany applications and the appropriate phasing and meanwhile uses for development proposals.



Ayr High Street has seen significant changes over the past 50 years or so in terms of its level of economic and civic activity. Changes in working and shopping patterns, and personal mobility, have impacted on the local economy in the town centre. One of the primary objectives of this Development Framework Document is to support the delivery of robust and sustainable patterns of development that revitalise the Riverside Block, the High Street and the town centre.

1.4 The Vision

The vision for the Riverside Block is to create a place that supports the ongoing vitality and viability of the town centre by providing a range of new facilities and amenities, seamlessly integrating with its historic environment and reinforcing what is unique and cherished about Ayr.

The Riverside Block site has been identified as a key component of the Regeneration Strategy of Ayr Town Centre. This Development Framework document seeks to maximise the regeneration benefits, resulting from the development. The vision for the site has been established to provide a foundation for the development of urban design and architectural solutions. This guidance has been prepared with the goals of good place-making to deliver the best possible economic, social, and environmental benefits for the development.

The vision for Riverside:

- Promotes the wider regeneration of Ayr Town Centre;
- Encourages uses which drive a vibrant daytime and evening economy;
- Respects the setting of listed buildings adjacent to the site;
- Promotes the refurbishment, creative reuse or adaptation of the historic unlisted buildings on the site where practical;
- Encourages high standards of design which are in harmony with the historic core of the town, in terms of urban form, layout, scale, massing and materials;
- Supports a positive design relationship with the river;
- Includes provision of high quality public realm and open space for public use;

- Improve public circulation, and accessibility to the river;
- Supports arts and culture strategies in the town; and
- Encourages meanwhile or temporary uses on cleared sites to improve vitality in advance of permanent development.

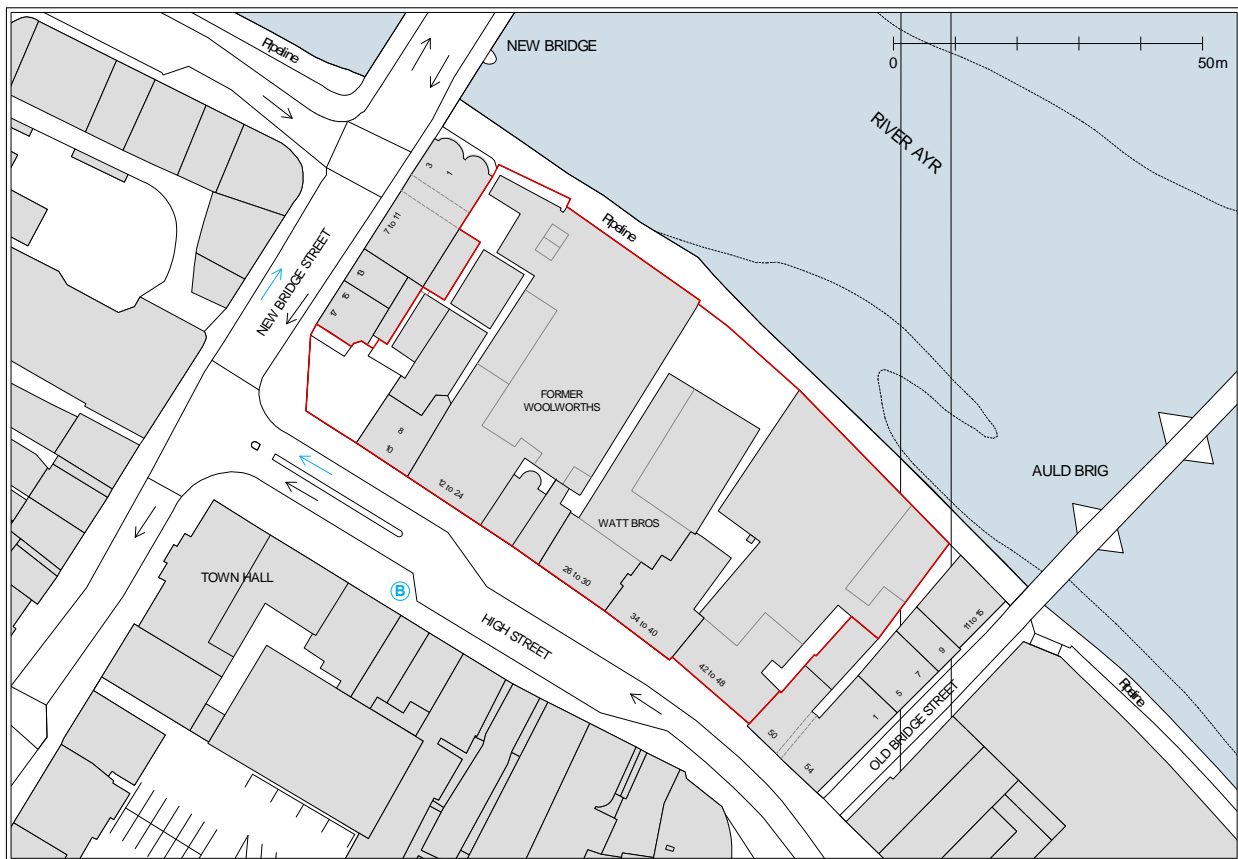


The objective for the Riverside Block is re-establishing it as an attractive, interesting and commercially viable area of the town centre. Redevelopment also provides the opportunity to improve the visual impression of the town centre on the approach from the north.

2.0 The Site

2.1 Location and Site Plan

The Riverside Block is located in the historic core of Ayr Town Centre in a prominent position to the north of High Street, and south of the River Ayr. The block consists of the properties at 8 to 48 High Street inclusive. The map below shows the extent of the site covered by this Development Framework. Whilst the physical elements of future development will occupy the site identified below, its impact on neighbouring properties and landmark buildings outwith the development site must be considered.



The Riverside Block Site Boundary.

2.2 Ownership

The Riverside Block is currently within a number of ownerships. The properties at 8-10, 12-18, 20-24 and 26-40 are currently in the ownership of Ayr Renaissance LLP. The property at 42-48 High Street is currently in private ownership. The Council has approved the use of Compulsory Purchase Powers in relation to the Riverside Block.

Whilst ownership is not a consideration in the determination of planning applications, the deliverability and viability of projects should be demonstrated in particular where it relates to the demolition of buildings.

2.3 Strategic Context

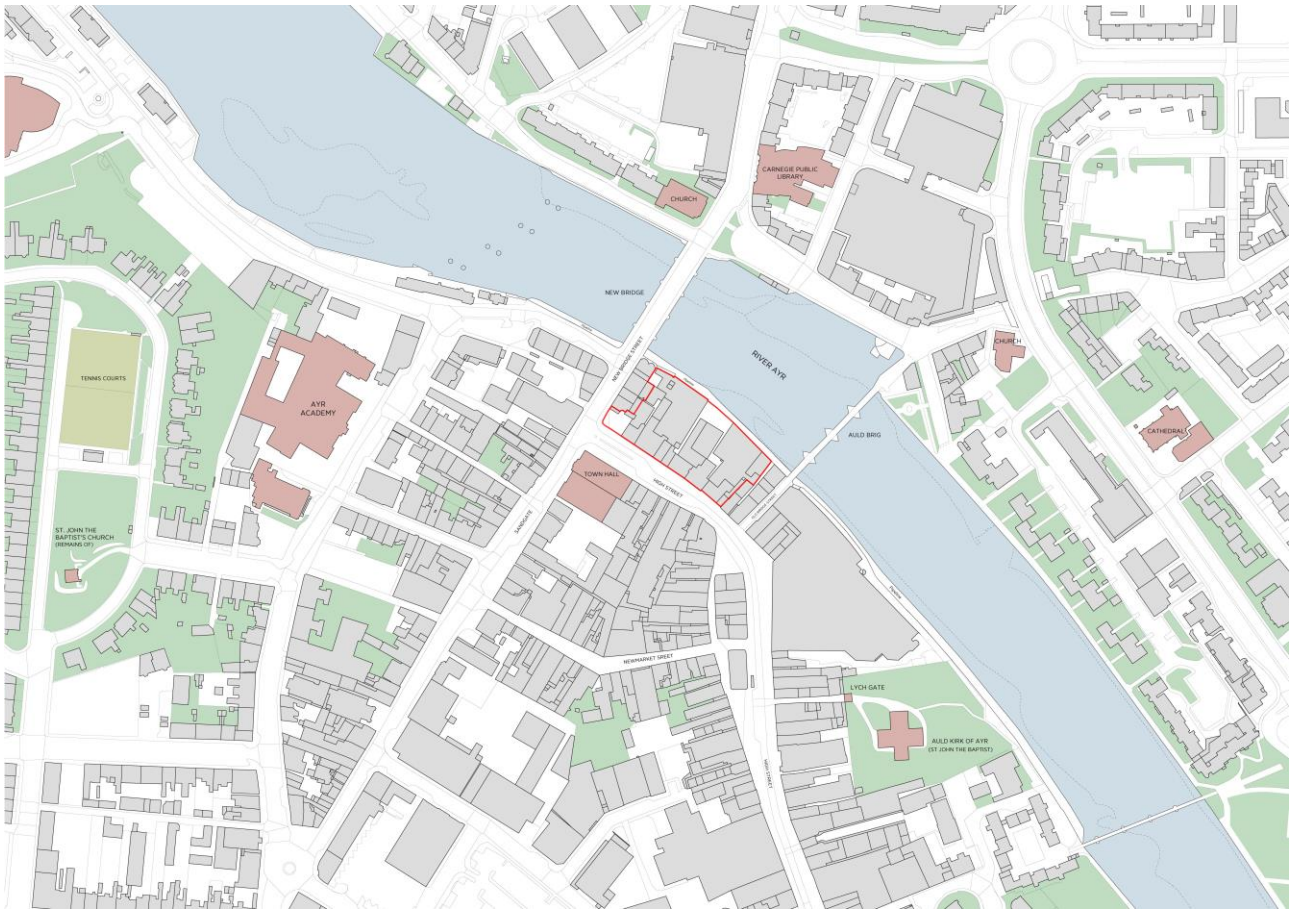
Ayr is the largest town and administrative centre of South Ayrshire and has a population of approximately 47,000. It is positioned on the Firth of Clyde at the mouth of the River Ayr. The town has a history of industry centred on the Port facilities, however is better known as a holiday resort due to its beachfront location and historical links to the Scottish National Bard Robert Burns. Historically Ayr was the market town for the County of Ayrshire, and is the traditional retail centre for the south west of Scotland.

It is approximately 35 miles from Glasgow to the north via the M77/A77. Other core settlements in the proximity of Ayr include Kilmarnock (15 miles), Irvine (15 miles) and Troon (10 miles) to the north. Prestwick, and its international airport, lies immediately to the north of Ayr, within the same urban area.

The A77 road skirts Ayr Town, before travelling south through the towns of Maybole (9 miles) and Girvan (20 miles). The A77 continues on to Stranraer in the south and the nearby Irish Sea ferry services at Cairnryan, linking Ireland with Scotland.

Ayr is located on the main Glasgow to Stranraer rail line, and has good internal bus circulation as well as coach services to major towns in the west of Scotland.

The A70 road links Ayr with Cumnock 15 miles to the east. The areas to the east and south east of the town are primarily agricultural, with a strong tradition of dairy farming. The Galloway Forest Park is located approximately 15 miles to the south, and is accessed from the north via the A77 at Ayr.



The Riverside Block is a prominent site within the historic heart of Ayr Town Centre.

2.4 Site Description

The Riverside Block site is bounded to the south by the northern extent of High Street and comprises approximately 0.45ha. A solid building block occupies the southern side of High Street opposite to the site, consisting of retail and office uses; several of these properties are Category B or C Listed. The Category A Listed Town Hall occupies a prominent position at the corner of High Street and New Bridge Street.

The River Ayr runs along the northern edge of the site, a Scottish Water waste water pipe traverses the edge of the site along the southern bank of the river. The northern outlook from the site is across to River Street on the northern bank of the river which consists of a solid block of traditional buildings with a mix of town centre uses. Views to the north of the site are framed by the Auld Brig to the east and the New Bridge to the west. A river walkway follows the southern bank of the river up to the eastern edge of the Auld Brig.

The western edge of the site consists of the rear of existing 3-4 storey properties. These properties front on to New Bridge Street beyond and consist of a mix of town centre uses on the ground floor with residential above. An arched access between 3 and 7 New Bridge Street leads to the Riverside Block site. The properties at 7–11 and 13–17 New Bridge are Category B and C Listed respectively. The properties at 1 and 3 New Bridge Street are Category A Listed and have undergone significant refurbishment in recent years to provide an important landmark property on the entrance to the town centre across New Bridge. The corner of New Bridge Street and High Street, adjacent to 17 New Bridge Street, is currently an area of public open space on a piece of land previously occupied by a long demolished building.



The northerly edge of the site is largely dominated by largely unrelieved brick elevations and present a physical and visual barrier between the River Ayr and the High Street. However the Town Hall Spire and 1-3 New Bridge Street (top left) are key landmarks in the town.

The eastern edge of the site consists of the rear of properties on Auld Brig Street, as well as the western gable of the three-storey Category B Listed property at 50 High Street. 50 High Street is currently vacant on all floors. Category B Listed 54 High Street sits at the corner of Auld Brig Street, completing the High Street frontage between New Bridge Street and Auld Brig Street. 54 High Street consists of retail on ground floor with residential flats above. Auld Brig Street is a narrow pedestrian street leading to the Category A Listed Auld Brig; the properties on this street vary in heights and consist of retail and café uses on the ground floors with office spaces above.

The site within the Riverside Block is currently densely developed, with buildings covering much of the area. There are seven existing buildings within the site as well as a small area of public space. The public space on the corner of High Street and New Bridge Street exists on a gap site created following the historical demolition of an earlier building. The original building on this plot followed the building lines of New Bridge Street and High Street creating a formal corner to the block.

Moving east along High Street, 8-10 High Street is an four and a half storey three bay tenement building, constructed in the 18th century, with a long term vacant shop unit on ground floor and first floor, and long term vacant residential on the floors above. The property has been extended on ground floor level to the rear with the further addition of a single storey store in the land to the rear, all vacant.

12-18 is a large 20th century retail unit over three storeys. It is long term vacant most recently being occupied by Woolworths. The property extends the full depth of the site from the High Street to the River. The arched alley off New Bridge Street provides access to the rear of 12-18 High Street.

20-24 is a small 18th century three-storey building with a long-term vacant retail unit at ground floor and vacant upper floors above previously used as storage for the retail. The property does not extend deep into the site with the property at 12-18 wrapping to the rear.



12 – 18 High Street, known locally as the Woolworth's building, is flanked by two 18th century buildings (8-10 High Street, a 4½-storey tenement and the 3-storey 20-24) that add to the rhythm and character of the Riverside Block's High Street frontage.

The properties at 26-30, 34-40 and 42-48 are large 20th century retail buildings. 26-30 is currently occupied by a retailer, 34-40 is long term vacant and 42-48 is currently occupied by a charity shop operator. The retail unit at 26-30 High Street includes some elements of an earlier YMCA hall (also 20th century). A small yard area is located to the rear of 26-30 High Street at the river.



The properties at 26-48 High Street are fairly large 20th century former retail premises considered to be detrimental to the character of the Town Centre.

The Riverside Block site slopes gently from the High Street towards the river, the ground level at High Street is in the region of 4.8 metres above sea level with the typical height along the northern boundary being in the region of 3 metres.

2.5 Policy Context

National Planning Framework 3

The National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) was approved by the Scottish Government in June 2014. It sets the context for development planning in Scotland and provides a framework for the spatial development of Scotland as a whole. It sets out a long-term vision for development and investment across Scotland over the next 20 to 30 years.

The vision set out in the NPF3 focuses on creating a **successful, sustainable place; a low carbon place; a natural, resilient place and a connected place.**

The NPF3 recognises the importance of reinvigorating Scotland's towns, supporting growth in priority sectors and locations, and promoting a place-based approach to development. Paragraph 2.28 of NPF3 states:

Our diverse and vibrant rural towns support clusters of services, have a significant share of homes and jobs, and act as transport hubs for a much wider rural community. We want to see the role of these towns strengthened and diversified.

Scottish Planning Policy

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) was approved by the Scottish Government June 2014. It sets out the national planning policies that reflect Scottish Ministers' priorities for operation of the planning system and for the development and use of land. It influences the preparation of Local Development Plans and is a consideration in the determination of planning applications. Applicants should consider SPP when preparing proposals for the Riverside Block.

With regards to town centres, SPP guides that the planning system should:

- *Apply a town centre first policy when planning for uses which attract significant numbers of people, including retail and commercial leisure, offices, community and cultural facilities;*
- *Encourage a mix of uses in town centres to support their vibrancy, vitality and viability throughout the day and into the evening;*
- *Ensure development plans, decision-making and monitoring support successful town centres; and*
- *Consider opportunities for promoting residential use within town centres where this fits with local need and demand.*

The SPP also expressly cites the importance of place-making, stating that planning should take every opportunity to create high quality places by taking a design-led approach.

Creating Places

Creating Places is the Government's policy statement on architecture and place and affirms the notion that planning should support development that is designed to a high-quality and demonstrates the six qualities of successful places:

- ***Distinctive***
- ***Safe and Pleasant***
- ***Welcoming***
- ***Adaptable***
- ***Resource Efficient***
- ***Easy to Move Around and Beyond***



These guiding principles underpin the Scottish Government's approach to delivering good places.

South Ayrshire Local Development Plan

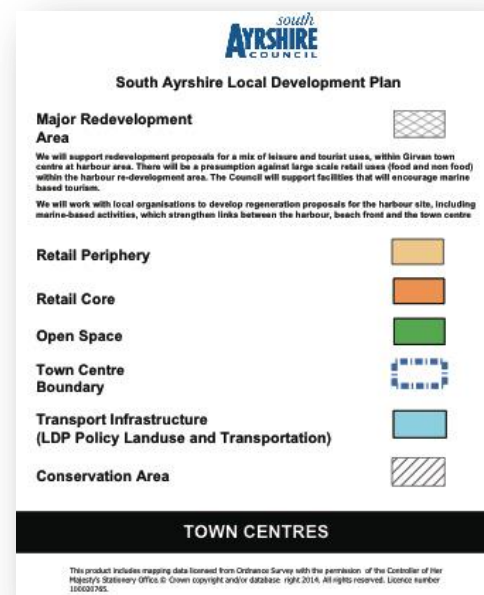
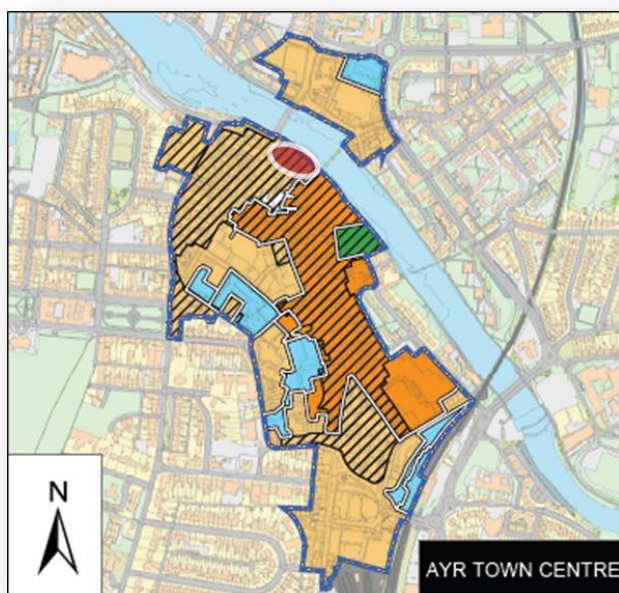
South Ayrshire Council's planning policy framework reflects the shift towards place-making at a National level in Scotland.

The Council adopted the South Ayrshire Local Development Plan (LDP) in September 2014. The LDP and accompanying supplementary guidance form the Development Plan for South Ayrshire against which planning applications are assessed.

Within the LDP, Ayr is identified as a Core Investment Town within South Ayrshire, where the regeneration of vacant, redundant or brownfield land will be supported and expressly promotes the Ayr Renaissance project.

The Riverside Block is located within an area designated as the Retail Periphery and Ayr Central Conservation Area, within the Ayr Town Centre boundary; these are set out below and are particularly relevant in the consideration of proposals and potential uses for the Riverside Block.

The LDP contains a policy under ‘Town Centres’ that expressly covers the Retail Periphery. The aim of this policy is to support uses identified within the LDP that are considered appropriate in the Town Centre core and peripheral areas. The range of uses supported in the periphery is broader and recognises that ‘complementary uses,’ e.g. offices and other uses that support the vitality and viability of the Town Centre.



The Riverside block site (in red) is located within the area identified in South Ayrshire Council’s Local Development Plan as the ‘Retail Periphery’ and outwith the ‘Retail Core’ thus allowing, in principle, a wider range of potential uses.

The LDP also recognises that the historic environment plays an important part of South Ayrshire’s cultural heritage and can contribute to its sustainable economic growth and regeneration. Much of Ayr Town Centre, including the Riverside Block, has been designated a conservation area in recognition of its historic importance and attractiveness.

Conservation area designation gives the Council extra control on development within the area and additional scope for improvement initiatives. There are policies within the LDP as well as a Conservation Area Character Appraisal (see below), which are intended to safeguard and improve the area’s character and appearance. Development proposals will be expected to adhere to all protocols in regard to demolition of existing buildings as well as new structures.

It is also advised that any future development proposals will be required to undertake a full ‘Culture and Heritage Report’.

South Ayrshire Council is currently undertaking a Local Development Plan Review, this review focuses exclusively on retail policy and town centres in South Ayrshire. The review will provide a vision for Ayr Town Centre, and once adopted should be considered in the preparation of development proposals.

South Ayrshire Town Centre and Retail Local Development Plan: Proposed Plan

South Ayrshire Council is currently developing a subject specific local development plan for town centres and retailing. This document is currently at Proposed Plan stage with adoption anticipated in 2016.

The Proposed Plan identifies the Riverside Block as a Redevelopment Opportunity Site stating:

Ayr Renaissance is currently working on plans to regenerate the north part of the High Street. We will support the production of a design framework for the site, supporting a range of suitable town centre uses including residential, offices, cafés/dining and cultural. Opportunities for open vistas through the site will be supported, with some reflection on the original streetscape onto the High Street, in terms of the general scale and massing of the existing buildings. Opportunities for some open or civic space onto the riverfront set within a backdrop of buildings will also be supported.

We will support appropriate temporary uses on the site during the demolition and construction phases, in line with the masterplan/framework for the site, supported by a phasing and project plan. It will also be important to pay attention to the treatment of exposed superstructure (e.g. exposed gable ends of buildings and the new base structure).

A flood risk assessment should be undertaken prior to the commencement of any development on this site and that any planning application is fully compliant with LDP policy: flooding and development. Any non-statutory guidance relating to the redevelopment of this site should be informed by the views of the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency.

Proposals for the Riverside Block should take account of the contents of the subject specific Local Development Plan.

Supplementary Guidance: Historic Environment

The South Ayrshire Council Supplementary Guidance: Historic Environment was adopted in 2014 as part of the preparation of the South Ayrshire Council LDP. The Supplementary Guidance builds on the LDP Policy Historic Environment and encourages the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic environment through a number of Supplementary Guidance Policies.

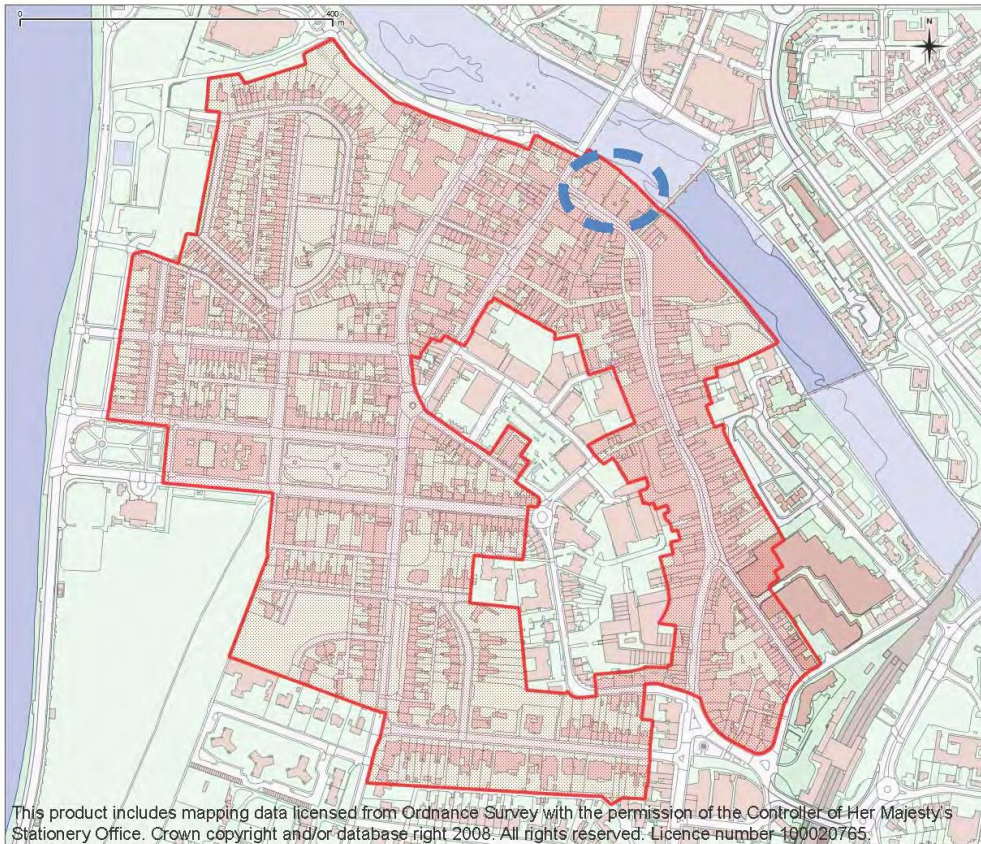
At the core of the Supplementary Guidance as it relates to the Riverside Block are Supplementary Guidance Policy 1: Design Quality and Supplementary Guidance Policy 3: Conservation Areas.

The Design Quality Policy contains detailed guidance in regard to the layout, density, scale, massing, material, etc. in the promotion of good design. Development proposals should

consider the contents of the Supplementary Guidance as a whole when preparing plans and designs for the site.

The Conservation Area Policy provides further guidance relevant to the design, construction and maintenance of buildings and development within a conservation area.

Conservation Area



Ayr Central Conservation Area Boundary, August 2008.

The Riverside Block is within the Ayr Central Conservation Area boundary.

Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP)

The latest iteration of SHEP was published in December 2011 and sets out Scottish Ministers' policies in relation to the historic environment. It provides detailed guidance in relation to listed buildings and conservation areas and is of particular relevance to the Riverside Block. Applicants should have regard of SHEP when preparing development proposals, particularly where these may impact listed buildings or involve the demolition of buildings within the conservation area. It is advised that Historic Scotland is consulted when preparing development proposals for the site.

Ayr Central Conservation Area Character Appraisal

The Ayr Central Conservation Area Appraisal was published in October 2008. It sets out the history and development of Ayr, and describes the surviving historic features of the town. It goes on to identify applicable policies and guidance and presents suggested actions for future protection and enhancement of the Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area Character Appraisal should be considered when preparing development proposals for the site. With specific reference to the Riverside Block the appraisal states:

High Street/New Bridge Street. The demolition of 2-6 High Street has left a small gap site on the prominent junction between the High Street and the New Bridge Street, opposite the Town Buildings. Whilst the small garden ground has some amenity value, the two gables looming over the site make it appear unresolved. It would be appropriate to reinstate a building on this site as proposed by the Ayr Renaissance initiative. A building of the highest quality is required for this important location.

Riverfront behind 12-16 and 26-48 High Street. This is another area recognised by the Ayr Renaissance initiative as having a poor impact on the Town Centre Conservation Area. Highly visible on the main approach to the town centre over the New and Auld Brigs, these brick-built structures present a physical and visual barrier between the River Ayr and the High Street. The proximity of the buildings to the water's edge prevents the continuation of the riverside walkway.

3.0 Site and Area Analysis

3.1 Environmental Assessment

The environmental effects of the Development Framework as relevant to Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, are assessed as part of the SEA for the South Ayrshire Town Centres and Retail LDP and therefore, no additional SEA is required. With regard Habitats Regulations, non-statutory planning guidance is not a 'land use plan' in terms of the Habitats Regulations 1994 (as amended), however a Habitats Regulations Appraisal is required under regulations 47 and 48 if it is likely to have a significant effect on a European protected site (Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Areas. The requirement for a Habitats Regulations Appraisal in this case will be considered through consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage prior to approval of the Development Framework.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to consider the requirement for Environment Impact Assessment under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Environment Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2011. The applicant should consult South Ayrshire Council and Scottish Natural Heritage for confirmation of the requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment or other supporting information.

Flooding

The proximity of the site to the River Ayr and the coast presents a possible constraint from both coastal and fluvial flooding. The SEPA high level indicative flood management maps identify a possible impact from flooding at the Riverside Block. Any development proposals should be accompanied by a flood risk assessment and scheme of mitigation if appropriate. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems must be included in development proposals. The applicant should consult with South Ayrshire Council and Scottish Environment Protection Agency with regard flood risk on the site. Local Development Plan Policy: flooding and development should be taken into consideration.

Water Environment

Proposed development should not harm the water environment, in particular the River Ayr. Where there are likely to be impacts on the water environment including on its biodiversity, this should be assessed. Local Development Plan Policy: water environment should be considered.

Ecology

The Riverside Block is not covered by any ecological designations. Applications for development proposals should consider the potential for ecological impact within the site or on adjacent areas. Local Development Plan Policy: natural heritage should be considered.

Cultural Heritage

As highlighted elsewhere in this document, the site is located within the core of the medieval burgh and adjacent to significant listed buildings. Cultural heritage impacts in relation to development proposals should be considered as part of any planning applications. Local Development Plan Policy: Historic Environment.

Archaeology

Whilst the site has been heavily redeveloped in the 20th century, as well as in earlier phases, there remains the possibility for undiscovered archaeological features beneath the ground. For any development which would involve ground works an archaeological assessment would be required to accompany the planning application. Local Development Plan Policy: Archaeology should be considered when preparing proposals for the site.

Air, Noise and Light Pollution

If a proposal includes uses which may generate noise, air or light pollution, it is recommended that an assessment is undertaken to consider the impacts of this on users of the site and neighbouring properties. Local Development Plan Policy: air, noise and light pollution should be considered.

Coal Mining Risk Assessment

The Riverside Block is located within The Coal Authorities ‘Development High Risk Area’; as such a Coal Mining Risk Assessment may be required depending on proposals. If in doubt of the requirement for a Coal Mining Risk Assessment, an applicant should consult with The Coal Authority.

3.2 Historical Context

Medieval

In 1197 a castle was built by the River Ayr and, shortly afterwards in 1205, King William the Lion created a burgh at Ayr. He laid out streets and set aside plots of land for building houses. Over time the town developed due to its strategic location at a confluence of trading routes, its natural harbour and the ability to ford the River Ayr just upriver from the harbour. The town was to develop into the west coast’s pre-eminent port and it was foreign trade, primarily with Ireland, that stimulated early growth. The town developed with High Street becoming its main axis, spreading down from the junction with Sandgate and forming its distinctive shape.

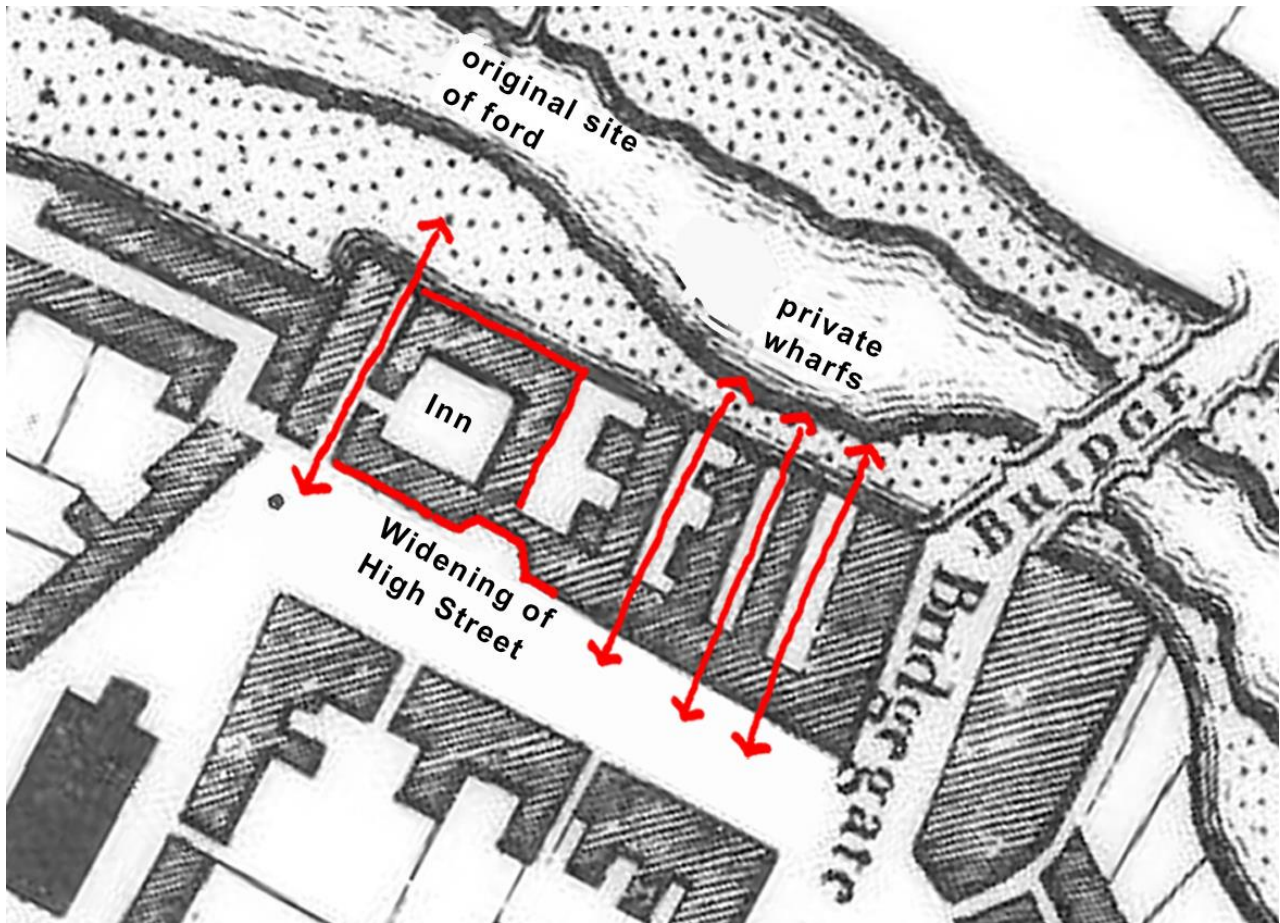
16th – 17th Centuries



Prospect of Ayr from the East by John Slezer, 1693.

The town continued to grow and by the middle of the 17th century its population was estimated at about 2,000. It retained its strategic importance as evidenced by its Cromwellian fort. A new parish church was constructed in 1654 on the site of the Franciscan Friary between the High Street and the River Ayr.

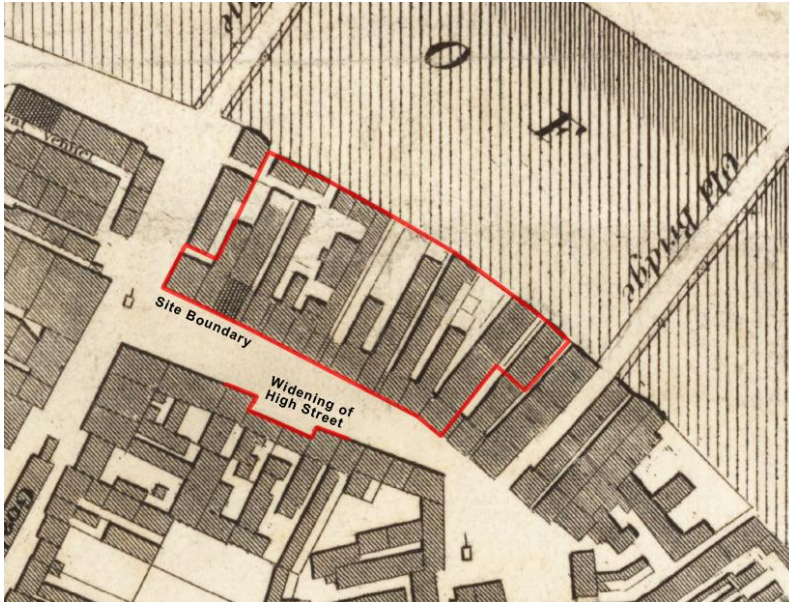
18th Century



Extract from Armstrong's map of 1775 which shows an enclosed courtyard (the Kings Arms Inn) as well as the linear pattern of development associated with burgage plots, prior to the construction of the New Bridge. There was also a widening of the building line of the High Street at that time.

The second half of the 18th century was a time of relative prosperity, expansion and improvement for Ayr. Cross Street, now Newmarket Street, was formed within the boundaries of old rig plots to link the High Street and Sandgate in 1767. Robert Adam submitted proposals in 1785 for a grand scheme involving a remodelled Sandgate Tolbooth and the construction of a new bridge and streets lining both sides of the river. The New Bridge, based on Adam's design, and the New Bridge Street link to Sandgate were built by Alexander Stevens in 1786. The 'Riverside Block' was formed.

19th Century



John Wood's Town Plan, 1818 shows the New Bridge. In 1826 the old tollbooth was cleared so that having crossed the bridge over the river the visitor, per the architectural historian Colin McWilliam, 'Entered the town with great architectural ceremony.'

The enthusiasm for 'improvement' continued into the early 19th century with the demolition of the old tollbooths in the High Street and Sandgate, and the construction of a number of exceptional new public buildings such as the County Buildings (1812–22), Town Buildings (1828–30), and Wallace Tower (1831). At the same time, large parts of the High Street were remodelled or redeveloped. The renewal was generally sensitive to the earlier land ownership patterns of long narrow 'rigs' and vennels set at right angles to the streets.

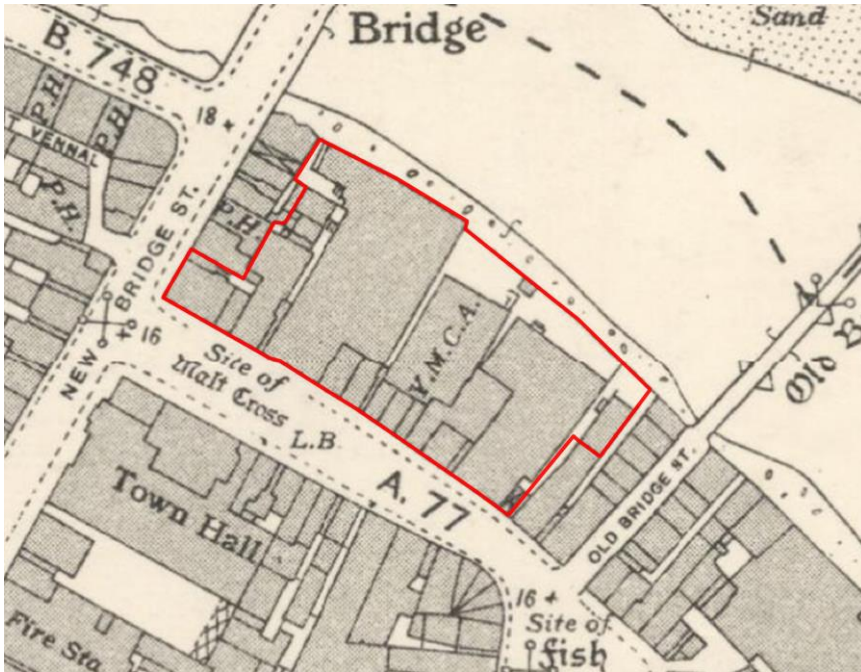
Ayr experienced substantial growth in the second half of the 19th century, due in large part to the opening of the Glasgow - Ayr railway in 1840. Whilst Ayr never became a major manufacturing centre, the arrival of the railway had a significant effect, boosting the harbour trade, enabling a wider range of industrial businesses, and establishing the town as a holiday resort.



Ordnance Survey Plan, 1855. The buildings highlighted in red are the only surviving ones to have survived the development of the block in the 20th century.

20th Century - Present

The 20th century Inter-War years were the height of Ayr's era as a seaside resort. During this time some of the tenements at the northern end of the High Street were replaced with shops such as the former Woolworths (1933–35 and remodelled 1959), Burton's (1936–37) and Marks & Spencer (1935) stores.



Plan from 1935 showing buildings with larger footprints now dominating the site.



Early 20th century photograph of the Riverside from east of the New Bridge. The diversity of building type and varied roofscape within the Riverside Block is evident.



Photos showing the corner of the High Street and New Bridge Street before and after building demolition.

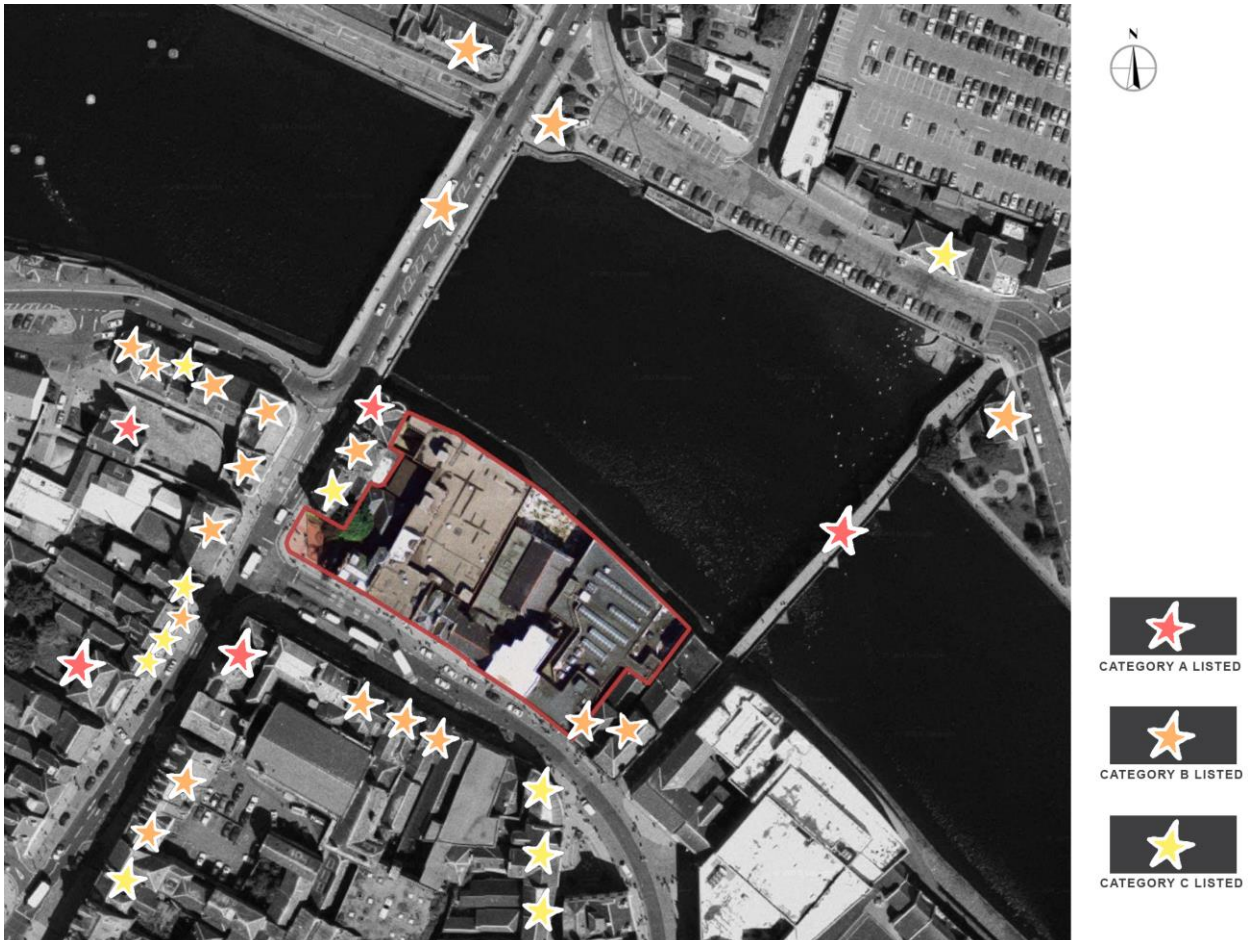


Ayr Riverside Block today. 20th century redevelopment resulted long unrelieved 1930s brick elevations to the riverfront. The monolithic nature of these 1970s buildings is at odds with the medieval rig pattern and diversity of buildings in historic core of the town.

Once a market town, Ayr is now the administrative, business and judicial centre for South Ayrshire and a regional shopping destination. However, as a result of changing patterns of shopping and improved road links, especially through the upgrading of the M77/A77, the town is facing new challenges as local residents take advantage of easy access to the retail and entertainment offers in Glasgow.

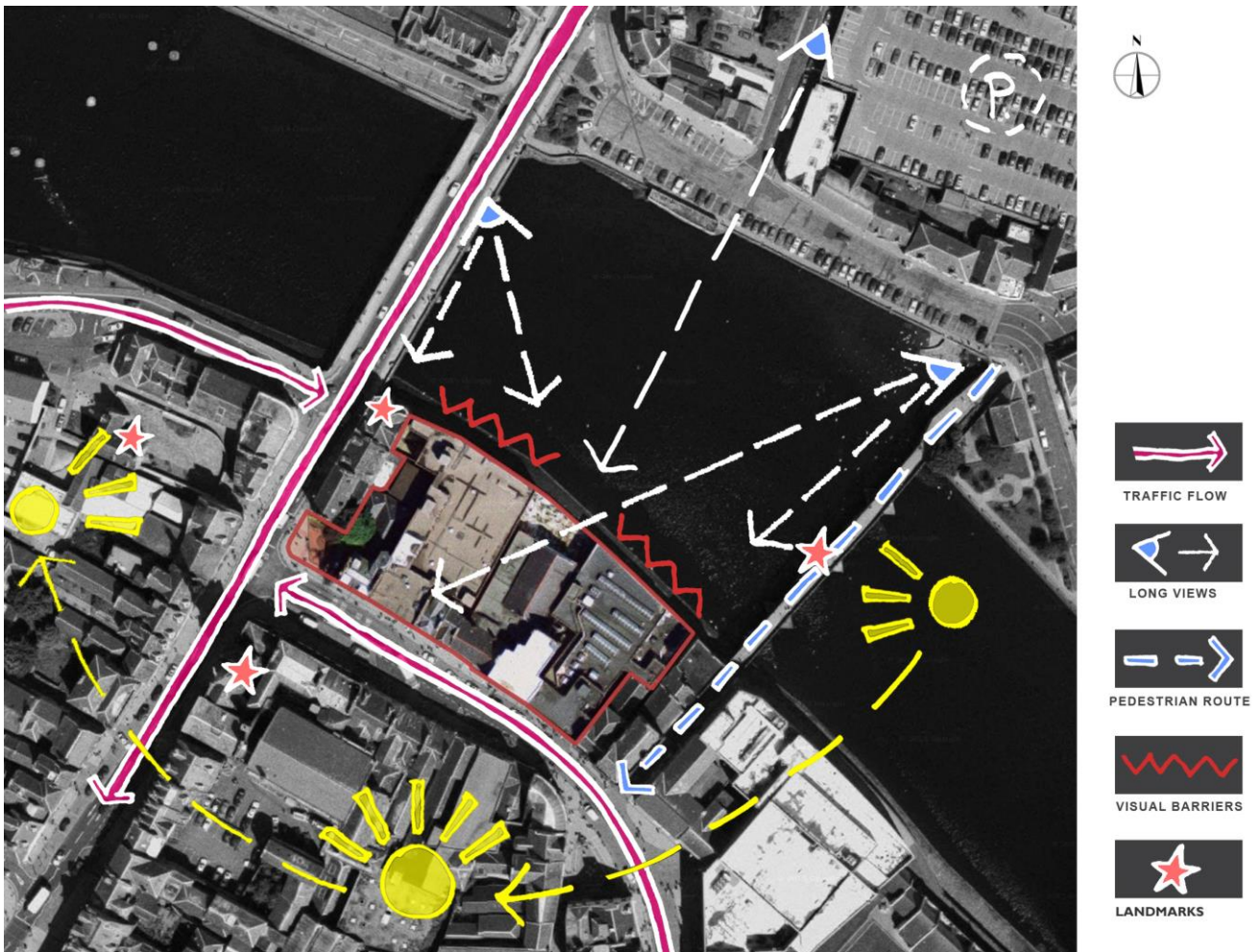
Listed Buildings

Ayr Town Centre is enriched with a wide variety of historic buildings, including 11 Category A listed buildings. The Riverside Block site, within which there are no listed buildings, is nonetheless within close proximity to a number of historic buildings, including five Category A listed structures. Designers will be required to take cognisance of these in the development of plans and designs.



Although there are no listed buildings within the curtilage of the site, there is a wealth of designated buildings around it, denoting the historic importance of the location and serving as contributors to the town's unique sense of place and identity.

3.3 Urban Design Analysis



Urban Design Analysis

Key aspects to highlight in regard to urban design informing future development of the Riverside Block site include:

- The majority of the Riverside Block site sits at the northern end of the town centre with frontage onto one of the main streets, i.e. Ayr High Street near a key junction with Sandgate Street/New Bridge Street and in proximity to the key access points/routes for both pedestrians and vehicles to the town centre.
- The Auld Brig is one of the town's defining features but also provides one of the most important pedestrian routes into the town centre from the north. Pedestrian traffic tends to turn to the south as the retail focus of the town has shifted with recent development.
- Views to Ayr Town Centre from the north bank and bridges over the River Ayr.
- Key landmarks include the Town Buildings with its prominent steeple, the two bridges, Nos. 1–3 New Bridge and Loudon Hall.

Negative features in these views include the backs of 12–24 (even nos.) and 42–48 (even nos.) High Street, which present long unrelieved 1930s brick elevations to the riverfront. Although the architectural articulation of 66–90 (even nos.) High Street is more varied, the monolithic nature of these 1970s buildings is at odds with the medieval rig pattern and diversity of buildings in this core area.

3.4 Opportunities

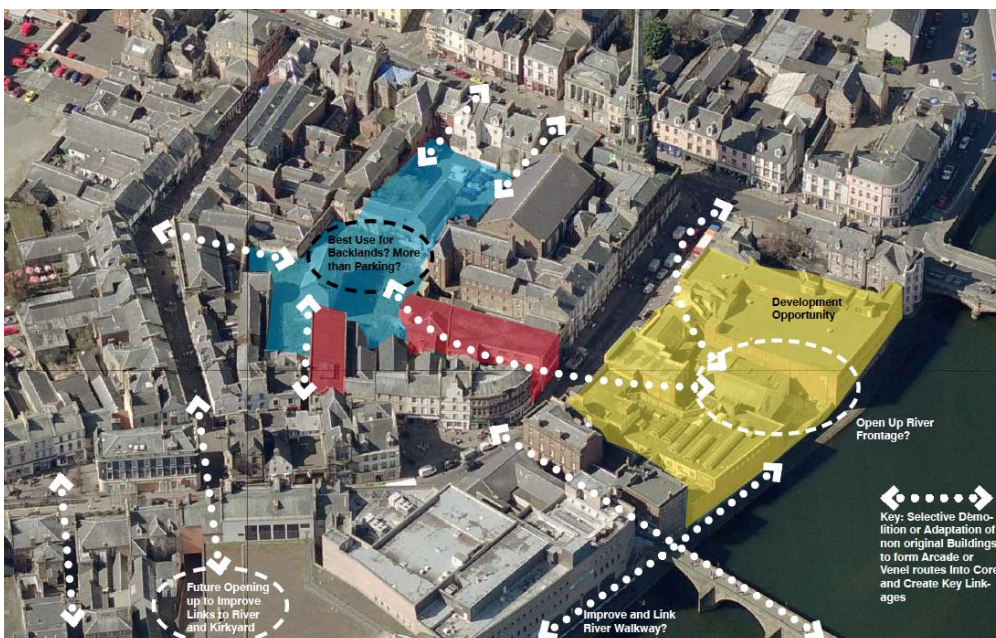
Redevelopment of the Riverside Block provides the opportunity to create a high quality development, which could become a catalyst for the wider regeneration of the town. The prominence of the site means that development proposals should consider views of the site from the wider area, in particular from the north side of the river and how the development relates to Ayr Town Hall.

The site benefits from two important frontages, on to High Street to the south, and on to the River to the north. Both of these frontages present a major opportunity to redefine the built environment in this part of town. Proposals on the site should investigate the relationship with the High Street and river, and encourage pedestrian infiltration from the High Street and New Bridge Street to the riverfront. Extension of the River Walkway from the east would be encouraged.

The historic environment, in particular the location within the Ayr Centre Conservation Area and proximity to prominent listed buildings, are key considerations. Whilst being a constraint in some senses, restricting inappropriate development, Ayr's historic environment presents an opportunity to deliver development which sits in harmony with the best elements of the historic townscape and building on the strong historical character that Ayr has.

The strategic location of the site and its interrelationships with other opportunity sites and proposals should be considered in the preparation of development proposals where appropriate. Given its close proximity, the relationship to the vacant site (formerly Affleck's Furniture) to the south of the Town Hall should be considered.

Proposals should have particular regard for pedestrian and cyclist movement. It is advised that consultation is undertaken with Ayrshire Roads Alliance to consider impact on town centre traffic management and public transport networks.



The strategic location of the site and its interrelationships with other opportunity sites and proposals should be considered in the preparation of development proposals. Given its close proximity, the vacant site (formerly Affleck's Furniture) to the south of the Town Hall should be considered within any proposal.

4.0 Design Evolution

4.1 Town Centre Summits and Ayr Renaissance Strategies

In 2013, South Ayrshire Council and Ayr Renaissance hosted three summits on the future of the town centre. The summits were facilitated by Architecture and Design Scotland. The purpose of the summits was to identify a strategic brief, a big picture view of how to organise and resource change to make a positive difference to the future of the Town Centre.

The findings of the summits cover several themes over a number of geographic locations, of which the Riverside Block is just one. These findings are currently being considered as part of the Local Development Plan Review, and the forthcoming updated Ayr Renaissance Strategy for Ayr Town Centre.

The Town Centre Summits highlighted the importance of the Riverside Block for the regeneration of Ayr Town Centre, and identified a requirement to redefine this part of the town, possibly as a zone for business, culture and living.

4.2 Consultation Events



Over 100 people attended a Public Information Day at Ayr Town Hall held in June 2014. Feedback from this event has directly influenced the proposed uses as well as the nature and character of the layout and design principles.

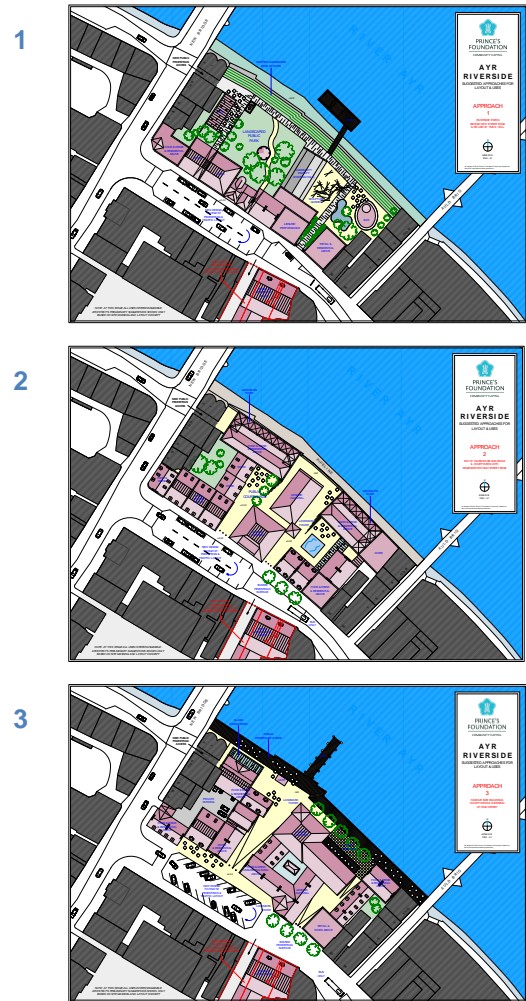
On 12th June 2014 a Public Information Day was held at Ayr Town Hall at which initial analysis and strategies for the redevelopment of the site were presented for comment and discussion by Ayr Renaissance with The Prince's Foundation for Building Community. Over 100 people attended the event. Feedback was gathered via response forms and annotations on plans.

Three Alternative Strategies

A range of redevelopment strategies were initially explored and tested, from which three contrasting visions were chosen for the purposes of consultation. Specific responses were thereby sought upon the following:

1. Clearance of the land behind the High Street for a substantial riverside park.
2. Maximised built redevelopment, with warehouse-style frontages to the river.
3. A new public space and riverside terrace delineated by building frontages of varied scale.

Whilst the complete clearance of land behind the High Street was the most popular approach, there were also pertinent criticisms of this proposal, which included the cost and maintenance of a sizeable new riverside park, concerns about antisocial behaviour and that the view towards the site from the north side of river would consist principally of the backs of buildings rather than fronts. The option for maximised built redevelopment was the least preferred, whereas the third approach, for public space balanced with new development, was generally appreciated, but still felt by some to represent over-development.



Land Uses and Specific Proposals

Visitors to the Information Day were also asked to give their views on potential land and building uses. There was general agreement that the site should support a mix of uses. The uses and specific proposals listed in the table below were discussed and consulted upon.

Land Uses and Activities	Response
Cultural / Leisure / Performance / Community Space	A majority supported the inclusion of one or more dedicated amenity uses. The absence of a central museum or art gallery in the town was raised several times. This general support was qualified by a number of comments that questioned the availability of funding for such uses.
Riverside Access	A prevalent view was that the site should be configured in such a way as to promote greater enjoyment and utilisation of the river, both in terms of riverside walks and leisure use of the river, possibly through the use of pontoons.
Retail	Given the recognition of empty shops at the northern end of the High Street, many opposed the provision of additional retail space, at least for large-footprint retail. Smaller, independent and specialised retail, however, was viewed more positively.
Restaurants, Cafes and Bars	In contrast to retail, many responders felt strongly that the inclusion of good quality restaurants, cafes and bars would be a benefit to the town. This covered both child-friendly venues for daytime usage, as

Land Uses and Activities	Response
	well as bars and restaurants to support a stronger night-time economy.
Residential	Residential development was supported by many of those who visited the Information Day, in a variety of types and tenures including open market flats for sale and rent, affordable housing and student accommodation.
Work / Studio / Office Space	There was support for the inclusion of some office space within the mix, particularly smaller offices and provision for start-ups. It was noted that these would help contribute to the daytime economy. Market Space A number of people supported the idea of provision for a market whether specialised, for example to sell food, or broader based. Several advocated some form of covered space for protection against inclement weather.
Car Parking	There was a perceived lack of car parking at the northern end of the High Street, and some concern that whatever uses are chosen for the site might exacerbate parking demand. There was general support for the proposal to allow cars onto the bottom section of the High Street from New Bridge Street.
Public Toilets	Several responders advocated the inclusion of public toilets, whilst one proposed that the former public toilets across the river be converted into a café.
Existing Buildings and Building Line	A significant number of attendees noted a desire to retain any existing buildings of character on the site. In contrast to this several expressed a view that the whole site should be cleared to open the river up to the High Street to the maximum extent, regardless of whether or not this might be consistent with the Conservation Area Character Appraisal. There was however majority support in principle for the option to provide a local widening of the High Street for south-facing seating and to encourage pedestrian access to the river, on the assumption that for the most part the existing building line of the High Street would be maintained.

Consolidated Framework Plan

In the light of feedback received a consolidated framework plan has been developed that encourages access to the river, with frontages onto both the High Street and the river, and with a greater proportion of public space.

4.3 Draft Development Framework Consultation

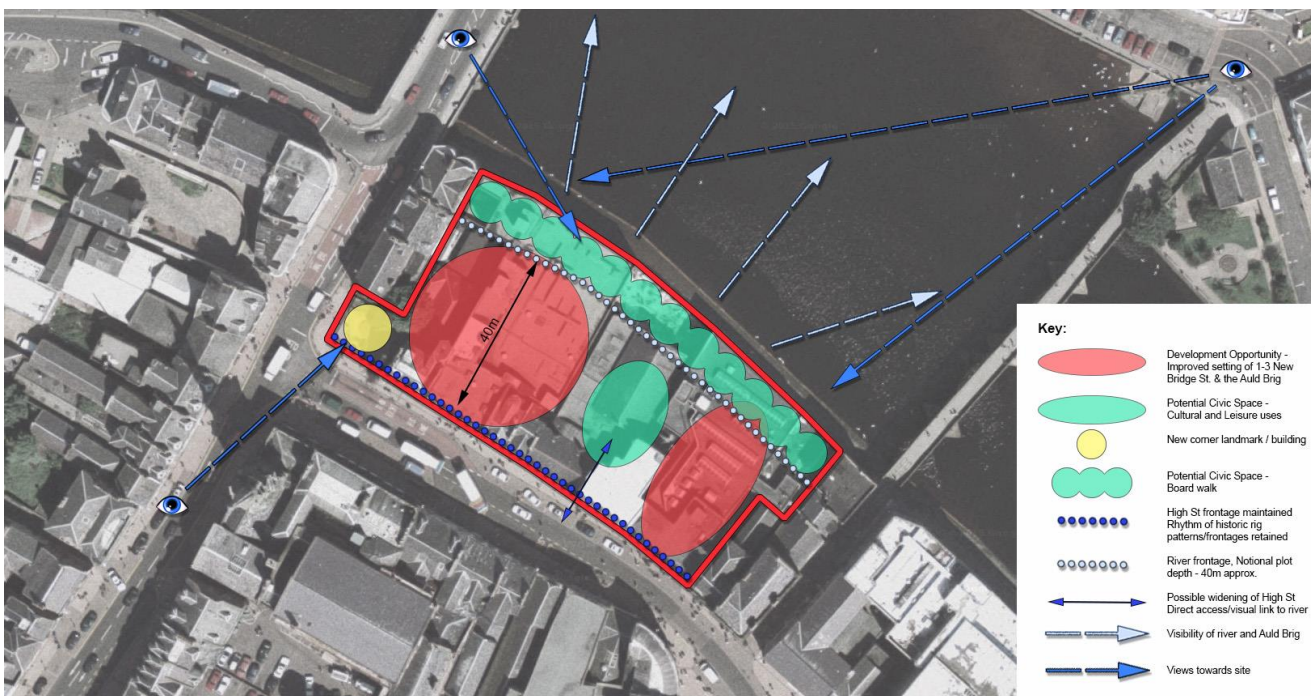
A six week consultation on the Draft Development Framework commenced on 22nd September and closed on 3rd November 2015. A public drop in session took place on 22nd and 23rd October 2015 in the central atrium at the Kyle Centre.

33 people attended the public drop in event over the two days, and 7 written comments were received at the events or via the website. There was general support for the principles set out in the Development Framework, with recognition that this represents another step towards the redevelopment of the site.

5.0 The Development Framework Plan

At this point in the planning process it is not possible to be prescriptive about the future uses. The Development Framework Plan does attempt to provide a structure and broad layout that would allow it to accommodate an array of uses within a sustainable urban form that is sensitive to the site, area and historical precedents. The Development Framework Plan is indicative, and is intended to illustrate principles to be inherent in any future plans and development.

5.1 Development Framework Plan



Key:

1. New Corner Building
2. A key characteristic of the form of the High Street is of containment: a continuous building line on both sides of the street. Proposals to introduce new openings to create visual links to the river should be carefully considered and should not result in the loss of the High Street character. Pend openings for pedestrian access could successfully achieve visual links whilst retaining the building line.
3. Possible widening of High Street with Opening for Direct Pedestrian Access to River
4. Former YMCA Building Converted or Replaced for Cultural or Leisure Uses
5. Notional Plot Depth of approximately 40m (Frontage onto High Street to River Frontage)
6. Board Walk
7. Visibility of River and Auld Brig (and Pedestrian Access)
8. Improved Setting of Nos1 – 3 Bridge Street
9. Improved Setting of the Auld Brig
10. Development should not hinder other opportunity sites within the town centre including at the Affleck's site.



Illustrative view of redevelopment per Option A from the North side of the river.

6.0 Design Principles

The purpose of the criteria and design principles contained in this document and the Development Framework Plan is to provide an indication of what might be regarded as acceptable development on the Riverside Block. There is an obligation to safeguard and enhance the character of the Ayr Central Conservation Area, the visual amenity of some of the most important frontages in the town and the setting of three nationally important, Category A listed buildings (No.1 New Bridge Street, the Town Hall and Loudon Hall). Compliance with these measures does not in itself mean that a proposal will be recommended for planning approval, which will depend upon further consideration of detailed design in relation to the surrounding uses, the acceptability of proposed uses, environmental issues and other planning matters.

Consideration should be given to the retention of existing buildings at Nos.10 and 24 High Street. Whilst contributing to the cohesive character and rhythm of the High Street frontage it is recognised that significant remediation works may be required given the present conditions of the buildings. It is preferred that these be incorporated into any new proposal, however it may be demonstrated that a proposal for a replacement makes an equal or enhanced contribution to the townscape of the Conservation Area.

6.1 Design Rational

Redevelopment of the Riverside Block site presents opportunities to demolish and replace some poor quality buildings, enhance others and greatly improve the townscape of the High Street/New Bridge Street area, the Riverside and Ayr Town Centre. Redevelopment of the Riverside Block is also intended to fully integrate it within the Town Centre based on uses that will bring activity and a form of development that will support that activity and commercial viability.

The physical layout will be characteristic of the pattern of Ayr Town Centre. The objective for the Riverside Block is to make it an attractive and interesting area, that also maximises opportunities in regard to its prominent riverside setting and High Street setting. Redevelopment also provides the opportunity to improve the visual impression of the Town Centre on the approach from the north, from both the Auld Brig and New Bridge, and from across the river.

Design in the redeveloped area will reflect the characteristics identified in the analysis and aim to support the unique identity of Ayr.

The Development Framework does not prescribe a particular architectural approach, but it does require proper attention to “place-making” and sustainability. In Ayr this depends upon principles that are well illustrated in the historic urban form, grain and scale, and character of the Town Centre. These principles also provide the basis for an attractive townscape designed to enhance social activity, enjoyment and quality of life. By adhering to these principles not only will new development support the proud identity of Ayr, but also encourage walkability, healthy living aspirations and ultimately sustainability.

It is expected that development proposals will require the submission of a design and access statement outlining the design rational of any proposal. This should be considered

against the principles and criteria contained within this document.

6.2 Proposed Uses

The delivery of a mixed-use scheme will help re-establish this area of the Town Centre as a viable and lively area with a broad range of complementary activities such as retail, commercial, cultural, residential, tourist and leisure uses. Uses which could be accommodated include:

- Class 1 – Retail
- Class 2 – Financial, professional or other services
- Class 3 – Food and drink
- Class 4 – Business
- Class 7 – Hotels and hostels
- Class 9 – Residential
- Class 10 – Non-residential institutions
- Class 11 – Assembly and leisure
- Sui Generis – Public houses and hot foot takeaway

The aim is to support the LDP's aspirations in regard to the Town Centre by encouraging a variety of uses that support the character of the area and foster economic and social activity. A significant and prominent public open space provision should be provided within the site.

6.3 Urban Form

The Riverside Block is located within the northern end and oldest part of the High Street. Historically, it was characterised by the distinctive 'rig' pattern of development with narrow vennels. It is important that the development should achieve an effective relationship with its surroundings and setting, including High Street, New Bridge Street and River frontages.

Proposed development should seek to reinforce the characteristics and qualities of Ayr Town Centre's urban form and patterns of development, including the following:

- The layout of new development should be informed by the traditional relationships between medieval plot widths, building heights, street widths and variations of roof geometry.
- The traditional urban grain of mediaeval rigs should be acknowledged in the elevations to express the memory of the site and where possible internally in order to avoid long, uniform frontages.
- In order to build in flexibility in new buildings, floor to ceiling heights on the ground floor should be designed to a height that is suitable for a mix of uses including office and commercial/retail uses.
- If residential development occurs on upper floors from New Bridge Street to No.20 High Street, at least one entrance from the residences should be provided directly onto the street on either New Bridge Street or the High Street, to facilitate easier access to nearby shops and services and to contribute to the vitality of the streets.
- With regard to the setting of the double-bowed, category A-listed, No.1 New Bridge Street, it is advised that a portion of the development site should be safeguarded for the enhancement of this building.

- Views in and out of the site should also be carefully considered to avoid any visual impacts, whilst exploiting attractive views, particularly from the north and across the river.
- Redevelopment to a plot depth of approximately 40m from the High Street frontage would allow views through the pend at New Bridge Street to the Auld Brig.
- Private and semi-private open space can be provided in the interior of the block, with access for services and, if necessary, car parking.

6.4 Scale and Massing



The history and diversity of the site and Ayr town centre provide the principal contextual approach for the scale and massing of new development at the Riverside Block. Proposals should incorporate or demonstrate the following:

- Proposed development should consider the scale and massing historically accommodated on the site and in the town centre, paying respect to the particular townscape character and landmark features of the area, i.e. the Town Hall, the River Ayr, etc.
- New development should not block views of the clock of the Town Hall from River Street. The Town Hall is arguably the most architecturally important building in the town and Thomas Hamilton designed its steeple to be seen from afar.
- How the design will reflect the scale and the controlled variety of appearance that the historic rig patterns generate, and how their rhythm can be incorporated meaningfully into street elevations.
- The replacement building at the corner of New Bridge Street and the High Street should be a maximum of four principal storeys plus attic - to correspond with the adjoining tenement on the High Street and so as not to compete in scale with either the Town Hall or No.1 New Bridge Street. Nearly all of buildings on the High Street and New Bridge Street are three or at most four principal storeys.
- Opportunities for solar gain and sheltering of any public spaces by stepping the scale of development up from the river to the High Street.

6.5 Roofscape

One of Ayr Town Centre's characteristic features is the predominance of pitched roof forms and the interest this gives to the roofscape. Pitched roof slopes still predominate on older buildings in the town centre in conjunction with gable ends, and this pattern should be observed in new buildings.

The roofscape of the new development is particularly important because of its visibility from numerous key vantage points.

Thus proposed development of the Riverside Block should:

- Avoid large roof expanses.
- Roof pitches similar to those within the Conservation Area would be preferred.
- Provide a variation in rooflines in order to afford visual interest.
- Consider opportunities to incorporate traditional and natural materials.
- Avoid locating plant and service equipment, for example air-conditioning/refrigeration units at rooftop level where visible from street level.

6.6 Principal Elevations

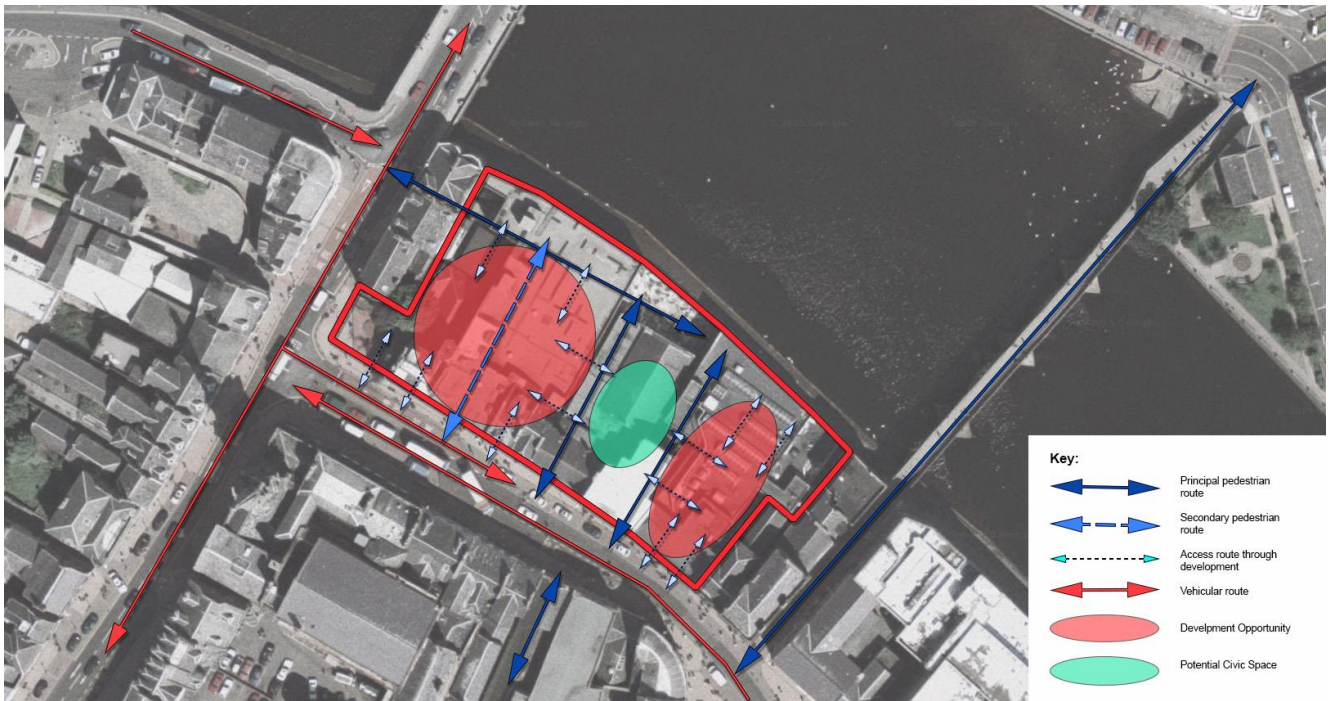
The design of principal elevations for the Riverside Block should consider the following:

- The plot sizes reflecting the historic urban grain should be evident in elevational treatments.
- All frontage development must be orientated to face the street, public space or river.
- Fenestration should in general have a vertical emphasis and be consistent with the general pattern and scale of openings found within the conservation area. The solid to void ratio of comparable and neighbouring listed buildings should be studied and incorporated into proposed designs.
- The subdivision of windows should be symmetrical about their vertical axis.
- The heads of the windows of the top principal storey should be no more than 400mm from the eaves or cornice, to avoid an incongruous, top-heavy appearance.

6.7 Materials

The choice and quality of materials in any proposed development are considered of significant importance in reinforcing Ayr Town Centre's character and identity. Materials and details, in regard to both buildings and the public realm, should be selected to harmonise with the palette that is characteristic of the Ayr Central Conservation Area.

6.8 Access and Movement



Ayr's street structure is highly significant to the quality and identity of the Town Centre, and much of the Riverside Block site fronts one its oldest and most important streets, i.e. High Street. The redevelopment of the Riverside Block site creates opportunities to vastly improve not only the quality of the townscape in the area, but to improve patterns of both vehicular and pedestrian movement, including access to the river. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate the following:

- Within the site permeability should be maximised by pedestrian access routes that penetrate through buildings as well as integration of 'vennel'-type routes between buildings. Vennels should be safe, welcoming, well-lit and incorporate natural or passive surveillance.
- Numerous pedestrian access points to the High Street should be provided, as well as at least one principal route providing direct access to the riverside. This is supported by the approved Central Conservation Area Plan, which states that, 'proposals for new development in conservation areas should also, where practical, incorporate local townscape characteristics, for example pedestrian or vehicle pends'.
- The Council wishes to retain the option of installing a cantilevered boardwalk along the river frontage of the development site. This should be acknowledged in any proposed design and not impeded.
- Within the site, the public realm should be as free of vehicles as possible. Proposals must show how the scheme will be designed and managed to prioritise pedestrian movement and activity, potentially as a 'shared space' or 'shared surface'.
- Areas that require vehicular access, i.e. for access, circulations and/or servicing, should be designed to prioritise pedestrians following the shared space principles.
- Opportunities to instigate 2-way vehicular traffic into a portion of High Street (turning left from New Bridge Street) should be investigated in co-ordination with the Council's roads engineers.
- Car parking within the site should be minimised per the Council's LDP policy in regard to town centre traffic management and in recognition of the aspiration to

support sustainable modes of transport, i.e. walking, cycling and public transport.

6.9 Public Realm

There are a limited number of public spaces in Ayr Town Centre to provide opportunities for lingering, outdoor eating or drinking or street performances. Although Newmarket Street is a pedestrian priority/pedestrian-only spaces, it lacks either the space or a focal point to generate the range of street activities normally associated with lively and successful town centres.

There are opportunities within the Riverside Block to create a range of attractive public spaces as part of the future development of the Riverside Block. Development proposals for the site should seek to create a significant and prominent element of public open space provide direct access to the river front from High Street.

The public realm should:

- Be planned as an integral part of any development;
- Make a positive contribution to the urban form of Ayr and its street life;
- Respect and accord with established building set-backs;
- Consider appropriate planting within the space;
- Have consideration to the on-going maintenance of the space;
- Maximise opportunities to provide active frontages onto streets and public spaces; and
- Make a clear distinction between public realm and private space.

Private space should be clearly articulated and public spaces should serve a clear function in the overall urban structure. 'Left over' landscape areas that serve no useful function as part of the public realm should be avoided, as should blank walls/gable ends, which provide little or no opportunities for overlooking.

As suggested previously in Section 5.8, in regard to the public realm proposals must show how pedestrian movement and activity will be prioritised, potentially as a 'shared space' or 'shared surface', within the block.

6.10 Services and Utilities

The design of refuse storage, service areas and utilities should be integrated as part of the design of any new development. Utility and meter boxes should be positioned away from street and active frontages to minimise unnecessary clutter. Rear utility servicing should be achieved where possible. Any new services will need to be coordinated and use common trenches where possible to avoid negative effects on the public realm and maintain the flexibility for future changes.

Buildings should be serviced from the street where possible to maintain and strengthen the tight urban grain of the town centre. Where private delivery or service space is required, this should be integrated within the building block and screened by buildings to avoid unsightly yards and storage areas along the street frontages. Bin storage areas should be integrated into the architecture and/or located at the rear of buildings or underground where possible.

A common system for TV/satellite receiving equipment should be provided to avoid

clutter.

Domestic and commercial M&E plant must be avoided on property frontages. External vents should not be visually intrusive and must be coordinated within the architectural treatment of the elevations.

6.11 Sustainable Design

This Development Framework supports the LDP's Sustainable Development policy whilst upholding a holistic view of sustainable development principles that promote socially, economically and environmentally successful communities. As such it aims to facilitate the development of the Riverside Block site to ensure that appropriate and acceptable uses that support the Town Centre's vitality and viability are directed to this highly accessible town centre location. It promotes the notion that sustainability of development extends beyond individual buildings to a more holistic consideration of how to create successful and enduring places. This includes the promotion of:

- A mix of uses;
- Networks of streets that adhere to the existing urban pattern;
- Buildings that front streets and provide an active development edge creating an attractive and safe public realm;
- Densities appropriate to town centre locations;
- A built form that is responsive and harmonious to the local context and supports Ayr's unique identity; and
- Robust and adaptable buildings that support opportunities for change, not just short-term occupier requirements.

Movement

The Development Framework promote the notion of town centres as inherently the most sustainable locations for development due to their levels of accessibility for all and through sustainable transport modes. The Development Framework also support a high quality pedestrian network and enhanced public realm which would make improve the Town Centre as an attractive place for walking and cycling. As such there are opportunities for the development to reduce car dependency for visitors and residents. Specific features of any proposed development may include:

- Minimising traffic impacts by balancing the commercial need for car parking and traffic generation;
- Supporting bus and other public transport strategies for the town centre;
- Provision of bicycle parking; and
- Providing safe bicycle parking facilities in any proposed residential development.

Development proposals must show how the needs of those with impaired movement are catered for. The public realm should be organised to include places for all people to sit and stop.

Building Design, Construction and Energy

Proposed development should satisfy the guidance set in national and local planning policies and meet all current statutory construction standards in respect of thermal insulation, energy and water consumption, and use of recycled, recyclable materials and sustainably sourced materials. Particular reference should be made to the Council's LDP

policies in regard to Low and Zero Carbon Buildings.

To conserve energy, several options could be considered, such as:

- High insulation standards through the use of the Code for Sustainable Homes and building regulations for commercial buildings;
- Orientate internal and external space for maximum solar advantage;
- Building design to minimise the need for mechanical environmental control, e.g. maximising opportunities for natural ventilation and other passive techniques; and
- Energy from renewable sources.

In terms of design, the site is within a prominent position in the historic core of the town centre, within close proximity to a number of listed buildings, including three A-listed structures, and the Ayr Central Conservation Area and architectural design must take account of this.

Water and Sewerage

Proposed development should minimise water consumption through a series of measures, which may include a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS), storing and collecting rainwater runoff, with the potential to clean the water for use as grey water in residential and commercial buildings.

It is essential that developers demonstrate that adequate water supply and sewerage infrastructure capacity exists both on and off the site to serve the development and that it would not lead to problems for existing users.

Waste

Proposed development should minimise waste in both the construction stage and during its lifetime. This may include:

- Adopting sustainable construction methods by using recycled building materials, and by reducing and recycling of construction waste;
- Designing and constructing buildings for a long lifetime, with the flexibility to change use or size; and
- Providing adequate facilities for recycling and waste collection for local residents and commercial users.

7.0 Phasing and Temporary Uses

7.1 Phasing

Given the scale of the site a phased approach to redevelopment may be necessary. It is likely that this will follow three phased stages, with built development in the west forming one stage, built development in the east forming another, and a third stage covering the open space in the central portion of the site. The notional phasing areas are identified below, however these are illustrative and the extent of each phase will depend on economic factors.



Notional Phasing Plan

The location of the site within a prominent town centre location, and within the Ayr Central Conservation Area, means that the phasing of development on the site must be carefully considered. Development must be undertaken in a way which minimises impacts on the character of the conservation area, and encourages active and viable uses in the interim. Demolition of the site should be undertaken on a piecemeal basis, with temporary uses occupying vacant space prior to the development of permanent structures.

An indicative phasing schedule is set out below. The final phasing will depend on economic factors.

- Phase 1a – Demolition of 12-18 High Street and construction/provision of Temporary Uses.
- Phase 1b – Construction of permanent development in west of site
- Phase 2a – Demolition of eastern blocks of site and construction/provision of Temporary Uses
- PHASE 2b - Construction of permanent development in east of site
- Phase 3 – Construction of central area civic/public realm space, including permanent relocation of temporary uses

7.2 Temporary Uses

As outlined above, where detailed permanent designs are not available, or where there is an anticipated delay in construction, planning applications for temporary uses should be submitted, at the same time as any conservation area consent for the demolition of significant portions of the site.

The provision of temporary uses ensures the creation of economic activity and vibrancy on the site at an early stage in the development process. Temporary uses should be of as high quality as is feasible and should seek to create a sense of place and destination.



The Development Framework supports the principle of short-term uses which would provide the opportunity to support small businesses and other economic activity.

It is appropriate for the temporary uses on the site to consist of a series of semi-permanent buildings, and temporary public open space. The uses within the buildings should be of a type which creates vibrancy to the area and would encourage engagement with the public. Suitable uses would include – café, culture and arts workshops, small-scale specialist retailers, social enterprise groups and business incubator units.

The applicant should consider the after-use of the temporary buildings, the moving of temporary buildings to other parts of the site, as development progresses would be supported. The applicant should seek to create a permanent space for the successful occupiers of the temporary uses if viable, to ensure continuity on the site.



Temporary buildings can be designed as a series of semi-permanent 'booths', kiosks and one/two storey buildings to house a range and mix of uses, from cafes to small boutiques and craft shops to incubator business type uses. They can add greatly to the vitality and viability of an area, as evidenced in the examples above.

Notes

Consultation Responses to proposed draft Riverside Framework:

Historic Environment Scotland:

Representation: -

- Broadly support production and content of Framework
- Consider that further assessment should be provided setting out the contribution that the existing historic buildings on the site make to the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area, to the surviving urban grain and toward the setting of the neighbouring listed buildings and bridges. We consider that the refurbishment, creative reuse or adaptation of the historic unlisted buildings on the site should be promoted wherever practical. In line with this, we consider that the Vision for the site as set out in Section 1.4 (The Vision) should acknowledge the contribution made by the existing unlisted buildings on the site to creating a unique sense of place in this part of Ayr.
- While we welcome the opportunities set out within Chapter 5 (The Development Framework Plan) to connect to the river from the High Street, we would note that a key characteristic of the form of the High Street is of containment: a continuous building line on both sides of the street. We therefore consider that proposals to introduce new openings to create visual links to the river require careful consideration and should not result in the loss of this significant High Street character. Pend openings for pedestrian access can successfully achieve visual links whilst retaining the building line.

Action:

- The merit of Historic Environment Scotland's representations agreed. Sections 1.4, 3.1 and 5.1 of the Framework have been amended to include modifications requested by Historic Environment Scotland.