

# Helensburgh Waterfront Development Briefing

Helensburgh Community Council – January 2018

# Waterfront Development Briefing - Agenda

Historical review of masterplans from 2009 to present

Scope of proposed swimming pool

Comparison to other leisure centres, and sports hall conjecture

Funding budget decisions

Notes on infilling & toilet block

Open questions

# Historical Timeline

## 2009 Pierhead Masterplan by Turley Associates

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/b8042/Additional%20Item%20Thursday%2027-Aug-2009%2009.30%20Helensburgh%20Lomond%20Area%20Committee.pdf?T=9>

In parallel, Gareth Hoskins was also discussing the leisure facility replacement  
The site was agreed (Pierhead) and the content was decided (with no consultation).

## Led to a Stage C Design Report of 2010 by Gareth Hoskins

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Pool%20stage%20C%20report%20part%201.pdf>

This was merged with the 2009 Masterplan as a 2011 Masterplan Addendum by Gareth Hoskins Associates, and then with significant changes to be a **2012 Masterplan Addendum**

[https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/helensburgh\\_pierhead\\_masterplan\\_addendum\\_may\\_2012\\_1.pdf](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/helensburgh_pierhead_masterplan_addendum_may_2012_1.pdf)

This is now the key starting point document

In Autumn 2015, this was revised by RLF/AECOM/Gareth Hoskins

**Agreed in Feb 2016 at full council, and footprint decision in June 2016 at Area Committee (since revised in Dec 2017).**

# 2009 Pierhead Masterplan

The Helensburgh Partnership was charged with attracting private sector investment and facilitating the regeneration of Helensburgh.

## Context

In July 2008, the Reporters' findings on the A&B Local Plan inquiry:

- Identified a requirement to balance retail, commercial, residential and recreational uses

- Upheld the 2001-02 public inquiry ruling that **the site was unsuitable for a single retail supermarket** (the refusal of a Safeway proposal).

(Note that plans show retail development, but this is not part of the council-delivered project.)

# 2009 Pierhead Masterplan

31<sup>st</sup> October 2008 Consultation (36 stakeholders) about the overall layout of the site.

Consensus:

- Mixed use redevelopment of the site (**including residential**)

- Attracting high quality, modern food retail store was an aspiration

- Maximise the relationship between the site and the water

- Public access, together with free and safe movement through the site

- Need to create a destination at the Pier Head

- Discussion, either way, about retaining or relocating the swimming pool

- Leisure uses desirable, together with a need for the masterplan to be deliverable.

# 2009 Pierhead Masterplan

Four broad scenarios developed

The Block – extension of one town block onto the site; leisure facility at the southern edge of the site →

The Arms – multiple retail/residential blocks across the whole site

**The Diagonal – blocks to the north west of the site; leisure centre and car parking to the south east**

The Canal – inclusion of a canal with sea-lock in the middle of the development site



# 2009 Pierhead Masterplan

Community engagement – 300 people attended a drop-in session across 3 days in December 2008

Feedback:

- The Block – neutral

- The Arms – negative

- The Diagonal and Canal – generally positive.

Priorities resulting:

- An extension of the town centre with its balance of pubs, restaurants and residential

- Movement through the site and to the waterfront

- Modern retail facilities to complement/respond to the existing town centre

- The need for a leisure facility on the Pierhead or relocated within the town centre.

# 2009 Pierhead Masterplan

Preferred option by Turley Associates was “The Diagonal”, incorporating:

- 7000m<sup>2</sup> retail ground-floor space with 138 residential units above

- A 35 room boutique hotel at the south west corner of the site

- 342 car parking along a north-east to south-west diagonal

- Replacement swimming pool at the south-east corner.

The key uncertainty was whether the commercial market could sustain the retail and residential space that would be created.





# 2010 Helensburgh Swimming Pool and Leisure Facility – Stage C Design Report

In 2009, A&BC appointed Gareth Hoskins Associates to create an Outline Business Case for the provision of a replacement facility.

Outcomes:

Pierhead was the preferred site for the building

**The new building should accommodate a wider range of facilities to create a “community hub”**

Initial proposals were established as a basis for taking the project forward.

In 2010, A&BC appointed the pool design team to develop the design to RIBA Stage C (outline design) to input to an updated OBC.

No public consultation in the creation of this report.

# 2010 Design Stage C

Key strategic relationships were:

- Between the swimming pools and the sea

- Location of the café to activate the pier and access views to the wider landscape

- Defining the arrival point and presences of the building to the town.

- Preferred design option was a “Vault” 2-level structure

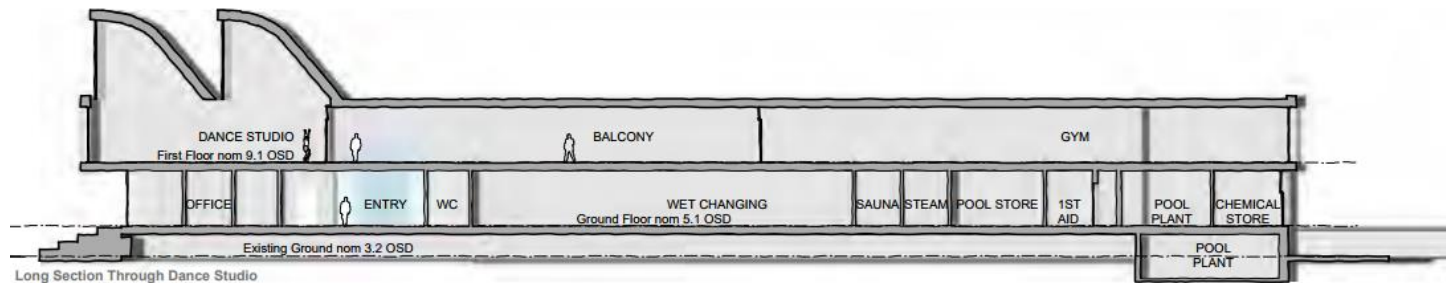
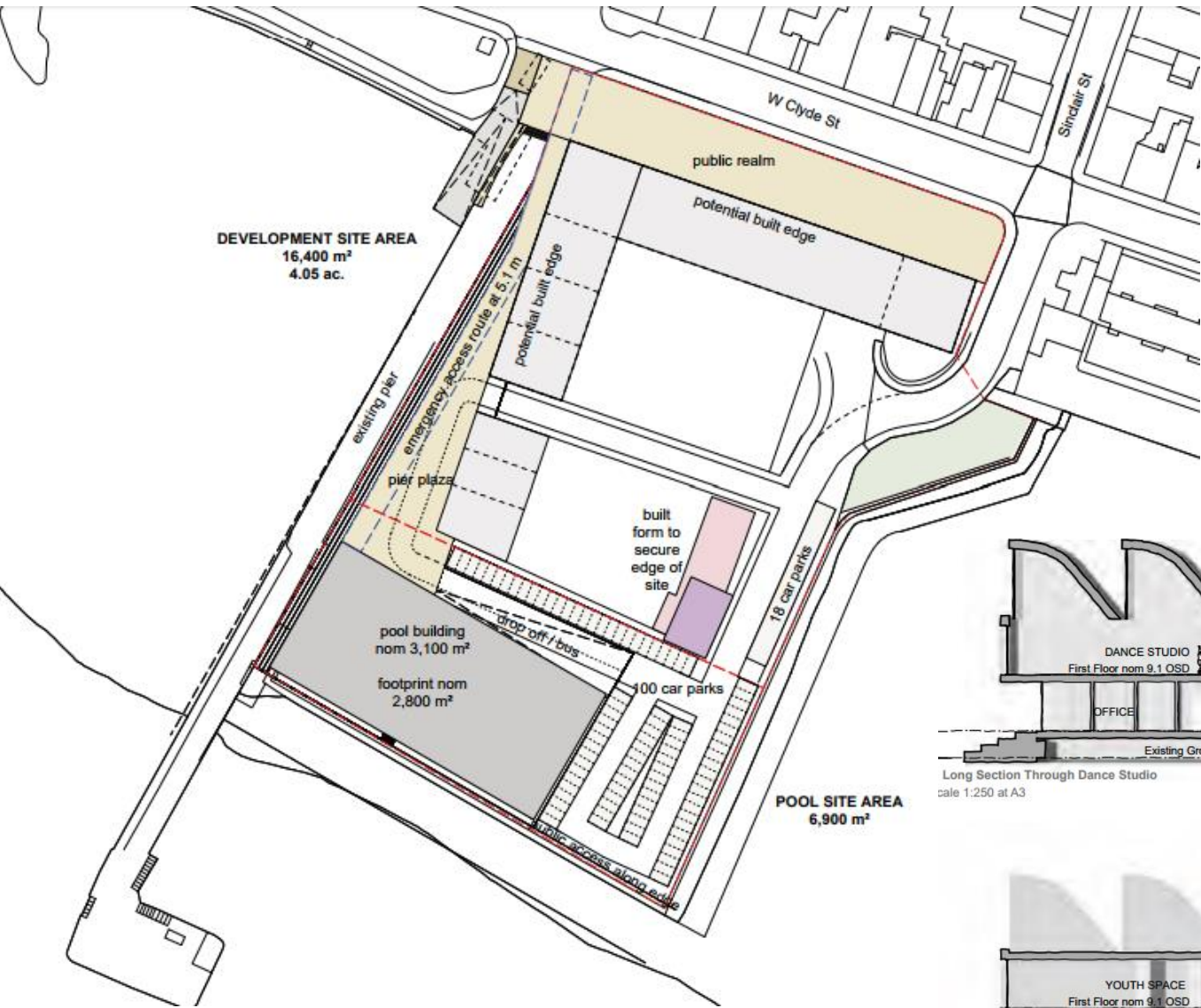
Design:

- Building sited at the southern edge of the site

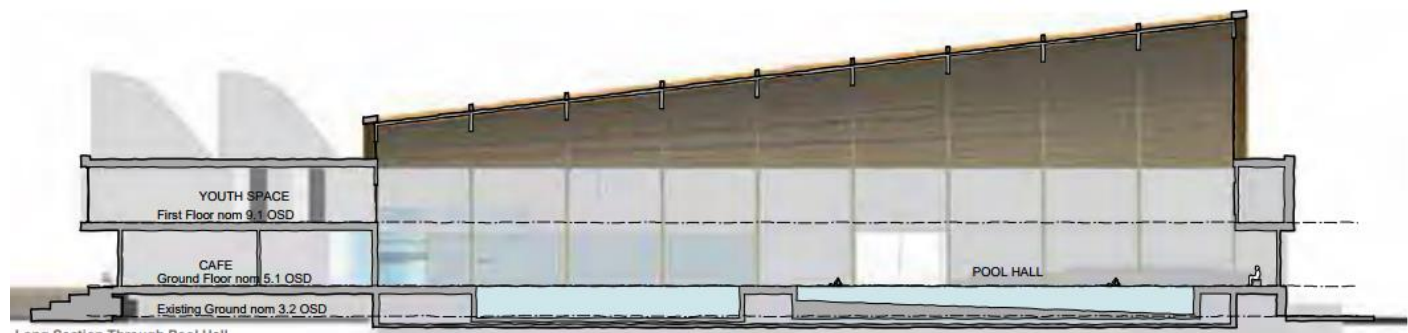
- Dance studio, gym, play area and café in building

- No other multi-use leisure space

Very detailed design in the Stage C document.



Long Section Through Dance Studio  
scale 1:250 at A3



Long Section Through Pool Hall  
scale 1:250 at A3

# 2012 Pierhead Masterplan Addendum – Gareth Hoskins Associates

## Brief

2009 Pierhead Masterplan approved as Supplementary Planning Guidance

However economic conditions changed; A&BC wanted 2009 plan updated to take into account current market considerations and recent studies

In Nov 2011 A&BC asked GHA to produce Masterplan addendums for the Pierhead and also Hermitage Academy former site.

Following public consultation, this was updated as the new Masterplan Addendum for the Pierhead.

# 2012 Pierhead Masterplan Addendum

The plan consulted on the 2010 Design Stage C plan along with:

Mixed use development: food retail of 54,000sqft, other retail of 1100m<sup>2</sup>, 16 housing units.

Parking

Public space in front of the new pool building



# 2012 Pierhead Masterplan Addendum

Public consultation on Dec 2011 plan - <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/masterplan2.pdf>

Two focus groups, total of **26 people**, in Dec 2011.

Two open days in Jan 2012 at Victoria Halls – exhibition, survey and presentations to specific interest groups

Face-to-face interviews with **371** local people

Total of **1200 responses**.

The questions focused on location, retail and residential, not on the content of the leisure building.

Responses:

Majority felt new pool should be located on the Pierhead.

If possible, the pool should be built whilst the existing pool remains in operation.

55% did not want a large supermarket on the pierhead – Waitrose proposals regarded as preferable.

55% did not want residential development on the pierhead.

Concern about loss of convenient parking, loss of public realm and open views across waterfront.

# 2012 Pierhead Masterplan Addendum

55% of public feedback on the original masterplan addendum **rejected** the Council's Option 1 (per A&BC Supplementary Pack 2, 2 Feb 2012, item 10

[https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/b12522/Supplementary%20Pack%202%20Executive%202%20Feb%202012%20Thursday%2002-Feb-2012%2010.00%20Executive.pdf?T=9\)](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/b12522/Supplementary%20Pack%202%20Executive%202%20Feb%202012%20Thursday%2002-Feb-2012%2010.00%20Executive.pdf?T=9)

A&BC executive recommended, therefore, that:

The scale/mass of retail units be substantially reduced

The larger scale supermarket be deleted from the Masterplan

**The new pool/community leisure centre be built on the Pierhead in a changed position to reflect concerns with regard to flooding/exposure etc**

A site be set aside to be landscaped, and spaces provide for parking of coaches

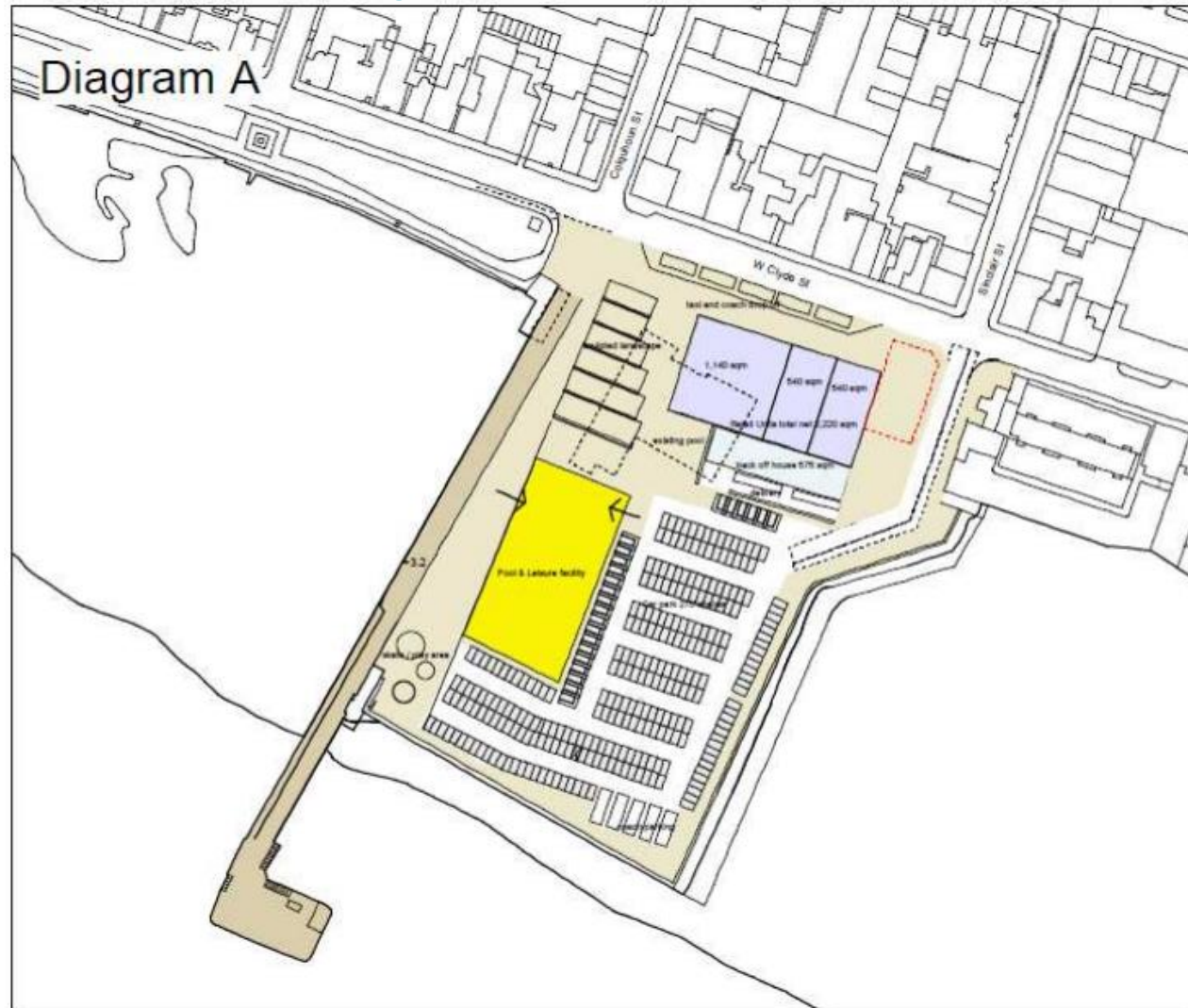
The retail units be restricted in size and set back along West Clyde St to lessen their visual impact

That the requirement for residential units be deleted from the Masterplan.



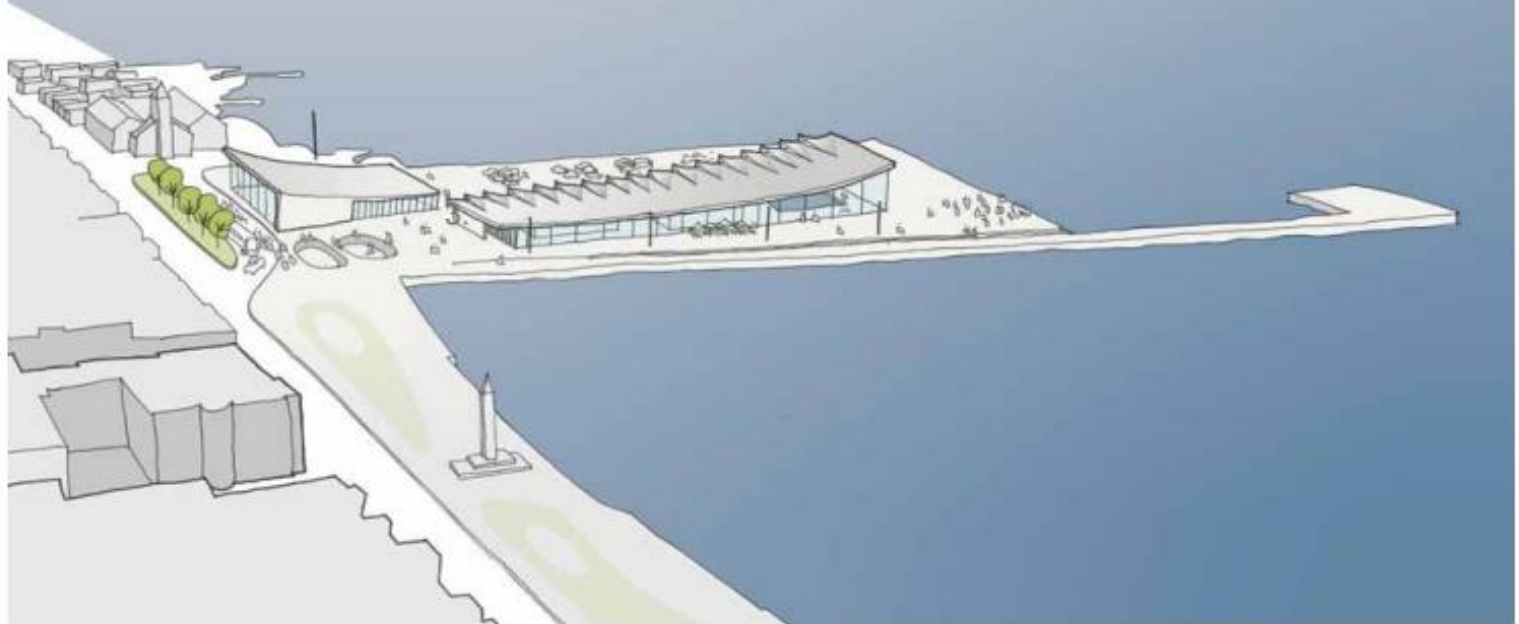
# 2012 Pierhead Masterplan Addendum

Diagram A  
approved by  
A&BC in February  
2012



# 2012 Pierhead Masterplan Addendum

This was memorably sketched as the “ski jump” building in Gareth Hoskins’ finalised addendum:



# 2012 Pierhead Masterplan Addendum

The significant changes made to the consulted plan were such that another round of consultation happened in September 2012. This was a free-form question: “Please tell us your views on the Finalised Helensburgh Pierhead Masterplan”.

The outcome, in

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s70114/Helensburgh%20Pierhead%20Masterplan.pdf>

was that **29** submissions were returned.

*HCC wrote to A&BC at the time “expressing their concern that the consultation was insufficient to adequately understand local peoples’ views. Council officers did however make every effort to get people involved through local media and use of the council’s web site in accordance with the consultation arrangements set out in the report to the council that approved the release of the Finalised Masterplan. It is considered however, given the feedback received, that the public generally appear to accept that the views expressed at earlier consultations were taken into account and reflected in the Finalised Masterplan and no further comment was necessary.”*

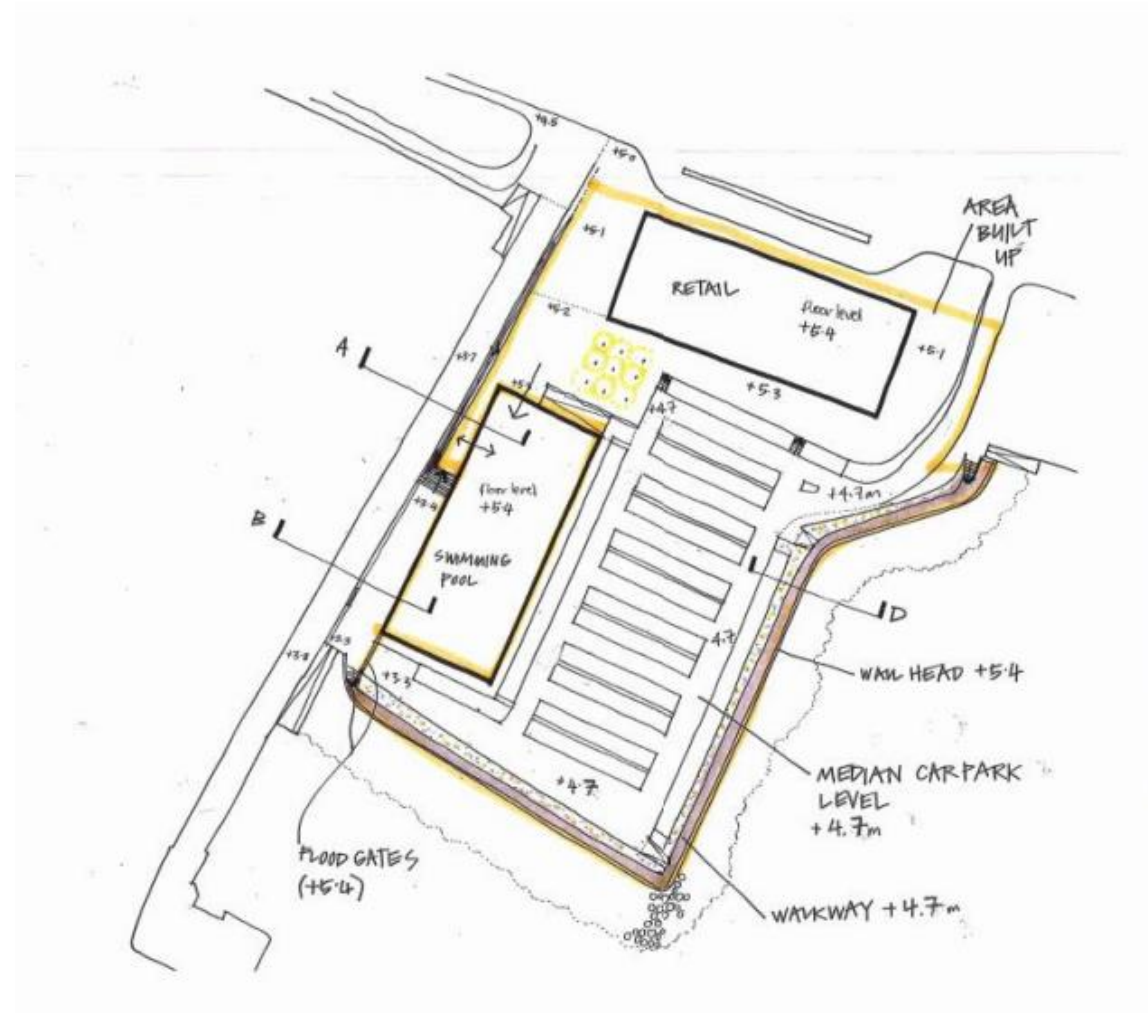
# June 2016 H&L Area Committee

Area Committee was presented with 5 options for the footprint of the site.

These had the retail and swimming pool buildings in various locations; none with the swimming pool at the southern end of the site.

The selected option was Option 5 – car park at +4.7m ->

Sea wall will be 6 feet above the level of the pier.



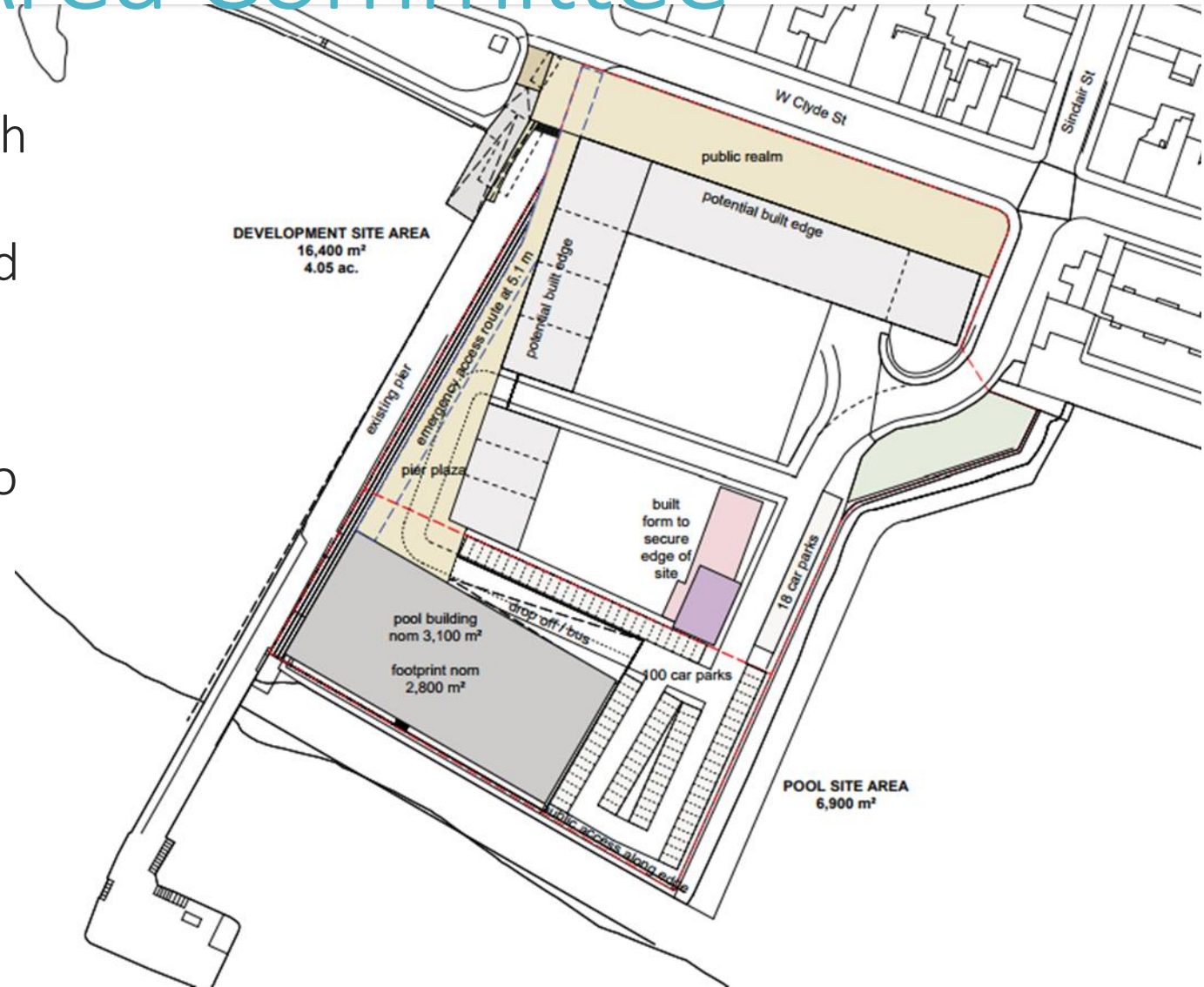
# Dec 2017 – H&L Area Committee

Revised the footprint to instead match the Stage C Design plan

- Swimming pool at the southern end of the pier head
- Remove spectator seating

No diagram, but this sounds similar to the Stage C plan →.

No details yet as to whether the building will have the flair of the Gareth Hoskins sketch.



# Swimming pool/leisure centre proposed

|                       | Current           | New  |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--|
| Pool 1                | 25x12m 6 lane     | 25x12.5m 6 lane                              |
| Pool 2                | 12.5x7.5m         | 16.6x8m                                      |
| Spectator area        | 30-40 people      | Was 150, but removed in Dec 2017 H&L agenda. |
| Café                  | -                 | -  |
| Changing              | 144m <sup>2</sup> | 250m <sup>2</sup>                            |
| Sauna/steam room      | 35m <sup>2</sup>  | 45m <sup>2</sup>                             |
| Gym                   | 16m <sup>2</sup>  | 390m <sup>2</sup>                            |
| Children's play area  | -                 | 30m <sup>2</sup>                             |
| Dance studio          | -                 | 427m <sup>2</sup>                            |
| Multi-use sports hall | -                 | -  |

# Other recent leisure centres

|                                  | Total cost | Main pool | Small pool | Sports hall | Gym | Other               |
|----------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|-------------|-----|---------------------|
| Helensburgh proposed             | £18.4M     | 25m       | Yes        | -           | Yes | Café, dance studios |
| Irvine Portal                    | £20M       | 25m       | Yes        | 6 courts    | Yes | Café, wedding venue |
| Clydebank                        | £23.8M     | 25m       | Yes        | 8 courts    | Yes | Café, dance studios |
| Kirkcaldy                        | £15M       | 25m       | Yes        | 4 courts    | Yes | Café, dance studios |
| Girvan                           | £5.4M      | 25m       | -          | -           | Yes | Dance studios       |
| Eastwood Leisure Centre proposed | £15.3M     | 25m       | Yes        | 4 courts    | Yes | Cafe                |

# Multi-use sports hall - a conjectural aside

Sport England's "standard" hall is a four-court size – 34.5x20x7.5m – for

Badminton

Basketball

Five-a-side football

Handball/Netball/Korfball/Volleyball

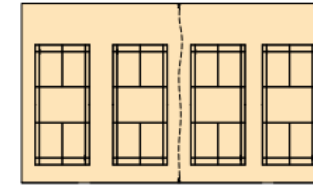
Cricket

Gymnastics/Judo.

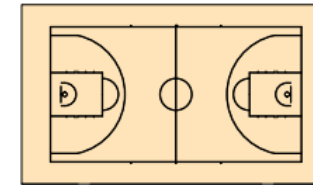
This would be 690m<sup>2</sup> which, at £2000/sqm = £1.38M

<https://www.sportengland.org/media/4330/sports-halls-design-and-layouts-2012.pdf>

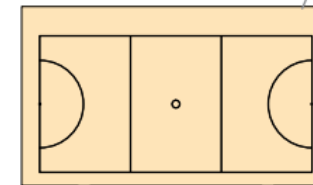
Four-court hall (Cont/d)



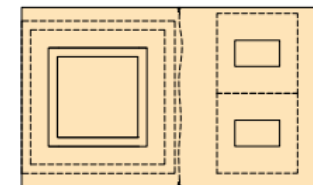
Badminton



Basketball



Netball



Judo / Trampoline

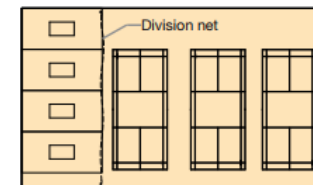
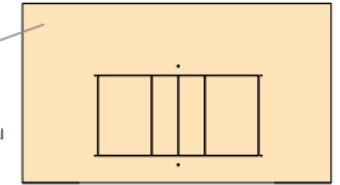
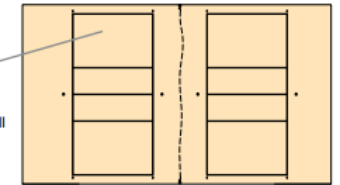


Table tennis / Badminton

Courts can be off set to allow additional circulation / casual viewing areas / officials



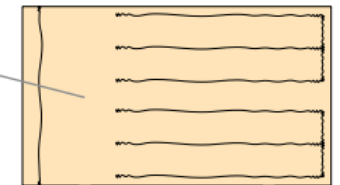
Volleyball



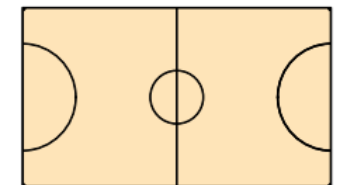
Volleyball / Basketball training

Wall mounted practice basketball goals reduce space for cricket nets

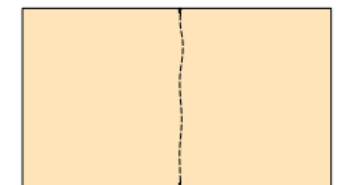
Space for roof mounted practice basketball goals assuming a centralised basketball court



Indoor cricket



Five-a-side football / Hockey



Short bowls / Gymnastics



# Funding – Current total

Helensburgh Waterfront Development currently has an **£18.4million** budget allocation, originating from:

**£11.67m** from A&BC

**£5.0m** LIBOR Grant by UK Government

Plus smaller amounts anticipated from SportScotland, etc.

# Funding – Council documents (1)

*Capital Plan 2016-20* proposed on 11 February 2016 included £11.091M for the Helensburgh Waterfront Development.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s106782/Capital%20Pack%20-%20FINAL%201.pdf>

Administration Budget Motion included allocation of an additional £5.579M towards capital provision for the Helensburgh Waterfront development.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s107019/Administration%20Budget%20Motion.pdf>

**Hence a total of £16.67M in February 2016.**

This Budget Motion included the statement

*To note that discussions are progressing by officers with regard to projects in the Council's Capital Plan that may well produce additional external funding together with the release of current provisions for underwriting, and to agree that, in the event that further monies are available, that provision is made from freed-up capital and earmarked reserves to be used towards phase 2 of the Dunoon wooden pier project and exploration of Rosneath Peninsula and Garelohead priorities*

**This was a general statement, not associated with the Waterfront development statement, and at no point in this document did the public budget statement say that the council was underwriting the capital expenditure for the Waterfront development.**

# Funding – Council documents (2)

Indeed, the press release from the Council in February 2016 includes the following clear statement of “£6million extra”:

**£6million extra, adding to the £11million already committed, to transform Helensburgh waterfront**

*Chair of the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee, Councillor Gary Mulvaney, welcomed the further investment in Helensburgh, saying: “We have identified a £17million scheme which will see Helensburgh Pier transformed, with new flood defences, a new swimming pool and leisure centre and improvements to the car park and public spaces.*

*“We are already seeing the great economic benefits of the town centre regeneration work, with more people coming to Helensburgh to spend their money and, crucially, private sector investment and new shops opening their doors.*

*“The waterfront project is the final piece of the jigsaw which will make Helensburgh an even more attractive place for people to live, work, visit and invest.*

*“We will now be looking at the best way of getting the designs agreed and the project tendered and spades in the ground.”*

*This funding provision will allow the project to progress but, as ever, the council will be exploring external funding opportunities.*

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/news/2016/feb/argyll-and-bute-council-making-new-investments-grow-economy>

# Funding – Council documents (3)

Therefore when, on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016, George Osborne announced that

*1.272 The government will also allocate £5 million from banking fines for a new leisure facility in Helensburgh, which will benefit both local residents and Royal Navy personnel and their families stationed nearby at Faslane.*

**There was no reason for the public to assume that the council would cut their funding by £5m, due to the original public positioning.**

Subsequent documents from the council, such as the Major Capital Regeneration Projects – Update Report as at 4 August 2016 – use the term “includes £5m underwriting” to refer to the February 2016 budget, when there is nothing in the February document to say that, e.g.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s111932/Amended%20Capital%20Regeneration%20Projects%20Update%20final%20version%20P%20and%20R%2018%20August%2016.pdf>

*The Council’s February 2016 Capital Budget has made the provision for contributing £16,670,000 ( includes £5m underwriting) to delivering the New Swimming Pool, Leisure Facility and Flood Defence works. A Report was presented to the Helensburgh and Lomond March Business Day based on these financial assumptions. On the 16th March at the UK Government Budget, an additional £5M funding for the swimming pool was announced.*

# Final notes 1 - Infilling for car park

This has been stated as necessary for new flood defence requirements, and it will be a very significant expense.

But the 2010 Stage C Design said that SEPA does not require car parking areas to be free from flood risk. Only that a safe pedestrian route and emergency vehicular access are required at the raised level.

This was repeated in the 2011 Helensburgh Flood Risk Assessment:

*As the car park is to remain unchanged under the new development proposal, the area would be subject to an average flooding depth of 0.8m. This may be acceptable, as car parks do not have to be free from flood risk. However, the car park should have suitable signage relating to flood risk, and be capable of being gated shut.*

[https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Flood%20risk%20assessment\\_0.pdf](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Flood%20risk%20assessment_0.pdf)

# Final notes 2 - Toilet location

The Stage C Design recommended removing the current building.

The Dec 2017 H&L Area Committee agenda also recommended consulting on this building, as being out-of-keeping with the new buildings.

The Stage C Design, though, included a swimming pool building with an entrance which was closer than the end of the car park.

Given the bulk of the other buildings, it seems unnecessary to remove the practical toilet block for purely aesthetic reasons.

# Once-in-a-lifetime opportunity questions

## **Have the community been consulted about how they want the £18.4M spent?**

We want the community (and visitors) to welcome the new development.

The community hub requirement of the 2009 OBC is not fulfilled in the current plan.

Last public consultation was 29 responses in 2012.

## **Funding is critical**

Do we need to spend money on flood defences for the car park?

Can we get multi-use sports hall for general public use instead?

What if £1M-5M was added to £18.4M – what could we create?

## **Building location and impact is important – what will it look like?**

The building will be prominent and should be a real destination.

This is the most significant site in Helensburgh and Lomond.

The public view across the Clyde is critical – from Sinclair Street or William Street.