

Consideration of feedback received during consultation.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 681 individual responses were received to the masterplan consultation containing over 1300 separate comments. Due to the volume of comments we have received, it has not been possible to provide a detailed response to every point raised within this report. As an alternative this report provides a discussion and recommended response to the top 3 issues raised about each of the masterplan's 8 key proposals.

2. Landscaping around the war memorial and fountain

- 2.1 88% of respondents indicated that they supported or strongly supported proposals for landscaping around the war memorial and restored fountain.
- 2.2 101 individual comments were received about these proposals including 24 supportive statements. The top 3 issues raised in those comments were about; proposals for tree removal (17 comments); proposed landscaping materials (15 comments) and access proposals (11 comments).
- 2.3 Comments around proposed tree removal questioned whether any tree removal was necessary, suggested that tree removal should be avoided and suggested that any trees earmarked for removal should be transplanted elsewhere.
- 2.4 Proposals for tree removal are intended to improve the landscape setting of the war memorial and fountain. None of the trees earmarked for removal are known to have any particular special historical significance. The transplanting of mature trees would be impractical. Overall, masterplan proposals involve the planting of 28 new trees which will more than compensate for the loss of trees removed.
- 2.5 Comments around landscaping materials questioned whether coloured aggregate was an appropriately robust choice of surface material for a well-used public space. Comments were also raised about the potential for this material to discolour; spill onto grass and damage grass cutting machinery; and be susceptible to weed growth. Comments also questioned whether sandstone might be a more appropriate choice of finishing than granite in this location.
- 2.6 The coloured aggregate material referenced on the masterplan drawings was always intended to be a resin bound material which should address concerns about potential spillage onto grass areas, susceptibility to weed growth or the potential to damage grass cutting machinery.
- 2.7 Comments about access proposals commended the plans to allow disabled people to safely get up close to the monument but questioned whether coloured aggregate would be a suitable surface for wheelchair use and whether a central wheelchair ramp would distract from the significance of the stepped base to the war memorial.

- 2.8 The coloured aggregate material referenced on the masterplan drawings was always intended to be a resin bound material which should address concerns about potential spillage onto grass areas, susceptibility to weed growth and will ensure easy access for wheelchairs. Caithness granite is considered to be the most appropriate paving material for the area around the war memorial as it is more durable and potentially less slippery than sandstone and is also an indigenous Scottish material. **It is recommended that further work on the disabled access ramp position is undertaken by the design team in consultation with Historic Environment Scotland.** Proposals will be further developed and listed building consent will need to be obtained for these proposals in due course.

3. Restoration and Refurbishment of the Fountain

- 3.1 86% of respondents indicated that they supported or strongly supported proposals for the restoration and refurbishment of the fountain.
- 3.2 Respondents were advised that there is a possibility that costs for fountain restoration could increase to beyond the level of funding for delivering the masterplan. In those circumstances 65% of respondents indicated that they would rather restore the fountain, but not to convey water, so that all elements of the masterplan could proceed than restore the fountain to working order knowing that other elements of the masterplan may not be able to progress.
- 3.3 104 individual comments were received about these proposals including 8 supportive statements. The top 3 issues raised in those comments were about: the operability of the fountain (34 comments) the affordability of restoration proposals (28 comments) and; arrangements for funding fountain restoration (19 comments).
- 3.4 Comments about the operability of the fountain related to: support for restoring the fountain to full working order; concern that a fully restored fountain would only break down; a view that if the fountain wasn't fully restored to working order then nothing should be spent on its restoration; a suggestion that the fountain could be restored to full working order if additional funding was secured ;and a suggestion that money could be saved by a solar powered water pump with no mains water connection.
- 3.5 Comments about the affordability of restoration proposals related to: the view that restoring the fountain to working order was a priority; the view that restoring the fountain to working order was not a priority; concerns that the fountain would go forward at the expense of other higher priority masterplan projects; and the view that fully restoring the fountain could be a future priority, but not part of the current suite of masterplan proposals.
- 3.6 Comments about arrangements for funding fountain restoration related to: the potential to secure additional funding from various sources to full restore the fountain; the potential to secure additional funding for other masterplan projects and divert funding towards the full restoration of the fountain; and the potential to delay the full restoration of the fountain until sufficient funding is secured.
- 3.7 The fountain is the last remaining original feature of Zetland Park, so its refurbishment is considered to be a critical element of the masterplan

proposals. The original application to the Heritage Lottery Fund estimated that the cost of restoring the fountain to working order would be in the order of c£75k. More detailed design development has highlighted there is a risk that that costs to fully restore the fountain will be significantly in excess of £75k. The main reason for this is that the bottom tier of the fountain would need to be completely re-cast to be able to safely hold water whereas the original assumption had been that the existing bottom tier could be repaired more cheaply. Other sources of funding could be explored to fully restore the fountain but there is no guarantee that enough additional funding would be able to be found. In addition a recasting of the bottom tier would result in the loss of the most significant remaining original element of the fountain, further eroding the heritage value of the project. **It is recommended, therefore, that proposals are altered to refurbish and restore the fountain, but not to working order.**

4. Naturalised Pond

- 4.1 84% of respondents indicated that they supported or strongly supported proposals for the naturalised pond.
- 4.2 146 individual comments were received about these proposals including 46 supporting statements. The top 3 issues raised in those comments were about: the safety of park users (23 comments); an alternative design for the pond (20 comments); and proposals for the maintenance of the pond (13 comments).
- 4.3 Comments about alternative pond design included suggestions that the pond should be filled in and used as a seating area; used as a skate park; used as a play area; and used as a community fishery. Other comments suggested that designs could be augmented by: incorporation of: a fountain; solar lighting and cascading water; a stage; some toilets and splash play.
- 4.4 Comments were raised about the potential for young / vulnerable people to get injured or drown in the pond. Suggestions for improving the safety of the pond included putting a railing around the pond and softening pond edges.
- 4.5 Comments about maintenance of the pond related to concern at whether the pond would be adequately maintained and whether maintenance would prove to be costly.
- 4.6 The pond has been designed primarily as a haven for wildlife within the park. Significantly fewer households in Grangemouth (86.2%) are within a 15 minute walk of a natural or semi natural open space than households across the Council area as a whole and the creation of a naturalised pond within the park will help address this deficiency. As such incorporation of more formal pond features such as a fountain, cascading water or splash play would be inappropriate. Toilets and a stage are proposed at other locations within the park.
- 4.7 The design of the pond already incorporates softened and graduated edges. Concerns about safety and the cost of on-going maintenance will be considered further by our design team and they will refine their designs for the pond with this in mind.

- 4.8 Feedback received from biodiversity partners at a meeting on 23rd January suggested that **masterplan proposals for wildflower planting could be enhanced by creating wildflower meadow corridors connecting habitats surrounding the park (particularly the Grange Burn) to the new naturalised pond. It is recommended that this proposal should be taken forward.**

5. Play area

- 5.1 88% of respondents indicated that they supported or strongly supported proposals for improving the play area.
- 5.2 154 individual comments were received about ideas for improving the play area with 69 additional comments about current proposals for improving the play area. The top 3 issues raised in those comments were about: inclusive play (36 comments); accessible play (34 comments) and toilets (17 comments).
- 5.3 Comments about inclusive and accessible play noted that the current safety surfacing in the play area excludes children with disabilities from some parts of the play area and that any new play area should be designed to be fully inclusive allowing young people with additional support needs or mobile and sensory impairment to play together with other young people and their families and carers. Requests were made for the new play area to be designed to include a wheelchair swing, wheelchair roundabout and play equipment with high sides.
- 5.4 Comments about toilets suggested that the relocated toilets and kiosk should be moved closer to the play area, should include baby and disabled facilities and a changing places toilet.
- 5.5 Recognising the strong support within the community for creating an accessible and inclusive play area within the park and the significant potential benefit this could have to the pupils of the nearby Carrongrange High School, it is recommended that the new play area should be designed with inclusivity in mind. Early discussions have been undertaken with Play As One Scotland (PA1S) a charity who's aim is to raise funds to create inclusive play areas for able and disabled children in Scotland and fundraising will be undertaken in partnership to increase the budget for the play area. There are currently only 2 "Planning Inclusive Play Area" (PIPA) accredited play areas in Scotland. This is a great opportunity to deliver one for the Falkirk Council area in Grangemouth.
- 5.6 There are already toilet facilities including a changing places toilet at the nearby Grangemouth Sports Complex, rather than relocating the new toilet block and kiosk to a location adjacent to the play area, **it is recommended that appropriate signage is introduced and path access improvements made to enable users of the play area to safely use this existing facility.**
- 5.7 Although not one of the top three issues, the creation of a skate park or pump track within the park has been frequently mentioned by respondents. Also frequently mentioned was the need for the play area to be made more engaging for older children. **It is therefore recommended that a wheeled sports pump track integrated with the existing cycle skills track and new**

play area is added to the masterplan. Delivery of this new element will be dependent on securing additional funding. Opportunities for funding the creation of a wheeled sports pump track are being explored with Scottish Cycling and Sportscotland.

6. Performance Space

- 6.1 72% of respondents indicated that they supported or strongly supported proposals for a new performance space.
- 6.2 141 individual comments were received about the proposals including 22 supportive statements. The top 3 issues raised were about frequency of use (33 comments) antisocial behaviour (24 comments) and necessity (23 comments).
- 6.3 Comments about frequency of use raised concerns that outside of the Children's Day, the stage was unlikely to be frequently used due to lack of local interest and potential bad weather. Other comments suggested that the stage and performance area would be enthusiastically used by the people, clubs, schools and local organisations of Grangemouth.
- 6.4 Comments about antisocial behaviour raised concerns that the new stage would be a magnet for bmx/ skateboarding and antisocial gatherings at times when the stage was not being used for events and that its proximity to nearby houses on Abbotsgrange Road would cause a nuisance to local residents.
- 6.5 Comments about necessity suggested that there were already performance spaces elsewhere in the Council area, that one wasn't needed in Grangemouth and that money earmarked for the performance space should be spent on other more priority projects within the park.
- 6.6 The extent to which the stage and performance area are used outside of the Children's Day will ultimately be down to the people and communities of Grangemouth but given the enthusiasm for the project shown through the masterplan consultation, there is every reason to be optimistic about its chances of success. Further work will be needed to identify the optimum arrangement for the future management of the performance area.
- 6.7 If funding for the new wheeled sports pump track is secured, then it is likely that the focus of bmx and skateboarding activity within the park will be there rather than at the new stage, however, informal use of the stage for these purposes cannot be discounted. The potential for antisocial behaviour at the new stage is also recognised. Whilst we will work with local police and the community safety team to manage any antisocial behaviour, the current location of the stage still has the potential to adversely affect the amenity of nearby residents. A meeting with residents of Abbotsgrange Road was arranged for 3rd March where they were asked to give their views on whether they supported or opposed 3 separate proposals:
 - Do you support or oppose the position of the stage as shown in the draft masterplan?
 - Do you support or oppose the position of the stage as shown in the revised drawing of the performance area i.e. relocated to the eastern

side of the event space oval - a location over 100m from neighbouring houses?

- Do you support or oppose the principle of including a performance space within the masterplan?

- 6.8 Of the 10 people who attended the meeting (representing 8 out of 14 properties adjacent to the performance space), all of them opposed all three proposals.
- 6.9 Whilst comments about the necessity of a new performance area are noted, these should be weighed against the significant support for the project demonstrated by 72% of respondents to the masterplan consultation strongly supporting or supporting versus 11% of respondents who opposed or strongly opposed the proposals.
- 6.10 The rationale for providing a performance space within the masterplan is linked to the desire to provide a more financially sustainable way of accommodating Children's Day activities which currently cost the Children's Day committee more than £8000 per year for the hire of a temporary stage. The Children's Day activity is currently funded by an annual grant from Falkirk Council's Community Learning and Development team. In the current funding climate it is questionable how sustainable this annual grant will be, so provision of a permanent performance space within Zetland Park should be seen as a potential saving to the Council.
- 6.11 Whilst the concerns of residents of houses on Abbotsgrange Road are noted, **it is recommended that the proposal for a performance space should be retained within the masterplan, albeit with the stage re-positioned at the opposite side of the event space oval, at a location over 100m from neighbouring houses.**

7. Heritage Interpretation

- 7.1 85% of respondents indicated that they supported or strongly supported proposals for heritage interpretation within the park.
- 7.2 58 individual comments were received about other ideas for heritage interpretation within the park together with an additional 42 individual comments about proposals for heritage interpretation contained within the masterplan. The top 3 issues raised related to design (28 comments); cost (19 comments) and theme (14 comments).
- 7.3 Comments suggesting ideas about the design of new interpretation were numerous and varied including the creation of interpretive themed trails within the park, interpretation boards and interpretive play equipment.
- 7.4 Comments about cost suggested that money spent on heritage interpretation should not represent a significant proportion of the overall park improvement budget.
- 7.5 Comments about theme were again numerous and varied including suggestions that the new features should interpret Grangemouth's history, natural heritage and industry.

- 7.6 The cost of new heritage interpretation does not represent a significant percentage of the overall capital project cost, however, as our primary funder, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, strongly values this element of the project, it is considered to be appropriate to retain proposals for heritage interpretation within the masterplan. Ideas for heritage interpretation will be passed to our consultant activity planner to consider for inclusion within the overall activity and interpretation plan for the project.

8. Rose Garden

- 8.1 75% of respondents indicated that they were supportive or strongly supportive of the principle of improving the existing rose garden. 51% of respondents indicated that they were supportive or strongly supportive of an idea to redevelop the rose garden as a labyrinth of ornamental planting resembling a petrochemical process to celebrate Grangemouth's industrial heritage.
- 8.2 86 individual comments were received about other ideas for redeveloping the rose garden. 72 individual comments were received about the proposals for redeveloping the existing rose garden. The top 3 issues raised related to design (97 comments) themes (17 comments) and the petrochemical link (12 comments).
- 8.3 Comments relating to the design of the rose garden were varied but common themes included: leaving it as a rose garden; putting back the original fence; including seating; and the need for it to be a peaceful place.
- 8.4 Comments relating to potential themes for a redeveloped rose garden were again varied and included: links to other Grangemouth industries; making it a sensory garden; and making it focussed on contemplation and peace.
- 8.5 Comments relating to the petrochemical link included concern at the appropriateness of this as a theme for a parkland setting.
- 8.6 Proposals to redevelop the rose garden as a labyrinth of ornamental planting resembling a petrochemical process is less popular than the principle of enhancing the rose garden in general. There have been numerous pleas from members of the public to leave the rose garden as it is. **On balance it is recommended that the proposal to enhance the rose garden is retained within the masterplan but in a more traditional form in keeping with its previous design.** There are opportunities to work in partnership with the Grangemouth Horticultural Society to redesign and create the new rose garden.

9. Toilet block and kiosk

- 9.1 74% of respondents indicated that they were supportive or strongly supportive of proposals for the relocation of the toilet block and kiosk.
- 9.2 207 individual comments were received about proposals including 16 supportive statements. The top 3 issues raised related to the proposed location (81 comments) design (60 comments) and operation (30 comments).

- 9.3 The vast majority of comments about the location of the toilet block suggested relocating it nearer to the play area, other comments suggested that they were too close to housing and should be relocated more centrally within the park.
- 9.4 Comments about design included suggestions that the new building should include: a café; a changing places toilet; disabled toilets; baby changing area and indoor and outdoor seating.
- 9.5 Most comments about operation suggested that the new toilets and kiosk should be open year round with significant numbers also suggesting that it should sell a better selection of food.
- 9.6 The main reasons for locating the new kiosk and toilet block in its current location was due to the availability of existing services and its relative proximity to road access, the tennis courts and the crazy golf course. There are currently toilet facilities located close to the play area at Grangemouth Sports Complex including a changing places toilet. Recognising concerns about the proximity of the new building to existing houses, **it is recommended that the new building is relocated to a position to the south of the grounds maintenance bothy and disabled parking spaces.** This new location is closer to the crazy golf, tennis courts and play area and also adjacent to existing services.
- 9.7 The original project budget only had a modest amount of money allocated towards the renovation of the existing toilet block and kiosk. The proposal to relocate the toilet block and kiosk has come about due to the likelihood of the Grangemouth Flood Protection Scheme requiring the demolition of the existing facility. Funding for the relocated toilet block and kiosk will come from the overall flood protection scheme budget but it will be restricted to the cost of a like for like replacement. The inclusion of a café within the new building would therefore require additional funding.
- 9.8 The current toilet block and kiosk is open seasonally and run by Falkirk Community Trust. It is likely that the new building will be run by Falkirk Community Trust. The matter of year round opening is one which will have to be considered by them in due course. It is worth noting, however, that the anticipated increase in footfall to the park following the completion of the regeneration project will improve the business case for year round opening. There may also be opportunities for the new kiosk and toilets to be run by a community organisation or leased to a private enterprise.