Section 4



The masterplan





Masterplan concepts



3

Coastal Park



Residential development within walking distance of the town centres

01



The balance of the area - modern industry within a forest setting





Saltcoats

The Saltcoats masterplan concentrates on turning the town back towards the sea. It was once a lively holiday resort for people from Glasgow. This however has declined to such an extent that there are no longer any hotels within the town. However in the summer months large numbers of people still use the beaches either side of Saltcoats, something that will expand as a result of the Coastal Park proposals in this masterplan. The strategy for Saltcoats must be to draw these people into the town by reinventing its role as a 21st century resort.



Saltcoats has a long and varied history. Its name derives from the production of salt linked to the explosives works at Ardeer. The port was also once busy with coal and iron produced in Stevenston to which Saltcoats was linked by a canal and rail line. However the town is best known as a resort and for the first two thirds of the 20th century it was famous as a resort for the people of Glasgow who would arrive by train. This period in the town's history is immortalised in the Billy Connolly song 'Saltcoats by the Sea'.

However while people still travel to the beaches either side of Saltcoats the town no longer operates as a resort. The high street, while remaining lively has gone down market and the town has turned its back on its beautiful harbour – symbolised by the development of two small supermarkets that back onto the sea.

Vision for the town:

There are many examples of seaside resorts in the UK that have reinvented themselves. These include Wick, Hern Bay, Newcastle in Northern Ireland and Bexhill on Sea (see precedents appendix). While each town is different the key in most cases is to appeal to day trippers, to provide a more up-market offer and to give people enough to keep them occupied for at least half a day. This often includes the development of the arts (artists are often attracted to the sea) through studios, galleries and public art. It can also include water sports such as wind surfing and jet skiing. These have the huge advantage of being 'cool' and attractive to





the young which is something that UK seaside resorts have struggled to do for years. Another ingredient is food which helps to project a quality image and adds to the visitor experience.

The vision for Saltcoats is therefore as a modern upmarket seaside resort which is seen as a good place to visit and to live.

This will be achieved through the following projects:

M.1a Lido Headland:

This is the most prominent site in Saltcoats and should be developed as part of the landmarks strategy in the coastal park. We believe that this would be an excellent site for a high quality hotel catering for tourists visiting the area for the golf, watersports, genealogy etc... There are currently two reasonable quality hotels in the area, the Thistle and the Gales in Irvine. Neither could compete with the views that a hotel on Saltcoats headland could provide.

However advice from our agents suggests that there is unlikely to be interest from operators in Saltcoats at the present time. Work is therefore required to change the image of the area before a hotel will be viable. However so valuable would this be that we believe that this site should be safeguarded so that it can be developed in the future.

The scheme would incorporate the funfair site, which is past its best, but would retain the cinema. The hotel would also make use of the saltwater pools that were part of the Lido that once stood on the site.

M.1b The Braes:

Saltcoats harbour is a beautiful but treacherous because of the rocks. It is used by jet skiers and occasional boats but the development of the Aldi suggests that the town has turned its back on the sea. It is proposed to undertake environmental works to the quay with the conversion of the old Quay House to a cafe or gallery. This would initially be linked to the redevelopment of the derelict hotel on the sea front. In the longer term there is an opportunity to relocate the Aldi to create a more significant development opportunity. This is likely to happen when values have risen sufficiently to fund the relocation.

M.1c Seafront improvements:

There is an opportunity to improve the landscaping and car park areas along the seafront with high quality planting and public art as part of the flood defence works. There is also an opportunity to create a landscaped link between the seafront and the high street. This is currently accessed via a back alley which again is typical of the way that the town ignores the sea.

M.1d. Improvements to Hamilton Street:

As with the other towns we are proposing a public realm scheme to improve Hamilton Street and the surrounding town streets. This area has been pedestrianised and is reasonably lively but is very down market in its offer. Improvements would include new surfacing, planting, street furniture, lighting and public art (see below).

M.1e. Saltcoats Arts Initiative:

The British seaside resorts that have revived their fortunes have often done so by promoting the arts. This would be done through the Saltcoats Arts Initiative to encourage an artistic community to locate within the town. This would start with a public arts programme (such as the fish trail in Hull) and should then be developed through an annual arts festival and temporary displays in vacant shops. There is also the potential to create a number of small galleries, for example in the old Port Master's home, the old town hall or the church on the high street which is currently a pound shop.

M.1f. Beach Park with cafes:

Saltcoats lies at the heart of the Coastal Park proposal. It is proposed that the Lido Headland and the Pier be important landmark developments along the coast with a series of 'coastal beacons' in-between. These Coastal Beacons are proposed to be cafes and shelters on the beaches, possibly in temporary structures. There are to be a series of these along the coast including two on South Beach and two more on Stevenston Beach. These structures are to be commissioned by architectural competition and will play an important role in changing perceptions of the area.

M.1g Flood Defences:

There are proposals to create a series of flood defences along the coast in Saltcoats to stop the sea flooding the town on Spring tides. The flood prevention proposals are to go out to public consultation and there is the opportunity to shape the scheme to complement the proposals for the Coastal Park. This could include locations for the Coastal Beacons and viewing points as well as the possibility of making the banking into a piece of landscape sculpture.

M.1h Business centre

As part of the iWork strategy we have proposed the location of a business centre in Saltcoats. This could be located in the old town hall and could have an arts theme. We have also proposed a workshop scheme which is likely to be on the outskirts of the town.

Dockhead Street in 1897





M2e High street improvements

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M2d / Dune works

M2f Business Space

> M2i Forest planting

M2c Extreme Watersports Centre

M2b Dune Eco-Village

> M2 Coas

M2a Coastal Park

> M2g Ardeer Peninsular

M2h Infill Housing anter a

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Stevenston

Stevenston is one of the oldest of the towns but has been overshadowed to an extent by the other towns and has lost much of its retailing role. It has been scarred by industry in the past, however now that the polluting uses have gone, it has the opportunity to transform its environment and image as an attractive town in which to live next to the sea. It is also an important gateway to the Ardeer Peninsular and its potential roles as an energetics cluster.



Stevenston is a closely knit community with a history as rich as the other towns. It has however tended to be over shadowed by its neighbours and certainly as a shopping centre is a shadow of what it once was.

While Stevenston is a historic town its environment has been shaped by its industrial past. In the 19th century it included a colliery, pig iron works and the explosive works on the Ardeer Peninsular. At the height of the ICI works three special trains were laid on for the workers, so many people were employed locally.

Much of this industry was concentrated along the coast and for a time Stevenston was probably quite a polluted and unattractive place. However much of the polluting industry has gone and the seafront has been reclaimed and grassed and much of the housing has been improved. However the town still has a somewhat bleak appearance.

With the growth once more of the energetics industry on Ardeer there is the potential to develop Stevenston as an attractive front door for the industry and an aspirational residential environment for its workers. This will involve transforming the environment of the town, turning it back towards the sea and using the opportunities for residential development to create attractive neighbourhoods.

The vision for Stevenston is therefore of a attractive coastal town set within a forest with a distinctive residential offer.

To do this we propose the following projects:



Stevenston Masterplan

Community uses



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- Residential and mixed-use development
- Retail development
- Employment uses

Jeisure development

Parking

Public realm improvements

M.2a Coastal Park:

Stevenston is an important part of the coastal park. It currently has a very beautiful beach but it is isolated from the town. The intention is to create an attraction on the beach (see the watersports centre below) as well as a series of 'Coastal Beacons'. It is unlikely that these would be viable as cafe's at the present stage so that they may be commissioned as shelters of environmental sculptures.

M.2b Eco Village:

There have been proposals put forward in the past for an eco-village on the Ardeer Peninsula. Concerns have been expressed about the extent to which this may constrain industrial activities on the peninsular and the proposed site is not well placed for public transport. An alternative would be to loctel an eco-village on the seafront near the concrete jetty. This was supported in consultations because this area is currently considered to be dangerous. The area was once a holiday camp and subsequent to that a military camp. There is the potential to create an exemplar development of a coastal eco-village that could really put Stevenston on the map.

However once more our market advice suggests that this is unlikely to generate the values necessary to make it viable in the short term. It is therefore proposed that an initial eco village be developed in Irvine and that the Stevenston eco-village is developed from year five onwards.

M.2c Extreme watersports centre:

As described in the iPlay section, the concrete jetty is already used informally for jet skis. It is proposed to formalise this by developing an extreme watersports centre including a club house, equipment store and hire facility, and changing rooms. The grassed area is also used for Kite Boarding sometimes coming into conflict with local people. However with better management this could also become part of the attraction.

M.2d Dune recreation:

The council is currently working with local groups on a scheme to recreate the dunes along the sea front. This is something to be encouraged and could be badged as an early win for the URC.

M.2e Improvements to New Street:

As with the other towns it is also proposed that public realm improvements be undertaken to New Street/ Station Road. This could include a face-lift scheme for the shops and improvements to the pavements.

M.2f Business Space:

It is proposed in the economic section that accommodation for new business be created in each of the towns. This would include small scale workshops (such as those that already exist on Station Road) and a business centre of the kind run in Ardrossan by Cunningham Housing Association. This should be located as close as possible to New Street possibly using vacant retail premises.

M.2g. The Ardeer Peninsular:

As described in the iWork section, there are proposals to explore the development of the Ardeer Peninsular as an 'Energetics Cluster'. As part of this there is likely to be a need for improvements to road access to the peninsular as well as the potential for new business space to create a gateway to the area.

M.2h Infill housing:

There are proposals for new housing on the site along Lundholme Road. This is well placed to access the station and the centre of the town and should be supported.

M.2i Forest Planting:

Throughout the area there is scope for extensive tree planting as part of the transformation of the area's environment.







<u>Kilwinnina</u>

Kilwinning is an attractive and historic town surrounded by new town estates. It is not as well known as it deserves to be and it should not be difficult to improve the quality of the environment. However the real issue is the role of the town and how this can be used to secure its economic future.



Kilwinning has a long and rich history. Its Abbey was founded in the 12th century and its builders became the world's first Freemasons. The Masonic Lodge in the town is known as the Mother lodge and is numbered 000, the first in the world. With such a history the town should be a magnet for visitors and residents.

Kilwinning was part of the new town and its neighbourhoods were largely developed by the new town authorities. However the town centre was largely untouched by the new town planners and has retained much of its character. The public realm of the centre is looking a bit tired especially on the high street and people passing though the town on the ring road see only the backs of the high street buildings.

Kilwinning is the point where the coastal road crosses the river and

where the two rail lines join. It is therefore a gateway to the area and the most accessible point to Glasgow. This is reflected in a strong residential market. The station also operates as a park-and-ride facility for the wider area. One of the key institutions in Kilwinning is the James Watt College. This operates on four campuses but is seeking to consolidate its activities on the site in Kilwinning.

Kilwinning suffers from the problems experienced by many small towns. It developed at a time when people lived and shopped locally and when the town provided facilities and services for the surrounding rural area. As people have become more mobile and they have increasingly travelled to larger towns and outof-town facilities for these services. This has meant that while many of the town's neighbourhoods remain





healthy the town centre has declined. This has not been assisted by Lauchlan Way that bypasses the high street. This was built at a time when the A737 carried all of the traffic along the coast including many heavy vehicles. Since that time the A78 has been completed so that much of the through traffic no longer travels through the town. The result is that people travelling through the town no longer see the high street and the shops are deprived of passing trade. The council is currently developing traffic proposals for the high street, however at present these do not include a suggestion to reopen it to traffic.

There is now a wealth of experience of towns such as Kilwinning that have regenerated themselves. In doing this there are a number of issues that need to be addressed:

Where are people going to earn their money in the future? In the past people in Kilwinning worked in

the industrial estates that were developed for the new town. This is no longer the case and one of the issues that needs to be addressed is the future of the West Byrehill and Nethermains industrial estates. The reality in Kilwinning is that in future people will earn their money elsewhere, in institutions such as the college or in new office space attracted to the town, as well as by commuting into Glasgow. There is also the potential to develop tourism as a new economic sector serving the many people who come to explore the town's history.

What role should the town centre play? The town centre will never

again be a general retail centre, convenience and comparison shopping has been attracted elsewhere and the high street has been left with down market retailing and some persistent traditional traders. In order to survive the centre needs to develop new roles as a focus for community life, a leisure and service centre and as a tourist attraction. All of these are possible in Kilwinning which could learn from towns like West Kilbride (http:// www.westkilbride.org.uk/), which has developed itself as a craft town.

Another approach is the Citta Slow (Slow City) movement which has gown out of Italy and is a movement dedicated to quality and enjoyment of life in towns and cities. There are currently three slow cities in England - Ludlow, Diss and Aylsham while Mold in Wales and Perth in Scotland are seeking membership. This could be a very good way of developing a new identity for Kilwinning. (http://www.cittaslow.org.uk/).

The vision for Kilwinning is therefore an historic abbey town offering an excellent quality of life, high quality services in a bustling town centre and attractive housing.

This will involve a combination of environmental improvements, animation of street and public life in the town and the promotion of town centre businesses. It is therefore suggested that the projects in Kilwinning should be as follows:

M.3a The High Street:

The improvement of the high street and its reopening to traffic in at least one direction. This should be done in such a way that the street can be closed for events but on normal shopping days will allow the shops to capture passing trade.

M.3b. Animation:

The Kilwinning Carnival 2006 is an excellent first step to involve people in the town and to animate the streets. This should be developed into regular events including fairs and a farmers market. This is a good way to test business ideas and to bring people into town.

M.3c Lauchlan Way:

The development of two of the car parks along Lauchlan Way for new mixed-use development together with the decking of the remaining car park to improve the rear view of the town and to bring more life into the town centre.

M.3d The College:

Support for the expansion of the College together with a green transport plan to prevent this from generating more congestion. There is scope to develop greater links between the college and the town centre, possibly by accommodating part of the college across Lauchlan Way.

M.3e River gateway:

A new gateway to the town centre at the bridge involving public realm works and possibly new infill housing. There is also the potential to develop the car dealership next to the bridge as an attractive employment site.

M.3f The health centre:

Agreement to the siting of the new health centre on Howgate as proposed by the Health Authority.

M.3g Park and Ride Facilities:

The development of a larger park and ride facility at the station by decking the station car park.

M.3h Consolidation of West Byrehill: N

The consolidation of the West Byrehill Estate on the eastern part of the estate.

M.3i Byrehill village:

A residential development on the western part of the West Byrehill estate linked along the main road into town.

M.3j Forest Planting

Extensive tree planting on sites within the town including the Nethermains industrial estate.

M.3k Kilwinning Sports Club:

The club has proposals to develop its facilities and is seeking funding for an indoor sports hall. If this can be secured it could become the training base for Kilmarnock Football Club as well as being available to local people and schools. It is suggested that there would be value in the URC/Council supporting this as part of a package of replacement measures for the Magnum Centre.

M.3I The Abbey

Improvements to the museum and interpretation for the Abbey allowing it to open for longer hours as a tourist attraction and genealogy centre.





Ardrossan

The development of Ardrossan is well underway with the plans by Clyde Port. The strategy seeks to extend and improve the quality of this development and to make better connections with the rest of the town. The aim is to substantially increase the number and range of people living in the town and to use their spending power to revive the town centre and particularly Glasgow Street and Princes Street.

Ardrossan is a historic settlement. The headland has been occupied since neolithic times and the castle was an important local power base until the 16th century. However the town today was shaped in the 19th by the 12th Earl who laid out a planned town to serve the docks that he was developing in the area. There were great plans to link the docks to Glasgow by canal. While this did not happen the port remained busy for more than a century and in 1925 the Shell depot was established.

Since that time the port has declined and the only significant trade is the ferry to Arran. The town has also lost much of its retail function as shopping has been consolidated in Saltcoats.

Ardrossan is therefore in a state of transition. It had become very run down but this has started to change with plans developed by Clyde Port who own the docks. They have created a successful marina surrounded by new flats that have sold well. There are further plans for an ASDA, further housing and waterside leisure uses. The masterplan for the area includes the development of the Shell Deport and the industrial uses on the headland. The strategy for Ardrossan is to encourage and work with Clydeport in bringing about these changes. They will introduce new people and commercial activities into the town and will help capture some of the trade that passes through the town on the way to Arran. The only danger in this is that the new development becomes an enclave separated from the rest of the town creating tensions and failing to maximise the economic benefits.

The vision for Ardrossan is therefore as a 'gateway to Arran and a good place to live and relax next to the sea in a regenerated town centre serving the existing and incoming community'.

To achieve this there is a need to masterplan the port development and the town centre together (avoiding the wall dividing the two that has been built as part of the Persimmon scheme). Key to this is what we have called the Heart of the town initiative where a new ASDA and housing is planned as well as improvements to Glasgow Street and Princes Street and the possible redevelopment of the Montgomerie Street flats. The strategy is therefore made up of the following projects:







M.4a Heart of the town:

The development of the site in the heart of the town centre is being progressed by Clydeport. This includes an Asda, a new restaurant in the pump house and new housing. This will contribute to the regeneration of the town and create momentum that can be used to carry forward URC schemes.

M.4b Shell Depot:

This area is being developed by Clydeport subject to an agreement with Shell on the decontamination of the site. Discussions are ongoing about the design of this scheme and the possibility of creating a landscapes strip, or Esplanade along the seafront. There is an opportunity for the URC to contribute towards this esplanade by creating one or two Coastal Beacons. It is suggested that the southern part of this space be marked by a taller residential building to create one of the landmarks proposed in the iSea strategy.

M.4c Marina:

The Clydeport plans also include a second marina in the former Shell dock. This will accommodate around 100 berths and is entirely in line with the iSea and iPlay themes of this masterplan. The marina will require the creation of a new breakwater and gate to protect boats from the elements. This is likely to require public subsidy and is something that the URC should support.

M.4d Montgomerie Street Flats:

The council flats in the centre of Ardrossan have been identified as a source of problems by a number of people in the consultations. They also serve to cut off the marina development from the town centre. While recognising that the flats are not as bad as their reputation would suggest, and indeed contain a number of right-to-buy properties, we believe that the estate should be redeveloped. This would create an opportunity for a new mixed-use scheme in partnership with one of the housing associations. The scheme could include a new library, accommodation for the public uses currently in shops on Princess Street and commercial premises onto Glasgow Street.

M4e The Headland:

The development of the headland overlooking the south beach is in the later phases of the Clydeport plans. There is the potential to bring this forward in association with the URC to create a landmark mixed-use development as part of the coastal park. The headland site would be a residential development with a landmark tower overlooking the bay. This area would be accessed by reconfiguring the level crossing over the railway line.

M.4f Business space:

The abattoir site on Princes Street is an opportunity for a office development as proposed in the iWork theme.

M.4g Princess Street:

There is a need for a public realm scheme on covering the heart of the town. This would include Princes Street which is currently laid out as a dual carriageway. There is scope to remove the central reservation and to create on chevron parking and wider pavements. Some of the shop units controlled by the public sector should then be marketed for specialist shops to serve the new residents of the area. The scheme also needs to take in Glasgow Street and be linked to improvements to Ardrossan Castle.

M.4h Esplanade

As part of the Clydeport development there is an opportunity to create a new waterfront space on the former Shell site. This would be a landscaped strip with two Coastal Beacons as proposed in the iSea theme. It is proposed that the URC partner Clydeport in the creation of this open space area.









Irvine

There are huge opportunities in Irvine partly because the new town was never completely finished. These focus around the harbourside and the creation of a lively mixed use area and the reconfiguration of part of the shopping centre to revitalise the main shopping offer.



Irvine has long been a bustling town on an important crossing point over the River Irvine. The main town stood to the north of the river and its history includes Celtic and Roman roots. To the south of the river was the village of Fullarton that was to develop into one of the most important ports and ship building centres on the west coast. However the port is shallow and prone to silting up so that the port was overtaken by Ardrossan and Largs.

The historic town of Irvine was changed forever by the designation of the new town in the early 1970s. The masterplan for the new town was undertaken by the architects Wilson and Womersly and is typical of the modernist plans of the period. The most prominent development was the Riverside Shopping Centre that replaced the old bridge and was intended to link to the station and beyond to the harbour. The only shopping centre and the Magnum Centre are the only elements of this mega structure that were completed. The remainder of the town was laid out as a series of neighbourhoods connected by landscaped roads and certainly at the time the view was that the new housing built was bold and imaginative.

Like all new towns of this era the architecture has not aged well and there is a real dissatisfaction in the local community at the ugly character of much of the town. This is also affecting the economic performance of its retail centre. As spending locally has declined and neighbouring centres have improved the shopping centre has gone down market. However the town remains busy and has a strong community with an intense sense of belonging.

The vision for the town is therefore to overcome the new town legacy and to restore its historic character by intensifying the amount of housing around the town centre and redeveloping the shopping centre. This involves the following projects:



Irvine Harbourside Community uses Residential and mixed-use development Retail development R X

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Employment uses

Leisure development 27

Parking

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Public realm improvements

Irvine Harbourside

M.5a Harbourside development:

There are a number of opportunities for residential development around Irvine Harbour. These include the development of the Big Idea car park as an extension of Irvine Harbourside with a mixed-use development of housing and leisure uses. This would include the refurbishment of the tower that marks the height of the tower as a base for Coast Watch. There is also the potential for residential development on the site of the Magnum Centre, parts of Irvine Industrial Estate and around the Maritime Museum.

M.5b Beach Park:

The main part of the Beach Park should be improved. It currently feels bleak and windswept and there is potential for significant development to turn it into a more traditional park with trees, play areas, seating etc...

M.5c Links golf course and hotel:

The southern part of the Beach Park is currently under used and the focus for anti-social activity. As proposed in the iPlay theme, we propose turning this into a high quality links golf course with a new landmark hotel. This is something for which there is current demand and the scheme should therefore be progressed in an early phase through a developer design competition.

M5d. The Magnum Centre:

As described in the iLive theme we are proposing the redevelopment of the Magnum Centre. Escalating maintenance costs mean that it cannot continue in its current form. It is therefore proposed that the centre be demolished and reprovided in the centre of Irvine on the East Road playing fields. The package of replacement facilities is likely to include investment in the Kilwinning Sports Club as well as the Harvies Leisure Centre in Stevenston.

M.5e Mudflats Walk:

Crucial to the creation of the coastal park is the ability to get off the Ardeer Peninsular when the Big Idea bridge is open. We are therefore proposing an elevated boardwalk across the mudflats giving access into the centre of Irvine. This would be a fenced walkway with no access to the mudflats.

M.5f The Big Idea:

As described in the iPlay theme it is vital to find a new use for the Big Idea. It is proposed that the land around the building be developed as a nature reserve. The building needs to be subject to a detailed study to explore public uses such as a gallery or wildlife centre, or uses linked to the industrial activities on the Ardeer Peninsular.

M.5g The Maritime Museum:

As described also in the iPlay theme we have proposed the expansion of the Maritime Museum as a working museum incorporating boat repair and building with historic boats moored in the harbour.







Irvine Town Centre

M.5h Town Centre office development:

As set out in i1.4 there is scope initially for a 2,000msq office pavillion in Irvine. The masterplan creates opportunities for these along Double Dykes Road. There is opportunity for more office space here in the future as demand expands. This is also linked to an opportunity to redevelop Cunninghame House and to create new accommodation for the council.

M.5i The Town Centre:

The redevelopment or refurbishment of the Riverside Shopping Centre. There are two options for this, the main drawing shows the refurbishment of the shopping centre with the creation of a winter garden on the bridge over the river. This option sees the development of a new square outside the entrance to the shopping centre with surface level retail development and housing above. Parking would be accommodated in two decked car parks - the existing car park which is being refurbished and a new car park. Access to the Asda would be provided with a travelator that accommodates shopping trolleys. This option includes a new footbridge over the river providing an alternative to the shopping centre. This would involve the redevelopment of the Forum Centre.

The inset plan shows a more radical option involving the demolition of the shopping centre and the redevelopment of a new street-based shopping area. This would also be based on decked car parks with office development to the west.

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Both options involve the redevelopment of Cunningham House. This would be reprovided as part of the office quarter on Double Dykes Road. This would include the removal of the Keith Road Roundabout and the de-dualling of Double Dyke Road and Keith Road.

M.5j The Civic Quarter:

The expansion of the courts in the Town House and the development of the former police station and garage to the rear for office space.

M.5k The High Street:

Public realm improvements to the town centre including High Street, Bank Street, Bridgegate and the alleys off these streets. This to be linked to the signage and interpretation strategy (i5.1).

M.5I Tarry Holme Eco Village

The development of an eco village on the Tarry Holme site in partnership with Irvine Housing Association. In the early years this could be developed as a housing exhibition to promote quality new housing in the area. See D3









Irvine Bay Masterplan



Community uses



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Retail development

Residential and mixed-use development

Employment uses

Leisure development

Parking

Public realm improvements

