



Vacant and Derelict Land Strategy Refresh 2022

Consultation 01



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

INTRODUCTION

North Ayrshire includes some of the largest areas of vacant and derelict land in Scotland.

Land in this condition is often the result of the decline in former industrial uses, and has a legacy of issues such as instability, contamination or deterioration. Such sites can have a blighting effect on nearby communities.

In recent years progress has been made to restore vacant and derelict land sites back to productive use.

The Council is now reviewing how it may continue to support and deliver a reduction in the amount of vacant and derelict land in North Ayrshire by updating its Vacant and Derelict Land Strategy.

An important part of this process is to understand the thoughts of communities and stakeholders affected by vacant and derelict land.

All of North Ayrshire's current vacant and derelict sites are shown on a storymap which can be accessed [here](#)

For further information



regeneration@north-ayrshire.gov.uk



[Vacant & Derelict Land \(VDL\) \(north-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](http://north-ayrshire.gov.uk)



PURPOSE

The purpose of this consultation is to gather local opinion to inform the refresh of the North Ayrshire Vacant and Derelict Land Strategy.

To do so, we are asking local residents, communities, businesses and stakeholders to share their experience:

1. Do vacant or derelict land or buildings affect the local area where you live? If yes, to what extent, how and what specific areas?
2. Where there is vacant or derelict land in your area, what uses do you think it should be developed for? Specifically, are there any sites which you would like to see brought back into use?
3. Why do you think land remains vacant or derelict? What do you think is required to improve the situation?
4. Are you aware of any community groups, local organisations or stakeholders who might be interested in redeveloping a site that is currently vacant or derelict?
5. Can you provide any examples of positive development?

Please use the comments form [here](#) to share your thoughts and ideas. Vacant and derelict sites are shown on the [story map](#).

This is the first stage of consultation which will help the Council prepare an updated Vacant and Derelict Land Strategy. A second series of public consultations will be carried out on the draft revised Strategy.

Vacant land is

- land that had a previous use but is now empty.
- land without constraint (not polluted or has buildings on it)
- land the Planning Authority say is available for redevelopment

Derelict land is

- land damaged by previous development
- land that is contaminated
- land that needs cleaned before it can be reused.



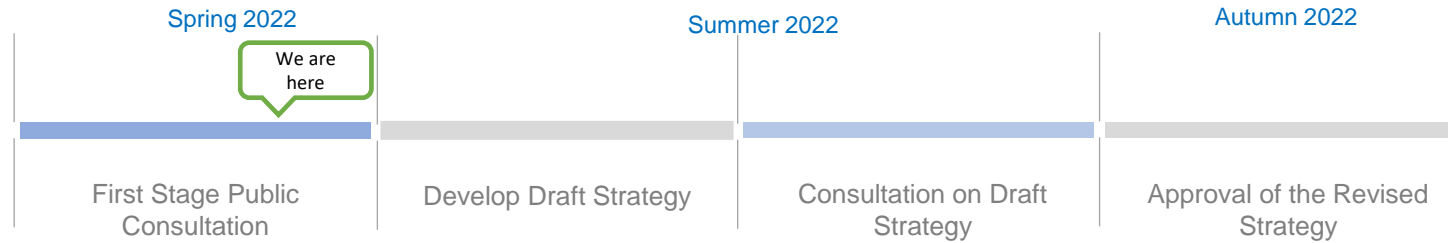
OUTCOMES

The refreshed Vacant and Derelict Strategy should:

1. Reflect the views of residents, communities, businesses and stakeholders.
2. Align with all relevant National and Local Strategies and principals.
3. Review and update the current strategy themes and identified actions (as appropriate).
4. Identify methods for the prioritisation of sites and investment in Vacant and Derelict Land.
5. Identify methods for providing support to the private sector and/or third-party groups.
6. Identify methods for monitoring the status of Vacant and Derelict Land and the impact of developed/ remediated Vacant and Derelict Land.
7. Reflect progress to date of temporary and permanent solutions to Vacant and Derelict Land.
8. Identify methods for assessing the viability of sites for future uses, including services and surveys required.
9. Identify information, support, or funding required to tackle vacant and derelict land.
10. Outline barriers that are preventing the redevelopment of Vacant and Derelict Land.
11. Develop an action plan for delivery of Strategy actions.



TIMESCALES



Your thoughts and ideas will help us prepare a new strategy for North Ayrshire.

When this is ready we will ask for more comments.





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Background Information



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

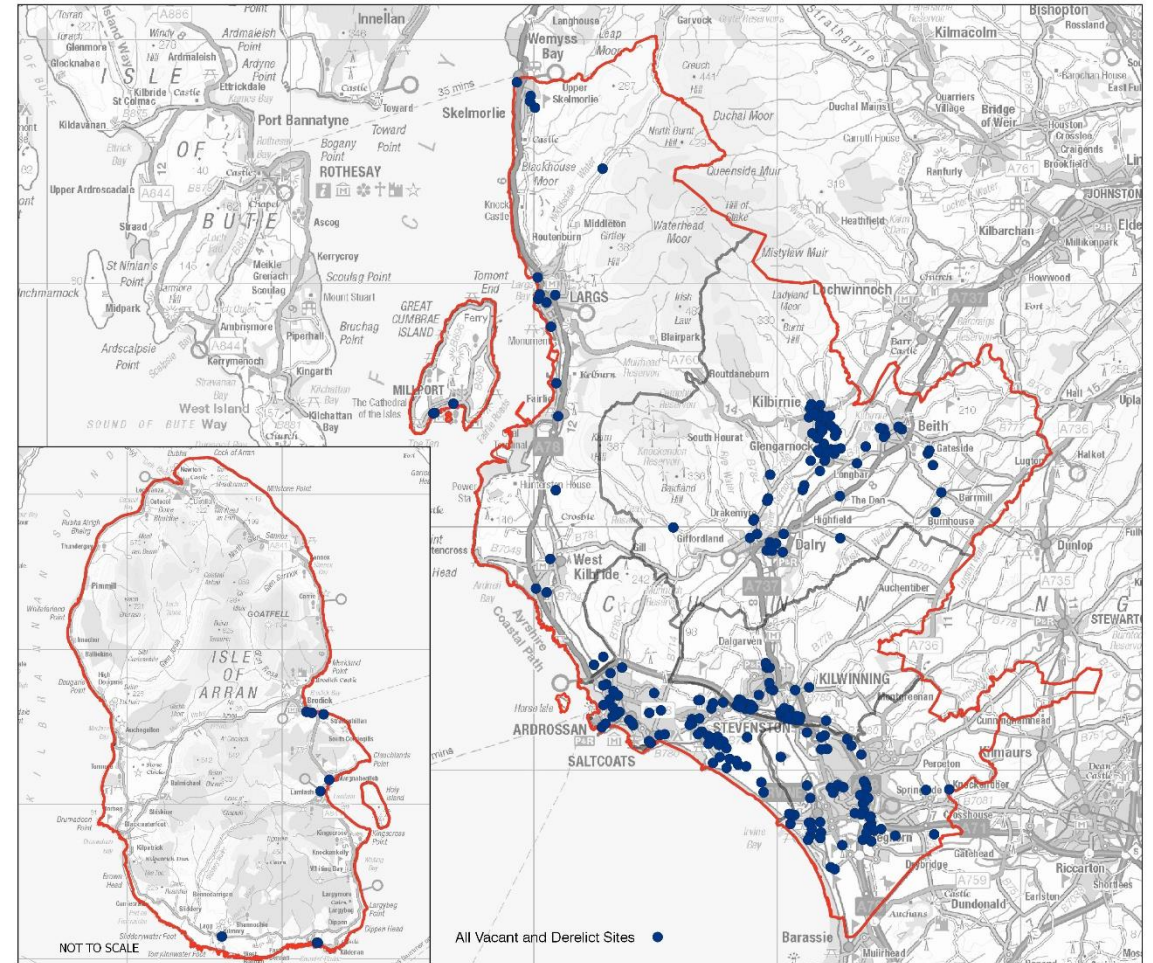
EXISTING SITUATION

North Ayrshire has a legacy of vacant and derelict land, much of which originates from past industrial land uses.

Urban vacant and derelict sites are surveyed on an annual basis by local authorities including North Ayrshire Council. The 2020 Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey (SVDLS) is available online and will be updated in early 2022. A link to the survey is [here](#)

The register provides a record of sites greater than 0.1 ha in size and other information, for example relating to ownership, previous uses and development potential. The register helps to direct funding from sources such as the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund (VDLF).

All of North Ayrshire's current vacant and derelict sites are shown on a storymap which can be accessed [here](#)



In 2020 there were 212 sites in North Ayrshire recorded as vacant or derelict covering 1,203 hectares of land.

1,203 hectares of land

Vacant and derelict land causes problems for local communities, from looking unsightly to attracting antisocial behaviours.

25% of sites are owned by the Council or Public Bodies

WHY IS LAND VACANT OR DERELICT?

There are often many complex reasons why sites fall vacant or derelict, and remain so for a long period of time.

Some sites are 'stuck' and have been on the Scottish Government Vacant and Derelict Land Register since it was created in the 1980's (DUSTE sites).

Some reasons for sites becoming, and remaining, vacant or derelict include:

- Past uses of sites leaving problems such as contamination which are expensive or risky to address for new users.
- Sites being poorly connected or badly located for alternative uses.
- Difficulty financing risky sites where the level of remedial works is uncertain.
- Landowners retaining or purchasing land in the hope that market values may increase.
- Buildings becoming unfit for use or uneconomic to maintain.
- Surplus land or buildings falling out of use but with no incentives for owners to sell or redevelop sites.
- Lack of information on land owners who might be contacted regarding the redevelopment or re-use of sites.

Relying on market conditions alone rarely results in more problematic sites, particularly derelict ones, returning to viability. These sites often require public support to return to positive uses.



The former Ayrshire Central Hospital Maternity Unit, Irvine



The former Ayrshire Metals site, Irvine

PROGRESS: QUARRY ROAD, IRVINE

Quarry Road is part of a regeneration masterplan in Irvine for North Ayrshire Council, which aims to promote health and wellbeing.

The former brownfield site is next to the historic recreation park which was once the home of the Caledonian greyhound race track and will be revitalised with new office space, sports, community and other facilities. The vision for the site is themed around the ideas of community, physical activity, health and wellbeing, with facilities linked to these aspirations.

Initial phases have seen the construction of a new high quality office accommodation, which is also a landmark, forming a gateway for safe, landscaped routes for pedestrians and cyclists from the town centre to the new leisure development and park. A new indoor 3G sports facility has also been completed.

Planned future phases of development are proposed to include leisure and community spaces.



PROGRESS: NORTHSHORE, ARDROSSAN

Almost £1.8m is being invested from the VDLF to Ardrossan North Shore to support site investigation, remediation and design work.

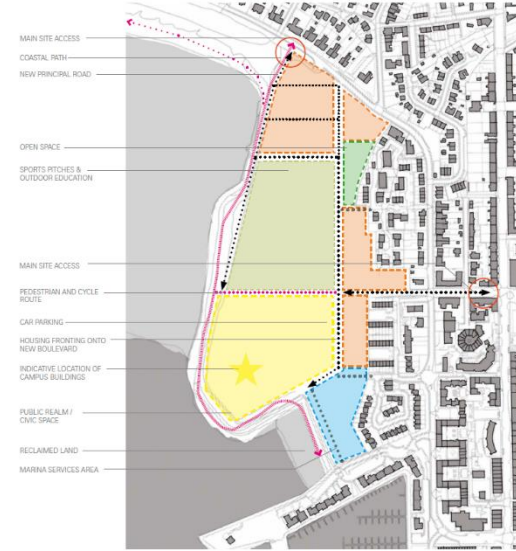
The North Shore is the site of a former Shell oil refinery but which has lain vacant for 30 – 40 years

Proposals for the site include a new campus for Ardrossan Academy and Winton Primary School, consolidating the schools as part of a Community Campus which will also include an Early Years facility, and re-provide Auchenhavrie Leisure Pool and Ardrossan Public Library.

It will include sports pitches for school and community use, 130-150 houses both private and social, a coastal path, an International Marine Science and Environment (IMSE) facility, commercial, public spaces and tourism uses.

Funding from the VDLF has so far allowed site investigation and the preparation of a remediation strategy, with enabling work to commence in 2022.

Development of the school campus is expected to proceed in 2023.



Images from the Ardrossan North Shore Development Framework

PROGRESS: LOCHSHORE, KILBIRNIE

Lochshore is the site of the former Glengarnock Steelworks near Kilbirnie and covers around 250 hectares, including Kilbirnie Loch.

Formerly under the ownership of Scottish Enterprise, the land is now owned by North Ayrshire Council. The site will benefit from around £1.7m of funding from the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund.

After much consultation with residents and work with a range of partners, work is already underway to construct a new £4.2 million Visitor and Community Hub and active travel routes.

The project will aid the regeneration of the surrounding communities of Kilbirnie, Beith and Dalry and to serve the entire Garnock Valley community.

A new active travel route connecting the site to Kilbirnie and the NCN7 will be constructed. Further active travel routes and a 5km leisure route incorporating play and interpretation have been designed.

The Garnock Visitor and Community Hub will provide improved facilities for the local rugby club in addition to space for sports and other community groups.



Visitor and Community Hub

PROGRESS: REPURPOSING PROPERTY GRANT

North Ayrshire Council launched Stage 1 of the Repurposing Property Grant Fund (RPGF) in February 2022 that has been created to help support landowners and community groups to bring back vacant land and properties to use.

It is another strand of the ambitious Community Wealth Building Strategy and Regeneration Delivery Plan – where the Council work more closely than ever with owners and community groups to make the most of local assets – and long-term plans to regenerate the area.

The aims of the fund are to:

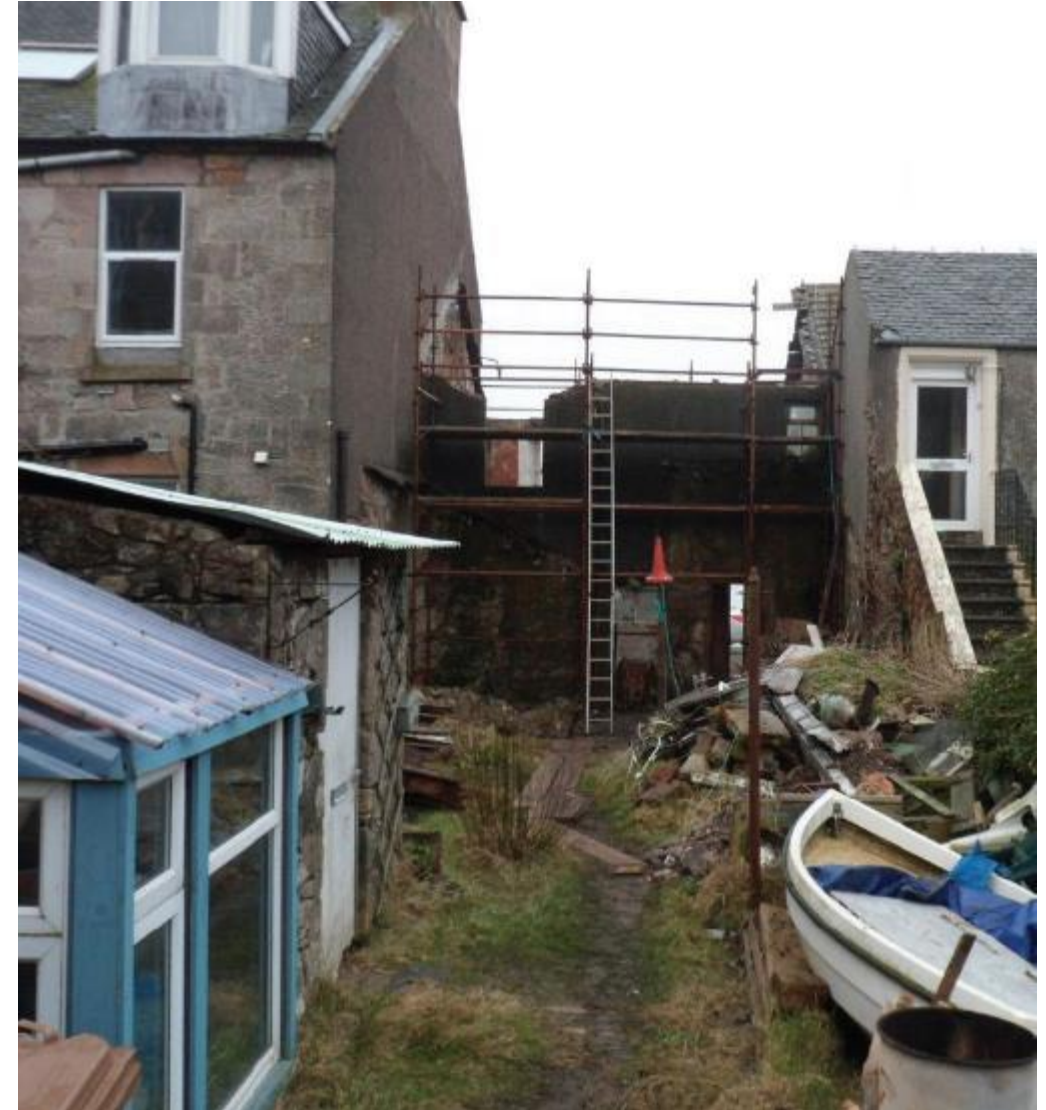
Enable or support the repair or redevelopment of vacant land and buildings.

To act as a catalyst to promote future investment from the private sector and external funding.

Safeguard the future of prominent buildings by indicating how high-quality conversion may be achieved.

Enable the Council to map development potential and barriers to development.

Stage 1 of the Fund is worth £200,000 and will allow property owners or community groups to carry out feasibility studies to identify potential options for the sites and their viability. The potential for further stages of the Fund to support project delivery following the feasibility stage will be informed by the outcome of Stage 1.



LEARNING FROM OTHERS

Vacant and derelict land is a problem in many of the former industrial areas of Scotland.

Here are some examples of the ways in which the problem has been tackled, bringing benefits to communities previously affected by vacant and derelict sites.

These examples are from the Vacant and Derelict Land Taskforce who have done extensive research into the problem in recent years. This research, along with other information on the problem of vacant and derelict land, is available on the Scottish Land Commission web site:

www.landcommission.gov.scot



Wishawhill Wood Pump Track

Creating a world-class community facility in an area of multiple deprivation was the work of a partnership between Central Scotland Green Network and the Wishaw MTB Club, with the long term vision of providing an outlet for positive engagement with young people and discouraging anti-social behaviour in the area.

Since opening in 2018, police and fire service call outs to the previously derelict site have dramatically reduced, and neighbours report a drop off of vandalism and anti-social behaviour. The Wishawhill Wood Pump Track facility has also brought the community together, and inspired the launch of a new social enterprise to support track based activities.



Baltic Street Adventure Playground

Recognising the demand for a safe outdoor space to play for children in one of Scotland's most deprived areas, an arts and architecture-led project set out to create the Baltic Street Adventure Playground in Glasgow.

Collaborating with the community, they formed a Community Interest Company, took over a plot of derelict land, and created a facility that has become a cornerstone of community life. Crucially, the supervised playground allows children to freely learn and develop at their own pace and in their own way without adult intervention or direction

the aim is to help break a cycle of chronic deprivation by investing in and trusting children, making space for them to grow, learn and thrive, and giving them respect and freedom they can act upon.



Raining Stairs

Once a thriving part of the medieval core of Inverness, this had become a complex derelict site in the heart of the city encompassing a 27m rise, suffering from poor access and attracting anti-social behaviour.

A series of aborted redevelopments over nearly 50 years had failed to bring the site back into use, until a collaborative approach of private, public and third sector interests working in partnership took the chance to increase the supply of desperately needed affordable housing. The close working relationship was critical to the success of the project, which now boasts 16 new homes available on a mix of affordable and mid-market rents, as well as providing an attractive pedestrian link within the town centre.