

Denny

Town Centre Regeneration Update from Falkirk Council

Oct/Nov2011

Denny Moving Forward

Denny's town centre will be transformed with plans for a £6.5m redevelopment package agreed earlier this month by Falkirk Council.

This major project will see new shops, a library, a town square and additional parking delivered as quickly as possible. The project will proceed despite the fragile economic conditions faced globally and across the UK. It will see the complete demolition of the Church Walk blocks, work on which started in August this year.

Last year the Council agreed to progress the delivery of the Denny Regeneration Project with its development partner, Henry Boot Developments Ltd. However this project is now ended as, despite extensive marketing efforts,

Henry Boot were unable to attract a major food retailer, needed to help deliver the scheme. As a result the Council will push ahead with the regeneration. With a strong architectural design record, the Council will build the first phase and market other sites as the scheme progresses.

Cllr Craig Martin, Leader of Falkirk Council, said: 'With the UK commercial property values down by 43 percent since 2007 and consumer spending weakened as people are worried about jobs and income, it's no surprise that many projects are no longer viable. That is why many projects throughout Scotland have been halted as the global recession bites. We worked hard with Henry Boot to deliver this scheme and it is unfortunate that they were unable to progress their plan.

'As a result, Falkirk Council will take it forward. We want to gauge the town's opinion as fully as possible and to this end have organised a wide ranging consultation that will allow people to express how they want to see their town centre transformed. Once we have your opinion we can incorporate this in preparing our application for planning consent.

'We are holding events to involve the public in finalising the next steps of the regeneration. People will have the opportunity to see our plans and comment on the details prior to the planning application being lodged. We will keep people posted on our progress through local media, our website, updates to the Community Council and to elected representatives.'



What the Council Agreed To Do

At its meeting on 5th October Falkirk Council was faced with two options in taking Denny's redevelopment forward.

Option One was its existing agreement with Henry Boot to progress the masterplan supported by the community through consultation in 2010. However this could not be progressed until commitment was received from a foodstore operator. Despite expressions of interest, this has not yet materialised. Henry Boot also made an offer to the Council that it would build a foodstore in advance if the Council would fund this property. The Council declined to do this due to the significant costs involved and concern that the foodstore design would not meet occupier's needs.

Option Two is a Falkirk Council led scheme and commits to delivery of a first phase of development incorporating a new library, and nine units for local retailers. In addition the Council would complete a new car-park, town square and other public realm work for the overall site. This will leave two development sites which will be marketed to attract private sector interest in other shops and a foodstore.

The Council intends to proceed with the second option and is consulting with the community prior to commencing the planning application process. The feedback from the consultation process will be reported to Falkirk Council on the 7th December.

How the Scheme will Progress

The Council's new £6.5m plans include:

2011-13

- Consult on the Council's new regeneration plans
- Secure planning approval for the new scheme
- Complete the acquisitions (9 interests to acquire, if necessary by CPO)
- Further demolition of remaining Church Walk blocks
- Marketing of the remainder of the site to other interests (including foodstore operators).

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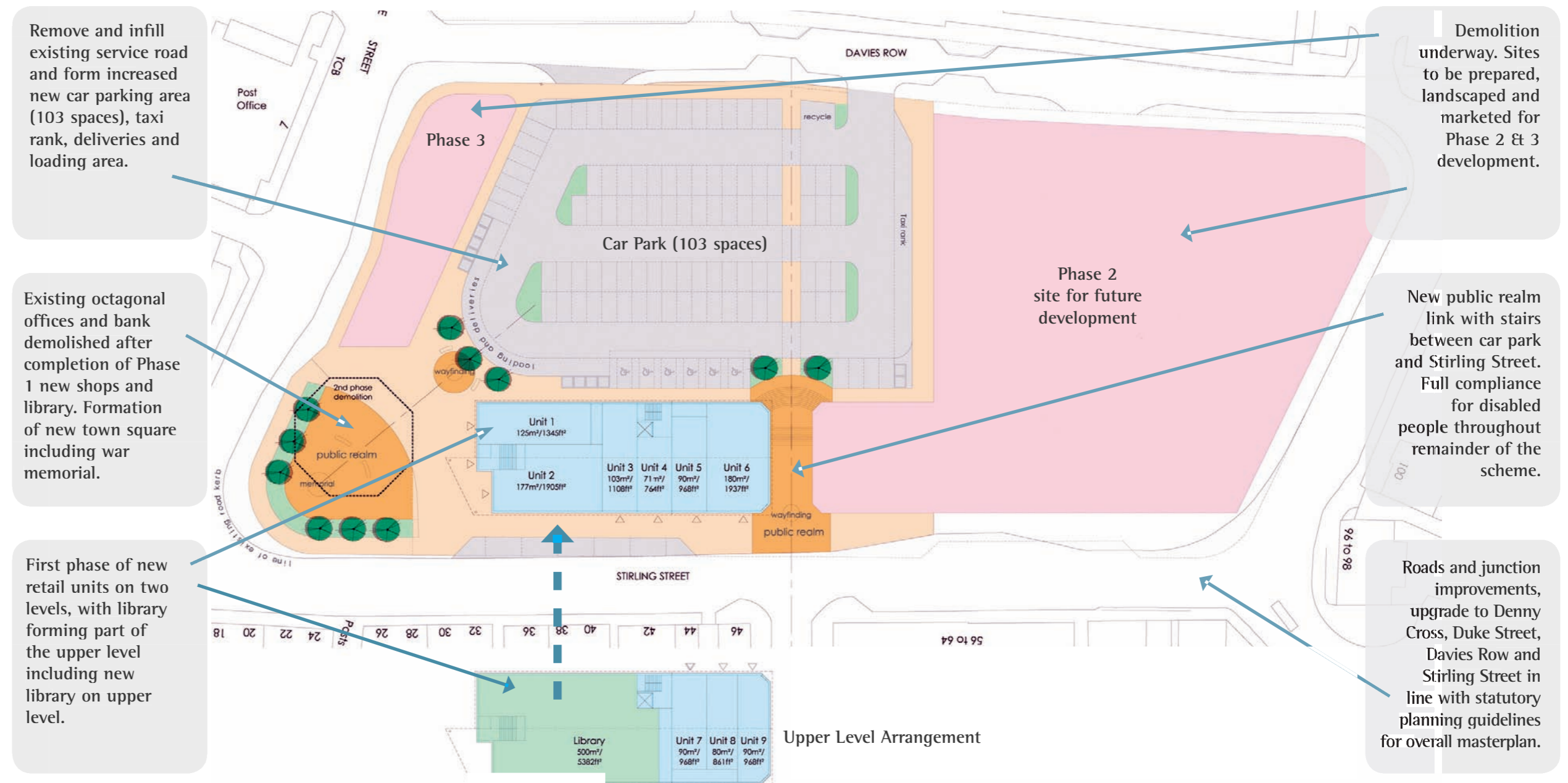
- Construction of first phase on Stirling Street, accommodating retailers and a library
- Demolition of bank building and creation of new town square.
- Improvements to parking and footways
- Demolition of octagonal offices and bank building
- Creation of a new town square and war memorial.

Demolition has Started

Denny town centre's regeneration is well underway with local firm Central Demolition of Bonnybridge appointed to pull down two of the blocks earmarked for demolition as part of the regeneration plans for the area.

The partial demolition of block 'A' (opposite the town's Post Office) started on 15th August with work on removing block 'D' starting in January 2012.

There will be some disruption to traffic in and around the Duke Street and Davies Row areas but temporary arrangements to give continued access for cars, taxis, retail deliveries and pedestrians to Davies Row car park, service areas and Broompark Community Centre will remain. Local schools have been contacted to ensure safe routes to schools are maintained.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q Is this a diluted regeneration scheme?

No, the Council's scheme meets market needs and elements such as the library, increased parking and the town square were agreed last year with the community. The new building will provide accommodation for nine shops and we are confident that interest will come forward in the development sites.

Q Why are Henry Boot no longer involved?

Delivery of the town centre project was severely dented by the recession. The Council and Henry Boot worked hard to deliver the project, however market uncertainty has continued and a foodstore operator was not secured for the site. Henry Boot were unable to submit a planning application on time and the agreement has now lapsed. The Council has therefore decided to press ahead with the scheme on its own.

Q When will work start?

Demolition work started in August this year on Block A and Block D is scheduled to come down in the New Year. Work will start as soon as planning approval is gained, properties acquired and a contractor appointed to complete the scheme.

Q Who will undertake the work?

The Council will have full control of the work on the first Phase. Its officials will design the Phase 1 works and the masterplan for the site. The Council has experience of delivering many projects of this scale including its Secondary School programme, major road projects, new Council housing and regeneration at Stenhousemuir, Bo'ness and Falkirk.

Q How will existing retailers be affected?

We have to work closely with Church Walk retailers and property owners to help deliver the scheme and we aim to acquire the buildings prior to demolition. We will relocate several of these businesses and will work with them to gain space in the new scheme.

Q Why is a foodstore needed in the scheme?

Almost 80 percent of people in Denny travel out of town for their food shopping and only a third consider Denny has a good range of shops. The Council wants to enhance the town centre and encourage local people into the town. A foodstore will help to attract people into the centre, retain expenditure, attract other shops and create new jobs.

Q Will the community really have the opportunity to change the plan?

Absolutely - the Council wants the scheme to happen as quickly as possible and wants you to help shape what is built. We provide regular updates at Community Council meetings and are working with Denny Town Centre Development Group, which includes Community Council, business and other local organisations. People are welcome to come along to the drop-in events being held at each stage of the project.

Have Your Say

Consultation Arrangements on the Denny Town Centre Plans

Stage 1 - The Council's Proposals

- Communicate the Council's decision and approach to delivery of the scheme
- Information on website and newsletter to all residents
- **Three drop-in days at Denny Community Education Centre on 1st, 2nd & 3rd November (2pm - 8pm) to present the Council's plans and provide the opportunity for comment**
- 7 December: Feedback to Falkirk Council on the Stage 1 consultation.

Stage 2 - The Planning Process Commences

- **November:** Preparation of design brief, commission technical studies and prepare all detailed plans and information required to submit an outline masterplan and detailed planning application
- **December:** Submission of Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) outlining statutory consultation proposals
- **December:** Leaflet to all Denny residents providing feedback from Stage 1 and inviting people to the next drop-in event with more details of the plans for the town centre redevelopment
- **January:** Two day drop-in days presenting detailed drawings of the town square, building perspectives and material finishes, inviting further comments
- **February:** Newsletter to all residents identifying detailed proposals and delivery timescales. Further opportunity to comment through a survey questionnaire.

Stage 3 - Submission of Planning Application

- Planning application and supporting documentation finalised
- Outline and detailed planning application submitted to Falkirk Council - with final opportunity for comment
- Report on planning application to Planning Committee with feedback on consultation
- There will also be further opportunities to comment on the plans for phases 2 & 3 of the scheme as they come forward.

Consultation with the local community has been carried out at every stage in the regeneration project to date. We want to ensure you have every opportunity to learn more about the project and put forward your views.

Call	01324 590973
Contact	jacquie.mcarthur@falkirk.gov.uk
Click	Information available at www.falkirk.gov.uk/dennyregen
Come Along	to the drop in days at Denny Community Education Centre; be kept updated at the electronic signage points at Carronbank House and Denny Library
Comment	Using the survey, at drop-in event days on 1, 2 & 3 November and again in January