

KIRKWALL TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVE

Pre-submission consultation - 11th February 2014




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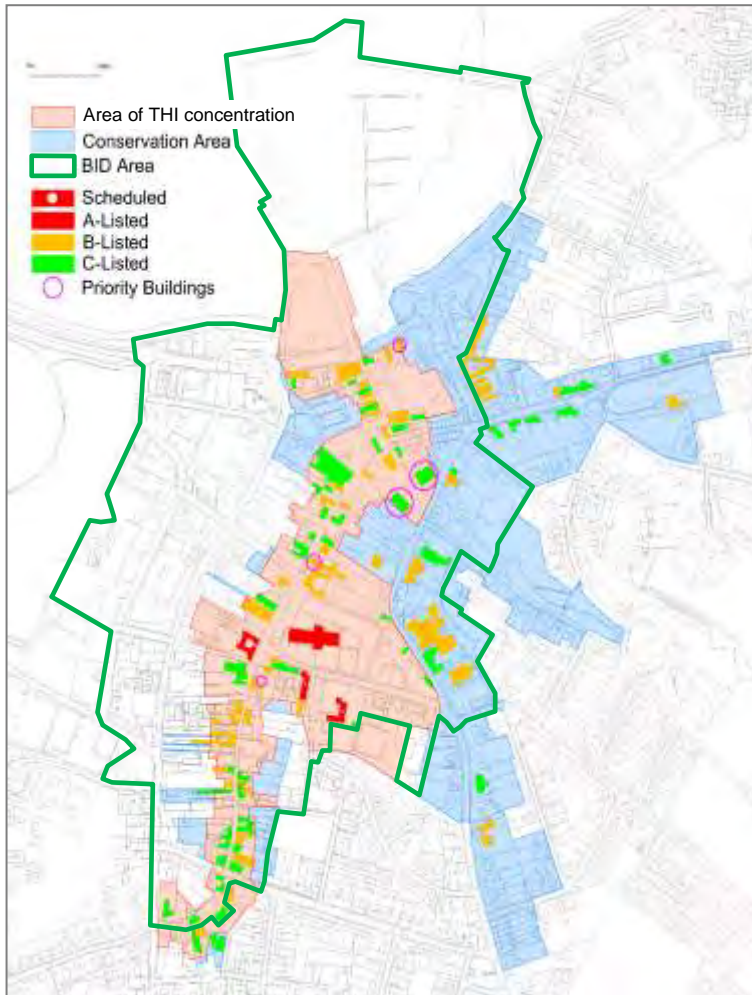
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KIRKWALL TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION INITIATIVES



REGENERATING KIRKWALL'S TOWN CENTRE

- **Business Improvement District**
The Business Improvement District is a private-sector initiative supported by OIC, which brings together local businesses to stimulate the town centre.
- **OIC Placemaking Strategy**
Alongside training and policy reviews, this includes targeted projects at Kirkwall Harbour, Central West Kirkwall (Junction Road/former Jewson's site) and Broad Street.
- **Kirkwall THI**
Funded by OIC, Historic Scotland and the Heritage Lottery Fund (not confirmed), this would provide over £3m of grants for restoration, public realm improvements and property owners within the Conservation Area.



WHY A THI IN KIRKWALL?

UNIQUE HISTORY

Kirkwall gains its name from the Old Norse meaning Church on the Bay and displays characteristics common to medieval settlements including a distinct burgh plot system and a number of key civic-scale buildings such as the twelfth century Cathedral of St Magnus, constructed by the masons who built Durham Cathedral which dominates the skyline of Kirkwall; and the Earl's and Bishop's Palaces at the heart of the city.



WHY A THI IN KIRKWALL?



Kirkwall has many positive attributes to build on including historical buildings, attractive dense urban pattern, diversity of independent shops, a balance between national chains and local shops, and a wide range of service provision.

The historic spine of the settlement focuses upon the main street, which was originally the Medieval shoreline. Buildings are orientated with their gables toward the street on long thin plots with a clear vertical emphasis to their form and to the form of their fenestration.

The conservation area includes a section of land to the west of the Main Street which was reclaimed in the later medieval period.

In addition to the commercial and residential properties surrounding the historic core of Kirkwall, the conservation area also includes the original Stevenson pier/harbour area, which acts as the gateway to the town by many visitors from cruise ships each year.



WHY A THI IN KIRKWALL?



REGENERATION ISSUES

- Kirkwall is central to Orkney's economic and community life
- The success of Kirkwall's town centre is pivotal to Orkney's future
- Historical buildings in need of repair and refurbishment
- Vacant properties with the potential for re-use and re-invention
- Retail businesses facing complex challenges (eg. changes in retailing patterns, rise in internet shopping, recession, constraints on bank lending, etc)
- The financial fragility of some retail businesses (eg. vacant shops, properties for sale, etc)
- opportunities exist to regenerate the town centre of Kirkwall and create an improved environment and an improved area to live, work and visit.



WHY A THI IN KIRKWALL? - ISSUES



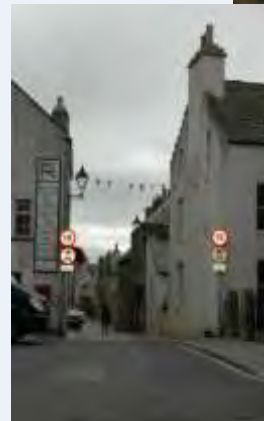
Harbour & Harbour Front
Poor environment, unwelcoming
- and entrance to town poor



Fragile Economy
Vacant premises



Bridge Street
First impressions of the town -
for some.



Victoria Street
Not obvious to visitors –
anonymous shops



What is a Townscape Heritage Initiative? - Principal Aims



A scheme established by the Heritage Lottery Fund to give substantial grants to historic towns to invest in:

➤ Conservation areas:

preserve & enhance character & appearance

➤ Repair & reinstatement:

authentic details/traditional materials

➤ Historic buildings:

bring back into appropriate & sustainable use

➤ Training opportunities:

heritage skills & community participation

➤ Improve quality of life:

for those who live, work or visit



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VISION AND AIMS OF THE THI



The underpinning regeneration aims of the vision are:

- To re-invigorate Kirkwall's identity and unique 'small is beautiful' location in the Northern Isles whilst raising aspirations and a sense of pride in the Conservation Area;
- To promote the value of its cultural, social and economic heritage for the benefit of all who live in Kirkwall, work in Kirkwall, or visit Kirkwall – including other Orkney residents and visitors to Orkney.



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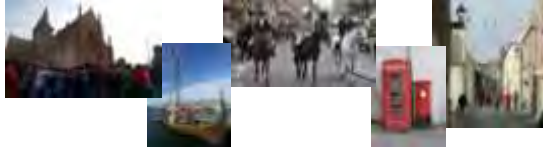


KIRKWALL THI : 5 KEY REGENERATION THEMES

THEME 1 : INVESTING IN THE BUILT HERITAGE



THEME 2 : IDENTITY AND PLACE-MAKING



THEME 3 : ENHANCING THE TOWN CENTRE OFFER



THEME 4 : DELIVERING TRAINING AND INTERPRETATION



THEME 5 : INVESTING IN CO-OPERATION





THEME 1 INVESTING IN THE BUILT HERITAGE – PRIORITY



Carnegie Free Library

This is an important public building in the heart of Kirkwall and its condition is a serious detriment to the character of the town centre and the Conservation Area.



Bridge Street Wynd

The building is at risk – it requires investment to repair the historic fabric, restore detail and bring the building into greater use.



60 Albert Street

The building is at risk – it requires investment to repair the historic fabric and restore detail.



10a Victoria Street

The building is at risk – it requires investment to repair the historic fabric and bring the building back into use.



60-62 Victoria Street

The building presents an opportunity to carry out an exemplary restoration in a prominent location, preserving original fabric and improving a key view within the Conservation Area

KIRKWALL THI – STRATEGY



The Store



The former Library



60 Albert Street/2 Broad Street



10a Victoria Street



62-64 Victoria St



Broad Street



STRATEGY FOR THE THI

THI grants benefit whole THI area, but

- Bridge Street area as a focus
- Victoria Street as a focus
- Place-making/public realm at Broad Street and link to Victoria Street as a priority



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Broad Street



THEME 2 IDENTITY AND PLACE-MAKING



a



b



c

Broad Street and Cathedral Precincts

THEME 2 IDENTITY AND PLACE-MAKING



a



b



c

Broad Street and Cathedral Precincts



THEME 2 IDENTITY AND PLACE-MAKING



**Broad Street , Palace Road
and Cathedral Precincts**



THEME 2 IDENTITY AND PLACE-MAKING



Smaller projects - social spaces, meeting points





THEME 3

ENHANCING THE TOWN CENTRE OFFER

The town centre as a whole is a “multi-million £ business”. In the current business environment with its ever quickening pace – to stand still is to slide backwards.

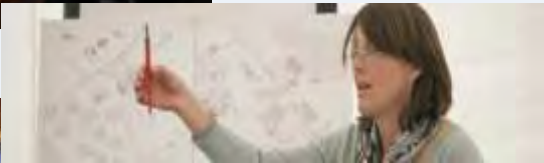
Improving and enhancing the built heritage, public realm and civic amenities will support business performance and growth through:

- Generating additional spending (by local residents and visitors) through encouraging additional/repeat visits, and longer stays
- Making the most of events and festivals relating to the town centre
- Promoting increased “foot fall - additional spending will improve business performance and encourage job retention and the creation of new job opportunities
- Encouraging businesses to invest in their properties
- Acting as a catalyst for other types of business investment that complements investment in the physical fabric of properties





THEME 4 TRAINING & INTERPRETATION



THI TRAINING PLAN

Developing a Training programme to:

- Increase awareness and understanding of Kirkwall's built heritage
- Understanding the evolution of Kirkwall including scanning the Cathedral (outwith the common fund) and new visitor offering
- Provide the construction skills needed to implement the THI
- Improve retail business skills to help complement the investment in the built environment and improve business performance
- Develop co-ordinated marketing for business and craft based enterprises
- Improve tourism training linked to the built heritage and history of Kirkwall to help enrich visitors' experience of the town
- The programme will embed skills for the future and secure long term benefits for Orkney



THEME 4 TRAINING & INTERPRETATION

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME

- Community engagement: volunteers, schools, youth, 'friends' group, open days & fun events.
- Learning about & understanding the conservation area evolution: living/hidden history tours; trained local guides & apps.
- Understanding the evolution of Kirkwall including scanning the Cathedral (outwith the common fund) and new visitor offering
- Working with other groups: eg. Local History Society
- Training for tourist guides and volunteers
- Awareness raising and educational activities for school students (primary and secondary)
- Development of a range of town centre heritage interpretation materials (eg. downloadable apps, leaflets, information boards, etc)
- Organisation of information events

Explore Stromness with our I-SPY trail map





THEME 5 INVESTING IN CO-OPERATION



INVESTING IN CO-OPERATION

The THI is based on co-operation between the THI team and a wide range of individuals and organisations; these include:

- Property owners
- Property tenants
- Kirkwall and St. Ola Community Council
- Kirkwall BID
- The voluntary sector
- Community and other civic groups
- The Society of the Friends of St Magnus Cathedral
- And, very importantly, the Programme's funders : Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic Scotland and Orkney Islands Council

KIRKWALL THI – OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS



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CREATION OF A STRONGER MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY AND FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE TOWN CENTRE

Owners & Community

- Grants to repair & restore authentic details / materials: buildings into use
- Advice & assistance appropriate conservation methods
- ‘Conservation Area Maintenance Guide’ & maintenance workshops - Increase community involvement in maintaining the Conservation Area.

Businesses

- Creation of an improved environment which will enhance retail business performance and promote growth
- Grants, advice & assistance to repair & restore
- Shop fronts / signage & bring historic buildings into appropriate use
- Enhancement of business skills to support and complement the investment in the built fabric
- New products & services focusing on quality & specialty niches

KIRKWALL THI – OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS



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CREATION OF A STRONGER MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY AND FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE TOWN CENTRE

Local people & Visitors

- An improved public realm that will enhance the town centre's civic amenity for residents and visitors alike
- Creation of a more attractive and vibrant place for local people and visitors
- Enable visitors to understand, learn about, appreciate & enjoy local heritage
- Encourage visitors to experience the specialist independent shops
- Encourage visitors to experience the whole town centre
- Spend more time/money in historic Kirkwall town centre
- Benefit from improved 'venues' & targeted calendar of events & festivals.