Scottish Water Consultation Response
August 2020

Town Centre Planning Review Group – call for evidence

Overview

General Comments
Scottish Water has a crucial purpose – at the heart of our country – to support a flourishing Scotland through being trusted to care for the water on which Scotland depends. We seek to transform our activities to reach net zero emissions five years ahead of national 2045 targets – and go beyond. Every day we connect new houses and businesses to our water and waste water networks across Scotland. This activity, including in our town centres, is a vital component in ensuring Scotland has a prosperous and inclusive economy. Our recently published 25-year strategic plan "A sustainable future together" focuses on how we will achieve three strategic outcomes that are aligned with our role in achieving Scotland's ambitious Water Sector Vision: Service excellence, beyond net zero emissions and great value and financial sustainability. The Strategic Plan can be found here: https://www.scottishwater.co.uk/help-and-resources/document-hub/key-publications/strategic-plan Within our Strategic Plan we set out how we will enhance the natural environment, reduce the water we take from the natural environment and use our land and assets to increase biodiversity, planting trees, restoring peatlands and creating better places to live. We will work with the Scottish Government, regulators, and developers to secure policy and planning approaches that achieve a sustainable urban drainage landscape, increase the resilience of our water supplies and enhance urban living and biodiversity. In our responses to the questions below, we have highlighted areas where the Town Centre Action Plan can support us to achieve our commitments while meeting the Review's own objective to revitalise and renew town centres.

Detailed Response

Specific Comments

1	What are the challenges and opportunities facing town centres in Scotland and how should these be addressed?
Redevelopment of town centres presents an ideal opportunity to consider the sustainable management of surface water and improve resilience against the effects of climate change. The physical built environment of town centres presents a significant challenge to the successful and sustainable re-development of these brownfield spaces. Most town centres in Scotland have a network of combined sewer infrastructure with limited surface water separation in place and often no immediate watercourses available for discharge in the nearby locale. Scottish Water's approach to sustainability, through the Storm Water Management Strategy, determines that no more connections for surface water will be made to the combined network and opportunities should be explored to remove existing surface water from the network where possible. When considering redevelopment of town centre areas design of surface water drainage	

options must be taken as early as possible in the planning process and Scottish Water would welcome involvement.	
2	What are the barriers to developing town centres suitable for their communities and how can these be removed?
Scottish Water has no comment	
3	To what extent has the Town Centre Action Plan (TCAP) delivered against its stated ambitions? In what areas has delivery been successful? In what areas is there room for progress and/or barriers to overcome?
Scottish Water has no comment	
4	To what extent are the stated objectives and policy challenges TCAP seeks to address relevant for the new challenges for our towns?
Scottish Water has no comment	
5	If TCAP were to be revised, what additional or replacement areas and objectives would you recommend should be included and how should these be addressed?
Scottish Water has no comment	
6	Can you provide details and contacts of any examples of excellent practice in town centres which you believe have wider potential?
Scottish Water has no comment	
7	Is there anything else you would like to add?

Surface Water management

Surface water and foul drainage infrastructure is essential in our town centres. The sustainable management of surface water requires careful consideration in our town centres to adapt to the effects of climate change.

As highlighted within our Strategic Plan we intend to lead the transformation of the management of surface water, working in partnership with the Scottish Government, local authorities, SEPA, house builders and communities. The Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Partnership is a good example of how this partnership work can result in the effective and sustainable management of rainfall to end uncontrolled flooding and improve water quality.

We have recently launched our Storm Water Management Strategy which aims to improve, protect and recover the hydraulic capacity of the sewer system and can be summarised as:

1. Preventing new surface water from entering the existing combined sewer network.
2. Working with stakeholders to remove and reduce existing storm water from sewers by preventing it from entering the network.
3. Supporting continued economic growth for all stakeholders.
4. Restricting existing surface water discharge into the combined sewer network. This will result in a long-term reduction in carbon emissions, as we reduce the need for pumping

and unnecessary treatment processes of surface water. It will also reduce flood risk for existing customers and support economic development across Scotland by providing additional capacity in our system.

The re-development of town centres presents a great opportunity to re-evaluate surface water management and the potential for retro-fitting Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems. Increasing green areas reduces flood risk and to improve resilience against increasingly frequent storm events. Well designed and connected blue-green corridors have added place-making attributes, by providing accessible green spaces/networks to be enjoyed and used by communities, as well as enhancing biodiversity, amenity value and improving climate resilience.

A recent example of this is in Melbourne where a combination of storm water tanks, green roofs, green walls, and rain gardens have completely transformed public urban laneways into verdant sanctuaries in the heart of the city. https://www.evergreen.ca/blog/entry/five-blue-green-infrastructure-projects-making-a-splash/

In Scotland the Greater Easterhouse Green Infrastructure Project has created new greenspaces and enhanced those existing, by introducing surface water management features that will reduce the risks and impacts of flooding for the local area, and also downstream through the east end of Glasgow, whilst creating drainage capacity for housing regeneration. The project has created new and improved open space through an integrated green and blue network across Cranhill, Ruchazie and Blairtummock. https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/article/25392/Greater-Easterhouse-Green-Infrastructure-Project-Now-Complete

Water Efficiency

The nature of our water environment is changing with recent weather patterns resulting in increased pressure on drinking water supplies in some regions of Scotland. Inspiring our customers to use water wisely is one of the ways in which we will ensure that there is sufficient availability of source water that can be treated and supplied to our customers both now and in the future, even during more extreme droughts. Reducing the demand for water is also part of Scottish Water's road map to going beyond net zero by 2040. We would welcome consideration of measures to support reduced use of water within town centre redevelopments.

Low Carbon Energy and Transportation

The Town Centre Action Plan can support Scotland to achieve its net zero emissions target by enabling the provision of infrastructure that supports low carbon heat, electricity and transportation:

- Championing the transition to the electrification of transport by increasing the pace of deployment of electric vehicle charging points as well as considering infrastructure requirements that would support alternative fuel provision.
- Seeking out opportunities to implement local district heat networks when infrastructure is being installed or renewed.

Ensuring that any heating infrastructure put in place is future-proofed or easily adapted for linking in to low carbon heating sources such as bio gas/bio methane that is produced, for example, through the digestion of bio resource (sludge) or by recovering heat from wastewater. We have recently worked with Stirling Council to deliver the Stirling District Heat Network which uses heat from waste water technology alongside a combined heat and power engine to generate low carbon heat.

- End of Document -