

**Report To: The Planning Board**

**Date: 6th October 2010**

**Report By: Development & Building Standards Manager**

**Report No: 10/0236/IC  
Plan 10/10**

**Local Application Development**

**Contact Officer: Guy Phillips**

**Contact No: 01475 712422**

**Subject: Demolish existing facilities and rebuild, new gymnasium and new changing facilities at Swimming Pool, Albert Road, Gourock**

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The Gourock outdoor swimming pool is on the seaward side of Albert Road. To the north east the site is bound by the access road into the Kempock Street car park, to the south west by the beach and to the north west by the River Clyde. Flatted properties, some with business uses at ground floor level, lie opposite. A broad paved area, containing Gourock's War Memorial, lies in front of the pool. The pool is approximately 3.6 m below the pavement level on Albert Road. Twin, flat roofed kiosks provide the original customer accesses from the street, accessing a pool viewing platform. Steeply sloping steps lead down from each kiosk to the pool. Below the viewing deck are the pool's changing rooms, office and a gymnasium. A terraced seating area adjoins the northeast access steps. A grassed embankment extends from the south west flight of access steps. Forward of the changing rooms, office, gymnasium and grassed embankment are a patio area, children's pool and the main swimming pool. The customer kiosks are disused with access presently being taken via a secondary access adjacent to the Kempock Street car park. An approximately 2m high brick wall runs between and to either side of the two kiosks to separate the pool from the street.

## **PROPOSAL**

It is proposed to reconstruct and extend the poolside accommodation to provide new changing facilities and a gymnasium. The proposed changing facilities would extend over the existing terraced seating area. The proposed gymnasium would extend southeastwards over the grassed embankment. The existing steep stairs are replaced by a centrally located, single stair with a halfway landing. A viewing deck is retained over the proposed accommodation.

Disabled access is provided by a new lift accessed through the south east kiosk. Four disabled parking bays are provided on the paved area adjacent to the kiosk, accessed via a footway crossover from Albert Road. A disabled access ramp links between the two kiosks, providing access from the parking spaces to the disabled lift. The flat kiosk roofs extends forwards to provide shelter to the disabled access ramp.

All of the proposed poolside accommodation is screened from view by the existing boundary walling and kiosks at Albert Road.

The principal materials proposed are white coloured render and powder coated aluminium windows.

## **LOCAL PLAN POLICIES**

### **Policy SA4 Central Coastal Gourock**

Inverclyde Council, as Planning Authority, will support the development of sites within the Central Coastal Gourock Special Area, identified on the Proposals Map as SA4, subject to an agreed Masterplan.

Any Masterplan should take cognisance of the Central Gourock Development Strategy (1999) and the following mixed use planning policy framework.

### **Comprehensive Development**

The three key elements of the development framework for this area are the Gourock Pierhead development opportunity site; the public transport interchange; and the Kempock Street Relief Road.

The development of all three of these elements will be required to ensure the regeneration of Gourock town centre.

### **Land Uses**

The development of Gourock Pierhead will be required to include an integrated transport interchange, the Kempock Street Relief Road, improved highway access to the development opportunity sites and, provision for the Inverclyde Coastal Route.

In addition the following uses will be permitted:

- (a) Shops (Use Class 1) for food and non-food retail;
- (b) Food and Drink (Use Class 3) and Public House;
- (c) Hotel (Use Class 7);
- (d) Use as Residential flats; and
- (e) Visitor/Tourist facilities (Use Classes 10 or Class 11).

Development of the Gourock Bay/Admiralty Jetty area will be encouraged by permitting the following uses:

- (f) Hotel (Use Class 7);
- (g) Use as Residential flats; and
- (h) Sports/Leisure/Tourist facilities (Use Classes 10 or Class 11); and
- (i) Marina and related commercial development, including ancillary retail, restricted to the servicing of the above tourism, leisure and sports facilities.

### **Built Environment and Design**

Any scheme will be required to incorporate the following elements:

- (j) the retention and enhancement of views of the Firth of Clyde, the shoreline, loch entrances and hills from both across and within the Pierhead and from the adjacent shores, including open views across Cardwell Bay and Gourock Bay from Cove Road and Battery Park as identified in the 'Gourock Bay/Battery Park Study' 1991;
- (k) the provision of effective and quality pedestrian and cycle routes both through the site and as a waterfront esplanade, linking with Kempock Street, Kempock Place, Shore Street and Cardwell Road and, as part of the proposed Inverclyde Coastal Route, to Ashton Promenade and Cove Road;
- (l) a quality of urban design, detail and materials which reflects and complements the urban character of this prominent coastal location in Gourock Town Centre;
- (m) an attractive area of open space at the Pierhead, possibly as part of a harbour/pier feature; and
- (n) a pedestrian priority and environmental improvement scheme for Kempock Street and Kempock Place.

## Access

Highways access to the area for vehicles should be from:

- (o) a western access at Albert Road/Kempock Street as the western end of the Kempock Street Relief Road;
- (p) a northern access at Kempock Street/Kempock Place/Station Road, at the eastern end of the Kempock Street Relief Road, to serve the major development opportunity at Gourrock Pierhead;
- (q) a central access at John Street/Shore Street to serve the integrated transport interchange and site; and
- (r) a southern access from Tarbet Street to serve the Gourrock Bay development area.

## CONSULTATIONS

**Head of Safer and Inclusive Communities** - No objections.

**Head of Environmental and Commercial Services** - No objections.

## PUBLICITY

The application was advertised in the Greenock Telegraph on 20th August 2010 as there are no premises on neighbouring land.

## SITE NOTICES

The nature of the proposal did not require a site notice.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

One letter of objection has been received.

The objector is critical of the architectural detailing of the submitted design and is concerned that the Art Deco character of the pool will be lost.

## ASSESSMENT

The material considerations in the determination of this planning application are the Local Plan, the consultation responses and the letter of objection.

The retention and upgrading of Gourrock Pool, which is a superb and valuable local asset, is wholly compatible with the terms of the Local Plan. While proposals for the redevelopment of Gourrock remain unresolved, there is nothing in this proposal to prejudice redevelopment.

Addressing the specifics of the proposal, I note there are no objections from the Head of Safer & Inclusive Communities on public health grounds or from the Head of Environmental & Consumer Services on road safety grounds.

While I appreciate the concern over the loss of some traditional features, the architects were faced with health and safety constraints and the desire to provide level disabled access throughout the facility. Structural surveys put the roof terrace and art deco entrance kiosks out of bounds to the public and the retention of these features was considered by the applicant but found to be unviable.

The decision to reinterpret the pool in a way that acknowledges the original design but adopts a modernist approach is supported.

Overall, I consider the proposal to be a welcome investment in a key leisure facility in Gourrock Town centre that accords with the aims of the Local Plan.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the application be granted subject to conditions.

### Conditions

1. No development shall commence until samples of all external materials have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority: development thereafter shall proceed utilising the approved materials, unless the Planning Authority gives its prior written approval to any alternatives.

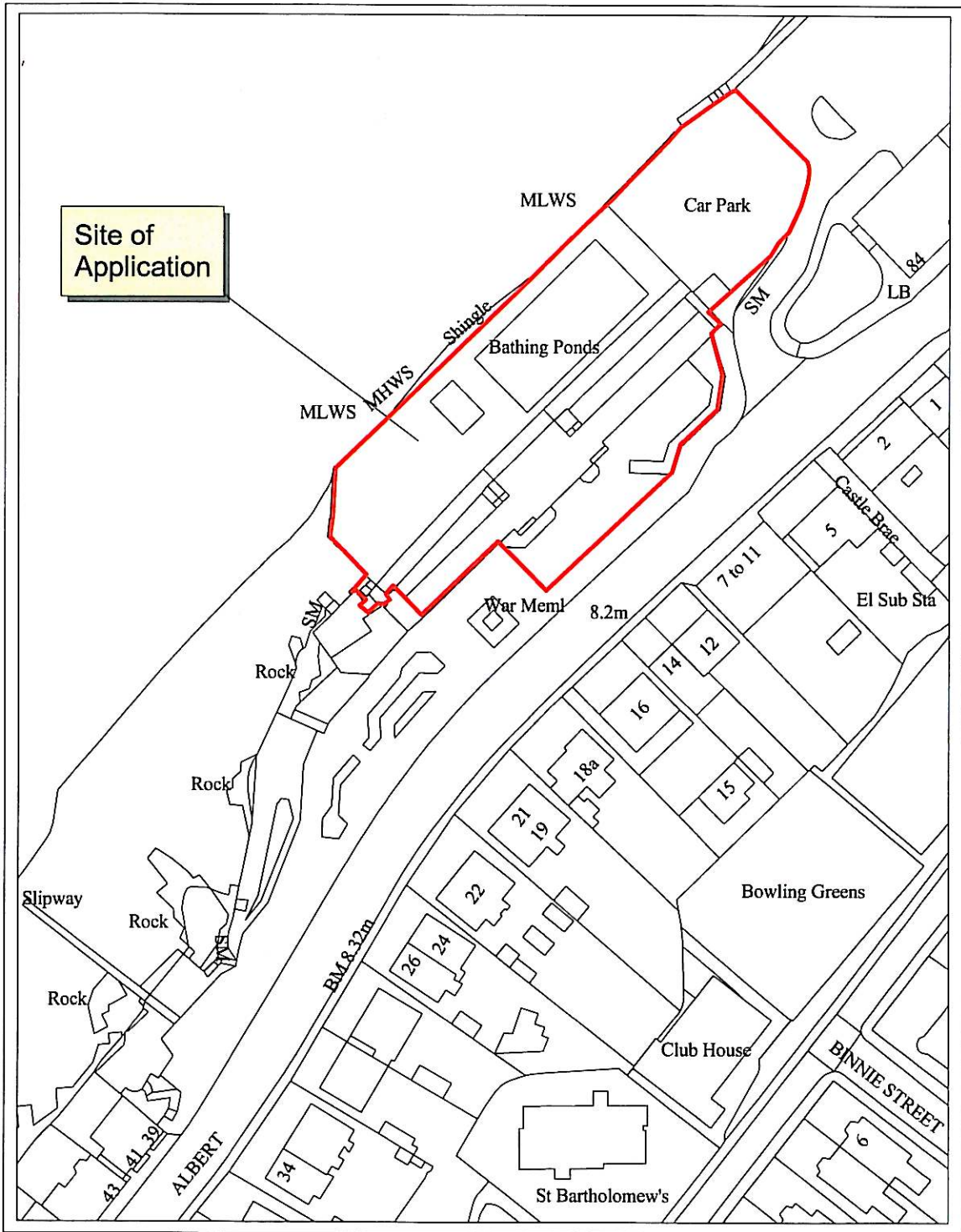
### Reasons

1. To ensure the use of finishing materials appropriate to the building.

Nicholas McLaren  
Development and Building Standards Manager

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. Application form
2. Application plans
3. Inverclyde Local Plan
4. Consultation responses



Drawing No. 10/00236/IC Swimming Pool, Albert Road, Gourrock

Drawn by: JML

Date: 16:09:10



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