***APPENDIX 1***

**Executive Summary**

Executive Summary of the proposals endorsed by the Tranent Town Centre Working Group and considerations moving forward

This executive summary seeks to verify that the report meets the key aims and objectives set out in our tender document but more importantly reflects the needs and aspirations of our local residents and our wider communities who input to this process. The summary will also clarify what happens next.

**Principles for town centre regeneration in Tranent**

The charrette outcomes formulated a strategic set of principles for the town centre. The principles that were established for the regeneration of Tranent Town Centre are:

1. **Improving the function of traffic in High Street:**

Traffic flow and volume acts as a constraint on movement through the town, but also on the quality of environment that the town centre can offer to local businesses and people who are using them, and the quality of centrally located public spaces.

1. **Better pedestrian spaces, paths and crossings:**

Enhancing the pedestrian experience would serve to better connect the town centre to other parts of Tranent, particularly the areas immediately north and south of the High Street which have got a number of good facilities. Crossing Street can be difficult in parts when traffic is busy and improving this would improve the safety of the street and aid movement.

1. **A new square and a sense of a ‘heart’:**

A quality space in the centre of Tranent that can function as the ‘heart’ of civic and community events, and play an important social role in the town was identified as important.

1. **A community centre / performance venue:**

Tranent is a local hub, yet lacks its own community centre that can accommodate different groups, performances and other events.

1. **Better ‘back side’ links and spaces behind the High Street:**

Tranent has a very good network of lanes and smaller pedestrian links. However, the quality and lack of sense of safety means that these are not used as well as they could be. Upgrading these areas would better connect lots areas, and also enhance one of the unique and ‘fun’ aspects of Tranent, discovering the lanes and routes that can be taken on them.

1. **Make much more of the Tranent heritage and identity**:

Tranent has a distinctive heritage, in particular the transition from an agricultural to an industrial place. Its coal-mining legacy is alive in many residents today who either worked mines themselves, or their families did. This close connection creates an opportunity to make more of the town’s heritage and to explore it further, back to Tranent Tower and the role that this may have played in the area.

1. **Maintain and increase the variety of shops and cafes:**

Tranent is faring better than many Scottish towns of comparable size and proximity to large urban areas, however it still has a lack of variety on the High Street with many bookmakers and takeaway shops. Many felt there was scope for a greater variety to cater for local people without them having to travel to Edinburgh to purchase clothes and shoes, an often-cited example during the charrette.

1. **Parking that facilitates a vibrant town centre:**

Parking is an issue in Tranent, with much discussion on whether this is from under-provision of parking or the wrong parking in the wrong place with the wrong regime. A new management regime that discouraged long-stay parking and encouraged higher turnover would create space for people who were using the shops and facilities in the town centre. In addition to this signage to let people know where there was available parking behind the High Street, with improved pedestrian links from these parking areas would be beneficial.

1. **A mechanism to draw all of these elements together:**

The community facing elements would need a mechanism to pull together the many facets of the plan to regenerate Tranent town centre. In particular this relates to the development of a community hall, which would need a vehicle that was able to bid for and capture funding. The plan is principally about the sum of multiple small to medium scale improvements that will have a greater impact than a single ‘big ticket’ redevelopment could.

**Key Charrette Recommendations**

The outcomes from the main charrette event were further refined for a follow-up event on 30 April. These were divided into thematic or geographic projects, with an overarching framework to tie all of the elements together to deliver on the strategic vision above.

**A new civic square:**

An urban design analysis of the options that were brought forward at the charrette including options for the former library buildings. Creating a connection between Loch Road and Well Wynd creates an opportunity for a one-way system in the town centre, which has to be balanced against the options that look to calm two-way traffic in High Street and offer a larger space at Civic Square. The implications of traffic reduction measures beyond the town centre must also be considered in the analysis of the civic square options. Key to all of the options is the development and redevelopment of buildings in the area with active and accessible ground floors that will animate and enliven the area.

**Improving High Street:**

The recommended approach for High Street is based on shared space concepts that modify driver behaviour allowing pedestrians to be in greater control of the town centre environment. This begins with vehicle attenuation zones at either end of High Street that physically signal to drivers that they are entering an area with a different set of ‘rules’. Vehicle lanes are narrowed through widening the pavements and introducing a median strip, again to slow down drivers. Benefits to pedestrians include crossing points that are pedestrian priority areas that have been aligned with desire line routes from the areas to the north and south of High Street. Wider pavements create more space and freedom for movement. Benefits for town centre business are that this retains traffic and parking (although this may be slightly reduced), improving the pedestrian environment encouraging people to spend more time in the town centre and wider pavements creating the opportunity for outdoor seating or displays.

**Small spaces around High Street:**

There are a number of smaller spaces in the town centre, particularly around key buildings, that could be improved to tie together High Street and the numerous civic assets to the north and south of the main street. Creating social spaces enhances access to these facilities, creates an opportunity to bring activity from inside these venues outside and signals that these are significant places within the town centre.

**Loch Road and the lanes:**

There are a number of key facilities and buildings on Loch Road that appear to exist and function separately from the town centre in spite of the proximity between these and the main street. A radical approach to a reconnection would be through realigning Loch Road to bring the frontages of the Loch Centre and Health Centre closer to the street, and create a residential development site that would complete the urban grain of the area. This would be further enhanced with the social spaces outside these and other buildings connecting to improved lanes connecting to High Street. On the north side of High Street, there is an opportunity to claim back space from the rear gardens of properties to create a wider ‘backside’ lane. Widening this lane would improve the feeling of safety with increased sightlines, improved lighting and the opportunity for public art and planting to make this important pedestrian route feel useable. This is particularly significant as this lane connects several car parks to the main street.

**A new park and car park:**

The currently underused green space that sits between the George Johnstone Centre and the new care home/day centre was recognised as a site that has a number of community-facing facilities and proposed facilities around it. Recreating this space as a park with multiple uses would tie the area together in a more coherent fashion. Uses in the park could include a skate park, community growing spaces and allotments and informal social green space.

The area of green space at Balfour’s Square was identified as an opportunity to create a car park that would serve the town centre with a connection through the ‘Backside’ lanes as well as Forester’s Park, the venue for Tranent Juniors Football Club.

**Improving the historic environment:**

Physically improving the historic environment includes three key moves. The first is to capitalise on the Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) funding that was secured by East Lothian Council for Tranent’s conservation area. The monies could be used for shop front improvements on High Street, positively changing the feel of the town centre. Secondly the redevelopment of Fa’side Lodge creates an opportunity to recreate some of the historic urban grain in this part of Tranent, with a residential development of 1 – 2 storey scale and a contemporary twist on the architectural type seen in this part of Tranent. The development would be closer to the street, adhering to historic convention in the area. The third move, is the more ambitious restoration of Tranent Tower to act either as a central location for interpretation of Tranent’s story or as tourist accommodation. Access to the tower is complex and could be taken either from Church Street or through Sandersons Wynd, dependent on the final use of the restored property. These physical improvements could be complemented with improved interpretation of Tranent’s story particularly the Tranent role played in the period of transition from an agricultural to industrial economy.

**Traffic management and movement:**

Peter Brett Associates considered the implications for Tranent from transport and economic perspectives. In terms of traffic, there are longer-term aspirations for traffic movement around Tranent, particularly beyond the town centre and related to future development. Roads that functionally bypass the town centre will have a positive effect in reducing non-user traffic.

There are several approaches that are discussed that have implications.

*Approach 1 –* New Connections around the Town: longer term developments could provide alternative routes to travelling directly through the town centre, reducing the volume and type of traffic (HGVs etc.)

*Approach 2 –* Active Travel Initiatives: improved local walking and cycling routes and an active travel campaign to encourage a modal shift from car to walking and cycling for local journeys to town centre facilities. This would relieve pressure on the road network and town centre parking.

*Approach 3 –* High Street Traffic Calming: Traffic engineering measures could be introduced to slow traffic on the High Street and encourage heavier vehicles to take an alternative route along the A1, bypassing the town altogether. This could involve some reallocation of road space away from vehicular traffic to pedestrians and active travel modes. However this could lead to significant congestion in the absence of alternative through routes from the south and east in particular.

*Approach 4 –* Town Centre One-way System: A one-way system with traffic running from Church Street to Ormiston Road on High Street and returning via Loch Road (this would remain 2-way to the new link road) and through Civic Square would allow for the reallocation of road space for pedestrians on High Street.

The traffic issues surrounding Tranent High Street have been recognised in East Lothian Council’s current Main Issues Report (2014). A transport modelling exercise is planned to look at both the strategic and local traffic impacts of the full extent of the development plan allocations.

It is felt that this modelling exercise can develop these options in detail using a mix of micro simulation and strategic transport modelling. The options developed during the charrette can be taken forward into this modelling and appraisal exercise. The Town Centre Regeneration Sub group fully endorse this approach.

**Economic development:**

Regarding the economic and town centre use implications, physical changes in the town centre proposed though the charrette process provides a basis for the development of the local town centre economy and a positive shift in how the town centre is used and its user base. Improvements to High Street and the gateway sites at the Ormiston Road junction and Civic Square/Winton Place would signal positive change in the town centre, inviting increased usage and ultimately new businesses or investment in existing ones. The measures in the regeneration framework are designed to increase footfall for all Tranent residents. Those who currently make the lowest use of the town centre need to be made aware of the planned changes and encouraged to use the town centre more. Additional private investment will not be attracted if existing spend/usage patterns continue.

**Delivery and Funding**

Delivery of the projects recommended in the charrette report and the proposed Tranent Town Centre Strategy will require collaboration between multiple agencies and players and will need to draw from a range of funding sources, with a view to levering the type of private sector investment that will deliver on the strategic vision.

The primary players that have been identified through the process to date and can play major roles in delivery are:

* + East Lothian Council
  + Fa’side Area Partnership
  + Scottish Government
  + Historic Environment Scotland (formerly Historic Scotland)
  + Scottish Natural Heritage
  + SUSTRANS

In addition there are other players who would need to play a role in the development and delivery of more specific elements of the plan:

• The Fraser Centre

* + A local business association
  + Leisure and sports groups
  + Arts and culture groups
  + Private individuals, developers and retailers.

There is already a good governance structure in place, with the Tranent Town Centre Working Group and the Fa’side Area Partnership. It is therefore envisaged that we simply require a **Tranent Town Centre Delivery Team** within that structure, that focuses on and co-ordinates the delivery of different elements of the plan as these come forward.

In addition to this it may be necessary to establish additional support vehicles for delivery such as a **community development trust** or a **business improvement district** that can direct investment locally.

At present, there is some fantastic work ongoing at the Fraser Centre and the group are wholly supportive of their efforts to secure additional funding in the provision of a new creative and artistic hub for the town centre.

Potential sources of funding that have been identified include:

* + BIG Lottery Fund for Townscape Heritage Funding and CARS schemes; Growing Community Assets fund for redundant or underutilised assets.
  + Government funding for Town Centre Regeneration Fund, Town Centre Housing Fund, Green Infrastructure Fund and local authority funding.
  + Housing Association Grant Funding
  + Local Business networks through a BID organisation or loyalty scheme
  + East of Scotland Investment Fund
  + People and Communities Fund including Coalfields Regeneration Trust
  + Community Benefit linked to residential, energy and infrastructure developments
  + Private sources, for example Wee Scones Nursery Tranent secured £300k funding from Santander.

**Proposed Next Steps**

1. Present a report to East Lothian Council, route to be determined, requesting that work begins on developing a formal Town Centre Strategy for Tranent, underpinned by the outcomes of the charrette, and the recommendations from the Town Centre Working Group
2. Establish the Tranent Delivery Team within the Fa’side Area Partnership structure. The delivery team will build on the work of the existing Town Centre Working Group and bring in other delivery agencies and specialists as necessary to project manage the process.
3. Deliver on identified short term projects (as listed below) as funding and/or staffing becomes available, including trial or temporary projects.

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| *Action* | *Team or Group responsible* | *Approximate Timescale* |
| 1. Improvements to High Street Conservation Area | CARS project | Immediate and ongoing over next 5 years |
| 1. Widen part of the Backsides | Fa’side Area Partnership | 12 months |
| 1. Secure a long term home for Recharge | Recharge/Fa’side Area Partnership | 12/24 months |
| 1. Increase town centre car parking | Fa’side Area Partnership | 12/24 months |
| 1. Creation of an arts and culture hub. | Fraser Centre | 24/36 months |