



Glasgow City Council
City Administration Committee

Item 2
1st October 2020

**Report by Councillor Kenny McLean, City Convener for
Neighbourhoods, Housing & Public Realm**

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**UPDATE ON VACANT AND DERELICT LAND ISSUES AFFECTING
GLASGOW**

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of the report is:

- to highlight to committee the main findings of the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey (SVDLS) 2019 return;
- to formally accept the 2020/21 Vacant and Derelict Land Funding grant offer from Scottish Government; and
- to advise on proposals for Vacant and Derelict Land Funding (VDLF) for 2020/21.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Committee:

1. notes the progress being made in tackling Vacant and Derelict Land in the City;
2. accepts the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund grant offer for 2020/21; and
3. approves the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund Programme for 2020/21.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes No

consulted: Yes No

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey (SVDLS) is a survey undertaken annually to establish the extent and state of vacant and derelict land in Scotland. The survey has been operating since 1988 and is managed by Scottish Government statisticians.

1.2 Glasgow has consistently had the highest concentration of urban vacant and derelict land of any local authority in Scotland. Scottish Government acknowledges the extent of the problem experienced by Glasgow and a small number of other authorities by allocating a ring-fenced budget for the purpose of bringing vacant land into beneficial use in accordance with Council and Government objectives.

1.3 Key issues for Glasgow include:

- the complex mix of poor ground conditions, fragmented ownership and inadequate infrastructure relating to many sites that restricts the availability of land ready for development and acts as a brake on the economic potential of the City; and,
- the blighting impact of derelict land on local communities, most disproportionately affecting those suffering from multiple deprivation.

2. SCOTTISH VACANT AND DERELICT LAND SURVEY 2019 MAIN FINDINGS FOR GLASGOW

2.1 The figure for Vacant and Derelict Land in Glasgow for 2019 was 954 hectares, which is a reduction of 51 hectares or 5.1% compared with 2018 figures. This is equivalent to 71 full-sized football pitches. These figures confirm the continuation of the downward trend over the last decade.

Table 1

	No of sites*	Area (ha)
Level of vacant and derelict land in the City, 2018	721	1,005
Level of vacant and derelict land in the City, 2019	688	954
Net Change across the City	-33	-51

*NB only sites greater than 0.1ha/1,000m² are eligible for inclusion on the Register.

2.2 Approximately two thirds of the land removed from the register in 2019 was for residential development. This included 750 housing units developed through the Council's Affordable Housing Supply Program (AHSP). The next largest

reduction was due to sites being developed for greenspace, recreation and leisure; other reductions include commercial, transport and utility services.

- 2.3 In the last ten annual Surveys, Glasgow has seen a year-on-year reduction in the level of vacant and derelict land. Whilst this result is encouraging, much of this reduction can be attributed to public sector led regeneration activities such as Transformational Regeneration Areas (TRAs) or the Affordable Housing Supply Program (AHSP).
- 2.4 Some of the other main findings of the SVDLS 2019 demonstrate the successes Glasgow achieved over the year, while at the same time highlighting the scale of problem still to be tackled:
- The distribution of vacant and derelict land continues to be concentrated in the east and the north of the City, with smaller concentrations in other inner city and peripheral areas;
 - Half of the sites on the Register are in local authority control. This represents both a challenge and a significant opportunity for the Council. These issues are more fully explored in the draft Vacant and Derelict Land Assets Plan, presented to City Administration Committee on 13 June 2019;
 - A high proportion of sites are categorised as long term vacant, i.e. more than 15 years. These sites are the focus of the Scottish Land Commission's Vacant and Derelict Land Task Force. Senior Council officers continue to engage with and advise the Task Force and to influence future policy;
 - More detailed statistical analysis of the 2019 return was published on the Scottish Government website on 24 April 2020 and is available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-vacant-derelict-land-survey-2019/>
- 2.5 The Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey 2020 is affected by COVID-19. Scottish Government have requested submission by 18th December 2020. Updates are being gathered from desktop sources, including aerial mapping and reviews of planning data. It is hoped that physical site surveys can be carried out ahead of the December deadline. Scottish Government expect the publish full survey results in spring 2021.

3 VACANT AND DERELICT LAND FUND PROGRAMME 2020/21

- 3.1 A one year allocation of Vacant and Derelict Land funding for Glasgow for 2020/21 was confirmed in January 2020 as £2,316,000.
- 3.2 Scottish Government's objectives for the 2020/21 VDLF Programme are:
- Objective 1: Tackle Long Term (more than 15 years) Vacant and Derelict Land (VDL).
 - Objective 2: Stimulate economic growth and job creation.
 - Objective 3: Develop a diverse sustainable environment with a focus on either permanent or temporary greenspace.
 - Objective 4: Support Communities to flourish and tackle inequalities.

- 3.3 Glasgow City Council submitted an outline Delivery Plan to Scottish Government in February 2020, and a full Delivery Plan in July 2020. This was approved by Scottish Government on 17th September 2020, and a grant offer letter was received on that date.
- 3.4 Appendix 1 outlines the projects for the 2020/21 Programme and their proposed funding allocations. In developing this Programme, officers have taken account of the requirement for projects to meet Scottish Government's stated criteria and has focused on:
- Remediation and/or decontamination of the former brownfield and industrial sites;
 - Continued resources to assist in the relocation of showpeople sites and families, to in turn facilitate the development of a key riverfront housing-led regeneration project;
 - Support for the Council's Food Growing Strategy, by investigating and developing vacant sites for food growing;
 - New and enhanced greenspace to benefit both existing and planned communities in areas of multiple deprivation;
 - Continue recent VDLF investment and projects with Clyde Gateway and the Glasgow Canal Regeneration Partnership;
 - Detailed investigations into a number of sites in the north of the city.
- 3.5 The 2020/21 Programme has potential to contribute towards an estimated 61.09 hectares of vacant and derelict land being investigated and/or treated.
- 3.6 It is clear that if Glasgow is to continue to reduce vacant and derelict land continued support from Scottish Government in the form of VDLF, and other measures, is required. Council continues to lobby Government for a multi-year award and relaxation of the 15-year site-eligibility rule, as well as engaging with the Scottish Land Commission Task Force.

4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Glasgow's Vacant and Derelict Land Survey results for 2019 demonstrate that the City continues to make significant progress in tackling vacant and derelict land in the city.

The 2020/21 Vacant and Derelict Land funding allocation from Scottish Government will help facilitate ongoing investment by the public and private sectors. However, it is clear that there is a need for action by way of:

- continued public sector investment to remediate sites for beneficial use, particularly housing-led regeneration projects, economic development, and temporary greening; and
- continued support for the private sector, to address constraints to development of vacant sites.

4.2 Development and Regeneration Services will continue therefore to engage with Scottish Government on future levels and sustainability of VDL funding, and will continue to develop new and innovative partnership approaches, and technical solutions, to land reclamation and development in the City.

5. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: Capital Investment of £2,316,000 funded from Scottish Government

Legal: No new legal issues.

Personnel: No Personnel Issues.

Procurement: No procurement issues.

Council Strategic Plan: The VDLF Funding Program supports the following strategic themes: -

A Thriving Economy:

- Priority 4: Maximise what the council can do through its community benefit clauses to secure jobs and training opportunities for Glaswegians and Small businesses and look at ways that these clauses can be strengthened.
- Priority 5: Use our initiatives and procurement to ensure that fair employment practices.

Resilient and Empowered Neighbourhoods:

- Priority 74: Develop a more integrated approach to how we use our policies, assets and resources to improve community empowerment, neighbourhoods and delivering equality.
- Priority 78: Deliver a programme of investment in new or refurbished community facilities.
- Priority 79: Encourage the development of trusts, social and community enterprises to support community ownership and management of assets.

- Priority 80: Deliver the Glasgow Housing Strategy, including utilising funding from the Scottish Government and development partners to step up progress on the city's priority Transformation Regeneration Areas and Development Framework Areas.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-21

No, but see below.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result Of this report?

None, however as a condition of grant all projects are required to observe the provisions of the Equality Scotland Act 2010.

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio economic disadvantage.

These projects will have positive socio economic impact in areas of deprivation, and help to address disadvantage and promote inclusive growth.

Sustainability Impacts:

Environmental:

The targeted VDLF program will help reduce the extent of vacant and derelict land present in the city.

Social, including Article 19 opportunities:

A wide range of community benefits and training and employment opportunities will be gained as a result of works carried out through VDLF resources.

Economic:

Vacant and derelict land has a blighting effect on investment in the City. A targeted VDL Programme has a direct positive impact on delivery of economic development.

Privacy and Data Protection impacts:

None.

6. Recommendations:

It is recommended that Committee:

1. notes the progress being made in tackling Vacant and Derelict Land in the City;
2. accepts the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund grant offer for 2020/21; and
3. approves the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund Programme for 2020/21.