



Glasgow City Council

City Administration Committee

Item 2

5th June 2025

Report by Councillor Ruairi Kelly, City Convener for Housing, Development, Built Heritage and Land Use

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VACANT AND DERELICT LAND - PROGRESS REPORT AND ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT AWARDS FOR 2025/26

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of the report is:

- a. To brief Committee as to indicative findings of the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey 2024 return for Glasgow;
- b. To brief Committee as to progress awarding Vacant and Derelict Land Fund 2025/26; and
- c. To recommend Committee accepts two Scottish Government Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme offers of grant.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Committee:

1. Note the contents of the report; and
2. Accept two Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme grant offers from Scottish Government totaling £2,633,641.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐ consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

1. Background

- 1.1. For many years Glasgow has been disproportionately burdened by vacant and derelict land. Although rates of vacant and derelict land are decreasing, Glasgow has the highest concentration of urban vacant land in Scotland, totalling 20% of all urban vacant land.
- 1.2. Vacant and derelict land constrains the economic potential of the city in addition to blighting local communities, with 42.5% of the Glasgow City population living less than 500m away from long term derelict land, concentrated in areas of multiple deprivation. A combination of poor ground condition, fragmented ownership, and inadequate infrastructure hinders development of Glasgow's vacant and derelict land for productive use.
- 1.3. Initiatives to mitigate vacant and derelict land include:
- Monitoring the extent of urban vacant and derelict land through the annual Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey;
 - Glasgow City Region-commissioned studies assessing the reuse potential of sites to improve evidentiary basis for intervention;
 - Funding projects through the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund, allocated by Scottish Government to a select number of local authorities including Glasgow City Council;
 - Bidding for project funding to Scottish Government's Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme.

2. Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey – progress update

- 2.1. All local authorities in Scotland, including Glasgow City Council, have a statutory responsibility to submit an annual *Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey* return to Scottish Government which was submitted in November 2024.
- 2.2. Scottish Government intend to publish official findings in June 2025 for the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey. However they have accepted Glasgow's submission and data, which confirm a continued trend of decreasing vacant and derelict land in Glasgow. In 2024 officers recorded 781 hectares of vacant and derelict land, a net reduction of 53 hectares. This is the equivalent of 72 full-sized football pitches.

	Number of sites*	Area (hectares)
2023 vacant and derelict land	599	834
2024 vacant and derelict land	574	781

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

2.3. The biggest contributor to the reduction of vacant and derelict land was residential development (25ha), with just under half of this as a result of the Affordable Housing Supply Programme (11.4ha).

3. Vacant and Derelict Land Fund 2025/26 – progress update

3.1. The Scottish Government makes an annual allocation of the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund (VDLF) to five local authorities, including Glasgow City Council. There are four objectives of the VDLF:

- Stimulate economic growth;
- Create jobs;
- Promote environmental justice and improved quality of life; and
- Support communities and tackle inequalities.

3.2. In December 2024, Scottish Government confirmed an allocation of £1.907m VDLF for Glasgow City Council in 2025/26.

3.3. Applications closed on 7 March. Council received 24 applications with a combined request of £5,031,985.

3.4. Applications were evaluated by a panel of senior officers. Following supplementary information provided by project partners and additional assessment, officers submitted Council's "Delivery Plan" to Scottish Government on 23 May 2025. Recommended projects include greenspace, land remediation, and economic development projects, through feasibility studies and/or works.

3.5. Once Scottish Government has approved the Delivery Plan and made a formal offer to Council for the VDLF allocation, officers will return to this Committee fully setting out all proposed projects and requesting acceptance of a VDLF offer of grant.

4. Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme 2025/26

4.1. The Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme (VDLIP) was established by Scottish Government in 2020. The fund is open to local authorities and Clyde Gateway to apply under a competitive bid system for proposed projects that address the below pillars of action:

- sustained place-based approaches
- urban green spaces
- community-led regeneration
- low carbon developments and renewables

4.2. VDLIP applications were "paused" in 2024/25 as Scottish Government reviewed all regeneration capital funding streams. At this time, Glasgow City Council had submitted a number of bids in partnership with local organisations for funding. In January 2025, Council and project partners were invited to resubmit previously shortlisted bids for funding for a revived funding round in 2025/26.

4.3. On 28 April 2025 officers received confirmation from Scottish Government that two projects would be awarded funding, with formal grant offer letters following on 7 May 2025. The successful projects are:

4.3.1. **Tureen Street School Residential Conversion:** this project has been awarded £1,978,441 for the façade retention of the B-listed former school buildings at 35 Tureen Street, Calton. This project will be delivered by Thenue Housing Association.

4.3.2. The former school buildings were constructed between 1875-1902. The buildings have been derelict for at least 18 years and are on Historic Environment Scotland's "Building at Risk Register." The site has become known for anti-social behaviour in the Calton area.

4.3.3. Thenue HA will develop the site for housing, including partial demolition, stabilisation and façade retention of the former school buildings and construction of 42 residential units.

4.3.4. VDLIP funding for the façade retention will preserve the heritage value of the site and make the affordable housing development viable. Complementary greenspace and biodiversity improvements will also be undertaken on the adjacent Elcho Gardens and on the street frontage to ensure new residents have access to amenity outdoor space.

4.3.5. Thenue has submitted planning permission and listed building consent applications for the works with an indicative site start in December 2025.

4.3.6. **Milton Discovery Wood:** this project has been awarded £655,200 for woodland enhancement adjacent to Birsay Road, Milton. This project will be delivered by Green Action Trust, a charitable organisation with experience delivering greenspace projects for Glasgow City Council.

4.3.7. The site has been vacant for at least 45 years, with previous history of shallow coal mining. The site is prone to fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour.

4.3.8. VDLIP funding will develop the site into a parkland environment for community benefit. Waste will be removed from the site, and entrance ways and sightlines improved to make the site safer. Paths will support connections to the north and south of the site. Outdoor classroom spaces will enable nature play and education opportunities for nearby schools. Construction is anticipated to start in February 2026 with completion in June 2026.

4.4. Both projects will be subject to established Scottish Government and Council reporting progress monitoring and claim requirements as set

out in Scottish Government's grant offer and Council's funding agreements.

4.5. Officers continue to monitor ongoing VDLIP projects from previous funding rounds. A high-level summary is set out below:

- Avenue End Road – greenspace enhancements delivered by Seven Lochs between Avenue End Road and Glenraith Road, now complete;
- Belle Gro' – community growing space at the Meatmarket recreation hub in Calton led by Meatmarket Regeneration CIC, awaiting planning permission;
- Hamiltonhill Green Infrastructure – open space and play area at former Saracen Primary School site delivered by Queens Cross Housing Association, now complete;
- Ruchazie Greening and Growing – open space enhancements between Drumlochy Road and Gartloch Road delivered by Seven Lochs, on site and due to complete in July 2025;
- Govan Graving Docks – construction of Riverside Park, on site and due to complete in March 2026;
- Greening Royston – open space enhancements at Provanhill Street delivered by Rosemount Development Trust, on site and due to complete in July 2025;
- Maryhill Blue-Green Infrastructure – open space enhancements and nature-based solutions complementing Maryhill TRA between Kilmun Street and Duncruin Street, pre-construction stage with target site start in summer 2025;
- Cadder Woods – woodland enhancement and linkages adjacent to Forth & Clyde Canal and Vaila Street delivered by Green Action Trust, on site and due to complete in July 2025;
- Community Net Zero Hub – refurbishment of derelict changing rooms at Queens Park Recreation Ground by South Seeds, on site and due to complete July 2025.

4.6. The current financial year marks the final year of VDLIP funding from the Scottish Government. On 15th May 2025 Scottish Government announced that future VDLIP applications will be considered as part of the 'Regeneration Capital Grant Fund' process. Council anticipates making several applications to this Fund by the 27th June deadline.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Officers will report to this Committee with finalised results of the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey 2024 and approved Delivery Plan for Vacant and Derelict Land Fund in autumn 2025.

5.2. It is recommended that Committee;

5.2.1. Note the contents of the report; and

5.2.2. Accept two VDLIP grant offers from Scottish Government totalling £2,633,641.

6 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: VDLIP grant offer of £2,633,641 from Scottish Government for the delivery of two projects by external partners

VDLF allocation of £1.907m; formal grant offer to be confirmed by Scottish Government.

Legal: Officers will work with GCC solicitors to negotiate funding agreements to enable funds to be disbursed, as well as negotiating appropriate property occupancy permissions and/transfers.

Personnel: Staff input required to assist in the delivery of the programme has been accounted for within existing resources.

Procurement: Nil

Council Strategic Plan: ***Fight the climate emergency in a just transition to a net zero Glasgow***

- *Mission 2: Become a net zero carbon city by 2030*
 - *Continue work to reduce Vacant and Derelict Land, prioritising brownfield sites for development and ensuring adequate protection for Green Belt and designated Open Space*
 - *Increase biodiversity within parks and council-maintained green and open spaces, supporting wilding where appropriate and identifying opportunities for promoting nature-based activities*

Enable staff to deliver essential services in a sustainable, innovative, and efficient way for our communities

- *Mission 1: Create safe, clean and thriving neighbourhoods*

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- *Deliver around 6,500 new affordable homes for the city meeting the needs of social housing, accessibility and sustainability needs, and the needs of people including larger and multi-generational households*

VDLIP funding for Milton Discovery Wood will enhance biodiversity, increase the city canopy cover in alignment with the Glasgow Tree Plan, and offer informal outdoor recreation and nature play opportunities.

VDLIP funding for Tureen St School Conversion will provide much need social housing in an area of multiple deprivation.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify. Yes, proposed VDLIP funded projects include the delivery of enhanced green spaces for information recreation and connection which supports Equality Outcome Six to tackle social isolation.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report? Proposed VDLIP funded projects include the delivery of enhanced green spaces for information recreation and connection. Funding for Milton Discovery Wood will deliver a green space for residents of Milton with active travel linkages, outdoor classrooms, and spaces for informal recreation and social connection. Tureen Street School Residential Conversion will include enhancements to neighboring Elcho Gardens so residents have an outdoor social amenity space. Improved opportunities for connectivity is in alignment with Council's Equality Outcome to tackle social isolation and loneliness is recognized and prioritised.

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage. VDLIP funding for Milton Discovery Wood will establish opportunities for nature play, recreation, and social connection outdoors for residents of Milton, an area of multiple deprivation. Woodland entrances and sightlines

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in the woodland will be improved to reduce anti-social behaviour.

VDLIP funding for Tureen St School Residential Conversion will add 42 social housing units in Calton, also an area of multiple deprivation.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:

Yes, VDLIP funding for Milton Discovery Wood project including outdoor classroom areas and woodland enhancement will support the following Climate Plan actions:

27 - Develop opportunities for all education establishments to access outdoor learning, including outreach biodiversity work

37 - Identify and utilise Vacant and Derelict Land for greening and rewilding

38 - Support new and further extensions to Local Nature Reserves in the city

Additionally, VDLIP funding for Tureen Street will meet Climate Action 29 with the proposed façade retention scheme for three B-listed former school buildings.

29 - Ensure that historic buildings are resilient to the impacts of climate change, protecting Glasgow's rich heritage

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?

VDLIP funding for Milton Discovery Wood will enhance city canopy cover for carbon sequestration, aligned with GCC's Forestry and Woodland Strategy.

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?

Yes, VDLIP funding for Milton Discovery Wood will support carbon sequestration as noted above.

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

Nil

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report
Y/N

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If Yes, please confirm that
a Data Protection Impact
Assessment (DPIA) has
been carried out

7 Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee:

1. Note the contents of the report; and
2. Accept two Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme grant offers from Scottish Government totaling £2,633,641.

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