



Glasgow City Council

City Administration Committee

**Report by Councillor Ruairi Kelly, City Convener for
Neighbourhood Services and Assets**

Item 5

22nd August 2024

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**VACANT AND DERELICT LAND – PROGRESS REPORT AND ACCEPTANCE
OF GRANT AWARD FOR 2024/25**

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) 2023 return;
- to formally accept the 2024/25 Vacant and Derelict Land Fund (VDLF) grant offer from Scottish Government, and to advise on proposed projects to be funded from VDLF in 2024/25;
- to highlight to Committee the progress of projects funded through previous rounds of the Vacant & Derelict Land Investment Programme (VDLIP), and current and future status of VDLIP.

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 of £1,270,000 for 2024/25 and approves the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund Programme for 2024/25; and
3. notes the progress being made through the Vacant & Derelict Land Investment Programme.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

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

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Glasgow has consistently had the highest concentration of urban vacant and derelict land of any local authority in Scotland. Council continues to work with Scottish Government by utilising available funding for the purpose of bringing vacant and derelict land back into beneficial use in accordance with the Council and Government objectives.
- 1.2 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;
 - the blighting impact of long-term vacant and derelict land and the challenges in bringing these sites back into productive use.

2. SCOTTISH VACANT AND DERELICT LAND SURVEY (SVDLS) 2023 - MAIN FINDINGS FOR GLASGOW

- 2.1 In Summer 2023, Neighbourhood & Regeneration Services (NRS) officers carried out Glasgow's Vacant and Derelict Land Survey. This is an annual statutory requirement. This involved a combination of desktop analysis and a physical survey.
- 2.2 The 2023 Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Register was published by Scottish Government in July 2024. See: [Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey 2023 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-vacant-and-derelict-land-survey-2023/pages/2/).

The figure for Vacant and Derelict Land in Glasgow for 2023 was 834 hectares, which is a net reduction of 14 hectares (or 1.7%) compared with 2022 figures. This is equivalent to 19 full-sized football pitches. These figures confirm the continuation of the downward trend over the last decade.

	No of sites*	Area (ha)
Level of vacant and derelict land in the city, 2022	619	848
Level of vacant and derelict land in the city, 2023	599	834
Net Change across the City	20	14

* only sites greater than 0.1 hectares are eligible for inclusion on the Register.

- 2.3 In total, 36 hectares of land were removed, with 22 hectares added. Of the 36 hectares removed, 23 were as a result of residential developments. 6 hectares of the reduction was a direct result of the Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP).
- 2.4 SVDLS 2023 demonstrates 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.
 - Approximately half of the sites on the Register are in local authority control. This represents both a challenge and a significant opportunity for the Council.
 - A high proportion of sites are categorised as long term vacant, i.e. more than 15 years. Such sites often face a variety of issues and constraints and are challenging to bring back into productive use.
 - The net reduction in Vacant and Derelict land between 2022 and 2023 is lower than in recent years, in part due to the residual impact on the construction industry as a result of Covid. Increased reduction is expected to be shown by the 2024 Survey.

3 VACANT AND DERELICT LAND FUND (VDLF) 2024/25

- 3.1 A one year allocation of Vacant and Derelict Land funding for Glasgow for 2024/25 was confirmed by Scottish Government in February 2024 as £1,270,000.
- 3.2 Scottish Government's objectives for the 2024/25 VDLF Programme are:
- Objective 1: Stimulate Economic Growth.
 - Objective 2: Create Jobs.
 - Objective 3: Promote environmental justice and improved quality of life.
 - Objective 4: Support Communities to flourish and tackle inequalities.
- 3.3 Council issued a callout for eligible projects in February 2024. This was followed by a Panel of senior officers assessing and recommending applications for inclusion in the Delivery Plan. At this time, Council was informed that one project from the 2023/24 VDLF Programme - Clyde Gateway's Green Regeneration and Innovation District – would require to be reduced in scale due to site ownership issues. Rather than produce a separate funding callout for this unallocated grant, with the agreement of Scottish Government, officers included this in the 2024/25 Delivery Plan submission to SG on 27th March 2024. Therefore this paper now presents a Delivery Plan based on the available VDLF allocation of £1,810,920. The Delivery Plan was approved by Scottish Government on 22nd July and a grant offer letter was received on 7th August 2024.

3.4 Appendix 1 outlines the projects for the 2024/25 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 former brownfield and industrial sites;
- 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;
- Sustainable food growing and tree planting initiatives.
- Feasibility funding for buildings at risk.

3.5 The 2024/25 Programme has potential to contribute towards almost 16 hectares of vacant and derelict land being investigated and/or treated.

3.6 The Scottish Government 2024/25 award is made for Council's wider Vacant and Derelict Land programme, not to any specific project. Council therefore has the flexibility to modify grant awards if required and will seek Committee's authority as appropriate.

3.7 Projects will be subject to established Scottish Government and Council reporting, monitoring, legal agreement and grant claim requirements.

4 VACANT AND DERELICT LAND INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

4.1 In December 2020 Scottish Government and Scottish Land Commission jointly announced the £50m (over five years) Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme (VDLIP). This funding stream is open to Local Authorities to apply under a competitive bid system over two stages, and has four 'pillars' of action:

- Sustained place-based approaches
- Urban green spaces
- Community-led regeneration
- Low carbon developments and renewables, including housing

4.2 Update on projects in VDLIP Rounds 1, 2 and 3 (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24)

VDLIP Round 1 (2021/22 awards)

- Avenue End Road: complete.
- Belle Gro' at the Meatmarket: being delivered as part of the wider masterplan.

VDLIP Round 2 (2022/23 awards)

- Hamiltonhill Green Infrastructure: complete.
- Ruchazie Greening and Growing: phase 1 of 3 now complete.

VDLIP Round 3 (2023/24 awards)

- Govan Graving Docks: design and preconstruction works ongoing.
- Maryhill TRA Green Infrastructure: design and preconstruction works ongoing.
- Greening Royston: pre-construction ongoing. Site start expected later in 2024.
- Cadder Woods: pre-construction works ongoing. Site start expected later in 2024.
- Community Net Zero Hub: on site and due to complete in early 2025.

Of the above projects, four are being delivered over multiple years and have funding profiled in 2024/25 that Council will be required to claim from the Scottish Government. These projects are Ruchazie Greening and Growing; Govan Graving Docks; Maryhill TRA Green Infrastructure; Cadder Woods. Council will claim £3,296,507 of VDLIP in 2024/25.

4.3 VDLIP Round 4 (2024/25)

The Council, working with local organisations, submitted eight bids to the Scottish Government at stage 1 in June 2023. Four projects were shortlisted for more detailed stage 2 submissions. One bid was withdrawn, with the remaining three bids submitted in November 2023.

On 28th March 2024 Scottish Government announced that Ministers had made the decision to pause VDLIP in 2024/25 due to financial challenges as set out in the Scottish Government's Budget. It is anticipated that no new VDLIP projects will be offered funding in 2024/25.

As a result of the pause in VDLIP, no new callout for funding in 2025/26 has been announced by the Scottish Government.

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Glasgow's Vacant and Derelict Land Survey results for 2023 demonstrate that the city continues to make progress in tackling vacant and derelict land in the city.
- 5.2 The 2024/25 Vacant and Derelict Land Funding allocation from Scottish Government, and ongoing VDLIP projects, will help unlock the potential of key vacant or derelict sites. However, it is clear that there is a need for further action by way of:
 - continued public sector investment to remediate sites for beneficial use, particularly housing-led regeneration projects, economic development, and temporary/permanent greening; and
 - continued support for the private sector, to address constraints to development of vacant or derelict sites.
- 5.3 NRS will continue to engage with Scottish Government on future levels and sustainability of funding and will continue to develop new and innovative

partnership approaches, and technical solutions, to land remediation and development of vacant and derelict sites in the city.

6 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	Award from the 2024/25 VDLF of £1,270,000. £3,296,507 is profiled from the VDLIP which Council will claim from Scottish Government in 2024/25.
<i>Legal:</i>	N/A
<i>Personnel:</i>	Staff input required to assist in the delivery of the programme has been accounted for within existing resources.
<i>Procurement:</i>	N/A

Council Strategic Plan: The measures outlined in the report will contribute towards the following Grand Challenges and Missions -

Grand Challenge 1 – Reduce poverty and inequality in our communities:

Mission 3 – Improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities.

Grand Challenge 2 – Increase opportunity and prosperity for all our citizens:

Mission 1- Support Glasgow residents into sustainable and fair work.

Mission 2- Support the growth of an innovative, resilient and net zero carbon economy.

Grand Challenge 3 – Fight the climate emergency in a just transition to a net zero Glasgow

Mission 2- Become a net zero carbon city by 2030.

Grand Challenge 4 – Enable staff to deliver essential services in a sustainable, innovative and efficient way for our communities

Mission 1- Create safe, clean and thriving neighbourhoods.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.

This proposal supports the outcomes through:

Outcome 6- The importance of tackling social isolation and loneliness is recognized and prioritised through our work with partners.

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

Positive impact.

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

Reducing the number of vacant or derelict sites, which are predominantly located in areas of socio-economic disadvantage, will increase economic activity and improve physical and mental health.

Climate Impacts:

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

Yes. By developing new high-quality open and green spaces and promoting local food growing the proposal supports the following actions:

Outcome 30- The city will support Glasgow's local food economy by exploring ways for procurement to support local businesses, ethically sourced, sustainable and healthy food. Outcome 37- Identify and utilise Vacant and Derelict Land for greening and rewilding in combination with renewable energy generation measures and reducing flood risk.

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal? Reduced carbon emissions as above.

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target? Yes, through reduced food miles and tree planting.

Privacy and Data Protection impacts: None.

7 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 of £1,270,000 for 2024/25 and approves the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund Programme for 2024/25; and
3. notes the progress being made through the Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme.