

FSWCC Response to Burns Statue Square Phase 01 Consultation

Fort, Seafield and Wallacetown Community Council, July 2026

This response reflects discussion among FSWCC members as informed by residents and traders who have addressed our meetings. It copies the format of the public survey that ran in June 2026 – Questions 1 to 4 were demographic questions, therefore disregarded.

Question	FSWCC Response	
Q5: Were you aware of the proposed traffic changes before now?	No. We regard this as a communication failure by South Ayrshire Council. Folk were not adequately reached and informed before the consultation opened. This limits the depth of informed feedback the consultation can generate.	
Q6a: Pedestrian safety has been improved	Neutral. Pedestrian safety baseline is a given. This misses the point that a supposed town centre regeneration proposal should prove it will boost the town centre economy, not suggest that pedestrian safety improvement boosts town centre economy. Accessible Ayr cycle path pedestrianisation was rejected on that basis: it would not boost the economy, and this will not either.	
Q6b: Traffic journey times are manageable	Disagree. The alterations accommodate the plaza design, not a roads improvement project. The reconfiguration does not inject vehicle traffic into Alloway Street/High Street. Burns Statue Square remains a terminus, not a gateway: the square is to be driven past, not through towards the town.	
Q6c: It is easier to get around the town centre	Disagree. The changes do not enable two-way vehicle access on the Alloway Street–High Street corridor that Ayr townsfolk have repeatedly called for. For residents in the south (St Leonards, Seafield, Alloway, Doonfoot) and east (Belmont, Holmston, Forehill, Masonhill, Kincaidston), the alterations provide no new access routes to the town centre. The scheme leads to Burns Statue Square but no further. For North Ayr residents, the scheme is distant and even if chosen as a	

	destination, access is only by circuitous means. The fundamental impenetrability problem of Ayr town centre — chiefly the High Street — remains unaddressed.	
Q6d: You are happy with the parking changes	Neutral. Walking distance from parking is acceptable when the destination offers worthwhile reasons to visit. However, Burns Statue Square offers no new shops, services, or attractions. The reduction in parking spaces is likely detrimental.	
Q7: Any other comments on traffic changes?	No evidence has been provided that the proposed traffic changes will improve town-centre access — specifically, footfall (likely via through-traffic) or dwell-time. The scheme functions as a terminus serving the plaza site itself, not as a gateway to the wider town centre.	
Q8: How much of a concern is parking for you?	A minor concern — in principle. Parking is a secondary issue; it becomes a barrier only when the destination lacks worthwhile purpose. Burns Statue Square offers no new amenity to justify the walk from parking. Without such attractions, the increased distance becomes a practical obstacle.	
Q12: Overall, how do you feel about the proposed design?	Neutral on design form, but the function is the flaw. The design offers no new amenity and adds nothing to increase footfall, dwell-time, or daytime spending. Burns heritage theming does not address this core functional failure. Design aesthetics cannot substitute for economic function.	
Q13a: It will make BSS a more attractive place to visit	Disagree. No new amenity is being delivered at Burns Statue Square. This is surface treatment of an existing space. Surface improvements to paving, lighting, and seating do not create new reasons to visit. Without new attractions, improved aesthetics alone do not increase footfall or dwell-time.	
Q13b: Burns heritage theme is appropriate for this location	Neutral. The Burns heritage theme is secondary to the core question: does this scheme meet the Ayr Town Centre Framework's tests for regeneration (footfall, dwell-time, spending, expanded catchment)? It does not. If heritage is to contribute to regeneration, evidence is required that the	

	theme will attract new visitors and increase spending — not simply redirect tourists already visiting Alloway. Theming alone, without demonstrated economic benefit, is decoration.	
Q13c: Design will benefit businesses and the evening economy	Disagree. The survey's focus on “evening economy” reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of town-centre vitality. Daytime trade — shops and services — is the engine of regeneration. Daytime traders face disruption during construction and beyond. No compensation scheme exists. The net effect will be to redirect hospitality customers to the square, diverting rather than growing town-centre footfall overall.	
Q13d: It will be welcoming and accessible for everyone	Disagree. Burns Statue Square will function primarily as a hospitality space (pubs, cafes, restaurants). By definition, this is not welcoming for children, non-drinkers, or those seeking goods and services. This is a nightlife quarter funded by public money meant for town-centre regeneration. North Ayr residents cannot reach it directly; many residents from surrounding wards have no reason to visit. The scheme does not create an inclusive town-centre space.	
Q14: Rank design priorities (1=most important)	1. Something Else: “Vehicle throughfare and connectivity to the town centre” 2. Quality of paving and materials 3. Lighting 4. Trees and greenery 5. Seating and places to rest 6. Burns heritage and artwork Access and connectivity to the town centre is the foundation. Design quality matters only if there is sufficient footfall to appreciate it. Without footfall, investment in design is wasted.	
Q17: Rank project outcomes (1=most important)	1. Something Else: “A structured, multi-site town-centre strategy” 2. Support for daytime businesses and services 3. A more attractive gateway 4. Improved public transport facilities 5. A better environment for pedestrians	

	6. A space that celebrates Burns and Ayr's heritage This project cannot succeed in isolation. Daytime trade — shops and services serving all demographics in all weathers — is the engine of town vitality. A strategic plan for the whole town centre must come before, or alongside, any site-specific project. Isolated improvements on single sites, without strategic context, fail.	
Overall: Business case and cost-benefit analysis	No cost-benefit analysis has been produced for this £16 million development. The Ayr Town Centre Framework (Cabinet 12 March 2024) sets four measurable criteria for town-centre regeneration: increased footfall, extended dwell-time, higher spending, and expanded catchment. This scheme provides no evidence it meets any of these criteria. Audit Scotland 2023-24 flagged the Citadel refurbishment — also funded from the Ayr Town Centre budget — was approved without a business case. This same pattern is repeating.	

FSWCC Response prepared by: Fort, Seafield and Wallacetown Community Council, compiled from member submissions and discussion.