

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Finance and Resources
DATE	6 th August 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Beachfront Pedestrian Spine – Design Update
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/25/177
DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald/Gale Beattie
CHIEF OFFICER	Craig Innes
REPORT AUTHOR	Craig Innes
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.17

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides Committee with final proposed design layouts for approval of Beachfront Pedestrian Spine.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That the Committee approve the final design layout as shown in Appendices 1 to 4 and detailed within this report for the Pedestrian Spine on the Beach Boulevard; and
- 2.2 Instructs the Chief Officer – Capital, following consultation with the Chief Officer – Commercial & Procurement Services, to negotiate and execute contracts for delivery of the construction programme in line with the previously approved total project budget as detailed in paragraph 4, reporting progress through the Chief Officer – Capital's regular capital programme monitoring reports to this committee.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 An Outline Business Case (OBC) including the medium-term interventions (Beach Park, Events Park and Broadhill) was approved by Council on 14th of December 2022, with a Full Business Case (FBC) being approved on 11 September 2023. A Development Framework for Phase 1 of the Beach area was approved by Council in May 2023 and sets out the Council's Vision to revitalize and renew Aberdeen's beachfront to maximise the potential of this unique space and create an exceptional asset for the city. The Pedestrian Spine (section of Boulevard from Links Road to the Esplanade) is part of the Beach Masterplan.
- 3.2 The Pedestrian Spine will serve as a gateway to the beachfront from the city centre.

- 3.3 It is bounded by both park areas of Phase A of the masterplan (Beach Park and Events Field) and on completion will connect these, resulting in an integrated space, free of motor vehicles (other than those authorised/service) to allow active use of the space and safe use for park users.
- 3.4 The main features of the Pedestrian Spine are;
- designated pedestrian routes to interface with key access points of the Beach Park and Events Field including consideration from the accessible parking locations.
 - designated, segregated, cycle path that travels through this central spine with junctions where it meets the pedestrian paths.
 - soft landscaping designed to complement the adjacent park areas with the plant types and heights varying depending on location and visibility requirements.
 - seating locations strategically placed along the spine route of robust precast design to provide opportunities to rest.
 - parking for bicycles incorporated at key locations
 - gate at the Esplanade approach for controlled access to emergency vehicles, vehicles for deliveries and maintenance purposes.
 - the materials used for the Spine are impermeable buff coloured asphalt on the pedestrian routes and hot rolled asphalt with red granite chips on the cycle route.
 - the Pedestrian Spine enhances the Phase A scheme due to its functional benefits increasing accessibility, safe use and integration of the spaces.
- 3.5 As part of the works, the Links Road and Beach Esplanade junctions will be upgraded. The designs for these junctions have been developed in conjunction with the Council, the Disability Equity Partnership and the Aberdeen Cycle Forum, ensuring accessibility and ease for all users has been ingrained into the proposals.
- 3.6 Additional accessible parking is to be provided on the Beach Esplanade to limit the distance for Beach Park visitors that require these spaces. [OBJ]
- 3.7 The planned programme for construction is to commence physical works in Q3 2025 and to complete within the same time scales as the Beachfront Phase A project, in Q3 2026. [OBJ]
- 3.8 A Stopping up Order (SUO) was required for this section of the Boulevard. The 28-day statutory consultation for the SUO took place under delegated powers between 27 May 2025 and 23 June 2025, which involved notices being advertised in the Evening Express and Edinburgh Gazette.
- 3.9 The statutory consultation returned no objections. Aberdeen City Council have proceeded with confirmation of the SUO.
- 3.10 It has been agreed with the Planning Authority that the works will be undertaken without the need for planning permission as this is considered permitted

development. However, a Certificate of Lawfulness (CLU) has been requested and has been applied for.

- 3.11 Specific stakeholder engagement in relation to the Pedestrian Spine has been undertaken with several organisations and individuals including:
- 25 April 2025: Presentation to Disability Equity Partnership on the Links Road & Esplanade junctions design, including an update on the core Pedestrian Spine Design.
 - 15 May 2025: Update to relevant Council Teams
 - 11 June 2025: Presentation to Disability Equity Partnership on the Links Road & Esplanade junction's design
 - Cycle Forum engaged early stages and again mid-July 2025 on Full Design.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Initially the Pedestrian Spine was to be delivered within Phase B of the overall Beachfront Masterplan. However the Pedestrian Spine is integral to the completion of Phase A and as such it was deemed necessary to move it into Phase A of the overall Beachfront Masterplan to ensure the benefits of Phase A could be fully realised.
- 4.2 An additional £3.3M was added to the Phase A budget to enable the inclusion of the Pedestrian Spine within Phase A, which was approved within March 2025 Council Budget Committee.
- 4.3 The report CR&E/25/126 Roads and Transport Related Capital Budget Programme 2025-2026 approved by the Net Zero, Environment and Transport committee on 10 June 2025 allocated £1 million of the Scottish Government Tier 1 Active Travel Infrastructure Fund to the Beach Spine Road as part of the Beachfront project.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 In the event that third party consents are required, the appropriate service will work with Legal Services to request that these are provided.

6. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Failure to proceed with the Beachfront Masterplan impacts on wider City commitments and economic targets.	Continue to work collaboratively to achieve the masterplan delivery and wider advantages.	M	Yes
Operational	Beach Boulevard/Beach promenade traffic arrangements	Consultation with Council Roads and Planning Teams has taken place,	M	Yes
Operational	Utility Diversions & Ground Conditions	Investigation undertaken and no diversion work identified. Ground conditions under existing slab ongoing.	M	Yes
Hostile Vehicle mitigation	ACC review require mitigation to be added	Hub North Scotland has obtained a report on behalf of ACC for their consideration	M	Yes
Financial	Budget pressures	Robust budget established. Monitoring process established. Cost market testing currently being undertaken prior to instruction	M	Yes
Reputational	Failure or delay to deliver in line with Masterplan	Continue to work collaboratively to achieve the masterplan delivery and wider advantages.	M	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2024-2025</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement <u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u>	Supports the delivery of Economy Policy Statement 4 – Increase city centre footfall through delivery of the City Centre Masterplan. 1. – Continue to maximise community benefit from major developments.
<u>Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	Supports Outcome 1 10% increase in employment across priority and volume growth sectors by 2026.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Supports Outcome 7 Child Friendly City which supports all children to prosper and engage actively with their communities by 2026.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	Supports Outcome 14 – Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by 42.5% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate. Supports Outcome 15 – 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026.
Regional and City Strategies	The report supports the priorities in the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) investment in infrastructure, regenerating our city Centre, unlock development potential, improve the deployment of low carbon transport, to enable Aberdeen to realise development opportunities in the City Centre Masterplan.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Previous Integrated Impact Assessment relating to Phase A of the Beach Masterplan has been reviewed and no changes required
Data Protection Impact Assessment (PDIA)	DPIA Screening Questions completed. Neither a brief DPIA or full DPIA is required at this stage
Other	N/A

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 [Report to Council 28 February 2022](https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s129266/220228%20City%20Centre%20Masterplan%20Update%20Report.pdf)
<https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s129266/220228%20City%20Centre%20Masterplan%20Update%20Report.pdf>
- 10.3 [Council Decisions 11 September 2023](https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/g9100/Decisions%2011th-Sep-2023%2010.00%20Council.pdf?T=2)
<https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/g9100/Decisions%2011th-Sep-2023%2010.00%20Council.pdf?T=2>

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Pedestrian Spine Overview Plan
- 11.2 Appendix 2 – Esplanade Junction Plan (1/2)
- 11.3 Appendix 3 – Esplanade Junction Plan (2/2)
- 11.4 Appendix 4 – Links Road Junction Plan

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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