

Appendix 1

CGP Preferred Design Scheme

Granite Web: The Green Heart of the Silver City

The Aberdeen City Garden will fuse nature and culture into a vital social network at the heart of the city. The warp and weft of urban lines support both park and cultural activities within a fabric of layered programs both historic and contemporary, conjoining the urbane with the pastoral. Covering the Denburn Valley dual carriage way and railway, the new City Garden will double the area of the Union Terrace Gardens, connecting the edges of Union Street, Union Terrace, Belmont Street and Rosemount Viaduct.

While the garden is also home to significant indoor and outdoor new cultural facilities – the Butterfly and the Forum – these structures are designed integrally within the surface of the park. The gently undulating green roofs flow seamlessly into the vegetated landscapes that are entirely public open space and the design floods natural light into the Butterfly structure at all levels. In addition, the Garden will be transformed into an exciting year round destination with cultural facilities and seasonal programming bringing life to the city centre even in winter. This merger of landscape and architecture springs naturally from the unique, three-dimensional topography of Aberdeen.



Aerial view of Gardens from Union Street

The new Garden will:

- *Provide a forum for Aberdeen's daily life* through new cultural and recreational features: a 500-seat indoor theatre and learning centre, an exhibition hall and café, and a 5,000-seat outdoor amphitheatre that transforms into an ice skating rink in the winter months
- *Double the total area* of the existing park
- *Connect Belmont Street* to the Gardens
- *Strengthen connections* across the site and from the city centre to the Green, the Harbour, and the Train Station
- *Preserve heritage elements* of the existing park including the historic Union Bridge, the balustrades, vaulted arches and existing statues
- *Catalyse activity at the city centre* – within the green areas of the park as well as the new open plazas off of Union Street and Belmont Street
- *Be usable year-round* by integrating wind breaks and covered areas with robust indigenous planting
- *Exemplify the principles of environmental sustainability*, with a goal to achieve the highest possible BREEAM rating
- *Eliminate the noise and pollution* from the motor and train traffic of the Denburn Valley into the park

The landscape of the Garden will be a blend of new and existing planting. It will remain a lush and inviting green space for the public, whether as a place of individual repose or group activity. Across the site, the rising and falling topographies frame views of the Triple Kirks, Aberdeen Art Gallery, His Majesty's Theatre, and St. Mark's Church. Pathways ranging from stone pavers to crushed granite to low grasses animate movement across the site. Wide bridges with protected edges and balustrades add drama and vantage points reminiscent of the many bridges found throughout the city centre. State of the art planting conditions support flora ranging from low grasses to towering trees.

A primary connection to the wider heritage of Aberdeen is made through the mix of material and the variety of the landscape. The planting scheme draws from the North-East of Scotland's natural landscape and ecology, with additional threads from Scotland's European neighbours to expand seasonal diversity and the stimulation of the senses. The gardens will be defined by four distinctive regional landscapes: Highland, Upland Pine, Moorland and Heather. By its native character the landscape will be highly sustainable. The planting layout will create microclimates providing protection from the harsher effects of the local weather.



View across the flower garden towards His Majesty's Theatre and Triple Kirks

Within the Garden, the Cultural Centre rises from the landscape on the wings of the Butterfly, providing major civic entrances at Union Terrace and the new Belmont open Plaza. It builds on the assets of Aberdeen's existing cultural institutions, providing a flexible array of expanded facilities for their evolving roles. A rich calendar of event programming will bring new vibrancy to solidify the City Garden as the green heart and cultural centre of Aberdeen. Events will engage different areas of the park on a daily, monthly, seasonal, and annual basis. Together, the Garden and Cultural Centre will support different scale events, from a large festival to small venues for musicians and artists.

Since the widely publicised first round of the design competition, feedback from the city and its residents has been incorporated into the revised design. Refinements include the complete covering of the Denburn Valley and the addition of large grassy fields suitable for play.

The design will bring a renewed life to the heart of Aberdeen. By making the park greener, more accommodating to passive and active uses, and more engaged at its edges, the City Garden will become a magnet for locals and visitors alike.



Views from the stage of the forum for different seasons

Proven team, proven techniques: While this design will be unique to Aberdeen and its site, the individual elements that comprise the whole are anything but experimental. Diller Scofidio + Renfro have designed the elevated walkways of New York's Highline, a park that has economically catapulted an underutilised region of that city and safely accommodated some 80,000 visitors per day in every extreme of weather. OLIN has designed some of the world's largest landscapes over structure, including Canary Wharf and Canada Square in London and the LDS Centre in the USA.