

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	5 March 2014
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Broad Street Civic Square Assessment
REPORT NUMBER:	ESPI/14/008

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The Council resolved, at its meeting on 26th June 2013, “to instruct officers to investigate options, including appropriate traffic modelling, for creating a more user-friendly pedestrian environment to form a civic space on Broad Street in advance of the pedestrianisation of Union Street, and that the cost of these investigations be met from the Central Aberdeen Infrastructure budget approved as part of the Non-Housing Capital Programme at the Council Budget meeting of 14 February 2013.”

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the results of the assessment process undertaken by officers on options for Broad Street.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that Members:

- a) Note the contents of this report and the outcomes of the supporting technical reports;
- b) Agree that Option C- Full Pedestrianisation of Broad Street between Upperkirkgate and Queen Street, best meets the objectives of this project and acknowledges that this option is reliant on additional traffic management measures;
- c) Instruct officers to report back to Members on the details of the draft Traffic Regulation Order within 6 months; and
- d) Instruct officers to also report back in this timescale on the outcomes of the future year traffic and air quality model testing for 2023.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The project review has been funded from the Central Aberdeen Infrastructure budget approved as part of the Non-Housing Capital Programme at the Council Budget meeting of 14 February 2013. It is anticipated that the cost of implementation of the preferred option would be met by the Developer of Marischal Square. Future maintenance burden would rest with the Council.

There are no implications for approved PBB options.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

The following is the executive summary of the Main Transportation Report. The full report is available in Appendix A.

The Council resolved at its meeting of 26th June 2013 “to instruct officers to investigate options, including appropriate traffic modelling, for creating a more user-friendly pedestrian environment to form a civic space on Broad Street in advance of the pedestrianisation of Union Street, and that the cost of these investigations be met from the Central Aberdeen Infrastructure budget approved as part of the Non-Housing Capital Programme at the Council Budget meeting of 14 February 2013.”

The Scottish Transport Assessment Guidance (STAG) was used as best practise guidance to develop an assessment framework to investigate the options for Broad Street to meet the instruction.

Opportunities to support the creation of a more user-friendly pedestrian environment on Broad Street are afforded by the redevelopment of the former St Nicholas House site and the infrastructure improvements proposed for the network over the coming years. However the city centre network is restricted and is currently congested at peak times and further development in and around Aberdeen in the coming years will impact on this already busy network.

Three options were taken forward for assessment

Option A – Do Nothing/ Do Minimum – The traffic remains as existing.

Option B - Bus and Taxi Only - Public transport options remain on the route whilst general traffic is rerouted through the remaining network.

Option C - Pedestrianisation - No through traffic on Broad Street between Gallowgate and Queen Street.

These options were assessed against the STAG criteria; environmental, safety, integration, accessibility and social inclusion, established policy directives, feasibility and consultation. These assessments are supported by the studies detailed in the Accessibility and Social Inclusion Report (February 2014), Transport Consultation Report (January 2014), Established Policy

Directives Review (January 2014) and Broad Street Testing Report (February 2014).

Option A is shown to provide little or no benefits in terms of the scheme objectives. It does not make the area more pedestrian friendly, safer, increase integration with the surrounding network or relevant policy documents, and it did not gather much support from the public through the consultation process. One area where it could be viewed more favourably is that it does not have a direct impact on the surrounding road network as no traffic is displaced as in the other options. On this basis it has some support from Public Transport providers.

Option B improves conditions for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport on Broad Street. This could improve safety locally and broadly meets the scheme objective to create a more pedestrian friendly environment. There would be a displacement of traffic from Broad Street which has an impact on the surrounding network, such as Schoolhill which has heavy pedestrian flows and West North Street and Commerce Street corridor. The separation of public transport and general traffic affords some benefits to traffic flows and increases the reliability of bus services directly affected.

These benefits can be lost by other services due to increase in traffic on the surrounding network. The effect on air quality and noise of this traffic displacement cannot yet be determined but this could impact on Air Quality Management Areas and Candidate Noise Areas within the City Centre. This will be reported at a later date. The changes in access to Broad Street would require a Traffic Regulation Order which it could be expected would be subject to a Public Local Inquiry if it were subject to any unresolved objections. Public support was high for an option that maintained public transport on the route and also for an option that promoted change to the area. In traffic management terms, to a degree supported by public response, there would be a preference to removing taxis from this option to eliminate enforcement issues and unnecessary through traffic.

Option C provides the greatest improvement for pedestrians and cyclists on Broad Street. It provides a fully pedestrianised area which links to further pedestrian priority areas within the City Centre. Public transport can be relocated onto Upperkirkgate in purpose built bus laybys in replacement of the lost timing points on Broad Street. Bus services are rerouted via Schoolhill/ Union Terrace and King Street/ West North Street. These diversions add little to the time of bus journeys and improve reliability to the routes directly affected, there is however some loss of reliability to services remaining on the surrounding network.

Option C most closely meets the aspirations of policy and strategy with regards to placemaking and supporting City Centre regeneration. A negative aspect of this option is the potential impact on Air Quality Management Areas and Candidate Noise Areas within the City Centre due to the increase in traffic on the surrounding network. These environmental impacts have not yet been quantified and will be reported on completion of the testing.

Through consideration of each of the options in relation to the relevant STAG and project specific objectives it can be seen that the pedestrianisation of Broad Street between Upperkirkgate and Queen Street most positively meets the assessment criteria.

Further assessment is required to determine the air quality and noise impacts created by the diverted traffic. These impacts may occur on Air Quality Management and Candidate Noise Management Areas which require compliance with EU standards. The assessment of 2017 levels are unlikely to be determined prior to this meeting and this would be the final element in concluding the Appraisal Summary Table (see Section 6 of the Main Transportation Study Report in Appendix A).

SCOOT (Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique) is used at many of the traffic signal junctions within the City Centre to manage and optimise flows. The system uses on-street detectors embedded in the road, to respond to fluctuations in traffic.

This outcome is reliant on:

- New bus infrastructure on Upperkirkgate to accommodate a relocated timing point with stacking for several buses, as currently available on Broad Street;
- The closure of Flourmill Lane to through traffic to ensure no rat running occurs on that route;
- A loading restriction on Schoolhill to minimise the disruption to traffic flows along the route; and
- Recalibration of the SCOOT traffic signal network.

6. IMPACT

The contents of this report link to the Community Plan vision of creating a *sustainable City with an integrated transport system that is accessible to all.*

This project contributes to delivery of the Smarter Mobility aims of Aberdeen – *The Smarter City: We will develop, maintain and promote road, rail, ferry and air links from the city to the UK and the rest of the world. We will encourage cycling and walking, and We will provide and promote a sustainable transport system, including cycling, which reduces our carbon emissions.*

The project identified in this report will assist in the delivery of actions identified in the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) 2013, in particular the Thematic Priority of Safer Communities (Safer Roads) and the Multi-lateral Priority – Integrated Transport (Aberdeen is easy to access and move around in).

The listed projects will also assist delivery of the 5 year Corporate Business Plan, in particular the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Directorate's aims to *Protect and enhance our high-quality, natural and built environment* and *Support the delivery of a fully integrated transport network*.

An Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) has been undertaken on this report and can be seen in Appendix B.

This report may be of interest to members of the public as it concerns the city centre transport network which has the potential to affect all members of the travelling public particularly those travelling by public transport.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Streetscape improvements which would lead on from the decisions resulting from this report have no identified maintenance budget of their own and could impact on the Council's maintenance budgets in the future. This represents a potential Hazard and Financial Risk to the Council. This would be minimised, however, by the use of high-quality design and installation materials which should ensure longevity of new infrastructure. The risks of inaction (not improving pedestrian and cycle infrastructure) are also significant in terms of a poor quality environment, poor reputation for the City of Aberdeen and a decline in active travel which would have significant implications for the health and wellbeing of the citizens of Aberdeen (Opportunity, Environmental and Customer/Citizen Risks).

There is a risk in delivering the Traffic Regulation Order, if there are unresolved objections that lead to a Public Local Inquiry then the final decision on the proposal lies with that independent arbiter, not the Council.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Broad Street Civic Square - Main Transportation Study (February 2014) is included as Appendix A
- Accessibility and Social Inclusion Report (February 2014)
- Transport Consultation Report (January 2014)
- Established Policy Directives Review (January 2014)
- Broad Street Testing Report (February 2014)

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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Appendix A

Broad Street Civic Square

Main Transportation Study

February 2014

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1 Executive Summary

The Council resolved at its meeting of 26th June 2013 “to instruct officers to investigate options, including appropriate traffic modelling, for creating a more user-friendly pedestrian environment to form a civic space on Broad Street in advance of the pedestrianisation of Union Street, and that the cost of these investigations be met from the Central Aberdeen Infrastructure budget approved as part of the Non-Housing Capital Programme at the Council Budget meeting of 14 February 2013.”

The Scottish Transport Assessment Guidance (STAG) was used as best practise guidance to develop an assessment framework to investigate the options for Broad Street to meet the instruction.

Opportunities to support the creation of a more user-friendly pedestrian environment on Broad Street are afforded by the redevelopment of the former St Nicholas House site and the infrastructure improvements proposed for the network over the coming years. However the city centre network is restricted and is currently congested at peak times and further development in and around Aberdeen in the coming years will impact on this already busy network.

Three options were taken forward for assessment

Option A – Do Nothing/ Do Minimum – The traffic remains as existing.

Option B - Bus and Taxi Only - Public transport options remain on the route whilst general traffic is rerouted through the remaining network.

Option C - Pedestrianisation - No through traffic on Broad Street between Gallowgate and Queen Street.

These options were assessed against the STAG criteria; environmental, safety, integration, accessibility and social inclusion, established policy directives, feasibility and consultation. These assessments are supported by the studies detailed in the Accessibility and Social Inclusion Report (February 2014), Transport Consultation Report (January 2014), Established Policy Directives Review (January 2014) and Broad Street Testing Report (February 2014).

Option A is shown to provide little or no benefits in terms of the scheme objectives. It does not make the area more pedestrian friendly, safer, increase integration with the surrounding network or relevant policy documents, and it did not gather much support from the public through the consultation process. One area where it could be viewed more favourably is that it does not have a direct impact on the surrounding road network as no traffic is displaced as in the other options. On this basis it has some support from Public Transport providers.

Option B improves conditions for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport on Broad Street. This could improve safety locally and broadly meets the scheme

objective to create a more pedestrian friendly environment. There would be a displacement of traffic from Broad Street which has an impact on the surrounding network, such as Schoolhill which has heavy pedestrian flows and West North Street and Commerce Street corridor. The separation of public transport and general traffic affords some benefits to traffic flows and increases the reliability of bus services. These benefits can be lost by other services due to increase in traffic on the surrounding network. The effect on air quality and noise of this traffic displacement cannot yet be determined but this could impact on Air Quality Management Areas and Candidate Noise Areas within the City Centre. This will be reported at a later date. The changes in access to Broad Street would require a Traffic Regulation Order which it could be expected would be subject to a Public Local Inquiry if there were any unresolved objections. Public support was high for an option that maintained public transport on the route and also for an option that promoted change to the area. In traffic management terms, to a degree supported by public response, there would be a preference to removing taxis from this option to eliminate enforcement issues and unnecessary through traffic.

Option C provides the greatest improvement for pedestrians and cyclists on Broad Street. It provides a fully pedestrianised area which links to further pedestrian priority areas within the City Centre. Public transport can be relocated onto Upperkirkgate in purpose built bus laybys in replacement of the lost timing points on Broad Street. Bus services are rerouted via Schoolhill/ Union Terrace and King Street/ West North Street. These diversions add little to the time of bus journeys and improve reliability to the routes directly affected, there is however some loss of reliability to services remaining on the surrounding network. Option C most closely meets the aspirations of policy and strategy with regards to placemaking and supporting City Centre regeneration. A negative aspect of this option is the potential impact on Air Quality Management Areas and Candidate Noise Areas within the City Centre due to the increase in traffic on the surrounding network. These environmental impacts have not yet been quantified and will be reported on completion of the testing.

Through consideration of each of the options in relation to the relevant STAG and project specific objectives it can be seen that the pedestrianisation of Broad Street between Upperkirkgate and Queen Street most positively meets the assessment criteria.

Further assessment is required to determine the air quality and noise impacts created by the diverted traffic. These impacts may occur on Air Quality Management and Candidate Noise Management Areas which require compliance with EU standards. The assessment of 2017 levels may be determined prior to the Committee meeting of March 2014 and this would be the final element in concluding the Appraisal Summary Table (see Section 6).

This outcome is reliant on:

- To support this change, new bus infrastructure is required on Upperkirkgate to accommodate a relocated timing point with stacking for several buses, as currently available on Broad Street;

- The closure of Flourmill Lane to through traffic is also required to ensure no rat running occurs on that route;
- A loading restriction is required on Schoolhill to minimise the disruption to traffic flows along the route; and
- The Transport Assessment for the development must be shown to support the aims of the Broad Street changes and no detriment to these conditions should occur.

2 Introduction

Following the move of Aberdeen City Council (ACC) from St Nicholas House to the redeveloped Marischal College, ACC sought a developer to redevelop the former Council offices site. After a two stage process the Council considered a report entitled "Property Disposal – Broad Street" on 1 May 2013 from which Muse were appointed preferred bidder status. The Council also instructed officers to prepare a report on the different issues the redevelopment posed for services and infrastructure in the city centre.

Muse's proposal is a mixed use development including office, hotel, retail and restaurant provision. It also envisaged a pedestrianised area between the development and Marischal College - Greyfriars Kirk.

A report to Council on 26th June 2013 identified these wider issues relating to the scheme. One such issue was transportation, a key element of the assessment including how people travel to, around and through the new buildings.

As part of the planning process the site developers will be required to carry out a comprehensive transport assessment (TA) which takes account of the existing movement of people and goods in the area plus local, regional and national policies. This TA must take into account the Council decision with regards to the traffic arrangement on Broad Street.

The Council resolved, at its meeting in June, "to instruct officers to investigate options, including appropriate traffic modelling, for creating a more user-friendly pedestrian environment to form a civic space on Broad Street in advance of the pedestrianisation of Union Street, and that the cost of these investigations be met from the Central Aberdeen Transport Infrastructure budget approved as part of the Non-Housing Capital Programme at the Council Budget meeting of 14 February 2013."

This report details the assessment process undertaken in response to the above instruction and informs the Council, stakeholders and the wider public of the results of the investigation.

This report will provide Members with a clear understanding of the implications should they wish to progress any changes to Broad Street separately and ensures Muse are aware of how their transport assessment, which is prepared to support their planning application, should take account of future traffic management arrangements.

3 Existing Situation on Broad Street and Surrounding Network

Broad Street is located at the eastern end of Union Street, running north westerly to join Gallowgate and Upperkirkgate.

Broad Street is the civic heart of Aberdeen, housing Aberdeen City Council's headquarters at Marischal College and the Town House, along with direct links to Police Scotland's Northern Headquarters and the Sherriff Court.

The remaining premises on Broad Street include a development site, formerly home to Esslemont and Mackintosh with planning permission for conversion into a hotel; a mixed retail, licensed and residential property on Netherkirkgate; and the proposed Marischal Square site, formerly ACC's headquarters at St Nicholas House (OP118 in the Local Development Plan) proposed as mixed retail, offices, hotel and restaurants, and also home to Provost Skene's House. Marischal College is adjoined to Greyfriars Church which is currently vacant with potential for development.

Broad Street benefits from a wide footway outside Marischal College and controlled pedestrian crossings at either end and mid point along the street. The Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) reported between 2,000 and 4,000 of pedestrians on Broad Street during weekdays and between 1,000 and 2,000 pedestrians on Broad Street during weekend days when the surveys were undertaken in 2012. Pedestrians and emergency vehicle only linkage is provided with King Street and West North Street via Queen Street and a pedestrian route is available along Netherkirkgate to Flourmill Lane and then to St Nicholas Street. Upperkirkgate gives pedestrians access to Schoolhill and the major shopping centres and smaller scale shopping, restaurants present there and onwards to the Belmont Street/ Back Wynd area which is semi pedestrianised, with a range of shopping, restaurant and licensed premises, and direct access into the Academy shopping centre.

The National Cycle Network NCN 1 currently passes along Schoolhill, Upperkirkgate and Gallowgate in the vicinity of Broad Street. This section of the route includes advanced stop lines to benefit cyclists at signal junctions however no cycle lanes are provided for users.

Broad Street acts as a timing point for the public transport network enabling services to match their timetables and drivers to change. This results in buses waiting on Broad Street and the need to accommodate up to 3 buses in each direction.

First Bus service numbers 11, 17, 18, 19 and 20 could be re-routed via the existing network on Union Terrace - Schoolhill- Upperkirkgate and Stagecoach service number 727 could be re-routed via Union Street - King Street – West North Street. The re-routing of the above bus services would

increase the frequency of buses on these routes and would impact on traffic flows and servicing/deliveries of existing businesses along these routes.

There is an existing traffic management issue on Schoolhill, outside Robert Gordon College, during the am peak and mid- afternoon period with parents dropping off and picking up their children from school which will be increased if Broad Street were closed to all traffic. Considerations towards a suitable solution would be required.

Aberdeen Railway Station is 10 minutes (0.5 miles) walk from Broad Street with the Bus Station slightly less.

Aberdeen Harbour Ferry Port is 15 minutes (0.8 miles) walk from Broad Street, with other operational areas of the harbour in closer proximity.

4 Structure of Assessment

The assessment process has been determined by a number of factors:

- The need to provide a robust assessment of options to meet the Council instruction;
- The need to provide a robust assessment of options to present at any future Public Local Inquiry into the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders;
- The need to provide a best value option to the Council; and
- The timescale for delivery of the development.

Scottish Transport Assessment Guidance (STAG) is best practise guidance provided by the Scottish Government for the evaluation of strategic transportation projects. The assessment process considers the transport problem(s) that require review by considering the existing conditions, opportunities, constraints and issues, and then looks forward to what the objectives of the scheme are.

The evaluation of the objectives within policies and strategies that have been adopted locally, regionally and nationally will ensure that the project is supportive of these guidelines.

Options should then be developed as opportunities to meet the objectives.

The options are then tested against various criteria. The lists of standard criteria within STAG were proportioned to an appropriate level of detail for a scheme of this scale and the guidance has been applied comprehensively.

The Initial Appraisal considers:

- Transport Planning Objectives;
- STAG Criteria – Environment, Safety, Economy, Integration, and Accessibility and Social Inclusion;

- Established Policy Directives;
- Feasibility;
- Affordability; and
- Public Acceptability.

The report then summarises the results for each section and concludes an option which best meets the above criteria for consideration by the elected Members.

5 Assessment

5.1 Problems and Opportunities

The infrastructure programme for Aberdeen City over the next 5 years present significant opportunities for the City Centre and these have been considered within the traffic model testing of the project options. These opportunities include but are not limited to:

- Impact of planned developments, and the implementation rate of the Aberdeen City Local Development Plan as informed by the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan;
- The construction of South College Street junction improvement, Berryden Corridor and Third Don Crossing prior to 2017;
- The opening of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route by Spring 2018 followed by Haudagain Junction Improvements

Opportunities can also be derived from the proposed development of the former St Nicholas House site, with developer contributions being made to improving the streetscape and the connectivity through the site. The new development would also enhance the built environment and increase the number of people within the area. The proposal to include mixed development including a hotel, retail, restaurants, cafes and offices, will increase footfall within the area and also the hours within which the area will be active.

The confined existing road network within the City Centre provides limited opportunity for large or small scale improvements. Routes are operating at or near capacity with the future network anticipating increased traffic volumes as a result of the significant new development, although transport improvements as identified above will have a positive impact on the circulation of traffic around and through the City Centre. Delays are currently experienced on the public transport network due to these congested routes. The lack of pedestrian friendly areas and linkages within the City Centre has been highlighted through the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) consultation.

5.2 Transport Planning Objective

The Council resolved “to instruct officers to investigate options, including appropriate traffic modelling, for creating a more user-friendly pedestrian

environment to form a civic space on Broad Street in advance of the pedestrianisation of Union Street....”.

With this in mind, the Transport Planning Objective of the scheme is defined as

To create a more user-friendly pedestrian environment to form a civic space on Broad Street.

5.3 Option Development

When considering options to provide a more user-friendly pedestrian environment on Broad Street the existing conditions were considered.

When assessing transportation options, guidance within STAG strongly suggests that a Do Minimum/ Do Nothing option is considered for comparison purposes with broadly the existing situation. This acts as a reference baseline on which to compare the operation and impact of the options, and also ensures that the options demonstrate an improvement to the existing situation.

The obvious way to improve the environment for pedestrians is to reduce the conflict with traffic enabling pedestrians to gain priority along the route. In view of the volume of bus services currently routing through Broad Street and the importance of this timing point to the operation of services, it was agreed to consider a bus and taxi only option for the length of Broad Street between Gallowgate and Queen Street. This option allowed general through traffic to be removed enabling part pedestrianisation of the route. Consideration of this option therefore includes the impact of the rerouted traffic on the adjacent and wider road network.

Currently pedestrians are provided with controlled crossing points at three points along the route and even with only buses and taxis using this section of road these crossing points would still be required for vulnerable users.

One further option therefore was to determine the benefits of removing all traffic from the route, i.e. fully pedestrianising the length between Gallowgate and Queen Street.

To summarise

Option A – Do Nothing/ Do Minimum – The traffic remains as existing.

Option B – Bus and Taxi Only – Public transport provision remains on the route whilst general traffic is rerouted through the adjacent and wider network.

Option C – Pedestrianisation – No through traffic on Broad Street between Gallowgate and Queen Street.

It should be noted there are a number of variations of the options which are based on the Options A, B and C which have not been included within the consultation process. These variations include a potential bus only option on Broad Street and a potential one way option for Broad Street.

5.4 STAG Criteria

This section considers each option against the STAG criteria.

5.4.1 Environment

Air Quality

Parts of the City Centre, including Market St, Union St, Guild St, Commerce St, Virginia St, Bridge St and parts of King St, Holburn St and Victoria Rd, Torry, are included within a designated Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) due to the exceedance of national annual air quality objectives for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particles (PM₁₀) across the area and exceedances of the 1-hour NO₂ objective and 24 hour PM₁₀ objective at specific locations. The mandatory EU nitrogen dioxide annual mean standard is also exceeded.

The following table summarises air quality concentrations and the number of properties affected, based on 2010 data. Annual mean NO₂ levels over the period 2002-2012 have remained fairly constant although PM₁₀ levels have reduced slightly.

Air Quality Summary (taken from the Air Quality Action Plan 2011)

AQMA	Area	Typical Maximum annual mean Concentrations (1g/m ³)		Maximum Reduction Required to meet mandatory NO ₂ Objective		Estimated properties currently exposed to concentrations in excess of Objectives
		NO ₂	PM ₁₀	NO ₂ (1g/m ³)	Road NO _x Emissions (%)	
City Centre	Union St / Holburn St / Guild St area	50-70	24-26	up to ~30	~75%	Hundreds (100-1000)
	Market St / Commerce St area	50-70	26-29	up to ~30	~70%	Tens (10-100)
	King St area	50-65	26-28	up to ~25	~75%	Hundreds (100-1000)

NO₂ Annual mean national and EU objective: 40ugm-3

PM₁₀ Annual mean national objective: 18ugm-3 (EU objective 40ugm-3)

Road traffic is recognised as the being the most significant contributor to the raised pollution levels, accounting for up to 90% of the total NO₂ concentrations. In the most polluted areas, traffic emission reductions of the

order of 50-75% would be required for compliance with the mandatory EU NO₂ annual mean limit value.

For each of the Broad Street options there are advantages and disadvantages in terms of air quality. The key consideration is how the increases and decreases impact on the existing AQMAs and on relevant receptors such as residential properties. Air quality modelling is based on predicted traffic changes resulting from a development. Due to the issues being experienced through the traffic modelling process, it has not been possible within the timescales of this report to model air quality changes and to fully determine the impacts of the options. Air quality modelling is therefore on-going and this section will be updated as soon as this data is available.

The Council's Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) describes measures to improve air quality in the City's 3 AQMAs. These include road infrastructure measures such as the AWPR and Union Street pedestrianisation, actions to encourage modal shift, the uptake of cleaner vehicles and the development of planning policies.

The Environmental Protection Team within the Council's Environment Service is concerned that the pedestrianisation of Broad St, which was not identified in the Action Plan as a measure that would improve air quality, may cause increased pollution levels at receptors within the AQMA and may impact on the viability of other measures within the Plan, particularly Union Street pedestrianisation. The team is therefore currently unable to comment on the air quality implications of options.

Once further data is available, this section will be updated.

Noise

The Environmental Noise (Scotland) Regulations 2006, which transposed the EU Noise Directive (END) introduced strategic noise mapping and noise action planning for large urban areas, major transport corridors and major airports. Under the regulations Scottish Ministers must prepare Strategic Noise Maps and Noise Action Plans which identify Quiet Areas (QAs) and Noise Management Areas (NMAs) and include measures to manage noise. Aberdeen came under the scope of the regulations in 2013.

The City was mapped for transportation noise and a draft Noise Action Plan published for public consultation in September 2013. A final Action Plan will be submitted to Scottish Ministers in February/March 2014. The draft Action Plan identified 20 Candidate Noise Management Areas (CNMAs), including the following in the City Centre:

Candidate Noise Management Area (CNMA)
Littlejohn St, Mealmarket St, King St
King St at St Clair St
Union St at Dee St
Rennie's Wynd, Wapping St, Carmelite St, Trinity St, Guild St
Market St, Union St, Netherkirkgate
Market St, Virginia St, Shore Brae
Victoria Rd at Walker Rd
Holburn St at Union St

The CNMAs will be assessed during 2014 to identify those that are appropriate to progress to Noise Management Areas. It is anticipated the majority of CNMAs will become NMAs.

Unlike air quality there is currently no specified target noise levels that member states must achieve. The requirement is for the development of Action Plans that will manage noise in the noisiest locations of major agglomerations. As with air quality, the proposed options will result in areas of increased and decreased noise levels within the CNMAs and at other residential properties. The Environmental Protection Team currently has no information on potential locations of increased or decreased noise and consequently cannot comment on the noise implications of options for Broad Street.

5.4.2 Safety

Accident statistics have been provided for the 3 year period 2010 to 2012. These highlight sixteen slight and eight serious injury accidents along Broad Street, Gallowgate, Schoolhill and Union Terrace with the majority of them involving pedestrians (sixteen pedestrians, seven passengers and four drivers/ riders).

Options B and C would have an impact on safety with a likely positive improvement for areas removing traffic and negative for those subject to increased traffic volumes. It would therefore be suggested that road safety impacts would be neutral.

5.4.3 Economy

This section has not been assessed.

5.4.4 Integration

As detailed above in Section 5.1, the implementation of substantial infrastructure improvements within the City will assist in managing traffic within the network to support the options under consideration.

The improvement of Aberdeen City Centre is of great concern to ACC and as such a City Centre Regeneration Board has been formed to drive forward the regeneration of the area.

What cannot be fully determined, at this time, is how the scheme will integrate with:

- The future actions from the Sustainable Urban Management Plan;
- The future actions from the City Centre Regeneration Board; and
- The City Centre Masterplan.

These on-going and future projects will have a requirement to meet the policy and strategy objectives previously established locally, regionally and nationally, similar to the Broad Street project (see section 5.4 for details) and therefore integration should be achieved.

The integration of the options with Union Street Pedestrianisation (USP) has been considered at a high level through a 2023 traffic model. This considers USP with its associated traffic management and major infrastructure measures as defined at this time. Whilst USP was previously agreed as a commitment for ACC for implementation following AWPR, the timescale delays for delivery mean there is now a need to re-test the options for the scheme, this means that the final scheme details have yet to be confirmed or detailed. This has created difficulties for testing the model conclusively. Further design work is necessary on the model for South College Street Corridor improvements and this may in turn require further iterations of testing within the network as a whole. These works are outwith the scope of the Broad Street study and are programmed to be undertaken over the coming months.

5.4.5 Accessibility and Social Inclusion

Option A - No Change

Pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities will not benefit from this option; similarly public transport is not improved. General traffic will not be diverted and therefore would be able to use the network as they are currently permitted.

Option B – Bus and Taxi only

Pedestrians and cyclists will benefit from reduced traffic volumes on Broad Street. This will allow them greater priority. Those reliant on public transport will be unaffected as bus routes will remain as they are at present. People wishing to access the disabled parking spaces on Queen Street will be required to access these from the Union Street/Broad Street junction. General traffic will be diverted onto the surrounding network, increasing congestion on

key corridors. This congestion will have some impact on public transport times and reliability on certain corridors.

Option C – Pedestrianisation

Pedestrians would benefit most from this option which allows them priority over the area. A cycle route through the area would be maintained. People with disabilities and vulnerable pedestrians would have a safer freedom of movement. Public transport access would be removed from Broad Street and relocated to nearby Upperkirkgate with minimal change to the distance from the existing bus stops to the front door of Marischal College. Increased traffic volumes on Schoolhill (NCN 1) will decrease amenity for pedestrians and cyclists on this route. Reduced volumes on Gallowgate (NCN 1) will improve amenity for active modes long the corridor. General traffic will be re-routed through the network increasing congestion on key corridors. This congestion will have some impact on public transport times and reliability on certain corridors.

Deliveries and servicing on Schoolhill will be impacted by Options B and C as the route will require a peak time loading restriction to ensure traffic flows are maintained along the route.

5.5 Established Policy Directives

National Policy requires the creation and maintenance a transport system to support sustainable economic growth. Designing Streets recommends that places are distinctive, safe and pleasant, easy to move around, welcoming, adaptable and resource efficient. Cycle Action Plan for Scotland seeks to ensure that cycling is considered within the road network and that cycling for every day trips is increased, with a vision of 10% of all trips to be made by bike by 2020.

Regional Policy seeks to encourage an integrated multimodal transport network which promotes the use of sustainable modes, reducing emissions and improving air quality. The network must enhance accessibility and safety for all users, particularly the disadvantaged and vulnerable. It supports City Centre redevelopment and the creation of interesting and enjoyable locations. Local Policy focuses on creating a clean, safe and attractive streetscape, supported by a sustainable transport system and reduced carbon emissions. These policies support the improvement of the city centre as a major retail centre, to be a safe and pleasant place, easy to move around and to create open space when it is recognised that there are limited opportunities for more. The policy review indicated that in the main, options B and C would align with a variety of the policy documents visions, aims and objectives. Option A would have a neutral effect.

Option A – maintains the status quo and does not provide benefit to the Broad Street corridor in terms of sense of place, with limited scope to increase the open space and adaptability of space within the area. It would neither improve nor be detrimental to air quality within the City Centre.

Option B – promotes the use of sustainable modes on Broad Street and provides opportunities for increased pedestrian priority in the area. This adds to the adaptability of the route and reduces traffic impacts. The rerouted traffic may have impacts elsewhere on the network in terms of reduced air quality.

Option C – enables the creation of a fully pedestrian-friendly, open space, linking with other pedestrian priority areas within the City Centre. The public transport services are re-routed to nearby locations for accessing the municipal buildings. General traffic will be re-routed and may have a detrimental effect on air quality on the wider network.

5.6 Feasibility

The feasibility of this scheme can be considered in three ways. Firstly can the options be physically implemented, then can the options be legally supported and finally, can the options be achieved within the constrained city centre traffic network.

- Physical implementation for each of the options does not present too much concern. It is likely that existing public utility services running underneath the existing footways and carriageway will impact streetscape design to a degree however no significant issues are anticipated. Any significant changes to the physical layout must accommodate for all users and should be agreed with Aberdeen City Council officers prior to implementation.
- Both Option B and Option C include the removal of traffic currently permitted to travel on Broad Street for over 8 hours per day therefore to change these existing access entitlements a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) must be promoted. This process will take 8-12 months. A Public Local Inquiry (PLI) will be required if any outstanding objections to the TRO cannot be resolved at the end of the TRO process. The PLI will hear both sides of the argument and the decision will be determined by an independent arbiter. This process could be expected to take 18 – 24 months.
- A traffic modelling study has been undertaken to determine if the proposed changes to the network can be accommodated on the future network at the proposed date of opening and at a future year following implementation of AWPR and USP. The full report is recommended reading however the following summarises the key points for consideration of the options.

Following the construction of a new 2013 Aberdeen City Centre Base Model, a 2017 Reference Case model was constructed to undertake the Broad Street study, taking into consideration the Local Development Plans for both Aberdeen City and Shire Councils.

The 2017 Reference Case model includes ASAM future year matrices and also demand from various committed developments within Aberdeen City Centre, giving an uplift of 9-12% over 2012 levels. The model also includes several infrastructure changes which are due for completion before 2017.

Three scenarios were tested in the 2017 model network.

Test 1 A - has the complete closure on Broad Street from Queen Street to Upperkirkgate, resulting in the diversion of public transport and general traffic. Bus stops H1 and H2 on Broad Street are no longer in use and are replaced

by new stop R2 and existing stop R1 on Upperkirkgate. Both stops R1 and R2 are dynamic stops in this scenario (i.e. accommodate 2 buses at one time).

Test 1 B – has a complete closure on Broad Street from Queen Street to Upperkirkgate resulting in the diversion of public transport and general traffic. Bus stops H1 and H2 on Broad Street are no longer in use and are replaced by new stop R2 and existing stop R1 on Upperkirkgate. Both stops R1 and R2 are non dynamic stops in this scenario (i.e. accommodate 1 bus at one time).

Test 2 - has a Bus and Taxi only restriction on Broad Street from Queen Street to Upperkirkgate, resulting in the diversion of general traffic only. Stops H1 and H2 on Broad Street remain in place.

Flourmill Lane has been closed to all traffic as a through route in all models.

Model Test Results

The results of the model testing provide the following results in the 2017 short term:

- The model suggests that the full closure or routing restrictions on Broad Street will result in the traffic migrating to primarily the East North Street corridor, with some further re- routing to the Denburn corridor and to Schoolhill/ Union Terrace.
- General traffic journey times are observed to reduce through Gallowgate and increase through Schoolhill and Union Terrace and also slightly on Union Street in all test scenarios. Test 2 results do not show the same level of journey time reduction on Gallowgate as Test 1.
- For public transport, there is little difference in the overall average journey time for the affected public transport in all test scenarios. The impact on buses re-routing via Schoolhill/ Union Terrace from Union Street/ Broad Street does not appear to have a detrimental impact on journey times across the modelled area.
- There is a consistent improvement to bus reliability in Test 1A and more so in Test 2 (due to the segregation between buses and routing traffic on Broad Street)
- Test 1B shows net dis-benefit to bus reliability which suggests that the dynamic bus stops (as provided in Test 1A) provide an improvement to the reliability of the bus services which have been re-routed from Broad Street.

In the 2023 long term:

- When considering the long term implications of options for Broad Street, the Union Street pedestrianisation scheme is likely to have a significant impact on the use and requirement for Broad Street as a route through the City Centre both for public transport and general traffic.
- High level modelling has indicated that the traffic demand on Broad Street would reduce significantly under a USP scheme with network mitigation. This would be due to the limited routing options in the core area of the City Centre (e.g. Market Street bus and taxi only between Union Street and Guild Street)

- *An assessment of the implications to public transport of the USP including network mitigation, suggests that the majority of bus services would require to be routed away from Broad Street via Schoolhill – Gallowgate, with additional bus stopping facilities proposed on Schoolhill. Only two bus services would potentially remain on Broad Street (Service No.'s 20 and 727)*

5.7. Affordability

Whilst the implementation of the Broad Street options would not be substantial in terms of Traffic Regulation Orders and revised road layout, the intention for the wider Marischal Square scheme is to create a number of public spaces including a Civic Square on Broad Street which would be a showcase area for the City. Within the development proposal agreed by ACC the Developer had identified a sum of £5.65M for public realm works throughout the development and tying into Broad Street. Of this sum around £1.8 million has been provisionally allocated for the creation of a civic square on Broad Street. As the preferred option has yet to be agreed or designed it is not possible to confirm if this sum will be fully sufficient for the works and therefore there may be a requirement for a contribution to the cost of implementation from ACC.

Works to support the various options would also need to be considered. This would be inclusive of a recalibration of the SCOOT traffic signals system to maximise the operation of traffic signals within the City Centre.

As the streetscape revisions are required for all options the variation in costs between the Options is minimal in relation to the supporting traffic management requirements. Option A requires traffic management and therefore is more affordable. Whilst differences exist between Option B and Option C these are negligible in terms of the overall scheme costs.

Maintenance costs for the final streetscape would rest with ACC. Again these have yet to be determined.

5.8 Public Acceptability

5.8.1 Public Consultation Summary

Public consultation was held between 30 October and 2 November 2013, with questionnaires available until 22 November 2013. Participants were asked to provide their first, second and third choices for Broad Street based on discussions with officers present and the details provided in the display.

The results are shown below.

Broad Street Options	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
Option A – No Change	23%	11%	23%
Option B – Bus & Taxi Only	29%	30%	4%
Option C – Full	47%	7%	18%

Pedestrianisation	1%	52%	55%
No Option indicated			
Totals	100%	100%	100%

An initial review of the figures suggested the Option C is the favoured first choice with further analysis showing that the majority (76%) of the public support the removal of some or all traffic from Broad Street. This suggests that the majority of those taking part want to see change on Broad Street.

However there were comments received from a large number of consultees concerned over the existing road network and infrastructure's ability to successfully accommodate the diverted traffic if Broad Street was fully pedestrianised.

It can also be seen that a narrow majority of 52% of respondees wanted buses and taxis to remain on site as a first choice. This can also be supported by the volume of respondees who chose Option B as their second choice.

5.8.2 Stakeholder consultation summary

Police Scotland indicated that the main impact for their operations would be the delays to response times if Broad Street was closed to all traffic. It was pointed out, by Police Scotland, that if they were responding to an emergency situation, in any of the areas mentioned above, they would still be permitted to have access through Broad Street.

The Disability Advisory Group highlighted the requirement for disabled access to the area if Broad Street were closed.

Aberdeen Cycle Forum made no comments regarding the proposal.

The Taxi Consultation Group indicated that Option A or B would be their preferred option as they thought the existing road network and infrastructure did not have capacity to accommodate the decanted traffic from Broad Street if this section were to be closed to all traffic.

During the public transport consultations First Aberdeen stated that to close Broad St and put buses on Schoolhill would increase the number of buses on the route by 20 eastbound and 22 westbound per hour. It was highlighted that Schoolhill is narrow in places (stop L2) and it is not possible to pass buses which are stopped at existing on-street bus stops.

It was also highlighted that the existing pedestrian crossing between the Bon Accord and St Nicholas Shopping Centres was a busy crossing facility where pedestrians crossed freely in between green man sequences.

First Aberdeen highlighted that their assistance in discussions regarding the proposals did not indicate support for the proposal to remove bus services from Broad Street. Their preferred option was for bus services to remain operational on Broad Street.

Stagecoach confirmed the 727 Airport route was their only current service on Broad Street. It was agreed this service could be rerouted along King Street. No significant concerns were raised with the removal of the service from Broad Street.

The greater concern was the impact of rerouted vehicles on the network as a whole.

6 Results

Proposed table of summary comments coloured up to show degree of impact. This is not expected to be taken out of context of the full review within this report.

Appraisal Summary Table

Objective	Option A	Option B	Option C
Transport Planning Objective	0	+1	+2
STAG Criteria			
Environmental	0	Undefined (but may be -ve)	Undefined (but may be -ve)
Safety	0	0	0
Integration	0	0	+1
Accessibility and Social Inclusion	0	+1	+1
Policy Directives	-1	+1	+1
Feasibility	0	+1	+1
Affordability	+2	+1	+1
Public Acceptability	+1	+2	+2
Stakeholder Consultation	+1	+1	0
General Result	0	+1	+1/+2

Greater Positive Impact on Objective	+2
Positive Impact on Objective	+1
Neutral Impact on Objective	0
Negative impact on Objective	-1
Greater negative Impact on Objective	-2

7 Conclusions

Through consideration of each of the options in relation to the relevant STAG and project specific objectives it can be seen that the pedestrianisation of Broad Street between Upperkirkgate and Queen Street most positively meets the assessment criteria.

Further assessment is required to determine the air quality and noise impacts created by the diverted traffic. These impacts may occur on Air Quality Management and Candidate Noise Management Areas which require compliance with EU standards. The assessment of 2017 levels may be determined prior to the Committee meeting of March 2014 and this would be the final element in concluding the Appraisal Summary Table (see Section 6).

This outcome is reliant on:

- New bus infrastructure on Upperkirkgate to accommodate a relocated timing point with stacking for several buses, as currently available on Broad Street;
- The closure of Flourmill Lane to through traffic to ensure no rat running occurs on that route;
- A loading restriction on Schoolhill to minimise the disruption to traffic flows along the route; and
- Recalibration of the SCOOT traffic signal network.

APPENDIX B



Equality and Human Rights Impact

Assessment - the Form

There are separate guidance notes to accompany this form – “Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment – the Guide.” Please use these guidance notes as you complete this form. Throughout the form, **proposal** should be understood broadly to include the full range of our activities and could refer to a decision, policy, strategy, plan, procedure, report or business case, embracing a range of different actions such as setting budgets, developing high level strategies and organisational practices such as internal restructuring. Essentially everything we do!

STEP 1: Identify essential information

1. Committee Report No. ESPI/14/008

2. Name of proposal.

Broad Street Civic Square Assessment

3. Officer(s) completing this form.

Name	Designation	Service	Directorate
Vycki Ritson	Senior Engineer	P&SD	ESP&I

4. Date of Impact Assessment. 14.2.14
5. When is the proposal next due for review? Not yet determined
6. Committee Name. Council
7. Date the Committee is due to meet. 5.3.14

8. Identify the Lead Council Service and who else is involved in delivering this proposal (for example other Council services or partner agencies).

The proposed Traffic Regulation Order that will be required, if this report recommendation is taken up, will be progressed by ESP&I and associated works will be undertaken by the Developer Partner, Muse, for Marischal Square.

9. Please summarise this Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA). This must include any practical actions you intend to take or have taken to reduce, justify or remove any adverse negative impacts. This must also include a summary of how this proposal complies with the public sector equality duty for people with protected characteristics - see Step 2. **Please return to this question after completing the EHRIA.**

This project is to provide a more pedestrian friendly environment on Broad Street and it is proposed within the report to ESP&I in March that the option to pedestrianize Broad Street between Upperkirkgate and Queen Street is taken forward. This option would require changes to the streetscape which will be carried out by the developer for the new Marischal Square development under supervision of officers from ACC. The streetscape will require to be DDA compliant. The option to pedestrianize Broad Street will benefit vulnerable pedestrians on Broad Street by removing conflict with motorised vehicles. Cycle access to the site will be managed within the streetscape design. A Traffic Regulation Order would be required for the change of use of the route. This will require to progress through formal public and stakeholder consultation.

10. Where will you publish the results of the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment? Tick which applies.

- Para 9 of EHRIA will be published in committee report in Section 6 "Impact"
- Full EHRIA will be attached to the committee report as an appendix
- Copied to Equalities Team to publish on the Council website

STEP 2: Outline the aims of the proposal

11. What are the main aims of the proposal?

The proposal is to provide a more pedestrian friendly environment on Broad Street, in the form of a civic square, to support the redevelopment of the former St Nicholas House site (now called Marischal Square).

12. Who will benefit most from the proposal?

Pedestrians in the vicinity of Marischal College and the new development will benefit most from the proposal. With through traffic removed the area will be safer for vulnerable pedestrians.

13. You should assess the impact of your proposal on equality groups and tell us how implementing this proposal will impact on the needs of the public sector equality duty to: eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations.

The option will provide a safer route for pedestrians accessing and moving through the area. Public transport services will be relocated to Schoolhill/ Union Terrace corridor or King Street/ West North Street corridor. These routes have been chosen for their proximity to the existing routes and their accessibility to Broad Street. New infrastructure will be required, in the form of new and extended bus stops on Upperkirkgate to accommodate the rerouted services. The routing of cyclists through the area will also be considered to reduce conflict with vulnerable pedestrians.

STEP 3: Gather and consider evidence

15. What **evidence** is there to identify any potential positive or negative impacts in terms of involvement, consultation, research, officer knowledge and experience, equality monitoring data, user feedback and other? You must consider relevant evidence, including evidence from equality groups.

Consultation with the Disability Advisory Group has been carried out on the proposals and traffic management officers have reviewed the proposals for issues. The streetscape design will be important to assist visually impaired people around the site. The proposed removal of traffic will benefit hearing and visually impaired users within the area.

STEP 4: Assess likely impacts on people with Protected Characteristics

16. Which, if any, people with protected characteristics and others could be affected positively or negatively by this proposal? Place the symbol in the relevant box. Be aware of cross-cutting issues, such as older women with a disability experiencing poverty and isolation.

(Positive +, neutral 0, - negative)

Protected Characteristics					
Age - Younger	+	Disability	+	Gender Reassignment*	0
Older					

Marriage or Civil Partnership	0	Pregnancy and Maternity	0	Race**	0
Religion or Belief	0	Sex (gender)***	0	Sexual orientation****	0
Others e.g. poverty	0				

Notes:

* Gender Reassignment includes Transsexual

** Race includes Gypsy/Travellers

*** Sex (gender) i.e. men, women

**** Sexual orientation includes LGB: Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual

17. Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts on those with protected characteristics you have highlighted above.

In making the assessment you must consider relevant evidence, including evidence received from individuals and equality groups. Having considered all of these elements, you must take account of the results of such assessments. This requires you to consider taking action to address any issues identified, such as removing or mitigating any negative impacts, where possible, and exploiting any potential for positive impact. If any adverse impact amounts to **unlawful discrimination**, the policy must be amended to avert this. Detail the impacts and describe those affected.

Positive impacts (describe protected characteristics affected)	Negative Impacts (describe protected characteristics affected)
Older people or those with disabilities would benefit will benefit from reduced conflict with vehicles whilst on Broad Street.	Those with mobility issues currently using bus services 11, 17, 18 and 19 will be displaced from their current route along Union Street between Broad Street and Bridge Street. This will impact them if they wish to access this section of Broad Street however new stops have been provided at points to compensate for this loss. Similarly, bus services 20 and 727 will be rerouted via West North Street/ King Street from Broad Street/ Gallowgate. This may have an impact on existing users with mobility issues.

STEP 5: Human Rights - Apply the three key assessment tests for compliance assurance

18. Does this proposal/policy/procedure have the potential to interfere with an individual's rights as set out in the Human Rights Act 1998? State which rights might be affected by ticking the appropriate box(es) and saying how. **If you answer "no", go straight to question 22. - No**

- Article 3 – Right not to be subjected to torture, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment
- Article 6 – Right to a fair and public hearing
- Article 8 – Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence
- Article 10 – freedom of expression
- Other article not listed above

How?

Legality

19. Where there is a potential negative impact is there a legal basis in the relevant domestic law?

Legitimate aim

20. Is the aim of the policy identified in Steps 1 and 2 a legitimate aim being served in terms of the relevant equality legislation or the Human Rights Act?

Proportionality

21. Is the impact of the policy proportionate to the legitimate aim being pursued? Is it the minimum necessary interference to achieve the legitimate aim?

STEP 6: Monitor and review

22. How will you monitor the implementation of the proposal? (For example, customer satisfaction questionnaires)

Consultation will be undertaken with DAG and feedback will be monitored and acted upon where required.

23. How will the results of this impact assessment and any further monitoring be used to develop the proposal?

The situation will be monitored and the scheme will be implemented in line with DDA guidance.

STEP 7 SIGN OFF

The final stage of the EHRIA is formally to sign off the document as being a complete, rigorous and robust assessment.

Person(s) completing the impact assessment.

Name	Date	Signature
Vycki Ritson	14.02.14	

Quality check: document has been checked by

Name	Date	Signature

Head of Service (Sign-off)

Name	Date	Signature