

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	16 December 2015
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Transport Implication – City Centre Masterplan Projects
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/15/299
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report advises Members of the results of the transportation assessment and traffic modelling undertaken for the City Centre Masterplan (CCMP) interventions for Broad Street, Schoolhill/Upperkirkgate, Golden Square, Bon Accord Square, Schoolhill Pocket Park, Castlegate and Queen Street.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Council agrees:-

- i) the outcomes of transportation assessment and traffic modelling of the above named CCMP interventions;

And in doing so agrees:

- ii) The preferred option for Broad Street is a bus and cyclist only route between Upperkirkgate and Queen Street and instructs officers to undertake the necessary statutory procedures for the Traffic Regulation Order, reporting back to the Communities Housing and Infrastructure Committee on the outcomes;
- iii) To note the public transport mitigations identified as necessary along Union Terrace to support the preferred option for Broad Street and instructs officers to develop a traffic management plan for Union Terrace report back to elected Members at the first possible opportunity;

- iv) To instruct officers to engage with Muse with a view to developing a preferred design and layout for Broad Street and to report back to members as soon as practicably possible for approval and to agree that Muse be appointed to undertake the design and construction on the Council's behalf subject to the costs being monitored by officers on an 'open book' basis;
- v) That Castlegate should not be reopened to traffic and Queen Street should not be opened to through traffic at the junction of West North Street; and
- vi) To instruct officers to develop and consult on options for Golden Square, Schoolhill Pocket Park and Castlegate and return to Members with a full business case including engagement outcomes, a preferred option, detailed design and costs, any Traffic Regulation Order implications and proposed time line/resource for implementation.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Contributions of up to £1.12m are available for public realm works on Broad Street from Muse. As Muse undertook initial design work as part of their initial planning application there are both time and financial advantages of working with them to complete the design and construction of this area by their contractor. If public realm works exceed these contributions the extra spend will be met within the £20m City Centre Regeneration non-housing capital budget. It is likely the £1.12m contribution will cover the majority of the public realm work on Broad Street as the cost of the works in the City Centre Masterplan and delivery programme is estimated at £0.4m.
- 3.2 The financial implications for Golden Square, Schoolhill Pocket Park and Castlegate will be detailed in the full business cases to be reported to Members during 2016. Any costs for these projects could be met from the City Centre Regeneration budget.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Any intervention on Broad Street should aim to be completed for the scheduled opening of Marischal Square in July 2017. Should Members instruct an option for Broad Street that affects bus routes, it is likely that the statutory process could take up to three years due to the risk of a public hearing if objections from bus operators remain unresolved by Aberdeen City Council. Discussions continue with bus operators on this and a range of transport network issues that influence public transport.
- 4.2 Similarly, any interventions on Schoolhill Pocket Park and Golden Square should align with the scheduled opening of Aberdeen Art Gallery and Aberdeen Music Hall in December 2017.

- 4.3 Traffic regulation orders for the localised CCMP interventions at Schoolhill Pocket Park and Golden Square should take no longer than 6 to 9 months to progress following the agreement of preferred options assuming appropriate access and loading requirements of the adjacent properties has been taken into account. Traffic regulation orders for Broad Street and any associated supporting traffic management should also take a similar timescale, assuming no hearing is required.

The TRO processes can be undertaken using existing internal resource.

- 4.4 Should public hearings be generated by the promotion of any proposals within the CCMP, additional resource support from Legal and specialist consultants may also require to be identified to enable the Council to defend the proposals. The production and approval of a City centre/ city wide detailed implementation and delivery plan would also be necessary for the successful defence of a 20 year phased implementation programme for the CCMP.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1.1 On 15 September 2015, Finance, Policy and Resources requested that officers undertake further transport modelling to take account of the transport implications associated with the masterplan proposal's for Broad Street and Schoolhill/ Upperkirkgate and to consider the implications on areas such as Castlegate, Schoolhill Pocket Park, Queen Street, Golden Square and Bon Accord Square and report its findings to the Council in December 2015.
- 5.1.2 At the Council meeting on 24 June 2015, the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan and Delivery Plan was agreed unanimously as well as an agreement that the Chief Executive would report to the Finance, Policy and Resource Committee on 15 September 2015 with a proposed programme of enabling works and activities for the city centre.
- 5.1.3 The June 2015 Council meeting also resolved that each project will be subject to detailed scrutiny and the normal development control processes and to agree in principle the interventions set out in the City Centre Masterplan and Delivery Programme. It was also noted that due diligence will be undertaken in relation to the financial, legal and all other implications on each project or programme of activity contained within the City Centre Masterplan and that it falls to the Council to deliver, with the results of this due diligence being reported to committee ahead of any decision being taken to proceed.
- 5.1.4 Prior to the above, the Council, at its meeting on 5th March 2014 resolved to agree that full pedestrianisation of Broad Street between Upperkirkgate and Queen Street best meets the objectives of the project and also agreed to investigate the feasibility of re-opening the

Castlegate to traffic and the opening of Queen Street at the junction of West North Street.

5.1.5 These decisions have all been considered in this assessment as part of the due diligence process.

5.2 City Centre Masterplan Context

5.2.1 The masterplan, a vision for the city centre for the next 20-25 years, was a design led process and was refined through consultation with the public and stakeholders without any modelling of transport impacts.

5.2.2 All CCPM interventions require to be subject to the appropriate levels of due diligence, including the modelling of transport impacts, before they are considered for implementation.

5.2.3 The City Centre Masterplan states that the dominance of car movement over people in Aberdeen impacts on the quality and the perception of the open spaces and streets making it less attractive for the pedestrians. The high level public realm strategy captured in the masterplan aims to enhance the setting of buildings and spaces in order to encourage people to live, work and visit the city centre. This will help change perceptions of Aberdeen to a living city for everyone, which will thereby encourage business and trade to grow in the city centre. As well as improved connectivity for both pedestrians and cyclists, it is recognised that the retention of public transport permeability is key to a successful city centre.

5.2.4 The city centre masterplan received significant support from the public during the consultation process. Within the responses, 83% agreed that more space was required for people. However, this needs to be considered alongside the 71% who agreed that the city centre needs to retain vehicle access and public transport.

5.2.5 The City Centre Masterplan, as approved at full Council on 24th June 2015, includes the following proposals related to the above instructions:

- EN01 Broad Street: The space between Marischal College and the Marischal Square development will retain bus movements on a day to day basis but will be designed in a manner so that it can be transformed into an event ready space on special occasions
- EN06 Upperkirkgate / Schoolhill: The removal of all traffic from the central area of Upperkirkgate and a considerable reduction in traffic elsewhere creates the opportunity to enhance north / south connectivity and the retail environment
- EN07 Castlegate: Castlegate will be presented as the 'central civic space' for Aberdeen, providing a strong focus and identity for the

city centre. This will be a high quality space that responds to the rich architecture and strong urban design structure, forming a desired destination at the end of Union Street. The design approach will be minimalist and defined, adding clarity to the geometry of the space with high quality natural stone materials and lighting.

- CM02 Queen Street: A new residential led mixed use development opportunity created by the relocation of existing public sector land uses (townhouse extension, police and courts) potentially to the Marischal College eastern annex or elsewhere in the city centre. The redevelopment of these buildings creates the scope for new city centre housing, ground floor commercial uses and a network of public spaces.
- EN09 Golden Square: Re-engineering of this space from a vehicle dominated car park towards to a public square and events space associated with the Music Hall.
- EN10 Bon Accord Square: Removal of some car parking and enhanced greening of this square.

5.3 City Centre Transport Network

5.3.1 The city centre strategic transport network comprises a series of linked primary and district distributor routes carrying the majority of people and goods movements into, through and around the city centre. This is evidenced by the very high volumes of all traffic, including pedestrians, on roads such as Union Street, Market Street, King Street, Holburn Street etc. Increasing volumes of traffic in the city centre exacerbates existing congestion, particularly on these sometimes over capacity strategic routes and any impact for example, vehicle breakdown, traffic signal failure or temporary traffic management, has significant effects on the overall network's performance by extending congestion periods beyond the traditional peaks. In some cases localised gridlock occurs, which can very quickly ripple out and impact on the wider transportation network affecting areas out with the city centre and beyond. Such impacts affect a significant proportion of the travelling public at these times, whether in the city centre or out with.

5.3.2 When considering the masterplan there are four strategic transport projects which impact directly on the movement of everyone within and out-with the city centre i.e. Broad Street, Schoolhill/Upperkirkgate, Union Street and Guild Street as these result in widespread redistribution of traffic beyond the city centre.

5.3.3 The less strategic parts of the transport network generally carry nominal or low volumes of pedestrian, vehicles and goods movements and are mostly of a very local access nature, with some even being

inaccessible by the largest vehicles. They do not directly contribute to the strategic mass movement of people and goods in general and in particular provide no real advantage in terms of journey times. CCMP projects on such parts of the transport network are discussed in the next section.

5.4 Non Strategic Network Interventions – Considerations

5.4.1 In view of the above paragraph 5.3.3, any planned interventions for Golden Square, Castlegate, Schoolhill Pocket Park, Queen Street and Bon Accord Square – all minor roads with limited access needs - will be very localised and will only impact the immediate environment and movement.

5.4.2 Looking at two of the locations in particular, Castlegate and Queen Street, as these were identified in 2014 by Council for further examination, their current relationship to the surrounding area is more about the place than their traffic function. This is discussed in more detail in the relevant project assessment at paragraph 5.4.3 and 5.4.6 respectively.

5.4.3 Queen Street

Queen Street and its adjacent buildings form the Queen Square intervention area, as detailed in the masterplan. It will form a new residential led mixed use development opportunity created by the relocation of existing public sector land uses (town house extension, police and courts) potentially to the Marischal College eastern annex or elsewhere in the city centre. The redevelopment of these buildings creates the scope for new city centre housing, ground floor commercial uses and a network of public spaces.

The masterplan aims to create a less car dominated space than at present. With options on Broad Street limiting the overall amount of vehicle movements in the wider area, the reopening of Queen Street onto West North Street would provide a convenient alternative route for traffic thereby prejudicing the aims for the redevelopment of the area, including proposals for the Arts Centre.

The possible re-connection of Queen Street to the West / East North Street junction provides no strategic advantage in journey times and potentially creates a rat-run where none currently exists. The opening of this street will require a complex five way signalised junction at King Street and will remove green time from the existing strategic network.

5.4.4 Golden Square and Bon Accord Square

The masterplan has a vision for Golden Square to transform it from a car park to a public square and events space to support the Music Hall refurbishment. The design will redefine South Silver Street as a

pedestrian priority zone but to retain necessary servicing and access arrangements for the operation of the Music Hall. This public realm intervention would link with the proposals for Union Street and Union Terrace Gardens.

The Music Hall refurbishment is due to be complete by late 2017. Therefore, it is sensible to align the completion of the public realm intervention on Golden Square along with the timing of the scheduled re-opening of the Music Hall.

This intervention will have a positive impact on the setting of Golden Square and will help support the redevelopment of Aberdeen Music Hall.

Neither Golden Square nor Bon Accord Square form part of the strategic road network and therefore any interventions here would also be of a localised nature. Options developed for this location in line with the masterplan will include consideration of possible adjustments to the local traffic management arrangements, which will then require the promotion of a new Traffic Regulation Order

5.4.5 Schoolhill Pocket Park

Public realm interventions outside Aberdeen Art Gallery and Robert Gordon's College at the Schoolhill Pocket Park is not a distinct project identified in the masterplan. It is recognised that changing how this space is used with less dominance of car access would have many benefits for the re-opening of the Grade A listed Aberdeen Art Gallery building and for connectivity in the city centre. Any intervention would re-engineer this space, from a vehicle dominated space with poor and cluttered public realm, to an accessible public realm space associated with Aberdeen Art Gallery and other adjacent uses. It would also create a more aesthetically pleasing arrival point for the Art Gallery.

The Art Gallery is due to re-open in late 2017 and the public realm intervention could be scheduled for completion to align with this programme. The improved public realm would also complement the approved planning application for a change of use to hotel at the former Robert Gordon's University Union building (P150513). The streetscape materials could be a continuation of those used in the Belmont Street area, this would better connect the Art Gallery to Union Street.

Four options have been designed by Gareth Hoskins Architects in January 2015 although none have been put before Members or compared as to how they meet the aims and objectives of the masterplan. They vary from minimal disturbance of the existing road layout to changing the emphasis of the space across Schoolhill and extending this across the road surface to the south side of the street, uniting the whole space as one. An option appraisal would be required to be completed and a detailed business case developed in order to

understand the funding levels required, the likely timescales for delivery and the key risks for the project.

Any intervention that is proposed for this area would have to take into consideration the WW1 commemorative stone to be laid in the area in 2017.

Schoolhill Pocket Park currently serves as local access to the RG School and loading for the adjacent properties and as such plays no part in the strategic transport network in terms of the mass movement of people and goods. Options being developed as part of the redevelopment of the Art Gallery will therefore require to consider access and loading requirements, as well as the bus stop located adjacent to this pocket park on Schoolhill itself in terms of any adjustments to the existing traffic management, and interactions with the main route of Schoolhill. Such adjustments are also unlikely to trigger the need for a hearing.

While this project is not seen as strategic in nature as it doesn't impact on wider traffic movements it will have to take account of the current arrival and departure patterns for children attending Robert Gordon's College. The option appraisal should include this in and any risks associated with promoting a traffic order.

5.4.6 Castlegate

The masterplan encourages the use of Castlegate as the 'central civic space' for Aberdeen, providing a strong focus and identity for the city centre. This will be a high quality space that responds to the rich architecture and strong urban design structure, forming a desired destination at the end of Union Street.

The public realm intervention proposed for the Castlegate is closely linked with the masterplan's proposed residential development. The improved public realm would complement this development and tie in with the proposed interventions on Union Street and Queen Street as detailed in the masterplan.

While Castlegate is recognised as a wide open space/ square – it nevertheless remains a road which has restricted traffic movements for access and loading to the adjacent premises during certain times with access and exit routes defined. Castlegate provides access to the area, either from Justice Street or Castle Street/Union Street, and in terms of place, reopening it only limits the ability to improve the quality of the built environment in the wider area. While there are alternatives as to what the space can be used for, or whether it is better to access it from the east or the west, it doesn't provide a strategic transport role in the wider city centre.

In contrast, re-opening this area to traffic could detrimentally impact the strategic network due to the introduction of a new traffic signal junction into the area of Union Street/ Castle Street, which would conflict with existing bus priority and controlled crossing points for pedestrians. Should there be any changes to the current access arrangements a traffic regulation order would be required.

5.4.7 In conclusion, these projects do not affect the strategic road network as they are currently defined in the CCMP and there is no strategic transport network advantage in re-opening the Castlegate or connecting Queens Street to the West/ East North Street junction. The projects will require consideration of the local traffic implications as the options/ business cases are developed.

5.5 **Strategic Network Interventions (Broad Street and Schoolhill / Upperkirkgate) – High Level Traffic Modelling / Considerations**

5.5.1 The masterplan recommends that the space between Marischal College and the Marischal Square development retains bus and taxi movements on a day to day basis but will be designed in a manner so that it can be transformed into an event ready space on special occasions. It also needs to redefine Broad Street as a pedestrian priority area with traffic calming measures and redesigned bus stops with a high quality streetscape to create a new shared space civic plaza.

5.5.2 It is crucial to look at the public realm intervention on Broad Street in the wider context of nearby developments such as:

- Marischal Square development (P140698);
- the approved alterations for the Bon Accord Centre and re-opening of Drum Lane (P141192);
- the planning application for a change of use from retail to restaurant for the former E&M's store at 26-30 Union Street (P151254) (yet to be determined);
- potential development of Queen Street ('Queen Square' as detailed in the masterplan); and
- the setting of Marischal College, the Town House and Provost Skene's House.

5.5.3 The proposed public realm intervention should allow for the opportunity of a flexible events space that could include the use of the Marischal College Quadrangle and the public realm that will be developed around Provost Skene's House within the Marischal Square development. The project will also make Broad Street more of a pedestrian priority area which will support the increased footfall associated with the Marischal Square office and leisure uses.

- 5.5.4 Aberdeen Inspired undertake on-going footfall monitoring in various parts of the city centre. This data highlights that currently Schoolhill/ Upperkirkgate has a higher footfall than Broad Street. Pedestrian levels on Broad Street will increase once the Marischal Square development is complete and occupied footfall will also increase on Upperkirkgate following the opening of Drum Lane connecting the Bon Accord Centre to Marischal Square.
- 5.5.6 This intervention will have a positive impact on the setting of Marischal College and will help link the internal quadrangle to Broad Street and into the Marischal Square development. It will also create a more welcoming space which will help to create a better city centre experience for those who live, work and visit in the city centre.
- 5.5.7 A transportation assessment of the implications of proposals for Broad Street and Upperkirkgate / Schoolhill has now been completed. It should be noted that this has been done in advance of a full transport assessment of the wider City Centre Masterplan, and therefore takes no account of sequencing or consequential impacts of the current masterplan proposals for Union Street or Guild Street/ Wapping Street which are the other two projects that have more strategic implications for people moving in the City Centre and will be reported at a future date.
- 5.5.8 The traffic modelling element of the assessment used the City Centre Paramics microsimulation model, which was updated in 2012 using a range of data gathering techniques including junction turning movement counts, ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) and bus stop dwell time surveys. The model was also informed by the strategic model for the region – ASAM. An overview of this region and city centre wide modelling revealed that:
- Across the city, 30% of all trips can be classed as strategic or through trips without a city centre destination. These trips have the potential to be diverted to other more suitable strategic routes including the AWPR.
 - Trips to and from the city centre area account for 20-25% of all trips
 - Around 15% of traffic generated within the city centre has a destination in the city centre
 - 6-8% traffic growth predicted between 2012 and the 2023 reference case in the city centre model area (committed development and infrastructure but no CCPM) which equates to approximately 16,000 additional vehicles per weekday

- Previous work on Union Street Pedestrianisation identified that the City centre network can only cope with up to 95% of 2012 traffic levels, without leading to a significant level of additional queuing
- 2023 reference case does not include further 12 years of remainder of adopted Local Development Plan build out
- Significant volume of east west trips – possibly routing to and from the north of the city (north of the Don)
- Higher volumes of strategic traffic routing from the south of the model than from the north
- AM peak trips to car parks - 3630 trips; PM peak trips to car parks - 7343 trips; Saturday peak trips to car parks - 12737 trips with approximately 47% of these trips involve crossing the city centre
- Based on previous work carried out, if CCMP is to be successfully delivered, the model is forecasting the need to remove 27,000 vehicles per day from the city centre area (this is in addition to those trips that can move to the AWPR)
- From 10 to 45% of trips on the key city centre routes likely to be significantly affected by the CCMP are from out with the city centre to out with the city centre, and more significantly so on Union Street, Guild Street and Market Street

5.5.9 High level conclusions from the above:

- Significant volumes of trips are of a short distance nature (easily undertaken on foot or by bicycle by many travellers)
- Significant volumes of trips have no destination in the city centre
- Significant proportions of car parking trips generate cross city centre movements
- The successful delivery of the masterplan will rely on a radical approach to the operation and management of the city's transport network and how future journeys associated with existing and new development in the short, medium and longer term are made
- Individual projects/ interventions will require some level of mitigation locally and/ or network wide, suggesting the benefits of the development of a long term plan, with a prioritised and fully detailed incremental delivery plan
- This radical approach needs to reflect travel not only to and from the city centre, but around the city as a whole
- Fundamental to this will need to be significant increases in journeys being made by means other than the private car i.e. shift to active and sustainable modes of walking, cycling, public transport

- Reprioritisation to and significant improvement of the infrastructure necessary to facilitate this shift – across the whole transport network – not just within the city centre

5.6 Detailed Modelling – Broad Street and Upperkirkgate/ Schoolhill

5.6.1 The following suite of options has been identified as best meeting the masterplan proposals whilst also ensuring due diligence in terms of best practice and recent Council decisions. The options also include some possible mitigation measures to address some of the issues identified at the high level testing stage.

Figure 2 – Test options for interventions on Broad Street and Schoolhill / Upperkirkgate

Test Option	Broad Street		Upperkirkgate/ Schoolhill		Mitigation
	Bus & taxi only	Closed	Closed	Open	
1	√			√	-
2	√		√		-
3		√		√	-
4		√	√		-
5	√			√	Test 1 with Union Terrace Bus & Taxi Only
6	√		√		Test 2 with Union Terrace Bus & Taxi Only and George Street Traffic Management*
7		√		√	Test 3 with Union Terrace Bus & Taxi Only
8		√	√		Test 4 with Union Terrace Bus & Taxi Only and George Street Traffic Management*

George Street Traffic Management = CCMP proposals for the George Street Area + Blackfriars Street as bus/ taxi only northbound and all traffic southbound + Charlotte Street closed to through traffic to restrict rat-running traffic through Maberly Street/ Spring Garden from Woolmanhill Roundabout.*

5.6.2 The modelling outputs focus on:

- Ability to meet travel demand in the city centre network
- Impact on the local and wider city centre area
- Impact on public transport

5.6.3 Full details of this modelling exercise can be found within the technical report prepared by SIAS Ltd, ‘*Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan Testing – Phase 1, Traffic Model Testing Report, TPXACCM177647*’ – attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

A summary of the model outputs is as follows:

Figure 7.1

Scenario	Models run at full demand prediction	Increase in traffic flow to non-strategic routes	Bus route/ bus coverage affected	Bus reliability/ journey time improvements	Bus reliability/ journey time detriment
Test 1	√	Union Terrace	none	Broad Street	Union Terrace
Test 2	√	Union Terrace, Union Street, John Street, St Andrews Street	minimal	Broad Street	Union Street
Test 3	√	Union Terrace	Routes on Broad Street affected	some	Worst of all tests
Test 4	√	Union Terrace, Union Street, John Street, St Andrews Street	Routes on Broad Street affected	some	Union Street
Test 5	√	Huntly St/ Summer St	none	Best of all tests	limited
Test 6	x	-	-	-	-
Test 7	√	Huntly St/ Summer St	Routes on Broad Street affected	some	some
Test 8	x	-	-	-	-

	Traffic Network Improvement
	Slight Traffic Detriment
	Traffic Detriment

5.6.4 The traffic modelling suggests that the proposed closure of Schoolhill, between the Bon Accord and St. Nicholas shopping centres has an implication of significantly increased traffic flows through the shopping areas north of the Bon Accord Centre in and around George Street. If measures were introduced to restrict routeing traffic through these routes, there would need to be a significant reduction in traffic demand through the city centre area to accommodate such measures. This would require the consideration of wider area traffic management measures which could not be implemented in the short term.

5.6.5 If restrictions to general traffic were implemented on Broad Street, there would be low impact to traffic in the city centre area and potential improvements to bus services directly affected through the core area of the city centre. A complimentary measure would be to also restrict general traffic through Union Terrace to reduce the impact of displaced traffic within the city centre and also to further improve the operation of the bus network through the core area of the city centre. These measures could be implemented in the short term and have already been in operation to some extent through seasonal restrictions on Union Terrace and traffic management measures on Broad Street during the consecutive Winter Village and Muse developments works.

5.6.6 Within the Broad Street traffic considerations, the issue of taxi access has also been reviewed. Recent traffic surveys reveal that in peak hours there are very few taxis using Broad Street - 6 No per hour (details in Table 6.1 of the detailed modelling report). If the CCMP intervention for this location is to be realised, ie the creation of a 'place' which is a much better environment for

pedestrians, then removing access for taxis, which can use the surrounding road network and are not restricted to specific routes like buses, would aid this objective.

5.7 **CCMP/draft Consultative Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) Objectives**

5.7.1 A review of the consultative draft Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan objectives, which are aligned with the CCMP, suggests that the principle of each of the options is well aligned with these, in terms of reprioritisation of space for active and more sustainable modes: The draft consultative SUMP objectives (CCMP objectives are in bold) are as follows:

The SUMP will aim to fulfil the following Masterplan **objectives**:

- **Technologically Advanced and Environmentally Responsible** – the delivery of targeted transport infrastructure improvements will play a leading role in the re-prioritisation of the city centre transport network to favour more sustainable modes of travel ahead of private motorised vehicles.
- **Changing Perceptions** – A reprioritised transport system in favour of more sustainable transport will be conducive to a radical alteration in perceptions so that people consider the city centre to be a vibrant and distinctive place.
- **Growing City Centre Employment** – the provision of transport infrastructure can play a key role in encouraging inward international investment to the city centre.
- **A Metropolitan Outlook** – improving multi-modal accessibility and creating distinct gateways to the city centre will ensure it retains its standing as a key central node in the regional economy.
- **A living city for everyone** – city centre infrastructure can create a liveable place through the provision of attractive vibrant streets that are safe and comfortable to be in all year round, day and night.
- **Revealing Waterfronts** – transport infrastructure has the ability to significantly improve multi-modal accessibility to the beach, harbour and rivers that define Aberdeen.

5.7.2 This alignment starts to break down when the implications of some of the options, as evidenced by the traffic modelling outcomes, detrimentally affects accessibility at some key locations, particularly for public transport, and around the city centre and wider on the City's transport network.

5.8 Summary and Conclusions

5.8.1 It is clear from the aspiration set out in the CCMP and from the high level modelling, that in order to successfully deliver the CCMP over the coming 5 – 20 years, a radical approach to the future management and operation of the transport network is required. A more pleasant walking and cycling environment, safe and accessible, easy to move around

and free from harmful pollution, can only be delivered with a significant reduction in city centre traffic levels. In order to secure the vibrant and economically dynamic future that is defined in the CCMP, this means increasing the numbers of people who live in, work in and visit the city centre and improvements to active travel and public transport are the most cost effective, practical and deliverable solutions.

- 5.8.2 A number of small scale projects have been discussed in Section 5.4 and can be progressed as defined in the CCMP without any significant impact on the strategic transportation network.
- 5.8.3 Projects which affect Broad Street, Schoolhill/ Upperkirkgate, Union Street and Guild Street have widespread strategic transport network impacts beyond the city centre and across the City. Interventions at these locations have to be carefully considered, particularly in terms of how these benefit or disbenefit place making and the active and sustainable travel objectives of the CCMP and the draft consultative SUMP.
- 5.8.4 Modelling undertaken to date on the Broad Street option reveals that a general traffic restriction on Broad Street (Queen Street to Upperkirkgate) can be accommodated without significant detriment to the city centre and wider city transport network, with mitigation on Union Terrace by means of bus and taxi only to support public transport. The bus stops were modelled as located out with the restricted area to enhance the overall pedestrian experience without impacting significantly on bus accessibility to key destinations such as Marischal College and the soon to be opened Marischal Square. Removing taxis from Broad Street could also compliment these measures to enhance the pedestrian experience and as taxis are not route - restricted like buses and current numbers are very low, it is unlikely there would be significant detriment to this mode of transport.
- 5.8.5 If an option which also restricts buses from Broad Street is agreed, this may trigger the need for a public hearing should objections from bus operators remain unresolved during the statutory traffic regulation order process. The impact of such an option would also reduce public transport access to the key civic amenities at Marischal College Aberdeen City Council headquarters. If such an option is progressed and followed by the CCMP proposals to close Schoolhill/ Upperkirkgate to all traffic including public transport, this would leave approximately a third of the city centre without public transport accessibility, significantly compromising a number of the CCMP aspirations and objectives.
- 5.8.6 Modelling undertaken for options on Schoolhill/ Upperkirkgate forecast a significant detrimental impact on public transport and the wider network performance and although some mitigation measures had been identified and tested e.g. the George Street Area CCMP proposals, these did not alleviate the impacts of the options on the immediate and wider transportation network. Given the scale of the

impact of any intervention on this route, it is likely that appropriate options and mitigations can only be identified as part of a city centre wide and city wide detailed plan to support the CCMP as a whole.

5.8.6 Modelling of options on Union Street and Guild Street will be reported to this Council in March 2016.

5.8.7 In conclusion, a buses only option for Broad Street, with mitigation by means of a bus, cycle and taxi only on Union Terrace, would fulfil the aspirations of the CCMP, be compliant with the SUMP objectives and could be delivered, subject to the successful promotion of the appropriate traffic regulation orders, with limited impact on the wider city centre and wider City transport network. Similar closure options for Schoolhill/ Upperkirkgate are unlikely to be successful unless they form part of a wider and more detailed CCMP transport network plan which must also be informed and supported by a city wide transportation plan, which delivers a radical approach to future network management and operation.

5.8.8 Proposals for Broad Street will include cyclists, in compliance with the CCMP and SUMP objectives, and consideration will require to be made within the TRO for timed deliveries and access for wedding vehicles.

5.8.9 Supporting traffic management measures necessary to ensure the reliability of buses on Union Terrace, should also include consideration of access for deliveries. There are also other considerations which need to be fully explored and therefore it is recommended that a traffic management plan for Union Terrace be developed and brought back to elected Members at the earliest opportunity.

5.8.10 As the transport network is incrementally modified to support the successful delivery of the CCMP as part of a wider and longer term plan, a continuous review of recently implemented traffic management measures will be undertaken and modifications identified as necessary to ensure appropriate network performance in accordance with the CCMP and SUMP objectives.

6. IMPACT

6.1 There are a number of benefits that could be achieved over time by implementing the longer term CCMP, of which many of the above mentioned public realm interventions form part:

- Improved perception amongst investors;
- Greater footfall leading to an increase in economic activity;
- Increased investor confidence;

- Increase visitor numbers and spend in the city centre;
 - Increased sense of community through gathering in new civic spaces;
 - Improved community safety; and
 - Increased number of green space and trees within the city centre.
- 6.2 In terms of transport, the proposals provide the first real steps towards establishing a transport network which reflects the wider aims of the Local Transport Strategy and the City Centre Masterplan.
- 6.3 Agreeing the proposed programme of enabling projects and activities will have a direct positive impact on the Council's delivery of the Aberdeen – The Smarter City policy statement and the City's Single Outcome Agreement.
- 6.4 The regeneration of the city centre is a key priority of the Strategic Infrastructure Plan and it is central to the City Region Deal bid to the UK and Scottish Governments.
- 6.5 An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan and Delivery Programme presented to Council on 24 June 2015. An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment will be undertaken when officers report back on the detail of interventions at Golden Square, Schoolhill Pocket Park and Castlegate.
- 6.6 Improving Customer and Staff Experience: The contents of this report and the recommendations relate to the delivery of the City Centre Masterplan which if successful in achieving the benefits defined in paragraph 6.1 will improve the City Centre for all those who live in, work in and visit it.
- 6.7 Improving Our Use of Resources: Internal resources and partnership working with developers have already been identified to deliver the recommendations of this report. Further resources may be required for the wider delivery of the transport network plan to support the successful delivery of the City Centre Masterplan, which has identified a range of benefits for citizens and business across the City.
7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK
- 7.1 The risks inherent in not addressing the regeneration of the city centre are set out in the Strategic Infrastructure Plan. In view of the fact that the regeneration of the city centre is widely supported, there is a reputational risk to the Council if no improvements are made.

- Air quality – no detailed assessment has been made of the implications of the CCMP on the Air Quality Management Area across the city centre. An air quality assessment for previously reviewed options for Broad Street was reported to this Council in March 2014. There are risks to public health as a direct result of PM10 and NOX emissions from vehicle engines. Attached at Appendix 2 is a spreadsheet of traffic flow variances on key routes within the City Centre relating to the recommended option for Broad Street.
- Resources are currently available to progress traffic regulation orders where no public hearing is required.
- Traffic regulation orders are subject to objections from members of the public and statutory and non-statutory bodies. The nature of the TRO and the objections remaining after the statutory processes would inform whether or not a public hearing is required.
- Compliance with CCMP/ SUMP.
- Lack of buy-in from public and stakeholders.
- Issues with timing regarding developments (Marischal Square, Music Hall refurbishment and Aberdeen Art Gallery).

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan Report
- CCMP – Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP)
- 'Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan Testing – Phase 1, Traffic Model Testing Report, TPXACCM1\77647'. – produced by SIAS Ltd

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Appendix 1

'Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan Testing – Phase 1, Traffic Model Testing Report, TPXACCM1\77647' – technical report prepared by SIAS Ltd

Appendix 2

Traffic flow variances on key routes within the City Centre relating to the recommended option for Broad Street.