

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Communities Housing and Infrastructure
DATE	17 May 2016
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Station Gateway: Draft Development Brief Consultation Results
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/16/018
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to present the results of the Station Gateway Draft Development Brief consultation, a summary of representations received, officers' responses to these representations and to detail any resulting action from this.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) Note the representations received on the draft Station Gateway Development Brief;
- b) Approves the revisions made based upon the findings of the consultation;
- c) Approves the draft Station Gateway Development Brief as Planning Advice.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has an interest in the area as a landowner in relation to some of the public realm. The Council is also asked to consider entering an agreement with Network Rail for a long (175 year) lease for the airspace and land required for a new deck structure to be constructed over the railway track to help facilitate development of the Atholl House site (identified as site no 1 in Figure 2 in Appendix 1). The detail around this issue is intended to be reported separately to the Property Sub Committee in 2016. Financial implications of the lease will be covered within the report to Property Sub Committee.

### 4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Redevelopment of Atholl House may have implications for the Council as landowner of neighbouring public realm infrastructure. This is

unknown until the full impact of the strategic transport model is determined, which will inform whether land may be required to ensure delivery of transport objectives. Further consideration will have to be given to the long term maintenance and upkeep of public realm and adopted areas. This will have to be considered on a project by project basis.

## 5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 At their meeting on 20 January 2016, the Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee approved the Draft Development Brief for consultation and instructed officers to report the results of that consultation on 15 March 2016. Due to the transport modelling exercise being scheduled for completion in May 2016 a bulletin report instead updated the Committee. This has allowed the modelling to determine the final form of the Station Gateway Development Brief and report with full consultation findings to committee on 17 May 2016. This report relates to the Station Gateway intervention area only.

### 5.2 Development Brief Scope of Work

#### 5.2.1 *Strategic need*

The draft Development Brief sets out the relationship to the Development Plan, City Centre Masterplan and Delivery Programme, Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, City Region Deal, Strategic Infrastructure Plan and any relevant, strategies and commitments from each key stakeholder.

#### 5.2.2 *Relationship to CCMP projects*

Key projects related to this intervention area:	Other project linkages:
Project CM10 Trinity Centre Project EC08 New hotel development Project EC11 Aberdeen works Project IN01 Walkable Aberdeen Project IN03 Cycle highways Project IN04 Cycle hire scheme Project IN05 Cycle hubs Project IN06 Bus priority measures Project IN07 Bus stop infrastructure & bus station Project IN08 Aberdeen Station Project EN02 Guild Street	Project EN05 Union Street Project CM11 Union Street Conservation Area Improvement Scheme Project CM12 Union Square Project EN11 Aberdeen in colour

5.2.3 ***Planning and design principles*** include scale, massing and urban form, connectivity, public realm, wayfinding, legibility, interaction, and uses.

5.2.4 **Conservation and heritage opportunities** includes challenges and opportunities of the rail and other built heritage, including impact on, listed buildings and structures

5.2.5 **Transport and access** focusses on opportunities to significantly improve the pedestrian environments, access to public transport (bus, rail, taxi, ferry), re-imagine Guild Street whilst continuing to serve ongoing business. Any proposals will have to be measured against the outcomes of the strategic transport modelling exercise currently being undertaken.

5.2.6 **Public realm** describes accessibility, managing topography, linking a series of spaces, lighting and interactive streetscape founded on the key principles of:

Orientation :	create spaces that people want to be in enabling them to get their bearings
Connectivity :	ease movement and wayfinding in favour of pedestrians and public transport
Animation :	create opportunities for activity and live frontage along all routes and spaces between the station and Union Street

5.2.7 **Land ownership, assembly** identifies key stakeholders and **Delivery/phasing** describes an overall programme with short and medium term actions with key project relationships identified.

### Consultation Process

5.5 The public consultation ran for a 4 week period from Monday 25 January until Monday 22 February 2016 inclusive and was carried out in accordance with the Council's adopted Masterplanning Process.

5.6 The following list highlights those that were consulted:

Byline/Atholl Square Developments	All Community Councils
Cairngroup	Scotrail/Abellio
Ellandi/ Savills	Stagecoach
Hammerson	Trinity Centre
Historic Environment Scotland	Union Square
Halliday Fraser Munro	Scottish Ambulance Service
Network Rail	Bon Accord Access Panel
Aberdeen City Council Public Transport Unit	Cycle Forum
Grampian Cyclists Touring Club	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
First Aberdeen Ltd	Nestrans
First Group	Police Scotland
Disability Advisory Group	Taxi Consultation Group
City Centre Forum	Scottish Enterprise

5.7 The Station Gateway Draft Development Brief and information about the public consultation were available via the following methods:

- Publication of the document on Aberdeen City Council Website 'Masterplanning' page  
<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning/>
- Hard copy of the document available for viewing at Marischal College between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday, by contacting the Planning and Sustainable Development Reception.
- A Press Release from Aberdeen City Council was issued on 21 January 2016.
- Information regarding the consultation issued to all Community Councils.

### **Consultation Results**

5.8 Responses were received from the following:

- Savills on behalf of Hammerson plc
- Halliday Fraser Munro on behalf of Byline/Atholl Square Developments Ltd
- Network Rail
- Scotrail
- First Group
- Cairn Group
- Cycle Forum
- Cults, Bieldside and Milltimber Community Council
- Culter Community Council
- Scottish Enterprise
- Access Forum
- Historic Environment Scotland
- Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce
- Fire and Rescue Scotland
- 4 members of the public

5.9 The following table summarises the responses received and the actions taken to address them where necessary. The draft Station Gateway Development Brief has been amended in accordance with these actions and is appended to this report.

**Please note that the final version of the Station Gateway Development Brief and this report will be dependent on the outcomes of the transport modelling and as such isn't complete.**

Number of respondents	Comments	Action	Who is responsible
<b>Support</b>			
9	Explicitly expressed support for the aims and objectives of the brief.	-	-
<b>Links to Union Square</b>			
1	Reference to improving links with Union Square – additional text suggested throughout (see response)	Noted and added to brief	Sandy Beattie
2	<b>Scale and Massing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the increase in scale and density.</li> <li>• Para 5.3 should be changed from ‘must’ to ‘should’ and ‘slender landmarks’ replaced with ‘landmark buildings of high design quality’ to ensure design solutions are determined on their merit.</li> <li>• Para 5.4 – phrase ‘from key locations or vantage points’ should be added.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noted</li> <li>• High design quality is acknowledged. More appropriate to retain current wording.</li> <li>• Agreed</li> </ul>	Wording to be added to the Development Brief
<b>Transport and Access</b>			
1	The Urban Relief Road outlined in the CCMP should be referenced.	This will take place after transport modelling is complete.	Hugh Murdoch
3	Para 7.4 –This should be reworded to focus on all 3 sites and not solely on Atholl House. All the focus is on Atholl House to Trinity Centre. How will Merchant Quarter be enhanced? Explore options to improve connectivity to Tivoli Theatre and the wider Merchant Quarter.	Agreed. A reference to Back Wynd stairs, Tivoli Theatre and Merchant Quarter will be added.	Wording added to the Development Brief
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guild Street should be closed to buses and taxis as well. Cyclists should not mix with buses and taxis on Guild Street so there should be a segregated cycle lane.</li> <li>• No mention of cycle paths from the station to Union Street and no provision for lockable cycle parking at the station.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awaiting transport modelling</li> <li>• To be discussed with Union Square/Station</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hugh Murdoch</li> <li>• Union Square /Scotrail/Abellio</li> </ul>

Number of respondents	Comments	Action	Who is responsible
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There should be pedestrian and cycle access from Regent Quay to the station. The B983 – South College Street could be a cycle path connecting with the Riverside cycle path.</li> </ul>		
1	Welcome the proposal to site a bus stop directly in front of station frontage. Designation of Guild Street as public transport only will have a positive impact. Keen to hear how the pedestrian friendly streets would function.	Noted. Once agreed, consultation/info on street layout	Sandy Beattie to action
1	Consider relocation of the Trinity Centre car park entrance to Wapping street to enhance pedestrian experience on Carmelite Street as an approach to Union Street.	Await transport modelling results	Hugh Murdoch
<b>Delivery/Phasing</b>			
1	Delivery/phasing should be amended once the Transport Modelling results are available.	Await transport modelling results	Hugh Murdoch
1	All parts of the overall development will process at different speeds. There should be some recognition that early phases may need to plug into the existing condition whilst others develop at their own speed.	Agreed. Phasing text will be added to page 18.	Wording added to the Development Brief
<b>Relocation of taxi rank, disabled car parking and passenger drop-off</b>			
1	Concern for adequate pick up and drop off provision for Station Hotel. Allocated drop off area in front of buildings will prevent congestion.	Possibly, pending Transport modelling and detailed street layout.	Hugh Murdoch and Sandy Beattie
2	The relocation needs to be considered in the transport modelling exercise. Illogical that development brief developed before traffic modelling complete. Once complete there should be a new consultation.	Agreed and waiting.	-
3	Links need to be enhanced from the College Street Car Park to the station. The taxi drop-off on South College Street is far from the station. The relocated taxi rank should be walkable for	Agreed. The final location will have to be accessible with a direct link to the station.	Scotrail/Abellio

Number of respondents	Comments	Action	Who is responsible
	passengers, suitable for elderly/disabled and on the same level as the arrival concourse. Blue badge drop-off should be signposted.		
4	<b>Alternative options</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A replacement taxi stance and drop-off area could be built above the existing taxi rank with access from College Street and escalators and lifts to platform level.</li> <li>• Other locations should be considered such as Guild Street and Guild Street Bridge.</li> <li>• Suggest devolved approach with 3 locations for Taxis and disabled access – constrained provision on guild Street, the College Street carpark and Union Square.</li> <li>• The station/taxi drop off as indicated in the Masterplan may be difficult to deliver. Other options should be identified.</li> </ul>	Noted. This is under discussion with Scotrail/Abellio as part of feasibility.	Scotrail/Abellio
2	Union Square generates a significant proportion of the taxi traffic. Requirement for a dedicated taxi rank should be considered. This was highlighted by NESTRANS.	Under discussion with Union Square.	Union Square
<b>Links between Union Street and the Station</b>			
1	Link between the station and Atholl House at Guild Street Bridge Level is an alternative. Options should be kept open for either.	Noted. The brief is not too prescriptive and will allow for this.	-
2	Support the review and removal of the Guild Street Bridge as currently a barrier to improving pedestrian connectivity.	Noted. Pending HES review/Network Rail operation.	-
1	Consideration should be given to improving/opening up old entrances to the station.	Noted.	Scotrail/Abellio review.
1	Opening Platforms 8 & 9 will not happen in the immediate future and development should be aware of this possibility.	Noted.	-
1	Question how route through Atholl House is practical and would be achieved.	The comprehensive redevelopment of the site will allow this to be achieved.	-
4	<b>Use of elevators</b>	Noted. This will be for discussion with the	All

Number of respondents	Comments	Action	Who is responsible
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider escalators between Guild Street and Union Street.</li> <li>Consider an elevated walkway from the station to Union Street, accessed by cycle elevators.</li> <li>Agree with access but in the meantime escalators could be fitted from Trinity Centre to Guild Street and access leading to the taxi rank should be improved.</li> <li>Consider additional retail space on Carmelite Street, replacing enclosed car parks and linking by escalator to existing retail mall areas.</li> </ul>	wider group on delivery options /opportunities.	
<b>Trinity Centre</b>			
1	The Trinity Centre should be demolished. It is a barrier and creates a negative impression. BT building and Atholl house should be demolished.	Previous report highlighted Scottish Enterprise options study.	-
1	A 24 hour access route through Trinity Centre or alongside it should be considered.	Noted. This will be raised with Elandi.	To be raised with Elandi.
<b>Station</b>			
1	Proposed station frontage and Atholl House will impact the Station Hotel – need to be kept aware of plans.	Agreed.	-
1	HFM proposal for station entrance on Union Street should be reviewed.	Noted. The City Centre Masterplan is agreed and the development brief follows those principles.	-
1	Change gateway to Aberdeen to Union Terrace Gardens. Some trains stop there, it would be a pleasant welcoming area for people and it is in the city centre with several options to exit. Buses travelling north could also stop here.	Noted. Masterplan is agreed and this Development Brief follows those principles.	-
1	The station can have a vibrant presence at street level and help the public to reclaim the street. Deliveries/servicing below Guild Street should have greater prominence in the document.	Noted. Rail collective currently reviewing options.	Scotrail/Abellio & Network Rail



Number of respondents	Comments	Action	Who is responsible
<b>Bus station</b>			
1	The bus station requires a covered passenger waiting area and seating with protection from the weather.	Agreed. Additional text to IN07 on page 5.	Wording added to the Development Brief
2	The bus station should be clearly marked for train passengers. Signs are poorly lit, staff are not helpful, there is no audio for blind people, help is needed to get between the bus and train station, and the automatic doors do not work properly.	Agreed. Additional text to IN07 on page 5.	Wording added to the Development Brief
1	A deck area above the station concourse would hold a new bus station accessed from Guild Street or South College Street.	Noted. The cost and feasibility will be discussed with Network Rail.	To be discussed with Network Rail.
1	Improvements to the bus station should be prioritised in this brief.	Agreed. Additional text to IN07 on page 5.	Wording added to the Development Brief
<b>Flexibility</b>			
1	There is no council policy that requires flexibility for future uses. This should be removed from the brief (para 4.3).	National Policy Creating Places – Definition of ‘good design’ includes functional value which ‘meets and adapts to the long-term needs of all users’. Therefore the wording is appropriate.	-
<b>Hotel provision</b>			
1	There is an overprovision of hotel accommodation in the area. There should not be a hotel above the station concourse.	Noted. The market demand will determine whether a hotel is appropriate.	-
<b>Conservation and Heritage</b>			
1	Support the conservation and heritage opportunities, and the recognition given to the listed buildings. Every opportunity should be explored to preserve their character and to safeguard/enhance their setting. This includes the Guild Street station classical granite entrance and its relationship to the	Noted. A formal review with Historic Environment Scotland is currently pending.	-

Number of respondents	Comments	Action	Who is responsible
	Station Hotel; the bow bridge; and the former ticket office. Welcome the opportunity to improve the setting and function of the former ticket office. The expansion of the new station concourse will need careful handling.		

## 6. IMPACT

### **Improving Customer Experience –**

*The Draft Development Framework will set guidance, design principles and options for the redevelopment of the Station Gateway area. It also highlights any further work required to support future planning applications in the area. This will improve customer experience in a number of ways including:-*

- *key stakeholders in the area – by ensuring that there is an agreed framework for development, thereby providing more certainty, speeding up planning processes, identifying common ground and potential development delivery efficiencies;*
- *the general public – by ensuring that a co-ordinated development approach is taken to enhancing a crucial gateway to the City, including pedestrian access, public realm and connectivity*

### **Improving Staff Experience –**

*Staff experience could be enhanced by providing a clear strategic direction for this City Centre Masterplan project, ensuring that it provides the framework for a programme of work to ensure clarity on roles and responsibilities. It will contribute to efficiencies in determining future planning applications and a reduction in Council staff time to assess future detailed proposals.*

### **Improving our use of Resources –**

*By demonstrating acceptable forms and uses of new development in the area and the relationships between them, it allows more informed decision making to be made earlier, saving time and resources for staff, applicants and the public. The Development Brief also highlights the expected improvements required to infrastructure, services and resources as a result of the proposed development. The Brief also highlights the key role that the Council plays in terms of facilitating major development delivery in the City.*

*Best use of resources and best value is currently being achieved by working in partnership with the key stakeholders. The draft development brief has the potential to unlock further feasibility funding for detailed project work from Scottish Enterprise*

### **Corporate –**

*The proposal contributes to the following Single Outcome Priorities: 1 – We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe; 2 – we realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people; 10 - We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the*

*amenities and services we need; 12 – We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect and enhance it for future generations.*

*The proposal contributes to the 5 Year Business Plan in terms of objective – Communication and Community Engagement; sharing our plans and aspirations for the city, – delivering an up-to-date plan, – facilitating new development projects to improve Aberdeen’s living environment and, – support open space initiatives.*

*The proposal contributes towards the Council’s vision for Aberdeen: 2012 – 2017, particularly creating a City which is a great place to live, bring up a family, do business and visit. It specifically contributes to the follows objectives: Governance – encouraging citizens to participate in design and development; Living – improving opportunities for physical activity; Environment – energy efficient design and construction, attractive streetscapes and access to green space; Economy – improve access; Mobility – encourage cycling, walking and promoting a sustainable transport systems which reduce carbon emissions.*

*The proposal is consistent with the Council’s Corporate Plan in particular with regard to delivering high levels of design from all development, maintaining an up-to-date planning framework, sustainable development and open space provision.*

*The proposal will assist in the delivery of the Council’s Strategic Infrastructure Plan by setting out the development parameters for one of the 7 intervention areas identified in the approved Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan.*

*The proposal is consistent with the Planning and Sustainable Development Service Plan, in particular engaging the community in the planning process, and the delivery of Masterplans/Development Frameworks/Planning Briefs in line with the Aberdeen Masterplanning Process.*

## **Public –**

*An EHRIA on the Station Gateway: Draft Development Brief report has been submitted. A summary of the EHRIA will be appended to this report.*

## **7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

- 7.1** Development Briefs contribute to efficiencies in determining future planning applications and a reduction in Council staff time to assess future detailed proposals.
- 7.2** If the recommendations are accepted the Council will have to manage the planning application process for the development of the site in line with the Development Brief.

- 7.3 If the recommendation is not accepted the risk is that piecemeal development will take place in the area with no clear parameters set for the area.
- 7.4 Absence of the Station Gateway Development Brief could lead to delays in development and uncertainty in the acceptability of proposals.
- 7.5 Further risk analysis to be completed in relation to legals, property and asset management

## 8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan

Finance Policy and Resources Committee draft minute, 15 September 2015, Item 28 (j)

<http://councilcommittees/documents/g3956/Printed%20minutes%2015th-Sep-2015%2014.00%20Finance%20Policy%20and%20Resources%20Committee.pdf?T=1>


Council minute, 24 June 2015, Item 9

<http://councilcommittees/documents/g3487/Printed%20minutes%2024th-Jun-2015%2010.30%20Council.pdf?T=1>

## 9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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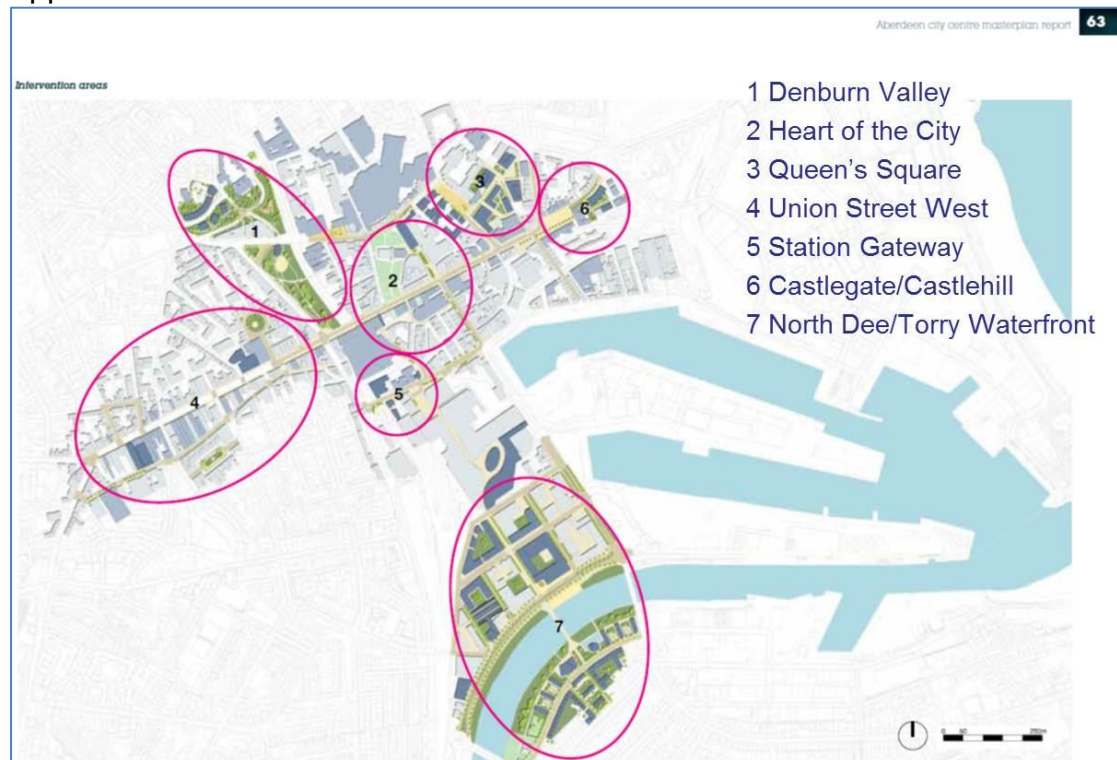


Figure 1: Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan intervention areas



Figure 2: Station Gateway

- 1 Atholl House
- 2 Guild Street Station
- 3 Station Hotel
- 4 Union Square
- 5 Trinity Centre