



George Street Mini Masterplan Strategic Environmental Assessment (Scoping Report) – Draft Version



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Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Background	1
1.2	Purpose of this Report	1
1.3	Structure of the Scoping Report.....	1
2	Key Facts about George Street Mini Masterplan.....	3
2.1	Key Facts	3
2.2	George Street Mini Masterplan Aims.....	5
2.3	George Street Mini Masterplan Options and Consultation	5
3	Context of the George Street Mini Masterplan	8
3.1	George Street Mini Masterplan.....	8
3.2	The Masterplan Vision.....	10
3.3	George Street Mini Masterplan Objectives	11
3.4	Relationship with other Plans, Programmes and Strategies.....	12
3.5	Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment	20
3.6	Environmental Baseline	20
3.7	Environmental characteristics of the George Street Mini Masterplan area	20
4	Proposed SEA Objectives.....	51
4.1	SEA Objectives	51
5	Scope and Methodology Proposed for the Strategic Environmental Assessment	53
5.1	Introduction.....	53
5.2	Scoping of Likely Significant Environmental Effects.....	53
5.3	Framework for Assessing the George Street Mini Masterplan	54
5.4	Reporting	57
5.5	Mitigation and Monitoring	57
6	Next Steps.....	58
6.1	Proposed Consultation Timescales and Methods.....	58
6.2	Anticipated Milestones.....	58

Appendices

- A George Street Mini Masterplan
- B Relationship with other PPS
- C Environmental Baseline Appraisal

Figures

Figure 2-1: Mini Masterplan Area	4
Figure 2-2: Mini Masterplan Area (Aerial Image)	5
Figure 3-1: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Data Zones	22
Figure 3-2: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Zones – George Street	22
Figure 3-3: Aberdeen City: Birth by Age Group by Year 2018 and 2028.....	25
Figure 3-4: Aberdeen City: Male Leading Causes of Death. 2020	26
Figure 3-5: Aberdeen City: Female Leading Causes of Death. 2020	27
Figure 3-6: Core Path Network.....	28
Figure 3-7: Bedrock Geology.....	30
Figure 3-8: Superficial Geology.....	31
Figure 3-9: Aberdeen Conservation Areas	34
Figure 3-10: Conservation Areas in Proximity to George Street	34
Figure 3-11: Historical Character	36
Figure 3-12: Local Character	38
Figure 3-13: Map of the Low Emission Zone (LEZ).....	40

Tables

Table 2-1: Key Facts relating to the George Street Mini Masterplan	3
Table 3-1: Name of Plan, Programme, Strategy or Environmental Protection Strategy.....	17
Table 3-2: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Zones - George Street.....	23
Table 3-3: Total population, Aberdeen City, 1998-2020	23
Table 3-4: Projected population change by age group, Aberdeen City, 2018 and 2028	25
Table 3-5: Water Classification	32
Table 3-6: Aberdeen City Council AQMA	39
Table 3-7: Vehicle types within scope of the LEZ	41
Table 3-8: Household Waste Generated and Managed in 2021 - Summary Data	43
Table 3-9: Household Waste Generated and Managed Per Person in 2021 - Summary Data.....	43
Table 3-10: Aberdeen City Business Waste (Tonnes) 2018 (Most Recent).....	44
Table 3-11: Data Sources for Providing Baseline Environmental Assessment.....	45
Table 4-1: Key Environmental Receptors, SEA Objectives and Questions	51
Table 5-1: SEA Topics for Scoping.....	53
Table 5-2: Assessment sub-tasks and their purpose.....	54
Table 5-3: SEA significance criteria	55
Table 5-4: Assessment matrix for plan, strategy and policy issues, and site assessment	56
Table 5-5: Monitoring tasks and their purpose.....	57

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Work has begun on a review of the George Street Mini Masterplan. The purpose of the Mini Masterplan is to establish a clear vision, supporting objectives and set of development principles that will stimulate and support the delivery of incremental but transformational change for George Street, securing a range of economic, social and environmental benefits. The purpose of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will be to provide an assessment of any significant environmental effects resulting from the Mini Masterplan.

1.2 Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report is to set out sufficient information on the George Street Mini Masterplan to enable the Consultation Authorities to form a view on the scope/ level of detail and consultation period that will be appropriate for the Environmental Report. This report has been prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

This scoping report is therefore provided for consultation and is circulated to the Consultation Authorities designated for SEA (NatureScot, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Historic Environment Scotland (for Scottish Ministers)).

Responses will be used to help shape the scope of the George Street Mini Masterplan and the assessment of its potential effects on the environment.

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1.3 Structure of the Scoping Report

This report sets out the proposed approach to the SEA. The report is structured as follows;

Section 2 presents an overview of the George Street Mini Masterplan, setting out the key facts about the plan and characteristics of the area.

Section 3 sets out the context for the George Street Mini Masterplan including a review of the strategic context of the plan, an outline of the environmental baseline and analysis of relevant problems and opportunities in the George Street area.

Section 4 sets out the proposed SEA objectives.

Section 5 addresses the environmental assessment, reviewing alternatives to the Mini Masterplan, setting out the findings of the scoping appraisal and presenting the proposed appraisal framework for the environmental assessment which will be reported in the Environmental Report.

Section 6 presents commentary on the next steps for the SEA.

2 KEY FACTS ABOUT GEORGE STREET MINI MASTERPLAN

2.1 Key Facts

The key facts relating to the George Street Mini Masterplan are set out below, based upon the draft Masterplan prepared by Optimised Environments.

Table 2-1: Key Facts relating to the George Street Mini Masterplan

Name of Responsible Authority	Aberdeen City Council
Title of the of the PPS	George Street Mini Masterplan
What Prompted the PPS	The purpose of the Mini Masterplan is to establish a clear vision, supporting objectives and set of development principles that will stimulate and support the delivery of incremental but transformational change for George Street, securing a range of economic, social and environmental benefits.
Subject	City Centre and Urban Regeneration (Daughter Document to the City Centre and Beach Masterplan).
Period Covered by the PPS	Annual review of progress and delivery
Frequency of Updates	This Mini Masterplan will ultimately form part of a wider recalibrated City Centre and Beach Masterplan which will be regularly reviewed to ensure Aberdeen City Council's strategy for the City Centre and the Beach remains up to date and relevant, with a clear focus on delivery.
Area covered by the PPS	<p>The area identified for the Mini Masterplan is outlined in Figures 2-1 and 2-2 below. The development of the masterplan will focus primarily within the study area.</p> <p>However, in order for wider benefits to be leveraged from the investment within the George Street area, the masterplan must acknowledge and respond to opportunities beyond the study boundary, understanding the influence of planned investment / development.</p> <p>The George Street neighbourhood is located towards the northern boundary of the masterplan area. George Street itself runs North to South, forming a once historic key between the city centre core and areas to the North of the city. The area is defined to the south by the Bon Accord Centre, which serves the historic connection to the City Centre. It is bounded to the south west by Robert Gordon College and by Gallowgate, Spring Garden and North East Scotland College (NES).</p> <p>George Street hosts a diversity of uses which give the area its own distinct character all of which sit within the wider context of Aberdeen's economy and cultural offer.</p>
Purpose of PPS	The Mini Masterplan will put forward a strategy for the George Street area in the wider city centre context, complementing its existing strengths and building on recognised opportunities. The strategy for the area will be informed by a thorough understanding of place, a strategy for change guided by a clear vision and objectives.

It will focus predominantly on urban realm improvements but will also consider and suggest recommendations for more fundamental and widespread change (both physical and non-physical) across the study area informed by community and stakeholder consultations as well as in response to wider City Centre projects.

It will set out a regeneration framework identifying areas of change and supporting design aspirations. Supporting the framework is a list of potential Mini Masterplan projects that can be implemented, through a combination of public and private sector involvement to secure the vision and objectives of the Mini Masterplan.

The Mini Masterplan will act as a tool to promote the following aspects;

- Consider the appropriate policy, cultural and physical fit for change
- Engaging with the needs and ambitions of local residents, businesses and stakeholders
- Establishing development potential (in the form of indicative sketches and scenarios) for areas of change
- Mediating between a range of landowner and other stakeholder interests to realise areas of change
- Promoting a vision for change that can stimulate market action
- Celebrating and respecting the area's cultural heritage; and
- Engendering a sense of cooperation and coordination between different agents of change to deliver on the Mini Masterplan's spatial vision.

Figure 2-1: Mini Masterplan Area

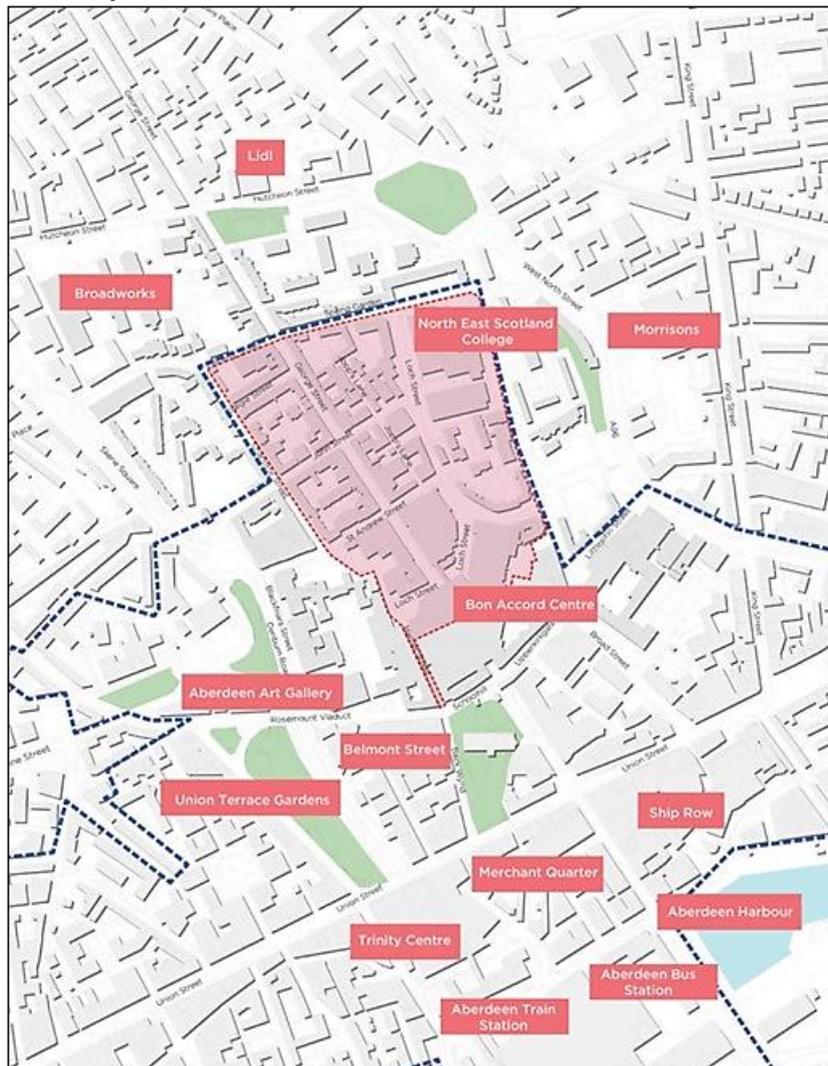


Figure 2-2: Mini Masterplan Area (Aerial Image)



2.2 George Street Mini Masterplan Aims

The Mini Masterplan has set out a vision and objectives to deliver change across George Street. It aims to promote and deliver change from the outset, through short term or medium term interventions whilst longer term opportunities are being developed in greater detail.

Each intervention is to be delivered through projects (both physical and non physical) which will have positive impact on improving the vitality of George Street.

The Council have the ability to both stimulate change and deliver change in areas across George Street; however, the interventions will require collaboration, mobilisation and coordination across community, private and a variety of other stakeholders in order to determine and deliver change.

The potential projects will continue to be co-developed by local stakeholders, community members and Council officers. It is intended to be a 'live' resource which can be updated and reviewed as opportunities emerge, so long as they support the vision and objectives of the Mini Masterplan

2.3 George Street Mini Masterplan Options and Consultation

2.3.1 Consultation

In February 2022 Aberdeen City Council undertook a consultation exercise to understand local stakeholder and community members views and aspirations for the George Street area.

This engagement process allowed Aberdeen City Council, to understand local stakeholder and community members views and aspirations for the George Street area. Masterplan.

The aim of the consultation process was to encourage people to share ideas and experiences of George Street and to ensure that these formed part of any future proposals for the area. The consultation exercise also invited comment on the area's key issues, it's strengths and perceptions of proximity to the city centre, in order to establish a picture of how the area functions on day to day basis and how the local and surrounding community use and interact with the place

Through analysis of the consultation feedback and establishing key themes, a number of potential interventions were identified. These interventions, both physical and non physical, could be further considered through the development of the Mini Masterplan to sustain and enhance the dynamic community within George Street

Potential physical / spatial interventions

- Opportunity to enhance and modernise the streetscape of the George Street Area, which could include enhancements to the public realm, de-cluttering and provide improved pavements, places to dwell and spaces to host street events.
- Revitalising the streetscape by looking at ways of filling vacant properties and establishing a coordinated shop frontage design. These would help to reactivate the area and reduce perceptions of decline / dereliction.
- Introduce space and facilities to help support temporary and medium term uses, to introduce more activity and animation to the area. This type of intervention could include pop up events, temporary road closures, temporary seating, planting features, signage and wayfinding. The space created would also allow businesses to expand out into the street to host events.
- Improve the pedestrian experience through enhanced materials, low level lighting, wayfinding, pedestrian prioritisation measures, better managed and potentially reduced street parking as well as planned cycle lanes and safe cycle storage to encourage more cyclists into the area.
- Improve safety and crime rates in the area, through enhancements to the public safety such as more CCTV, better street lighting and greater levels of activity (through different uses and types of spaces) to improve the sense of safety both during day and evening.
- A more radical suggestion raised through the consultation feedback was to demolish both the Bon Accord Centre and former John Lewis building and to replace with public facilities, public space, green space. This and other options would need to be tested and appraised through the George Street Mini Masterplan Area study.

Potential non physical / spatial interventions

- Creation of a brand identity and localised incentives for visits for George Street that helps to promote a stronger online presence.
- Working with the council, local community groups and stakeholders to expand the city centre events programme to include the George Street area.
- Creation of a business community to support those investing in the area and to coordinate local businesses.
- The feedback suggests the existing community is strong and well connected, however a coordination group could be set up among residents to liaise with businesses to organise local events.
- Continued inclusion and collaboration with locals and stakeholders throughout the design and decision making process.
- Creating incentives for local entrepreneurs to set up in the area.

- Increase investment opportunities in the area to attract larger brand names. There is a view among feedback that big brand names would encourage more business and footfall in the area.

2.3.2 Additional Engagement

A key part of continuing the conversation has been to host a number of stakeholder workshops as well as a public consultation exercise. The following feedback has come from initial stakeholder discussions.

Stakeholder Feedback Summary

First reaction feedback during these sessions includes comments as follows:

- Lack of urban landscaping and green spaces;
- Feels busy and vibrant – but not alive after 5pm;
- Historical connection severed by Bon Accord Centre – some connections are constrained;
- There is a real fragility of business – although George Street has survived Covid relatively well, its small independent businesses may be lost because of energy costs.
- The area doesn't feel overly safe at night – lighting is poor;
- Concern about transport and bus routes;
- George Street has become increasingly constrained with clutter;
- Only decent green space is on Hutchenson Street;
- Diversity is great - lots of ethnically diverse shops;
- College, Robert Gordon's, Sandman and Finnies are all attractors. Estimate of 11,000 people potentially associated with all on a daily basis; and
- Broadford works really needs tackled – there are few big sites that could be real game changers

Community Planning Feedback Summary

- There are several community organisations that are operating in the area, but what they do not have is a knowledge of what each other are doing and how they could support each other
- Create a Community Network where groups, organisations and individuals would be asked to share ideas and take forward some actions
- Add to the already developed and well attended George Community Council
- Use of notice boards and a social media presence to promote what is going on
- A small minority do not like the shops and would like to see a return of more traditional offer, such as butchers, bakers, or clothes shops
- Accessibility issues with uneven pavement and minimal seating opportunities.

3 CONTEXT OF THE GEORGE STREET MINI MASTERPLAN

3.1 George Street Mini Masterplan

The Mini Masterplan will set out a regeneration framework identifying areas of change and supporting design aspirations. Supporting the framework is a list of potential Mini Masterplan projects that can be implemented, through a combination of public and private sector involvement to secure the vision and objectives of the Mini Masterplan.

The Mini Masterplan is at an early stage of development and the following draft objectives are being developed.

- Objectives for People
- Objectives for Place
- Objectives for Economy

In addition, a list of possible interventions to achieve the objectives and address identified problems and opportunities will be identified under each of the themes to be included within the following 3 options:

Option 1 – Partial demolition and Greyfriars Square

This option explores the potential to partially demolish the eastern extent of the John Lewis building, retaining the brutalist and most distinctive elements of the building.

The demolition makes way for a new George Street urban civic space - Greyfriars Square. new glazed facade to the east of the building allows a greater amount of natural light into the building whilst providing an animated new, mixed use address onto the square.

Development Approach:

1. Norco House 1990's extension demolished;
2. Retained and refurbished Norco House to accommodate new ground floor and upper floor uses;
3. Demolition of the extension allows for more natural light to infiltrate the floor plan and allow for more flexibility of use;
4. A new pocket park, Greyfriars Square, providing new residential and public amenity along St. Andrew Street and Loch Street. There is potential for this to become a sculpture park, outdoor exhibition space or more flexible uses civic space;
5. Infill development could comprise of ground floor retail, food and beverage and commercial spaces with residential above;
6. Existing road infrastructure along Loch Street narrowed to create larger pedestrian space and pocket park;
7. Alteration to elevation of Bon Accord Centre along Loch Street with potential for single storey food and beverage units facing onto Greyfriars Square;
8. St. Andrew's Street traffic calmed to create new space to Norco House;
9. Substation retained on Crooked Lane;
10. New residential frontage onto St. Andrews Street and Crooked Lane.
11. Approximately 98 new residential dwellings created.

Option 2 - A new residential scale

This option explores the potential to introduce residential development as part of an integrated redesign of the Norco House site. It looks to demonstrate an approach that retains the most distinctive elements of Norco House whilst introducing a mix of residential typologies. It proposes to demolish the eastern

extent of the 1980s Norco House extension, refurbishment of Norco House, additional residential floors to Norco House and a new build development of residential development adjacent.

The new building element screens views of the Bon Accord Centre car park and alongside a new elevation to Norco House, frames and overlooks a small pocket park along St. Andrews Street.

This option explores the ability to deliver the potential for circa 150-200 new dwellings which could help to attract a different type of resident to the area, for example graduates, young professionals or starter families who wish to access all that the City has to offer whilst being in walking distance to high quality public spaces and a vibrant local community.

Development Approach:

1. Demolition of the 1980s Norco House Extension;
2. Refurbishment of Norco house - Ground floor and first floor refurbished to accommodate workshops, retail, co-working and office spaces. Creation of an atrium through the centre of building to allow for natural light to infiltrate the plan and make it suitable for residential redevelopment. Addition of two new residential floors to the existing Norco House (structural ability to support additional floors would need to be determined through detailed design feasibility);
3. Interventions to ground floor of Norco House to allow for a clear route from George Street to Greyfriars Square. Creation of strong visual permeability and connection between Loch Street and George Street;
4. New residential building to the east of Norco House. This makes the most efficient use of the site for higher density residential development whilst still allowing for a park and public amenity;
5. Service area entrance to north west corner of the Bon Accord Centre re-located to enter / exit onto Harriet Street
6. Infill development along St. Andrews Street could comprise of ground floor retail and commercial spaces with residential uses above;
7. Existing road infrastructure along Loch Street narrowed to create larger pedestrian space and pocket park;
8. Alteration to elevation of the Bon Accord Centre along Loch Street with potential for single storey cafe/restaurant/bar units facing onto the new Greyfriars Square.

Option 3 – A mixed use community

This option considers the full demolition of Norco House and the Norco House Extension to allow for a new residential led development to occupy its place.

The proposal is a mid-rise, mixed-use development accommodating residential, ground floor retail, commercial, food and beverage uses.

A new pocket park sits on the corner of George Street and St. Andrews Street to offer community focused dwell space and that is framed by ground floor active uses. This approach shifts the sense of centre towards the core of the study area and addresses the issues along Loch Street and the interface with the Bon Accord Centre.

This option achieves circa 250-300 residential dwellings.

Development Approach:

1. Demolition of Norco House and extension to create new residential led neighbourhood of scale along the southern extent of George Street. Approximately 201 residential dwellings accommodated.
2. Assumes residential development across all floors but could facilitate some non-residential uses on ground floor along George Street to animate the surrounding streets and public realm

3. Combination of 3-12 storey blocks in locations which create new gateway features as well as respecting the established ridge and shoulder heights of historic buildings along St. Andrew Street;
4. Approximately 250-300 new residential dwellings created;
5. New east - west connection from George Street to Loch Street;
6. Internalised, private green space and residents parking enclosed with residential development and former Soup Kitchen forming part of the setting of the space.
7. Alteration to elevation of the Bon Accord Centre along Loch Street with potential for single storey cafe/restaurant/bar units;
8. Service area entrance to north west corner of the Bon Accord Centre re-located to enter / exit onto Harriet Street

3.2 The Masterplan Vision

A primary role for the George Street Mini Masterplan, is to ensure that its under lying principles support and complement those of the wider Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan. The current vision for Aberdeen City Centre is:

‘To create a world class city centre and beach that respects and enhances Aberdeen’s unique qualities and characteristics and puts people at its heart...’

The key objectives of the city centre masterplan are categorised into three themes:

Economy

- Eradicating poverty
- Supporting residents into fair work and;
- Enabling 500 residents to upskill and move into economic opportunity.

People

- Child Friendly City which supports all children to prosper and engage actively with their communities by 2026;
- Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026
- Increasing satisfaction and use of community facilities and green environment to increase the health
- and well-being for older people and people managing long term conditions);

Place

- Increasing sustainable travel with 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026.
- Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen’s carbon emissions by 61% by 2026 and
- Addressing the nature crisis by protecting/ managing 26% of Aberdeen’s area for nature by 2026

George Street's Contribution

Building on the wider ACC key themes of Economy, People and Place, George Street can directly support and contribute to the success of the City. It will do this successfully by:

Economy	People	Place
Fully contributing to a more varied and dynamic local economy, where local businesses are supported, and where new ones, and people with ideas are encouraged to start-up, to grow and to thrive.	Supporting a neighbourhood full of a diverse mix of people and communities, participating in all that our district has to offer in terms of culture, education, everyday activities, a place to call home and a bustling street-life.	Becoming a place that is vibrant, comfortable, inclusive, playful and inviting. Being part of the city, but with a sense of the local intact.

3.3 George Street Mini Masterplan Objectives

Objectives For People

1. A place to continue to call home. An enhanced, greener environment in which to live sustainably and safely.
2. Encouraging community and individual wellbeing – creating amenity spaces and enhanced streets that foster greater social interaction, build and reinforce local community networks, and which support relaxation and dwell time.
3. Supporting community diversity from local shop owner, student, street artist, start-up business, exhibitor to resident with opportunities for all.
4. Encouraging a sense of local ownership & stewardship through events and initiatives shaped by the variety of local residential, educational and business communities.
5. A people focused place which offers a variety of uses and activities to support people of all ages – for residents and visitors

Objectives for Place

1. Define a coherent, colourful street aesthetic with a co-ordinated palette of quality materials, planting and street furniture distinctive to George Street.
2. Harder working streets – somewhere that is easy and safe to navigate, with a clearer hierarchy of streets and wayfinding. Reclaiming streets to prioritise a positive pedestrian experience, manage traffic movements, improve their environmental sustainability.
3. Tackling areas of inactivity through a programme of transformational change - from short to long term – making space for pop-ups, tactical urbanism and interactions that are experience focused.
4. Supporting the core to do more – addressing infrastructure barriers and poor-quality movement thresholds to encourage more comfortable journeys into & out of George Street.
5. Illuminating culture and identity - inviting you to learn about the built and social history through interpretation, intervention in the public realm and lighting.

Objectives for Economy

1. Retain the existing economic heart of the neighbourhood.

2. Encourage renewal and diversification to support new small and local enterprises that can define the culture of George Street.
3. Foster a culture of entrepreneurialism and experimentation – providing flexible spaces, space to fail and a means to support experimentation and trial.
4. Help the neighbourhood to respond to new residential, student & other demands – finding new locations to grow.
5. Establish a distinctive role in the city’s cultural offer - create a home of sorts for a burgeoning scene for arts, craft and independents.
6. Play a key role in evolving the city’s retail offer and reshaping its core.

3.4 Relationship with other Plans, Programmes and Strategies

This section sets out the policy and guidance at varying administrative levels, namely UK, Scotland, Regional and Local, that have influenced preparation of the George Street Mini Masterplan, and with which this exercise seeks to comply.

3.4.1 National Policy

At a National level, in addition to Scottish Planning Policy, the Scottish Government Economic Strategy and associated strategies, the emerging National Planning Framework 4 was published in draft in 2021. In July 2022, the Scottish Government confirmed that there was strong support for the general direction of NPF4, and that their intention is to lay a revised draft for the Scottish Parliament’s approval in the autumn of 2022.

At a UK level, the UK Government’s ‘Levelling Up’ White Paper identifies the requirement for a clear framework to “act upon the drivers of spatial disparity”, and identifies six ‘Capitals’ to be considered – of particular relevance to Aberdeen City Centre and Beach are: Physical capital; Human capital; Social capital; and Institutional capital. In addition, the White Paper identifies 12 clear ‘Missions’ to be achieved by 2030.

Those of particular relevance to the success of George Street include:

- Transport Infrastructure – improved public transport connectivity and services;
- Health – Health Life Expectancy gaps to be narrowed;
- Well-being – to improve in every area of the UK; and,
- Pride in place - people’s satisfaction with their town centre to have risen.

The Aberdeen City Region City Deal in 2016 committed both the UK Government and Scottish Government to jointly investing up to £250m whilst Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and local partners are committed to investing up to £44m over the next decade. The commitments made under the deal include those in relation to Innovation, Digital Connectivity, Aberdeen Harbour Expansion, Transport Appraisals and Governance.

In the meantime, the draft NPF4 identifies that each part of Scotland can be planned and developed to create:

- Sustainable places, where we reduce emissions and restore and better connect biodiversity;
- Liveable places, where we can live better, healthier lives;
- Productive places, where we have a greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy; and
- Distinctive places, where we recognise and work with our assets.

In addition, NPF4 sets out specific actions for a “North east transition” which actively plans a just transition from oil and gas to a net zero future.

These actions include: Transition to net zero; Improve local liveability; Regenerate coastal communities; Decarbonise connectivity.

Additional Scotland-wide actions which are key to George Street Mini Masterplan are that of: 20-minute neighbourhoods and local living representing liveable environments and great access to services for all; Sustainable Tourism, where tourism is a priority sector within the Aberdeen Regional Economic Strategy; and the Reinvention and Future Proofing of City Centres.

3.4.2 City And Town Centres

Specifically in relation to city and town centres, the Scottish Government’s ‘A New Future for Scotland’s Town Centres’ (Feb 2021) promotes a set of proposals which will strengthen the role of town centres in planning and the role of communities in shaping their town and town centre.

Recommendations include towns and town centres to be included in NPF4 with a requirement to create and implement town plans; and, expanded and aligned funding of demonstration projects in towns and town centres.

More recently, the Scottish Government, partnering with the Scottish Cities Alliance, have also published ‘At the Heart of Economic Transformation’, the City Centre Recovery Task Force Report (March 2022). This identifies the impact of the Covid-19 public health emergency on city centres, and sets out the areas and actions that the Task Force have agreed to prioritise. These immediate priority actions focus on: Action on immediate recovering; Data on spend; Building expertise; Visitor campaign; Investor attraction; Greater clarity around the return to offices; and Call on UK Government to make changes to VAT to better support city centre recovery.

In putting these recommendations into practice, the Task Force Report sets out seven 5-year outcomes for city centre recovery, namely:

1. Increased residential capacity and occupancy in city centres;
2. Smaller city centre carbon footprint;
3. Reduction in the amount of vacant and derelict land and property;
4. Increase in city centre creative, entrepreneurial and start-up activity;
5. More revenue raising opportunities for local authorities;
6. Reduction in oversupply of retail, and increase in cultural offer; and,
7. Faster and more agile planning decisions.

The George Street Mini Masterplan as prepared, in conjunction with other Council activities, shall align with the 5-year priorities as set out by the Task Force.

3.4.3 Transport

With respect to transport at a national level, in addition to the National Transport Strategy, the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (Feb 2021) echoes the Scottish Government’s Climate Change Plan by identifying the need for a 20% reduction in car kilometres with a modal shift from car to walking, cycling and public transport. The Review also includes a number of recommendations which are pertinent to Aberdeen City Centre, most notably the development of Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART) – a bus-based rapid transit system for the region which could prioritise buses and connect key destinations on the

outskirts of Aberdeen to the city centre. A national development around provision of a new Rapid Transit network for the city is also outlined in the draft NPF4.

At a Regional level, the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (2020) recognises Aberdeen City Centre as a ‘Transformation Zone’ and “an important asset for the City Region [which] must continue to be enhanced and promoted”. The Regional Economic Strategy and Action Plan (2018) focuses on key themes of: Investment in infrastructure; Innovation; Inclusive economic growth; and Internationalisation. In addition, there are Key Actions identified for Aberdeen, including: Enhance City Centre environment by implementation of transport elements of the City Centre Masterplan and a Low Emissions Zone; and Review and scope potential future transformational projects.

Echoing the national position on transport, the Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy 2040 sets out six key priorities: Improved journey efficiencies to enhance connectivity; Zero fatalities on the road network; Air quality that is cleaner than WHO standards for emissions from transport; Significantly reduced carbon emissions from transport to support net zero by 2045; Accessibility for all; A stepchange in public transport and active travel enabling a 50:50 mode split between car driver and sustainable modes. Related to this is the key Policy Heading of ‘Delivering Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART)’

3.4.4 City Centre Recovery Task Force: report

Covid-19 has changed the face of city centres up and down the UK. As a result of necessary health measures, businesses and streets usually bustling with people were transformed overnight. In 2021, the Scottish Government and Scotland’s seven cities established a Task Force to identify the actions needed to take together to support city centre recovery from the effects of the pandemic, working through our existing successful partnership of the Scottish Cities Alliance.

The pandemic has heightened awareness of inequality, poverty and disadvantage, and there is clear evidence that harm has been felt unevenly. The Scottish Government has set the national direction with its ten-year National Strategy for Economic Transformation, which will build on the Covid Recovery Strategy to create a greener, fairer, more inclusive wellbeing economy.

The key messages arising from the report were about the nature and role of city centres and how without people city centres are just empty spaces and buildings. What makes our cities flourishing, vibrant, social, creative, interesting and resilient is that they are places where large numbers of people come together.

The principal challenge considered in Task Force Report is how to attract people back into our city centres, and this is something that should be applied when looking at the future of George Street. How to attract people back into George Street.

3.4.5 Local Development Plan (LDP)

At the Local level, planning policy and guidance is provided by the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017, which will soon be replaced by the emerging Aberdeen Local Development 2022 which is currently undergoing Examination in Public by the Scottish Ministers. Both of these plans provide detailed planning policy to be considered when considering proposals across the city, including the city centre and beach, and also provide more detailed information and briefs in relation to specific opportunities (OP sites).

The Council’s Local Outcome Improvement Plan and associated Locality Plans are key in setting out a vision for an Aberdeen as “a place where all people can prosper”, and considers the People, Place and Economy of Aberdeen. The refreshed Local Outcome Improvement Plan was approved in July 2021,

with an annual report published in July 2022. The LOIP identifies 15 'stretch' outcomes to be delivered by 2026 and 75 shorter term improvement aims. Stretch Outcomes particularly relevant to George Street include: Child Friendly City which supports all children to prosper and engage actively with their communities by 2026; Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026 - this includes the Key Drivers of encouraging adoption of healthier lifestyles, and increasing satisfaction and use of community facilities and green environment to increase the health and well-being for older people and people managing long term conditions); Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate; and, Increasing sustainable travel with 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026

3.4.6 Supplementary Guidance within the Development Plan 2017

Shops and Signs

The repair and replacement of shops and signs is a prevalent topic. Historic and original features add to the overall pleasant experience of buildings, streetscape and their wider surroundings. Inappropriate design, proportions or materials can detract from a building and the wider streetscape and setting.

The SG acknowledges a principle of retaining and repairing historic materials, with replacement requiring thorough consideration. New shops and signs need to be designed for their location to ensure they provide a positive experience to the streetscene.

The guidance applies to existing and new shopfronts and signs. The guidance is to be used on a citywide basis for retail and commercial premises including banks, betting offices, restaurants, estate agents and beyond. The signage guidance should be considered in all instances.

Hierarchy of Centres

Scottish Planning Policy states that a sequential approach should be used when selecting locations for all uses which generate significant footfall, including retail and commercial leisure uses, offices, community and cultural facilities and where appropriate public buildings and requires that locations are considered through a hierarchy of centres. Within this SPD, George Street is identified as a neighbourhood centre which is the preferred location for local retail, commercial leisure, community and cultural provision only.

3.4.7 City Centre Masterplan (CCMP) Context

Aberdeen City Council have made a commitment to update the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan (CCMP) (2015) to align with the Aberdeen economic policy panel report (November 2020) and other recent key strategic commitments. These strategies focus on the desire to develop a holistic Aberdeen City Vision to support economic recovery and growth (post Covid) and to support the continuing diversification from oil and gas-based industries to green infrastructure, emerging technologies and renewables alongside optimising the remaining off-shore opportunities.

Investment in skills, health and wellbeing and quality of life through the utilisation of "place based" strategies will also support the development of "Aberdeen the place" – a vibrant city where people choose to live, work, do business and invest.

Masterplans that cover such an ambitious scope and with long-term programmes are by necessity dynamic, responding to evolution of demand, priorities, market conditions and trends. This has been particularly evident during 2020/21 with changes to how people interact and use the City Centre and surrounding areas during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Mini Masterplan document will sit as a 'daughter' document to the updated CCMP document. The Mini Masterplan proposals will align and complement the wider CCMP strategy.

3.4.8 Transport and Accessibility

Transport provision should be considered from the very outset of a development proposal, with particular attention paid to the need to encourage sustainable travel.

The Local Transport Strategy highlights the role that spatial planning can play in ensuring Aberdeen has "a sustainable transport system that is fit for the 21st Century, accessible to all, supports a vibrant economy, facilitates healthy living and minimises the impact on our environment" through the careful siting and design of development and the implementation of parking policies and Travel Plans to discourage unnecessary car travel.

A sustainable transport system will also help reduce emissions to tackle climate change, improve air quality, and lead to a healthier population.

3.4.9 Green Space Network and Open Space

Access to good quality green and blue infrastructure, including areas of open space and green networks, will contribute to a greener, healthier, smarter, safer, stronger, wealthier and fairer city. This guidance will assist the George Street Mini Masterplan in assessing and demonstrating their compliance in enhancing and improving green infrastructure to create useful, sustainable and well used places. This will benefit the wider community, the natural environment and support a healthy economy.

3.4.10 Big Buildings

Guidance is given to ensure big building proposals, when appropriate, will have a positive impact on the streetscene and surrounding area, and Aberdeen's skyline.

Big buildings can be tall buildings and/or bulky buildings. Generally, a big building is regarded as one that exceeds the general height of the surrounding built context and/or whose footprint is in excess of the established development pattern of the surrounding area.

According to guidance, big buildings should:

- Complement or improve the existing site context, consider the natural topography, scale and height of structures, urban grain, streetscape and built form, open spaces, effect on the skyline, and respect, reinforce and, where applicable create opportunities for enhanced views and vistas and make a positive contribution to the skyline when viewed from all angles from near, middle and distant views, both during the day and at night;
- Consider the environment and amenity of those in the vicinity of the building, including micro climate, overshadowing, glare reduction, night time appearance, internal and external lighting;
- At street level, present an active frontage and be comfortable for people and, where feasible, include publicly accessible areas within the building;
- Be situated in areas where existing topography, urban scale and transport make them sustainable;
- Have a well-designed vertical emphasis;
- Be constructed of high quality materials, craftsmanship and have detailing with low maintenance implications;
- Provide fully integrated servicing arrangements which are, wherever possible, off street;

- Comply with civil aviation requirements and those of other telecommunication, television and radio transmission networks; be adaptable over time and utilise best sustainable practices; and
- Contain a mix of uses rather than rely on a single use to achieve a viable development. It may be appropriate for big buildings to form part of a wider development mix with smaller scale buildings that reduce any dominating impact.

3.4.11 Urban Realm Manual 2021 (Draft)

The Draft Urban Realm Manual 2021 aims to provide clarity, certainty and consistency on the city's requirements for a comprehensive approach to understanding and developing place and movement hierarchies, their appropriate hard landscaping material specifications, the retention and re-use of important features as well as identifying new opportunities to sustainably enhance and green the city.

Maintaining and enhancing the existing built environment, as well as delivering new development of distinctive high quality places, is important to Aberdeen. To consistently have sustainable and efficient streets and places that are easy for all to use, that look good and have longevity give a positive impression and a lasting sense of place are fundamental to successful city life.

The public realm of George Street and the surrounding streets is something to be enhanced throughout this masterplanning process, so by considering the principles of the urban realm manual and responding to the place and movement context in planning, design, responsible sourcing, responsible use and the principles of the circular economy, a successful place can be achieved.

The urban realm manual offers guidance on; street design hierarchy, street structure, street layout and street detail which is established through a deep understanding of the likely place and movement values of the area.

Table 3-1 summarises how the Mini Masterplan affects, and is affected by, other relevant PPS and environmental protection objectives. Appendix B shows a more detailed analysis of each relevant PPS and its implications for the Mini Masterplan.

Table 3-1: Name of Plan, Programme, Strategy or Environmental Protection Strategy

International Level	
Nature Conservation	
	The Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC
	The Birds Directive 2009/147/EC
Water	
	Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC
	Nitrate Directive 91/43/EC
Waste	
	The Landfill Directive 99/31/EC
	The Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC
Climate Change	
	Paris Agreement 2015
	International UN Agreements - Kyoto Protocol (2005)
	UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) (Glasgow)
National Level	
Overarching Planning Policy	
	Planning (Scotland) Act 2019
	National Planning Framework for Scotland 3 (NPF3) (2014)
	Scottish Planning Policy 2014
	Draft National Planning Framework for Scotland 4 (NPF4)
Cross- Sectoral	

	Transport (Scotland) Act 2019
	National Transport Strategy 2 (2020)
	Strategic Transport Projects Review (2021)
	The Government's Economic Strategy (2007)
	Choosing Our Future: Scotland's Sustainable Development Strategy (2005)
	Natural Resource Productivity (2009)
	Getting the best from our land: A land use strategy for Scotland 2016-2021
	Building a Better Scotland Infrastructure Investment Plan: Investing in the Future of Scotland (2005)
Air and Climate Change	
	Environment Act 1995
	Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019
	UK Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland - Volume 1 (2011)
	Climate Ready Scotland: climate change adaptation programme (SCCAP2) 2019-2024
	Update to the Climate Change Plan 2018 – 2032
	Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme (SCCAP) Progress Report 2018
	Climate Change Plan: Third Report on Proposals and Policies 2018-2032 (RPP3)
	Scottish Climate Change Delivery Plan (2009)
	Clean Air Scotland – The Road to a Healthier Future (2015)
	A Low Carbon Economic Strategy for Scotland (2010)
	Scottish Energy Strategy 2017
	Planning Advice Note 84 Reducing Carbon Emissions in New Development (2008)
Heritage, Design and Regeneration	
	The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1997
	Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
	Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS 2019)
	Planning Advice Note (PAN) 2/2011: Planning and Archaeology
	Our Place in Time: The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland (2014)
	Creating Places - A policy statement on architecture and place for Scotland (2013)
	Designing Streets: A Policy Statement for Scotland (2010)
	People and Place: Regeneration Policy Statement (2006)
	Green Infrastructure: Design and Placemaking (2011)
Soil and Landscape	
	The Scottish Soil Framework (2009)
	Scottish Landscape Forum: Scotland's Living Landscape (2007)
Population and Health	
	All Our Futures: Planning for a Scotland with an Ageing Population (2007)
	Reaching Higher- Building on the Success of Sport 21 (2007) (Scotland's Sport Strategy)
	Let's Make Scotland More Active: A Strategy for Physical Activity (2003)
	Let's Get Scotland Walking – The National Strategy
	Cycling Action Plan for Scotland 2017-2020
	A Long-Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland 203
	Equality Act 2010
	Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005

	Community Empowerment Act 2015
Natural Conservation	
	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
	The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004
	Scotland's Biodiversity Strategy- It's in your hands (2004)
	2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity - A Strategy for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Scotland (2013)
	The Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 1994 (as amended)
	The Conservation (Natural Habitats) Amendment (Scotland) Regulations 2007
Water	
	Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011, as amended
	Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003
	Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009
	The river basin management plan for the Scotland river basin district: 2015–2027 (2015)
	Scottish Water Strategic Asset and Capacity Development Plan (2012)
	SEPA Groundwater Protection Policy for Scotland v3: Environmental Policy 19 (SEPA)
	Action Programme for Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (Scotland) Regulations 2008)
Waste	
	Scotland's Zero Waste Plan (2010)
	Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012
	SEPA Guidelines for Thermal Treatment of Municipal Waste
Cross- Sector Guidance	
	PAN 60: Planning for Natural Heritage
	PAN 61: Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
	Planning and Waste Management Advice (2015)
	PAN 65: Planning and Open Space
	PAN 75: Transport and Planning
	PAN 76: New Residential Streets
	PAN 77: Designing Safer Places
	PAN 78: Inclusive Design
Regional Level	
Overarching Planning Policy	
	Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan 2020
Cross- Sectoral	
	Regional Economic Strategy – Securing the Future of the North East 2015
	Regional Economic Strategy: Action Plan (2018-2025)
	The Economic Action Plan for Aberdeen City and Shire to 2025
	NESTRANS Regional Transport Strategy Refresh (2013)
	Aberdeen Rapid Transit
	Destination Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire Tourism Strategy (2018-2023)
Nature Conservation	
	North East of Scotland Biodiversity Partnership - Action Plan 2014 - 2017
	River Dee Catchment Management Plan (2007)
	Forestry and Woodlands Strategy 2017
Local Level	

	Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017
	Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2020 (Draft) (The Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2022 will replace the existing local development plan)
	Aberdeen City Council Supplementary Guidance
	Aberdeen City Local Transport Strategy 2016 - 2021
	Aberdeen Active Travel Action Plan 2021-2026
	Delivering Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART)
	Aberdeen City Air Quality Action Plan
	Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap - towards becoming a net zero emissions city by 2045
	Aberdeen Socio-Economic Rescue Plan 2020/21
	ACC Open Space Strategy 2011-2016
	Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26
	Aberdeen Nature Conservation Strategy
	Aberdeen City Air Quality Action Plan
	Aberdeen City Core Paths Plan
	Aberdeen Rapid Transit
	Healthy Cities Agenda
	Landscape Character Assessment of Aberdeen
	Urban Realm Manual 2021 (Draft)
	Contaminated Land Strategy
	Aberdeen City Waste Strategy 2014-25
	Powering Aberdeen – Aberdeen Sustainable Energy Action Plan 2016 (has been superseded.)
	Aberdeen Adapts: Climate Adaptation Framework
	Aberdeen Electric Vehicle Framework
	Granite City Growing, Aberdeen’s food-growing strategy

3.5 Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment

The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 Schedule 3 requires that the Environmental Report includes a description of the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the PPS, and “the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected”. This section aims to describe the environmental context within which the PPS operates and the constraints and targets that this context imposes on the PPS.

3.6 Environmental Baseline

The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 Schedule 3 requires that the Environmental Report includes a description of the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.

3.7 Environmental characteristics of the George Street Mini Masterplan area

The early stages of SEA, such as describing the baseline, identify environmental problems/issues and analysing the links and relationships between other strategic actions, should be carried out concurrently and they should inform each other throughout the process. This approach has been adopted within this Scoping Report.

In order to measure the significant environmental effects of the George Street Mini Masterplan the current state of the environment must be known. Sufficient information to provide the current state of the environment, or an Environmental Baseline, utilising GIS mapping where possible will be gathered to show the geographical location and scale of key environmental designations and assets. The potential effects (including, cumulative, secondary and synergistic effects) of the information contained within the Plans and their alternatives will be measured against this baseline.

The environmental baseline provides a 'snapshot' of George Street's urban and natural environments and allows appropriate draft Objectives and Indicators

The Environmental Report will identify the current environmental issues that impact on the George Street area, utilising the information that has been identified through an analysis of the baseline environmental data to determine the potential environmental implications. When undertaking the assessment of the Mini Masterplan, Aberdeen Council will be capable of predicting whether the identified environmental issues will worsen, stabilise or improve through the implementation of the masterplan.

3.7.1 Population

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is the Scottish Government's official tool for identifying small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across all of Scotland

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) uses several measures to understand the relative deprivation of areas across Scotland. This is not only in terms of 'low income' but can be people who have fewer resources or opportunities in health and education. SIMD ranks data zones from most deprived (ranked 1) to least deprived (ranked 6,976), where 1 is within '10% most deprived areas' and 10 is within '10% least deprived area.

Aberdeen City is one of six Council Areas which includes North Lanarkshire, Moray, East Lothian, Highland and North Ayrshire which have a larger share of the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland. Compared with SIMD 2016, levels of deprivation have increased in Aberdeen City. None of these increases are greater than 2 percentage points.

The George Street Mini Masterplan area comprises two data zones (S01006646 and S01006648) (Figure 3-1). Data zone S01006646 is ranked 3,888 out of Scotland's 6,976 data zones, while S01006648 is ranked 3,506.

Figure 3-1: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Data Zones

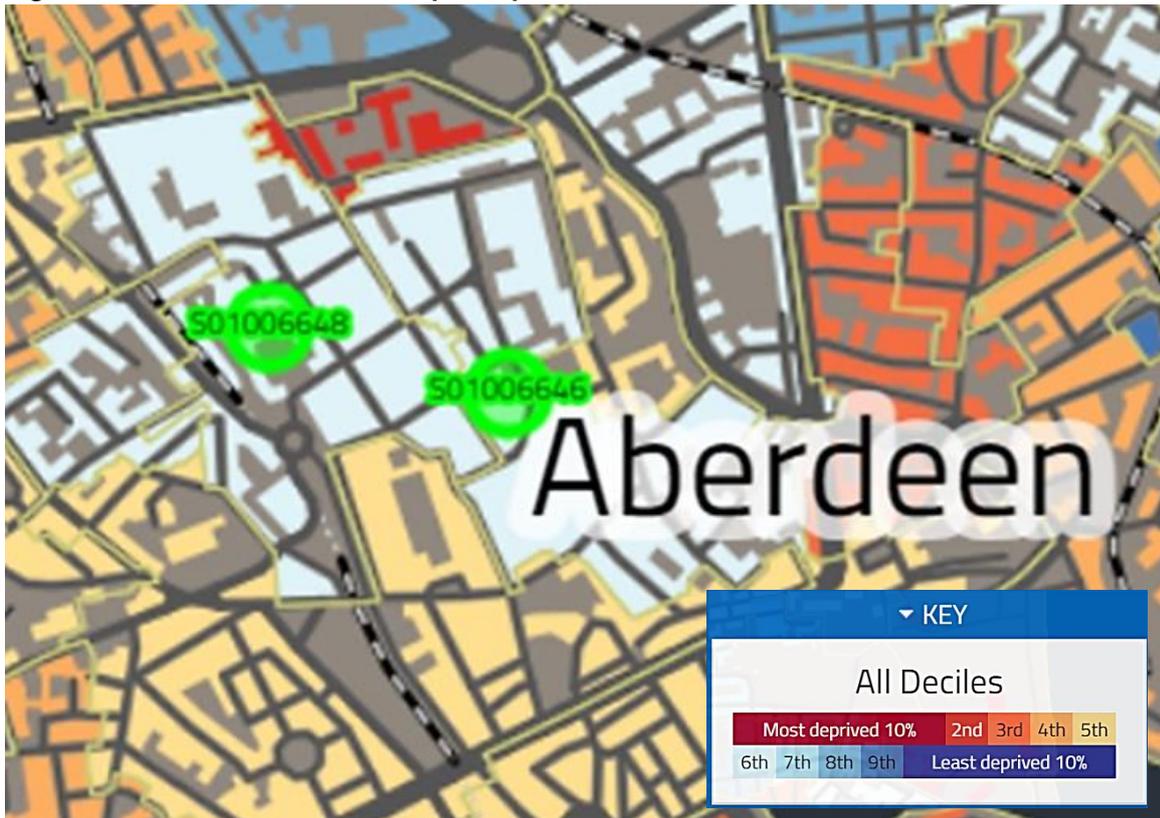


Figure 3-2 and Table 3-1 indicates that both George Street S01006646 and S01006648 are within Decile 6, Quintile 3 which is one of the least deprived areas.¹

Figure 3-2: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Zones – George Street



¹ **Deciles** split the datazones into 10 groups, each containing 10% of Scotland's datazones
Quintiles split the datazones into 5 groups, each containing 20% of Scotland's datazones

Table 3-2: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Zones - George Street

Data Zone	Intermediate Zone	Total population	Working age population	SIMD 2020 Rank	Income Domain Rank	Employment Domain Rank	Health Domain Rank	Education Domain Rank	Access Domain Rank	Crime Domain Rank
S01006646	George Street	861	762	3888	4871	5686	4431	1775	4665	311
S01006648	George Street	1751	1611	3506	4103	3531	4607	2898	4732	599

3.7.2 Aberdeen City Population

On 30th June 2020, the population of Aberdeen City was 229,060² over an area of 186 km² (18,600 ha). This results in a population density of 12.3 people per hectare.

There was an increase of 0.2% from 228,670 in 2019. Aberdeen City had the 8th highest population in 2020, out of all 32 council areas in Scotland.³

Between 1998 and 2020, the population of Aberdeen City has increased by 6.2%. This is the 16th highest percentage change out of the 32 council areas in Scotland. Over the same period, Scotland's population rose by 7.7% (Table 3-3).

Table 3-3: Total population, Aberdeen City, 1998-2020

Year	Population	% change from 1998	Scotland % change from 1998
1998	215,650	0.0	0.0
1999	214,630	-0.5	-0.1
2000	213,340	-1.1	-0.3
2001	211,910	-1.7	-0.3
2002	210,680	-2.3	-0.2
2003	209,280	-3.0	-0.2
2004	207,820	-3.6	0.1
2005	208,690	-3.2	0.7
2006	209,630	-2.8	1.1
2007	212,470	-1.5	1.8
2008	214,020	-0.8	2.5
2009	217,020	0.6	3.0
2010	219,730	1.9	3.6
2011	222,460	3.2	4.4
2012	224,910	4.3	4.7
2013	227,070	5.3	4.9
2014	228,920	6.2	5.3
2015	230,350	6.8	5.8
2016	229,840	6.6	6.5
2017	228,800	6.1	6.8

² <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-estimates/mid-year-population-estimates/mid-2020> (Accessed 24/11/2022)

³ <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/aberdeen-city-council-profile.html#:~:text=Population%20Estimates,-Last%20updated%3A%20June&text=On%2030%20June%202020%2C%20the.of%20Scotland%20increased%20by%200.0%25.&text=Aberdeen%20City%20had%20the%208th,32%20council%20areas%20in%20Scotland.> (Accessed 24/11/2022)

2018	227,560	5.5	7.1
2019	228,670	6.0	7.6
2020	229,060	6.2	7.7

In 2020, there were more females (50.2%) than males (49.8%) living in Aberdeen City. There were also more females (51.2%) than males (48.8%) living in Scotland overall.

Between 2018 and 2028, the population of Aberdeen City is projected to increase from 227,560 to 230,170. This is an increase of 1.1%, which compares to a projected increase of 1.8% for Scotland as a whole.

Over the next 10 years, the population of Aberdeen City is projected to increase by 0.1% due to natural change (more births than deaths). Total net migration (net migration within Scotland, from overseas and from the rest of the UK) is projected to result in a population increase of 1.0% over the same period.

Between 2018 and 2028, the 0 to 15 age group is projected to see the largest percentage decrease (-3.2%) and the 75 and over age group is projected to see the largest percentage increase (+16.1%). In terms of size, however, 25 to 44 is projected to remain the largest age group.

The Mini Masterplan proposals will provide long term significant benefits for the area that will arise through the provision of high quality amenities. The development principle is to develop a liveable retail, commercial, leisure and tourism destination which would revitalise the George Street area and reconnect it to the city centre. Other benefits include the provision of employment and community facilities, integrated transport links, environmental improvements and contributions to the regeneration of related areas. This will ensure the key elements of a sustainable community are looked at holistically.

3.7.3 Migrant Population

In 2019-20, Aberdeen City had the 12th highest level of net migration out of the 32 council areas in Scotland, with a net total of 500 people. This is a decrease of 310 from 810 people in 2018-19⁴.

Net migration is the difference between in-migration (those coming into an area) and out-migration (those leaving an area). Positive net migration means in-migration is higher than out-migration. Negative net migration means out-migration is higher than in-migration.

In Aberdeen City, the net migration rate decreased from 3.5 people per 1,000 population in 2018-19 to 2.2 in 2019-20. In comparison, the rate in Scotland overall decreased from 5.5 to 3.1 people per 1,000 population.

In 2019-20, Aberdeen City was the council area with the 17th highest net migration rate, out of all 32 council areas in Scotland. Between 2018-19 and 2019-20, 24 councils saw a decrease in net migration rates per 1,000 population and 8 councils saw an increase.

In the period 2019-20, net migration in Aberdeen City was higher for females (322) than for males (180). The age group with the highest level of total net migration was 15 to 19 (1,034). In contrast, the age group with the lowest level of net migration was 30 to 34 (-310).

⁴ <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/aberdeen-city-council-profile.html#migration> (Accessed 24/11/2022)

3.7.4 Ageing Population

In terms of overall size, the 25 to 44 age group was the largest in 2020, with a population of 75,582. In contrast, the 75 and over age group was the smallest, with a population of 16,241. In 2020, more females than males lived in Aberdeen City in 4 out of 6 age groups.

Between 1998 and 2020, the 16 to 24 age group saw the largest percentage decrease (-16.5%). The 45 to 64 age group saw the largest percentage increase (+16.4%).

Between 2018 and 2028, the 0 to 15 age group is projected to see the largest percentage decrease (-3.2%) and the 75 and over age group is projected to see the largest percentage increase (+16.1%). In terms of size, however, 25 to 44 is projected to remain the largest age group (Figure 3-3 and Table 3-4).⁵

Figure 3-3: Aberdeen City: Birth by Age Group by Year 2018 and 2028

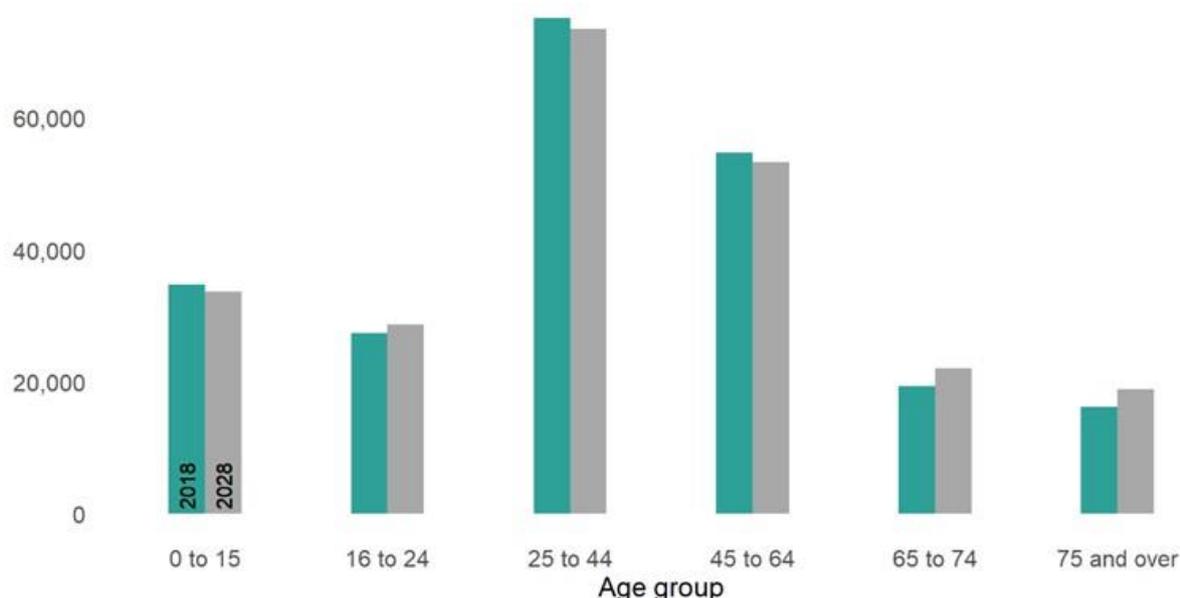


Table 3-4: Projected population change by age group, Aberdeen City, 2018 and 2028

Age group	2018	2028	% change	Scotland % change
All people	227,560	230,170	1.1	1.8
0 to 15	34,833	33,702	-3.2	-6.0
16 to 24	27,357	28,713	5.0	-0.9
25 to 44	75,101	73,500	-2.1	3.1
45 to 64	54,737	53,329	-2.6	-5.5
65 to 74	19,297	22,077	14.4	14.4
75 and over	16,235	18,849	16.1	25.4

In Aberdeen City, life expectancy at birth was higher for females (81.3 years) than for males (76.9 years) in 2018-20.⁶

In Aberdeen City, life expectancy at birth is higher than at Scotland level for both females and males.

⁵ https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/aberdeen-city-council-profile.html#table_pop_proj_age (Accessed 24/11/2022)

⁶ https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/aberdeen-city-council-profile.html#life_expectancy (Accessed 24/11/2022)

Over the period between 2001-03 and 2018-20, female life expectancy at birth in Aberdeen City has risen by 1.6%. This is the 2nd lowest percentage change out of all 32 council areas in Scotland and this is lower than the percentage change for Scotland overall (+2.7%).

Over the period between 2001-03 and 2018-20, male life expectancy at birth in Aberdeen City has risen by 3.8%. This is the joint 20th highest percentage change out of all 32 council areas in Scotland and this is lower than the percentage change for Scotland overall (+4.5%).

In Aberdeen City, life expectancy at age 65-69 was higher for females (20.0 years) than for males (17.3 years) in 2018-20. Male life expectancy at age 65-69 has increased more rapidly than female life expectancy at age 65-69 between 2001-03 and 2018-20.

In Aberdeen City, female life expectancy at age 65-69 is higher than at Scotland level and male life expectancy at age 65-69 is lower than at Scotland level.

Over the period between 2001-03 and 2018-20, female life expectancy at age 65-69 in Aberdeen City has risen by 6.6%. This is the 29th highest percentage change out of all 32 council areas in Scotland and this is lower than the percentage change for Scotland overall (+9.2%).

Over the period between 2001-03 and 2018-20, male life expectancy at age 65-69 in Aberdeen City has risen by 11.3%. This is the 2nd lowest percentage change out of all 32 council areas in Scotland and this is lower than the percentage change for Scotland overall (+16.3%).

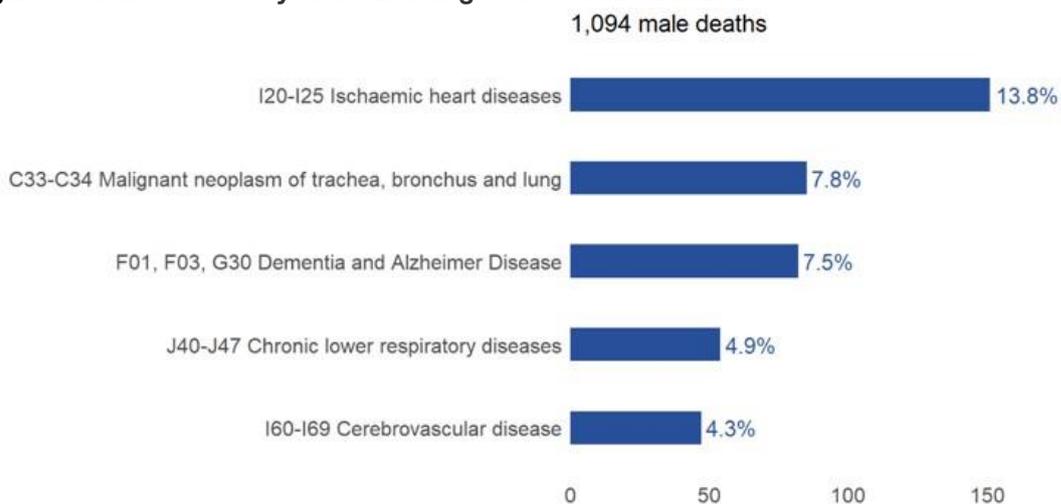
3.7.5 Health

In Aberdeen City, the standardised death rate increased from 10.8 per 1,000 population in 2019 to 11.0 in 2020. In comparison, the rate in Scotland overall increased from 10.6 to 12.0.

In 2020, Aberdeen City was the council area with the 27th highest standardised death rate. Between 2019 and 2020, 2 councils saw a decrease in standardised death rate and 30 councils saw an increase.

In Aberdeen City, the leading cause of death for males in 2020 was ischaemic heart diseases (13.8% of all male deaths), followed by lung cancer (7.8%). In Scotland overall, the leading cause of death for males was also ischaemic heart diseases (14.1%), followed by dementia and Alzheimer's disease (7.7%) (Figure 3-4).⁷

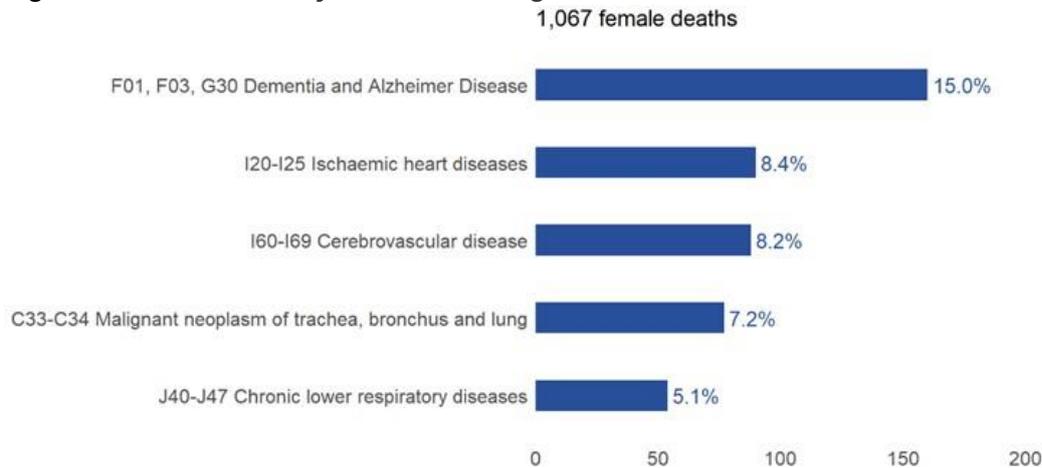
Figure 3-4: Aberdeen City: Male Leading Causes of Death. 2020



⁷ <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/aberdeen-city-council-profile.html#deaths> (Accessed 24/11/2022)

In Aberdeen City, the leading cause of death for females in 2020 was dementia and Alzheimer's disease (15.0% of all female deaths), followed by ischaemic heart diseases (8.4%). In Scotland overall, the leading cause of death for females was also dementia and Alzheimer's disease (14.2%), followed by ischaemic heart diseases (8.6%) (Figure 3-5).

Figure 3-5: Aberdeen City: Female Leading Causes of Death. 2020



Scotland has seen increasing levels of obesity over the past ten years and currently one in four adults (25%) in Aberdeen City are obese.⁸ Clinical obesity increases the risk of ill-health and premature death, and is therefore an important driver of life expectancy.

In Aberdeen there are over 55 sites where the Council monitors air quality. These include simple measuring devices and 6 highly sophisticated automatic monitoring sites that work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The automatic monitors measure Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) and Fine particles (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) and are located at Union Street, Market Street, Anderson Drive, Errol Place, King Street and Wellington Road.

Air quality in most parts of Aberdeen is good and unlikely to cause any major health problem. However, there are hot spots of raised nitrogen dioxide, PM10 and PM2.5 levels around busy roads and particularly in the city centre. The raised pollution level is caused by traffic congestion and the number and type of vehicles on our roads.

If an air quality objective is exceeded, or predicted to be exceeded, then the authority must declare the affected area an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The Council has declared the following AQMA's due to Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) and Particulate Matter (PM₁₀) exceedances:

- City Centre
- Anderson Drive/Haudagain/Auchmill Road corridor
- Wellington Road (Queen Elizabeth II Bridge to Balnagask Road)

If health is good, the level of air pollution usually experienced is unlikely to have any serious short-term effects, but on rare occasions when pollution levels are high, some people may feel eye irritation, others may start to cough or have difficulty breathing. Those likely to be more sensitive include people who suffer from heart and lung disease, including asthma and bronchitis, especially young children and the elderly.

Refer to Section 3.7.13 for more details on Air Quality.

⁸ Source: Scottish Health Survey, local authority results 2014-17 inclusive, published 2017
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-results-local-areas-2014-2015-2016-2017/> (Accessed (Accessed 24/11/2022)

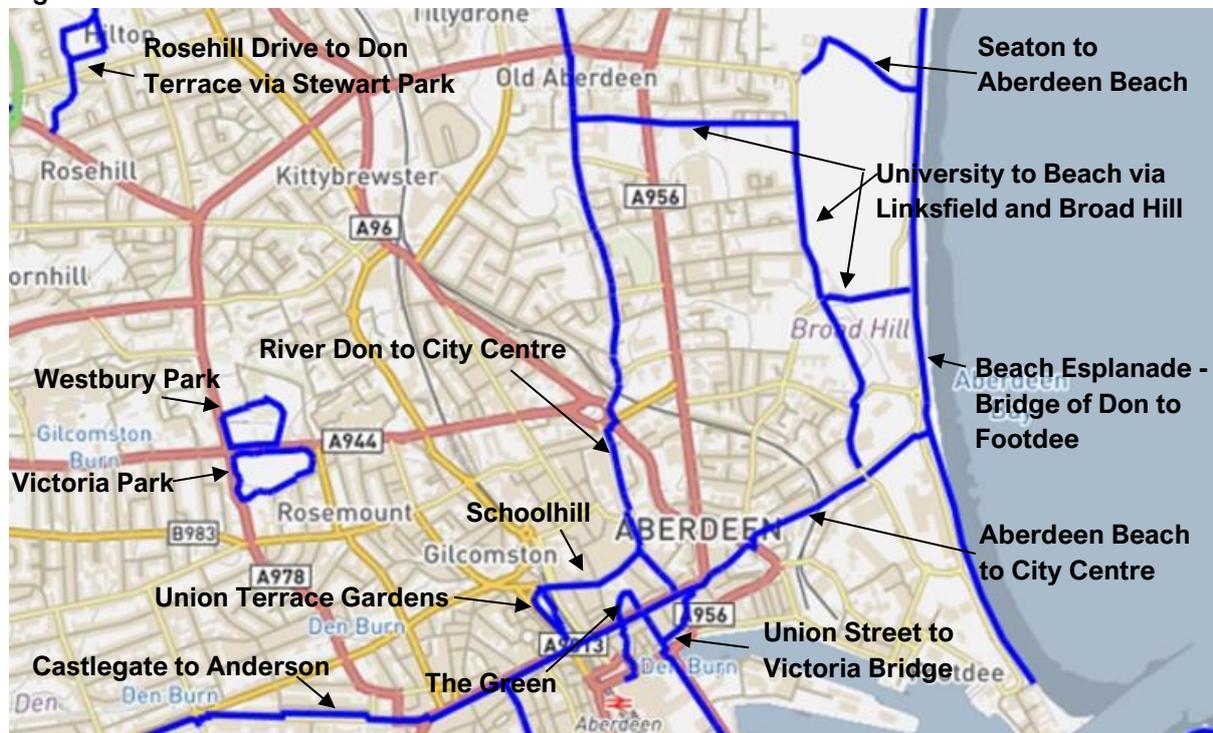
3.7.6 Transport

The area has good access to bus, walking and cycling routes and will provide an excellent opportunity for the provision of new infrastructure. The enhancements will benefit the wider area. Viewed in the context of conventional appraisal techniques and when compared to many other UK cities, the George Street area is not physically distant from the city centre or the key transport corridors that serve it.

3.7.7 Core Paths

There are no core paths within the boundary of the George Street Mini Masterplan boundary, however, the River Don to City Centre and Schoolhill core paths are the closest. The River Don to City Centre core path is located to the east of the masterplan boundary at Gallowgate and Schoolhill core path is to the south at the foot of Harriet Street (Figure 3-6).

Figure 3-6: Core Path Network



3.7.8 Biodiversity, Flora & Fauna

To inform the scoping report a desk study was completed. This involved a search for any statutory and non-statutory designated sites, notable habitats and species within a 5km radius from the site using the following sources:

- NatureScot SiteLink (for information on statutory designated sites);
- National Biodiversity Network's Gateway (NBN Gateway) (for records of protected or notable flora and fauna);
- Scotland's Environment (for information on statutory designated and non-statutory sites);
- Aberdeen City Council Local Development Plan (for non-statutory designated sites); and
- UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and the North East Scotland Local Biodiversity Action Plan NESLBAP (for priority habitats and species).

The findings of the desk study are presented below.

Desk Study

Special Protection Areas

SPAs are areas which have been identified as being of national and international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds.

The Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie and Meikle Loch Special Protection Area (SPA) is located 1.3km to the east of the site. It supports bird populations including Sandwich tern (*Sterna sandvicensis*), common tern (*Sterna hirundo*), little tern (*Sterna albifrons*), pink-footed geese (*Anser brachyrhynchus*), eider (*Somateria mollissima*) and provides a foraging zone for these species. It is ecologically connected to the site via the North Sea.

Special Area of Conservation

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are strictly protected high-quality conservation sites that will make a significant contribution to conserving the habitats and species.

The River Dee Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is located 1km south of the site. It contains populations of Otter (*Lutra lutra*), Freshwater pearl mussels (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) and Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*). It is ecologically connected to the site via the North Sea to the east and the green residential garden habitats to the south and west of the site.

National Nature Reserves

National Nature Reserves (NNR) to protect sensitive features and provide suitable areas for research, managing habitats, rare species and significant geology. No NNRs will be affected by the George Street Mini Masterplan.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

A review of Scotland's Environment Interactive Map indicates that there are no SSSI's in proximity to the George Street Mini Masterplan area.

Local Nature Reserves

A review of Scotland's Environment Interactive Map indicates that there are no Local Nature Reserves in proximity to the area covered by the George Street Mini Masterplan.

The Donmouth Local Nature Reserve 2.25km north-east of the George Street Mini Masterplan at its closes point (straight line) supports waterfowl and seal populations. It is not connected to the Mini Masterplan area.

Ancient Woodland

There are no areas of ancient woodland present within the site or within close proximity. The nearest ancient woodland to the site is the long-established (of plantation origin) woodland at Seaton Park approximately 2km north of the site. It is not ecologically connected to the Mini Masterplan.

3.7.9 Geology and Soil

The British Geological Survey “Geology Viewer” indicates the bedrock geology comprises:

1. **Brig O' Balgownie Formation** - mainly a well-rounded conglomerate with clasts of granite and psammite of local provenance, and some sandstone and mudstone interbeds. Sedimentary bedrock was formed approximately 393 to 419 million years ago in the Devonian Period.⁹ The local environment was previously dominated by rivers and alluvial fans. These sedimentary rocks are fluvial in origin. They are detrital, generally coarse-grained and form beds and fans of deposits where rivers flow from upland valleys onto lowland plains.
2. **North-east Grampian Granitic Suite (Ordovician)** - Granodiorite. Igneous bedrock formed between 485.4 and 443.8 million years ago during the Ordovician period.

Figure 3-7: Bedrock Geology



Source: BSG Viewer

Superficial Geology

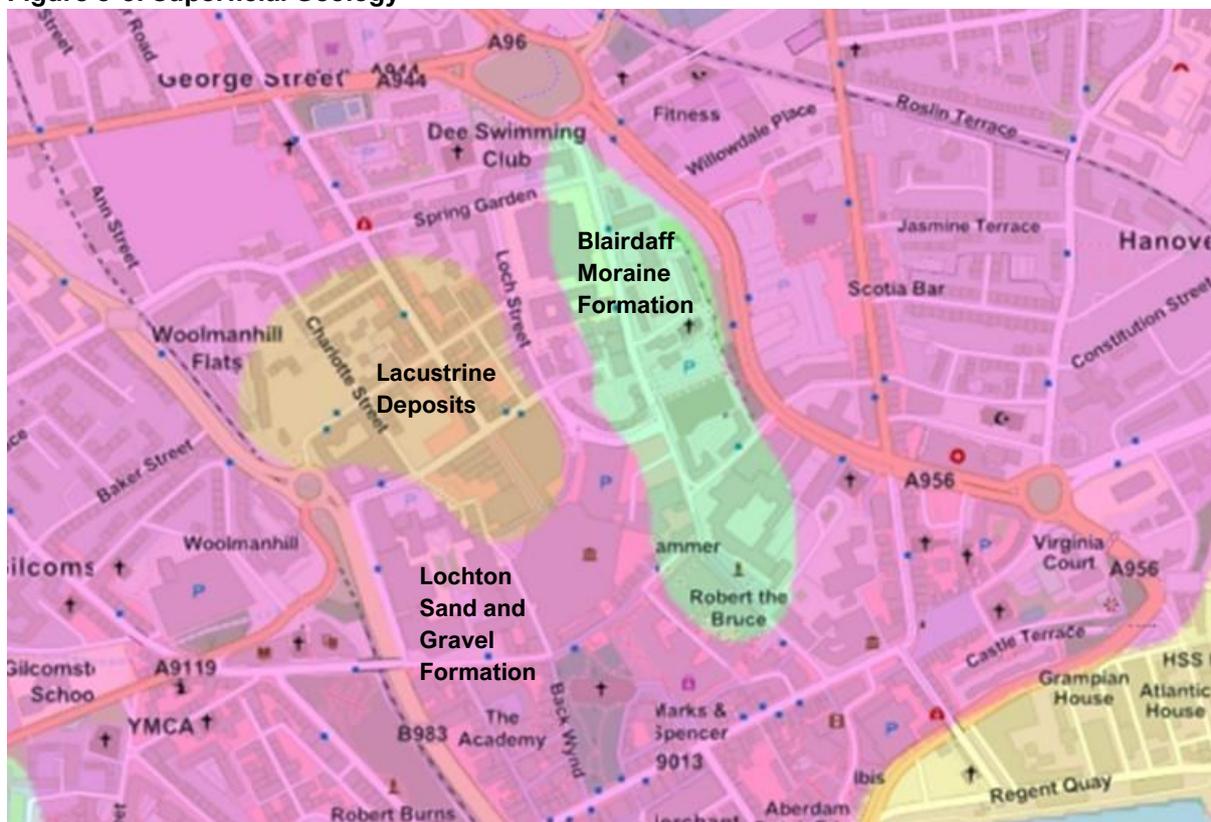
The British Geological Survey “Geology Viewer” indicates. The superficial geology comprises the following:

1. **Lochton Sand and Gravel Formation** - Sand and gravel. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period. These are sand and gravel composed predominantly of clasts of Neoproterozoic metamorphic rocks and Caledonian igneous rocks. Unconformable on bedrock or conformable on Banchory Till Formation or Glen Dye Silts Formation.

⁹ www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer/ (Accessed 24/11/2022)

2. **Lacustrine Deposits** - Clay, silt and sand. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 2.588 million years ago and the present during the Quaternary period. Lacustrine deposits were laid down as deltaic, lake bottom and shore sediments in lakes. They include clastic deposits, composed of coarse-grained bedload and suspended fine-grained material brought by streams flowing into the lake. Under arid and semiarid conditions evaporites form an important component of lake sediments. Includes fine-grained sediments (i.e., clay and silt), commonly laminated, and can contain thin layers of organic material or sand.
3. **Blairdaff Moraine Formation** - Diamicton, sand and gravel. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period. Typically, yellowish brown, crudely bedded, angular to well-rounded clasts, with extremely variable sorting, of both matrix- and clast-supported clayey gravel, with boulders and sandy diamicton, composed of psammite, metagreywacke, granite and quartzite, with some gneiss, slate and dolerite, elsewhere locally formed of mainly granite or gabbroic rocks, forming hummocky ground and cross-valley moraine ridges. Generally, a sharp, undulating, unconformable contact with a yellowish brown, gravelly clayey sand diamicton of the Banchory Till Formation and other sandy tills of the East Grampian Glacigenic Subgroup.

Figure 3-8: Superficial Geology



Source: BSG Viewer

Soil

The National soil map of Scotland indicates that the Soil Association within Mini Masterplan area is classed as “Built up Land” and there is no data relating to Generalised Soil Type. Therefore, it is classed as “made ground”

Made ground is land where natural and undisturbed soils have largely been replaced by man-made or artificial materials. It may be composed of a variety of materials including imported natural soils and rocks with or without residues of industrial processes or demolition material (such as crushed brick or concrete).

Contamination

Existing features such as car parking areas could contain localised contamination and therefore any made ground encountered should be tested for chemical contaminants and dealt with accordingly.

3.7.10 Water

Flooding

From a review of SEPA’s flood map, which provides an understanding of how the site may be affected by flooding, the following existing impacts have been determined:

Fluvial Flooding (River)

The Flood Map indicates that areas of the mini masterplan site can experiences fluvial flooding during the 1:200 year (0.5%) and 1:1000 year (0.1%) return periods.

Pluvial Flooding (Surface Water)

Surface water flooding, associated with existing hard-standings serving the existing buildings etc. are indicated for the 1:10 year (10%), 1:200 year (0.5%) and 1:1000 year (0.1%) return periods.

Coastal Flooding

The Flood Map indicates that the site does not experience coastal flooding.

Groundwater

Aberdeen is a groundwater (ID: 150491), in the Scotland river basin district. It is 37.8 square kilometres in area. Overall status of the groundwater is good (Table 3-5).

With reference to the SEPA Water Classification Hub, the groundwater has been classified under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) scheme as having good overall status.

Table 3-5: Water Classification

Parameter	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
2: Overall status	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-1: Quantitative status	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-1-1: Quant - Saline Intrusion	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-1-2: Quant - SW Interaction	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-1-4: Water balance	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2: Chemical status	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-1: Chemical - Saline Intrusion	-	-	-	-	Good
2-2-1-1: CSI - Electrical Conductivity	-	-	-	-	Good
2-2-2: Chem - SW Interaction	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-2-3: SWI - Specific pollutants	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-2-3-1: SWI - Chromium	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-2-3-2: SWI - Iron	-	-	-	-	Good
2-2-2-3-3: SWI - Zinc	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-2-3-4: SWI - Manganese	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-2-4: SWI - Other Substances	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-2-4-1: SWI - Nitrate	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good

2-2-2-5: SWI - Priority substances	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-2-5-1: SWI - Cadmium	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-2-5-2: SWI - Lead	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-3: Drinking Water Protected Area	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-3-1: DWPA - Priority substances	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-3-1-1: DWPA - Atrazine	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-3-1-2: DWPA - Simazine	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-3-2: DWPA - Other Substances	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-3-2-1: DWPA - Epoxyconazole	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-3-2-2: DWPA - Nitrate	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4: Chemical - General tests	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-4: CGT - Priority substances	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-4-1: CGT - Atrazine	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-4-2: CGT - Simazine	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-4-3: CGT - Trichloroethene	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-4-4: CGT - Benzene	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-5: CGT - Specific pollutants	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-5-1: CGT - Chromium	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-6: CGT - Other Substances	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-6-1: CGT - Electrical Conductivity	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-6-2: CGT - Epoxyconazole	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-6-3: CGT - Nitrate	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-6-4: CGT - Free Product	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-6-5: CGT - Vinyl Chloride	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
4-1: Water quality	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good

3.7.11 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

The George Street mini masterplan area has a complex pattern of overlapping use that reflects the establishment, development and growth of the adjacent burghs.

World Heritage Sites

A review of Pastmaps¹⁰ and Scotland's Environment¹¹ identified there were no World Heritage Sites within the proximity of the area covered by the George Street mini masterplan.

Scheduled Monuments

A review of Pastmaps and Scotland's Environment identified there were no Scheduled monuments within the proximity of the area covered by the George Street mini masterplan.

Conservation Areas

There are eleven Conservation Areas in Aberdeen. Three are in proximity to the area covered by the George Street mini masterplan including, Rosemount Conservation, City Centre Conservation Area and Albyn Place/Rubislaw Conservation Area (Figure 3-9).

¹⁰ <https://pastmap.org.uk> (Accessed 23/11/2022)

¹¹ <https://map.environment.gov.scot/sewebmap> (Accessed 23/11/2022)

All are located outwith the boundary of the area covered by the George Street mini masterplan area (Figure 3-10).

Figure 3-9: Aberdeen Conservation Areas

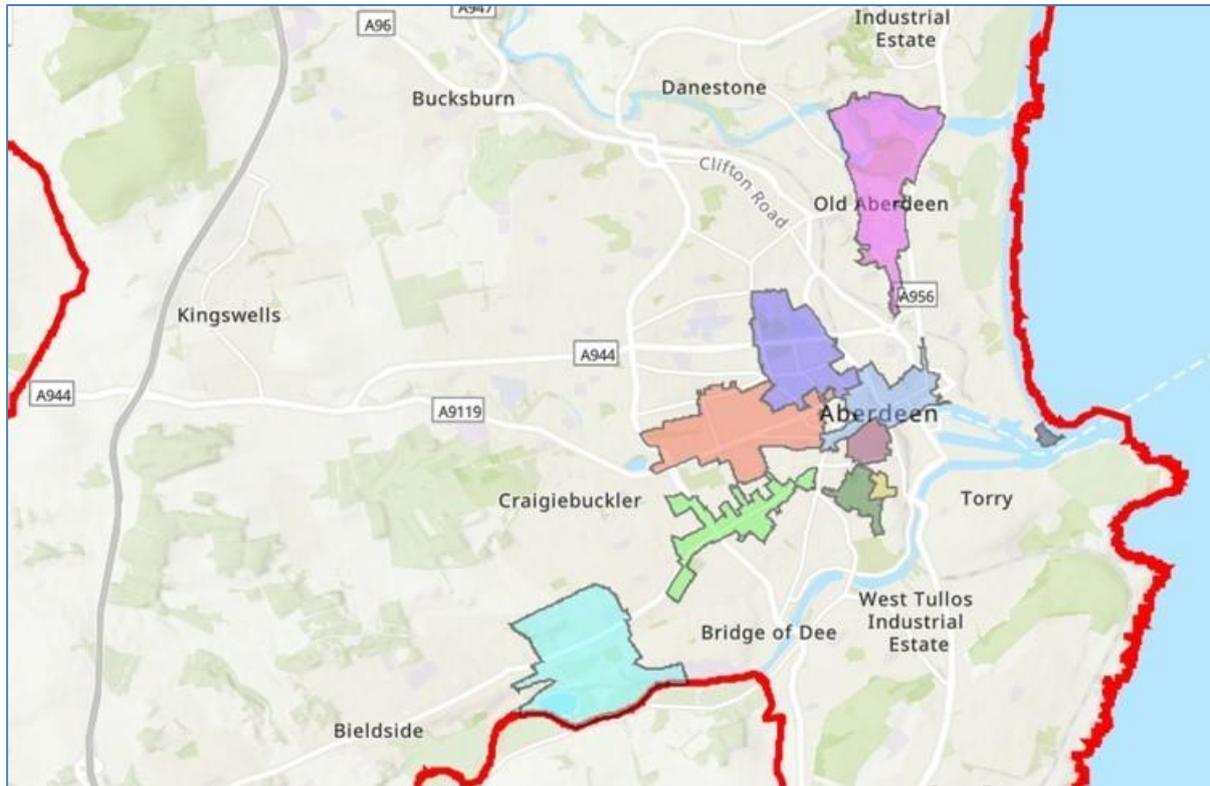
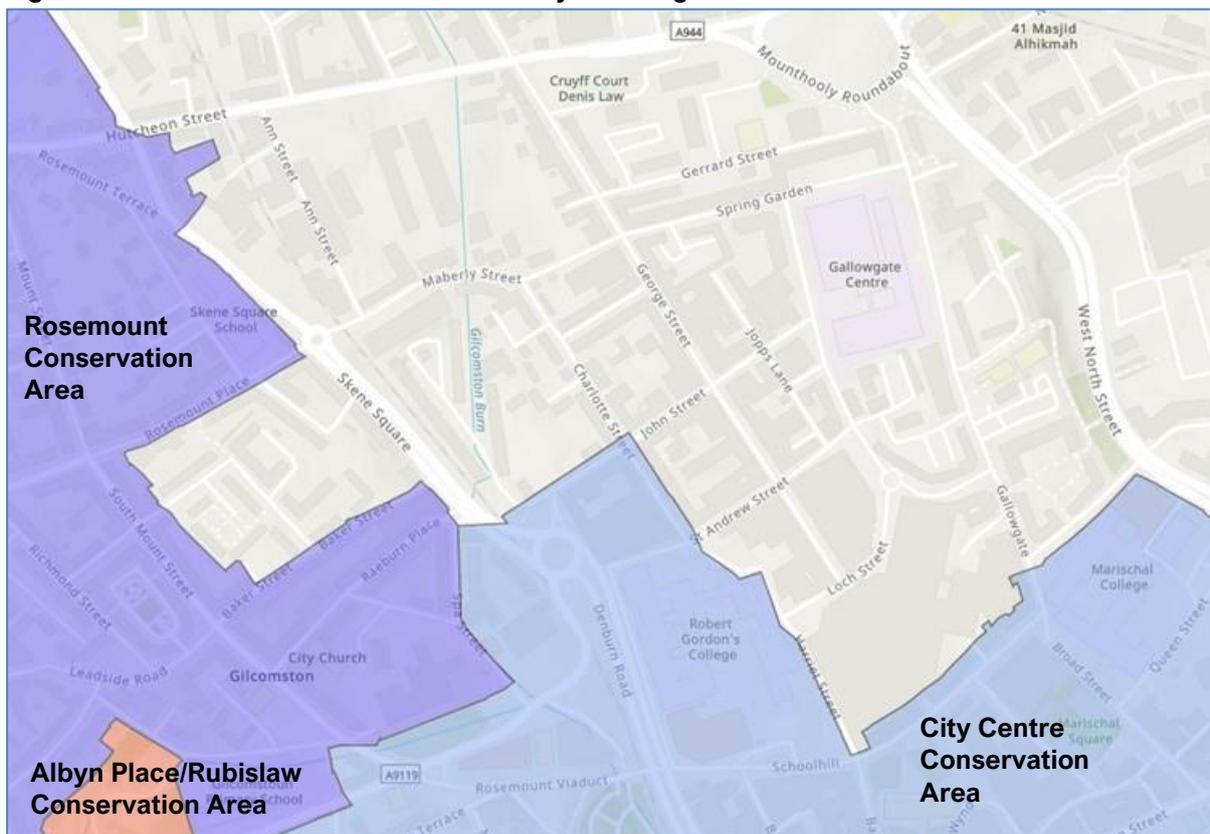


Figure 3-10: Conservation Areas in Proximity to George Street



Garden & Designed Landscapes

There are no 'Garden & Designated Landscapes' within the proximity of the area covered by the George Street mini masterplan.

Battlefields

There are no battlefields within the proximity of the area covered by the George Street Mini Masterplan.

Protected Military Remains, Wrecks

There are no 'Protected Military Remains, Wrecks' within the proximity of the area covered by the George Street mini masterplan.

Listed Buildings

The George Street area sits just north of the City Centre Conservation Area, with Harriet Street and Gallowgate connecting into the George Street mini masterplan area (Figure 3-11). T

There are a number of listed buildings / structures surrounding the George Street area and a small number within including:

Within the George Street mini masterplan area

- Category B listed 230 George Street And 34 John Street (3-storey, 4-bay Classical Bank)
- Category B listed 261-265 (Odd) George Street (former college building with prominent octagonal tower)
- Category C listed 46 Charlotte Street and Arched Gateway
- Category C listed 26 John Street (3-bay warehouse with ornate Dutch gable to John Street elevation)
- Category C listed 119-127 (Odd Nos) George Street (5-bay commercial and residential building with distinctive wallhead stack and flanking crow-step gables).
- Category C listed 111 Gallowgate

Beyond the George Street mini masterplan area

- A number of Category B & C listed buildings along Upperkirkgate
- Category A listed Porthill Court Residential tower blocks
- Category A listed Robert Gordon College
- Category B listed Gerrard Street Baptist Church (former united free church)

There are also a number of buildings identified through the baseline analysis which also add to the overall character and identity of the place, which are identified in the plan adjacent. These buildings have no formal protected designation. The purpose of identifying these is to understand their relationship to George Street and is not intended as a recommendation for formal listing or categorisation.

Loch Street Soup Kitchen

Aberdeen Public Soup Kitchen was first established as a charity in 1800 in St Mary's Chapel in St Nicholas Church. It supplied a breakfast of coffee and bread and a lunch of bread, soup and a piece of beef or mutton to the needy of the city.

The Soup Kitchen moved to Loch Street in 1838 and this new building was opened by Lord Provost Stewart in December 1894. The ground floor dining room had accommodation for at least 50 people and the tables were marble topped. In 1926, a total of nearly 27,000 meals were provided with funding still coming from charitable donations since few could afford even the two pence for the lunch.

The building survived major developments in the surrounding area but in recent years its charitable purpose was no longer thought necessary, and it was converted into a café in the mid-1990s. In 2022, the building still stands at 41-43 Loch Street, with the covered walkway for the Bon Accord Centre to its south. It is occupied by an outlet of the Jo Malone London fragrance and candle store.

3.7.12 Landscape

The section of George Street within the mini masterplan area is predominately a mixed use urban high street. George Street is comprised of primarily granite tenement buildings with small local retail shops at ground floor, complemented by small flatted residential units on the upper floors.

Within this retail offer, units are dominated by a variety of independent health and beauty shops, takeaways and repair shops, creating a vitality to the area

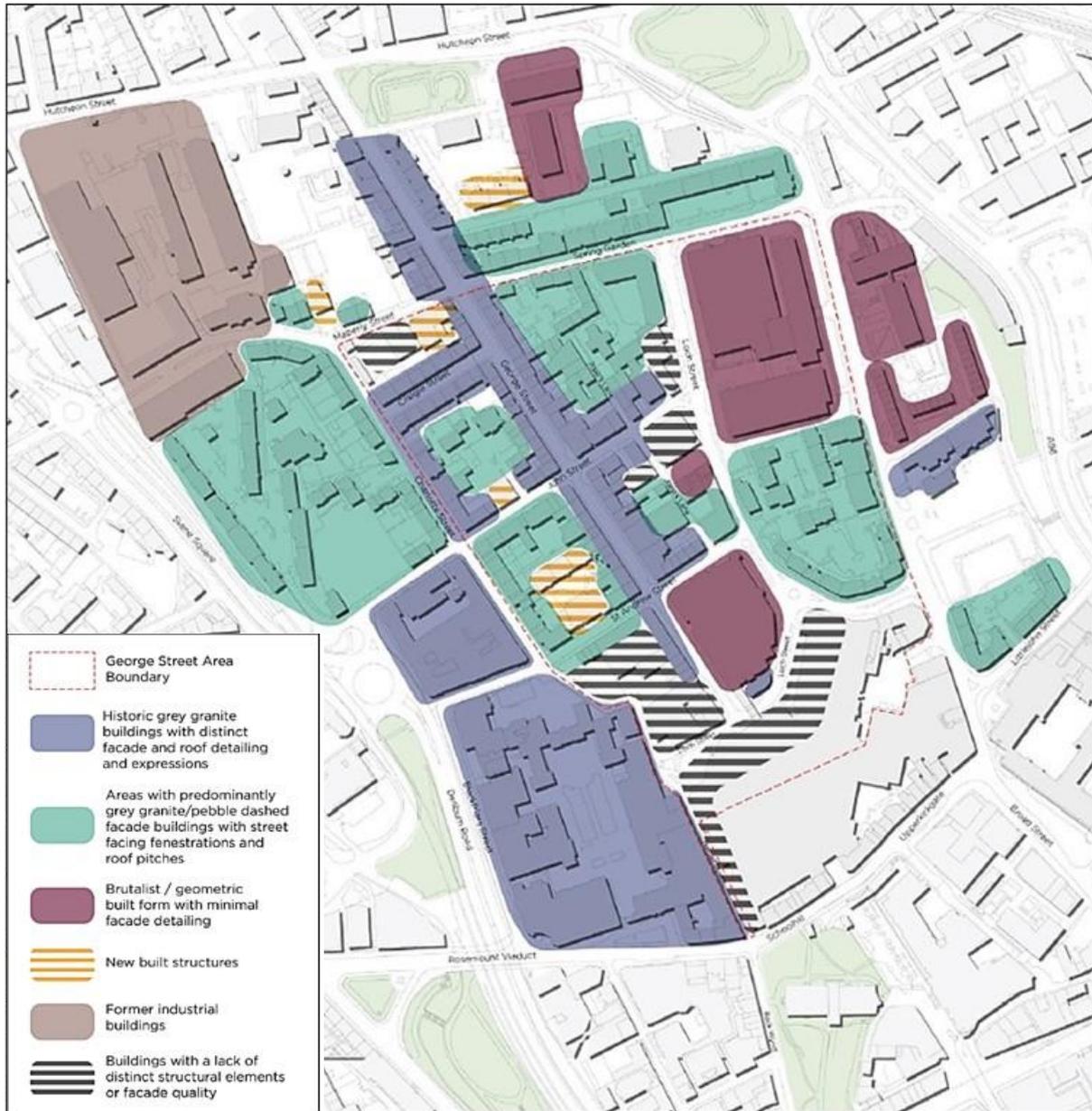
George Street sits to the northern fringes of a dynamic part of Aberdeen City Centre. The area can be broadly characterised into six character areas based on their location and type and uses found across the area (Figure 3-12).

In addition to these immediate characters; to the south lies a number of leisure and cultural destinations and established city quarters (Belmont Quarter Merchants Quarter and Ship Row), some of which are undergoing phased regeneration programmes.

With reference to local townscape character and what it means to the mini masterplan:

- George Street is the focus of character and identity with intact building architectural features and could be reinforced to create a sense of centre;
- John Street & Craigie Street are most visually and architecturally connected to George Street;
- Areas to south and east lack strong, cohesive character and could experience greater degree of intervention;
- Historic texture / materials within intact core add positive character and could be celebrated; and
- Street art works successfully to animate & add colour contrast in areas with poorer quality townscape.

Figure 3-12: Local Character



3.7.13 Air

In order to inform the Scoping Report, the 2022 Air Quality Annual Progress Report (APR) for Aberdeen City Council (the most up-to-date report available) was reviewed.

The main pollutants of concern associated with road traffic emissions are NO_2 and PM_{10} .

Aberdeen City Council has declared three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) (Table 3-6). The closest AQMA to the boundary of the George Street mini masterplan is the Aberdeen City Centre AQMA.

Table 3-6: Aberdeen City Council AQMA

AQMA	Description	Pollutants
Aberdeen City Centre AQMA	Market St, Union St, King St between Castle St and Roslin Terrace, Virginia St, Commerce St, Guild St, Bridge St, Holburn St between Great Southern Road and Union St, Victoria Rd, Torry between Queen Elizabeth II bridge and Crombie Rd and West North Street King St to 100m north of junction with Littlejohn St.	Nitrogen dioxide NO ₂ , Particulate Matter PM ₁₀
Anderson Drive AQMA	All of Anderson Drive from the Bridge of Dee including Haudigan roundabout, part of Gt Northern Road from 815 GNR to Auchmill Road, part of Auchmill Rd from GNR to the junction with Howes Road.	Nitrogen dioxide NO ₂ , Particulate Matter PM ₁₀
Wellington Road AQMA	From the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge to Balnagask Road.	Nitrogen dioxide NO ₂ , Particulate Matter PM ₁₀

Continuous Monitoring Sites

There are two automatic monitoring sites in proximity to the George Street area at Errol Place (CM1) and Union Street (CM2) .

The Errol Place and Union Street sites are part of the UK's Automatic Urban Network. All sites are part of the Scottish Government data reporting process and subject to independent audit

Errol Place is representative of typical residential properties close to the city centre but not adjacent to a major road and provides urban background data. Union Street's continuous monitoring site is on a busy city centre road and are representative of population exposure for NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. Union Street is the city's main shopping street with shops on the ground level and commercial premises and flats on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors. Almost all the city's bus routes pass along at least part of Union Street and the inside lane of both sides of the road are designated bus lanes.

Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂)

Monitored NO₂ levels at all automatic monitoring sites continue to be below the annual mean air quality objective of 40 µg/m³. NO₂ levels have been decreasing since 2015. NO₂ levels at all automatic monitoring sites have been below the objective level since 2018

The NO₂ automatic monitoring data collected at all sites in 2021 increased slightly on 2020 levels. This was to be expected following a relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions in relation to the twelve months previous.

There were no exceedances of the hourly mean objective at any automatic or diffusion tube sites in 2021. The hourly mean has not been exceeded at any automatic site in the last 7 years.

Particulate Matter (PM₁₀)

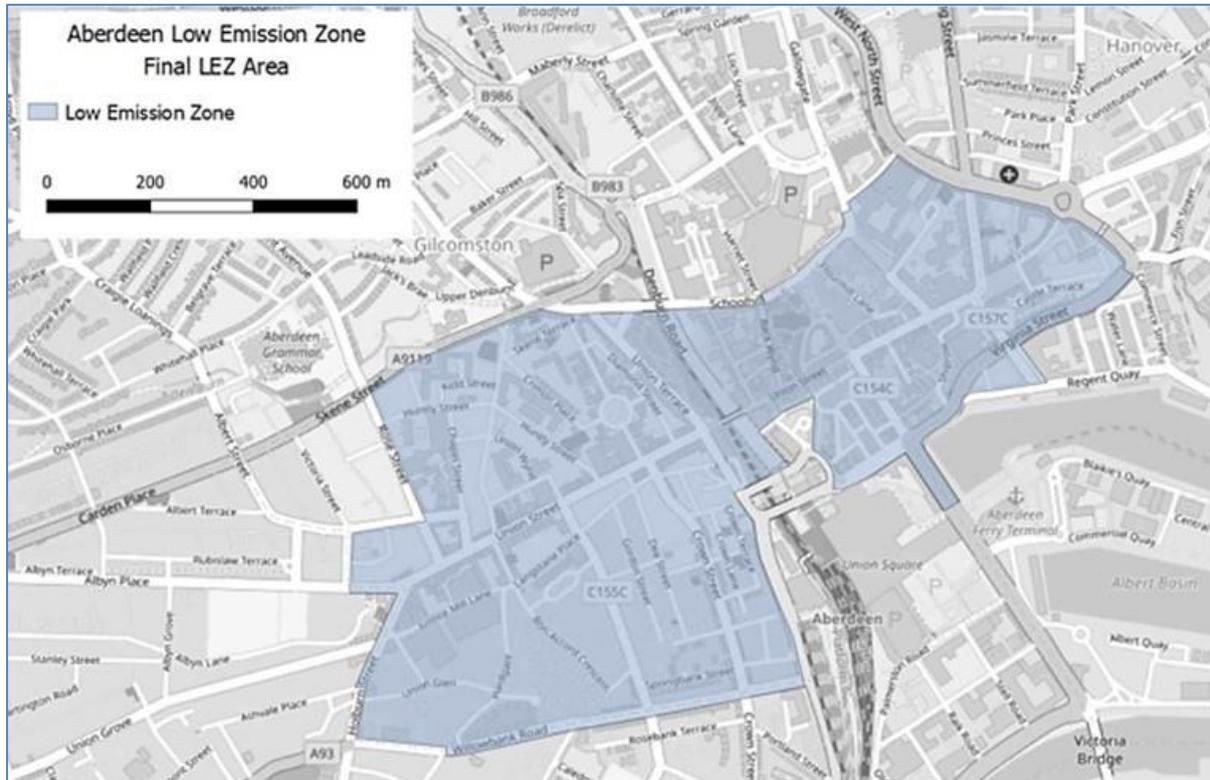
The PM₁₀ annual mean measured at each automatic site in 2021 were below the objective level and marginally lower than levels measured in 2020, other than Union Street and King Street which saw marginal increases.

No exceedances of the annual mean were recorded at any of the continuous monitoring sites. No exceedances of the objective have been recorded at any site since 2016

Aberdeen Low Emission Zone (LEZ)

Following approval from Scottish Ministers, Aberdeen City Council is introducing a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) in Aberdeen City Centre (Figure 3-13).

Figure 3-13: Map of the Low Emission Zone (LEZ)



The LEZ is an area of Aberdeen City Centre where the driving of vehicles which do not meet the specified emissions standards is prohibited. The aim of the LEZ is to improve air quality within the City Centre Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) to ensure compliance with the Scottish Government's air quality objectives, particularly for the pollutant nitrogen dioxide (NO₂).

The LEZ came into effect from 30th May 2022 and will operate for 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. A 2-year grace period (during which enforcement of the LEZ will not take place) for both residents and non-residents of the LEZ area and for all non-exempt vehicle types will commence from this date, meaning that enforcement will take place from 1st June 2024.

The LEZ has been introduced in response to longstanding issues of poor air quality in the Aberdeen City Centre AQMA. Air pollution is believed to be a contributing factor in a number of serious health problems suffered by individuals, and the number of health concerns linked to poor air quality is growing every day.¹² This has a disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable members of society, particularly the young, elderly and those with chronic heart, lung and respiratory conditions. Air pollution is therefore a significant Public Health concern and a LEZ is an effective means of responding to this. This accords with the precautionary public health approach to air pollution advocated in the Scottish Government's Air Quality Strategy, *Cleaner Air for Scotland 2* (CAFS2).¹³

The Aberdeen City Council document 'Low Emission Zone (LEZ) Scheme' states that Air Quality modelling has shown that, even with the delivery of ambitious transport improvements in the City Centre,

¹² www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-05/LEZ%20Summary.pdf

¹³ www.gov.scot/publications/cleaner-air-scotland-2-towards-better-place-everyone/

such as those identified in the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan, emissions exceedances will remain unless tailpipe emissions are also addressed, While the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting travel restrictions led to air quality improvements in 2020 and 2021, the medium to long term impacts of the pandemic on transport and travel remain uncertain, therefore the pandemic is not a reason for delaying action.¹⁸

The LEZ applies to all vehicle types specified in the table below, unless subject to an exemption (Table 3-7).

Table 3-7: Vehicle types within scope of the LEZ

Vehicle	Vehicle Category	Description
Light passenger vehicles	M1	Vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of passengers and comprising no more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat.
Minibus	M2	Vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of passengers, comprising more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat, and having a maximum mass not exceeding 5 tonnes.
Bus and coach	M3	Vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of passengers, comprising more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat, and having a maximum mass exceeding 5 tonnes.
Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs)	N1	Vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of goods and having a maximum mass not exceeding 3.5 tonnes.
Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs)	N2	Vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of goods and having a maximum mass exceeding 3.5 tonnes but not exceeding 12 tonnes
	N3	Vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of goods and having a maximum mass exceeding 12 tonnes.

A number of vehicle types are exempt from LEZs in Scotland, meaning that any restrictions do not apply to them i.e., emergency vehicles, historic vehicles, Vehicles for disabled persons, showman vehicles

Aberdeen City Council can also grant and renew time-limited exemptions to any vehicle type that is not covered by a national exemption, meaning the registered keeper of the vehicle would be exempt from LEZ enforcement for the period of time that the exemption applies.

The legislation allows for the LEZ to be suspended for the duration of events of local or national significance. The LEZ can also be suspended in emergency situations, such as an incident on the wider road network that requires all vehicles to be temporarily diverted through the LEZ area (but only where vehicles follow prescribed diversionary routes).

3.7.14 Noise

Existing noise sources surrounding and within the mini masterplan area include general noise found within a city centre including road traffic noise. There are also a range of cafes, restaurants, public, commercial and retail properties and educational facilities.

There are no Candidate Noise Management Areas (closest being, Littlejohn Street, Mealmarket Street, King Street) or Candidate Quiet Areas within the proposed mini masterplan boundary.

3.7.15 Climatic Factors

Emission reductions set under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 were updated under the Climate Change Emissions Reduction Targets (Scotland) Act 2019 to net zero by 2045.

The Mini Masterplan sets out a vision which aims to promote local enterprise, encourage social mobility and respond to the climate change crisis through environmental improvements. The balance and delivery of these will have various positive impacts for the neighbourhood as a whole.

The Mini Masterplan will set out a best practicable sustainable solution to meeting the objectives set out within the strategy. This would be carried out through a Sustainability Assessment, which sets out potential criteria to provide well defined benefits across each of the People, Place and Economy objectives.

Two of the three proposals retain the Norco House building, both its brutalist building envelope and its interior floor slabs and column grids.

This approach allows for a retrofit first approach to Norco House in response to the climate crisis and the increasing demand on our natural resources. It looks at retention and reuse in order to minimise the carbon produced through demolition, landfill and extraction of new materials for new development.

Norco House in particular is a building with high embedded carbon due to its concrete construction. Demolition of this building, the removal and processing of the waste and the redevelopment of the site would all produce more carbon emissions.

Demolition isn't just an environmental problem. It is frequently undesirable on social and economic grounds. Research by the London School of Economics identified that demolition is both costly and unpopular in many instances. Retrofit of existing buildings can be cost-effective, depending upon local market conditions because it conserves and enhances existing places and neighbourhoods. As for carbon emissions, retrofit makes sense because of the substantial embodied energy savings made in re-purposing existing buildings, compared with the ultra-high embodied energy costs of demolition and rebuild.

With regards to restoration, retrofit measures must be sympathetically and responsibly implemented. Inappropriate restoration measures can lead to unintended consequences and actually damage buildings. Design is the most important factor in determining GHG emissions over a building's lifetime. By the time the construction process begins, the majority of decisions affecting the project's GHG emissions are locked in. The ability to influence a building's lifetime emissions is highest very early in a project and before construction has started.

Fundamental design decisions—such as new construction versus upgrading, building size and shape, level of insulation, and floor-space flexibility—can have a significant impact on emissions for decades to come.¹⁴

The Mini Masterplan also looks to reduce private car use by providing people with a choice on how they travel. Ensure there is adequate transport infrastructure in place, including provision for walking and cycling.

¹⁴ <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/engineering-construction-and-building-materials/our-insights/call-for-action-seizing-the-decarbonization-opportunity-in-construction>

3.7.16 Material Assets

The land on which the site is situated is a material asset. It has been zoned for development through the appropriate Development Plan process and as such the use of this material asset in a manner compatible with the zoning designation and the Mini Masterplan, is entirely appropriate.

Other material assets in terms of water services, electricity, other local utilities and the proposed developments within the Mini Masterplan can readily connect to same.

The construction and operation of the proposed development elements will utilise material assets (access road and construction materials) but given the scale of the development this will be considered at the project level.

Significant progress has been made in recent years with regard to waste management in Aberdeen. The Zero Waste Plan establish a framework for reforming the waste management system in Scotland and sets targets for improving the sustainability of waste management up until the year 2025. In 2013 Aberdeen recycled 37% of waste. By 2020 this figure had risen to 45.6% (Table 3-8). Nevertheless 10% of all household waste is destined for landfill.¹⁵

Table 3-8: Household Waste Generated and Managed in 2021 - Summary Data

Local Authority	Generated (tonnes)	Recycled (tonnes)	Recycled (%)	Other diversion from landfill (tonnes)	Other diversion from Landfill (%)	Landfilled (tonnes)	Landfilled (%)	Carbon Impact (TCO _{2e})*	2020 Recycled (%)
Aberdeen City	93,747	42,574	45.4	41,799	44.6	9,376	10.0	224,549	45.6
Total Scotland	2,483,304	1,061,042	42.7	757,913	30.5	663,533	26.7	5,901,520	42.0

Table 3-9 indicates that 0.41 tonnes of household waste was generated per person in 2021, with an associated carbon impact of 0.99 TCO_{2e} per person.

Table 3-9: Household Waste Generated and Managed Per Person in 2021 - Summary Data

Local Authority	Generated (tonnes per person)	Recycled (tonnes per person)	Other diversion from landfill (tonnes per person)	Landfilled (tonnes per person)	Carbon Impact (TCO _{2e} per person)
Aberdeen City	0.41	0.19	0.18	0.04	0.99
Total Scotland	0.45	0.19	0.14	0.12	1.08

In addition, the Aberdeen City Council area also generates 192,155 tonnes of business waste (Figure 3-10).¹⁶ This is selected businesses waste in Scotland, including factories, utility and transport companies, shops, offices, hotels, restaurants, schools and hospitals. As there is no statutory duty for businesses to report to SEPA on the waste they generate, SEPA derives the information from statutory waste data

¹⁵ <https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/waste/waste-data/waste-data-reporting/household-waste-data/> (Accessed 25/11/2022)

¹⁶ <https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/waste/waste-data/waste-data-reporting/business-waste-data/> (Accessed 25/11/2022)

received from operators of licensed and permitted waste management sites, and from operators of activities exempt from full waste management licensing.

Table 3-10: Aberdeen City Business Waste (Tonnes) 2018 (Most Recent)

Waste type	Tonnes
Spent solvents	3,394
Acid, alkaline or saline wastes	601
Used oils	10,750
Chemical wastes	17,609
Industrial effluent sludges	10,977
Health care and biological wastes	1,322
Metallic wastes, ferrous	5,673
Metallic wastes, non-ferrous	1,611
Metallic wastes, mixed ferrous and non-ferrous	81,306
Glass wastes	4,766
Paper and cardboard wastes	2,863
Rubber wastes	39
Plastic wastes	173
Wood wastes	3,985
Textile wastes	3
Discarded equipment (excluding discarded vehicles, batteries and accumulators wastes)	1,381
Discarded vehicles	1,645
Batteries and accumulators wastes	1,122
Animal and mixed food waste	4,920
Vegetal wastes	3,761
Animal faeces, urine and manure	8
Household and similar wastes	22,315
Mixed and undifferentiated materials	1,617
Common sludges	99
Mineral waste from construction and demolition	3
Other mineral wastes	10,018
Combustion wastes	7
Soils	186
Mineral wastes from waste treatment and stabilised wastes	1
Total	192,155

3.7.17 Environmental Baseline Appraisal

An Environmental Baseline Appraisal covering the topics above is included in Appendix C

The main environmental considerations are outlined in Table 3-11 below. These issues will be reviewed

in more detail during the SEA and discussed in the Environmental Report.

Table 3-11: Data Sources for Providing Baseline Environmental Assessment

SEA Topic	Environmental Issue	How the Mini Masterplan contributes to tackling the problem?	Relevant Data
Population & Human Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to social and community facilities and the amenity of the area will have an impact of general wellbeing. The George Street Mini Masterplan can influence the relationship between facilities, amenity and the general vitality of communities. • The form and location of new development within the George Street Mini Masterplan area can contribute to social integration and improved wellbeing opportunities for the whole community. 	<p>Promoting access to employment, supporting accessibility and health improvement.</p> <p>Mini Masterplan aims to identify open space to improve health through increased physical activity, reduce pollution by encouraging walking and cycling as an alternative to the car. Positive effects on mental health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>National Records of Scotland (NRS). https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/stats-at-a-glance/council-area-profiles</p> <p>Scottish Public Health Observatory (ScotPHO). https://www.scotpho.org.uk/</p> <p>Health and Wellbeing Profiles (life expectancy and mortality by cause) https://scotland.shinyapps.io/ScotPHO_profiles_tool/</p> <p>Access to outdoors / open space Sport and recreation participation Physical activity levels Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020/</p> <p>Core paths Aberdeen City Council . https://map.environment.gov.scot/sewebmap/</p>
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential impact on nature conservation designations. • Potential impacts on protected species and priority habitats. • Potential loss of green linkages and wildlife corridors. • Pressure on Protected Species from new development through 	<p>Protection and enhancement of designated areas, and important habitats.</p> <p>Safeguard and enhance biodiversity.</p>	<p>NatureScot Sitelink. https://sitelink.nature.scot/map</p> <p>Scotland's Environment. https://www.environment.gov.scot/</p> <p>UK BAP & LBAP priority habitats and species. https://www.nesbiodiversity.org.uk/ https://www.nature.scot/doc/scottish-biodiversity-list</p>

	disturbance or loss of resting places and habitats.		<p>Scottish Ancient Woodland Inventory. https://map.environment.gov.scot/sewebmap/</p>
Soils & Geology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The potential for impact associated with existing soil contamination. Impact to existing soil (i.e. removal of topsoil or compaction of soils). 	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan should ensure that soil quality is appropriate for the proposed site use.</p> <p>Sites within the Mini Masterplan area will provide access to open space and recreation facilities. As such existing soils can be protected and enhanced as part of the development.</p> <p>SUDS and green infrastructure are delivered in new development.</p>	<p>Aberdeen City Council Vacant and Derelict Land Survey (2018) https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2019-03/Scottish%20Vacant%20and%20Derelict%20Land%20Survey%202018_0.pdf#:~:text=Aberdeen%20City%20Council%20carries%20out,for%20vacant%20and%20derelict%20land.</p> <p>Contaminated land. https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/environment/contaminated-land#:~:text=This%20legislation%20requires%20the%20Local,Authority%20will%20arrange%20for%20remediation.</p> <p>Geology of Britain viewer, https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer/</p> <p>Scotland's Environment. https://www.environment.gov.scot/</p> <p>Scotland's Soils website https://soils.environment.gov.scot/</p>
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on existing water and wastewater infrastructure. The surface water management strategy for the George Street Mini Masterplan will be based on the principles of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) 	<p>Protection and enhancement of water status and avoidance of flood risk areas and areas which would contribute to increased flood risk.</p>	<p>SEPA flood maps. https://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmaps/FloodRisk/PostCode</p> <p>SEPA Water Classification Hub. https://www.sepa.org.uk/data-visualisation/water-classification-hub/</p>

	<p>and green infrastructure to incorporate best management practices for the treatment of surface water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geomorphology and morphological erosion pressures. 		<p>Local water quality data. https://www.sepa.org.uk/data-visualisation/water-environment-hub/</p> <p>SEPA River Basin Management Plan Maps</p> <p>SEPA – RBMP Data.</p>
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The area may have a direct impact on the quality of the landscape/seascape. • Landscape character. • Design quality and layout. • Sites within the Mini Masterplan area will provide access to open space and recreation facilities and encourage walking and cycling through the provision of designated paths and will thus contribute to health promotion. 	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan should seek to ensure that development takes account of the important landscape characteristics within the George Street area.</p>	<p>Local Development Plan.</p> <p>Landscape Character Assessment. https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2018-01/Landscape%20Character%20Assessment%20of%20Aberdeen.pdf</p> <p>https://www.nature.scot/doc/landscape-character-assessment-aberdeen-city-landscape-evolution-and-influences</p> <p>Designated landscape areas. https://www.environment.gov.scot/</p> <p>Inventory and non-inventory Gardens and Designed landscapes. https://www.environment.gov.scot/</p>
Archaeology & Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New development can potentially impact on historical features. • The George Street Mini Masterplan can contribute to the overall conservation of the cultural heritage through the protection of listed buildings and sites of historic or archaeological interest conservation areas 	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan should support the protection and enhancement of the cultural heritage resource, including through consideration of the locations and impacts on specific resources and the wider historic landscape.</p>	<p>Buildings at Risk https://www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk/search/keyword/aberdeen</p> <p>Aberdeen City Historic Environment Record (HER) https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/smrpub/master/mapquery.aspx</p> <p>Pastmap. https://pastmap.org.uk/map</p>

			<p>Aberdeen City Council https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building-standards/building-conservation-and-heritage/conservation-areas</p> <p>Scotland's Environment. https://www.environment.gov.scot/</p>
Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with national and international standards. Road traffic movements. 	<p>One of the main sources of nitrogen dioxide emissions is road traffic; road traffic is also a contributor to PM₁₀ emissions. Sustainable transport will be a key issue for the George Street Mini Masterplan.</p>	<p>LAQM Annual Progress Report. https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/environment/air-quality-aberdeen/air-quality-reports</p> <p>Scottish Air Quality (website). https://www.scottishairquality.scot/</p>
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The George Street Mini Masterplan proposals could change the noise levels compared to the existing situation due to changes in traffic flow on existing roads, new recreations facilities and stadia. 	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan will encourage minimising noise levels.</p>	<p>https://noise.environment.gov.scot</p>
Climatic Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate change could have different impacts on the environment including water resources, flooding, biodiversity, population and health and wellbeing. Long-term climate trends for Scotland indicate hotter/drier summers and milder/wetter during 	<p>The extent of the sites identified should seek to minimise contributions to the emissions of greenhouse gases and seek to avoid locations vulnerable to the effects of climate change.</p>	<p>Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/723c243d-2f1a-4d27-8b61-cdb93e5b10ff/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions</p> <p>Indicative SEPA river and coastal flood maps https://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmaps/FloodRisk/PostCode</p>

	<p>autumn & winter, in addition to sea level rises. Issues such as flooding and landslips are potential issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The George Street Mini Masterplan has the potential to affect levels and form of transport use and levels of energy consumption in buildings. • The George Street Mini Masterplan will include measures to enhance existing transport links and accessibility in the area through additional bus services, cycling and walking with associated infrastructure improvements. • Development will be laid out to allow direct and frequent connections throughout the area, to points of interest, neighbourhood centres and public transport. • Opportunities for renewable energy provision and low/zero carbon technologies will be explored. 		<p>UKCP18 - https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp</p>
<p>Material Assets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open space and recreational facilities. • Roads and pavements • Waste minimisation and management. 	<p>Waste disposal incurs significant transport implications. Support for increased levels of recycling and composting and waste minimisation.</p>	<p>Aberdeen City Council Action programme and monitoring https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building-standards/local-development-plan/aberdeen-local-development-plan/action-programme-and-monitoring</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drainage and wastewater capacity.	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan will ensure that maximum use is made of existing infrastructure where practicable (roads, pavements, water treatment, drainage). Where this is at capacity sustainable system will be put in place.</p>	<p>Open Space Audit and Strategy 2011-2016 (amount / type of space).</p> <p>Core Paths. https://www.environment.gov.scot/</p> <p>Transport and infrastructure data.</p> <p>Cycle routes. https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/roads-transport-and-parking/cycling-aberdeen/cycling-maps</p> <p>SEPA data. https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/waste/waste-data/waste-data-reporting/household-waste-data/</p>
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4 PROPOSED SEA OBJECTIVES

4.1 SEA Objectives

Through the undertaking of the scoping tasks listed above, some initial existing environmental problems and sensitive areas within the George Street Mini Masterplan boundary area have been identified and allows appropriate draft Objectives (Table 3-2) to be developed as assessment tools against which strategy, policies and proposals contained within the George Street Mini Masterplan can be assessed.

A draft list of key SEA Receptors organised by SEA topic, and objectives identified as relevant to the George Street area are summarised and presented in Table 4-1. Comments are invited from the Consultation Authorities and interested stakeholders. These will be further refined in subsequent stages of the SEA process as and in discussion with Aberdeen City Council and other appropriate stakeholders. The key receptors and objectives will be considered throughout the SEA process and used to inform the development of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan at key decision making stages.

The SEA Regulations require that the Environmental Report identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant environmental effects of the George Street Mini Masterplan. The Environmental Report will also include measures to avoid, reduce or mitigate any significant effects of the George Street Mini Masterplan.

To assist assessment against the objectives identified within Table 4-1, the following questions will be considered in relation to Mini Masterplan proposals.

Table 4-1: Key Environmental Receptors, SEA Objectives and Questions

SEA Topic	Objectives	Questions
Biodiversity (Flora and fauna)	Protect or conserve and, where possible, restore and enhance biodiversity and valued nature conservation habitats and species.	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conservation objectives of International, National or local designations? • populations of protected species, their habitats and resting places or roosts? • wider biodiversity, i.e., non-designated/protected sites and species? • existing green network and habitat connectivity? • opportunities for enhancement or expansion of the green network and wider habitat connectivity? • the protection and enhancement of urban trees?
Soil	To maintain or improve soil quality, quantity and function and prevent any further degradation of soils	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contaminated land? • Impact to existing topsoil and/or subsoils?
Landscape	Protect and enhance landscape character, local distinctiveness and promote access to the wider environment.	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect t: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the landscape character and setting of settlements?
Cultural heritage	Protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment.	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Archaeological sites, Conservation Areas and

		Gardens and Designed Landscapes and their settings?
Water	To protect and enhance the ecological status of the water environment	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ecological status of identified water bodies, through: • surface water run-off • flood risk in the local and/or wider areas?
Air	To improve or maintain air quality and reduce emissions of key pollutants	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan be likely to reduce/increase air quality, in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carbon emissions? • levels of Nitrous Dioxide (NO₂) and Particulate Matter (PM₁₀)?
Climatic Factors	To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase resilience to the consequences of climate change	To what extent will the strategy or policy promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency? • sustainable transport and active travel? • future proofing of new development? • Green infrastructure provision?
Material Assets	To reduce waste and promote the sustainable use of resources	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • waste from new development? • the re-use of previously developed land and buildings? • the delivery of renewable energy development?
Population and Human Health	To protect and enhance quality of life, including maintaining and improving opportunities to access public open space and the natural and historic environment	To what extent will the Mini Masterplan affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the provision of housing and employment opportunities to meet identified needs? • the provision of appropriate services and community facilities to meet identified needs? • residential amenity, including noise? • access to open spaces, recreational facilities and active travel routes? • access to the historic environment?

5 SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY PROPOSED FOR THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

5.1 Introduction

There is potential for all of the SEA issues to be significantly affected by the review of the George Street Mini Masterplan, so all will be scoped in to the SEA.

5.2 Scoping of Likely Significant Environmental Effects

It should be noted that none of the SEA issues have been scoped out of the assessment for the scoping report as it is too early in the George Street Mini Masterplan making process to meaningfully scope SEA issues in or out (Table 5-1).

Table 5-1: SEA Topics for Scoping

SEA Topic	Scoped In	Scoped Out	Justification
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	✓		Development has the potential to affect habitats and species through loss of habitat and disturbance.
Soil	✓		Development has the potential to result in changes to soils and geology.
Landscape	✓		Proposed development has the potential for significant effects on landscape/ townscape quality and character.
Cultural heritage	✓		There are sites such as Listed Buildings, within the area which the proposals have the potential to affect.
Water	✓		Increased run-off from development areas may increase flood risk albeit SUDS/ green infrastructure measures are proposed.
Air	✓		New development may result in traffic at certain times of the day. These indirect effects may give rise to changes in local air quality and noise along affected routes.
Climatic factors	✓		Indirect effects on carbon emissions from demolition/ construction. The proposals offer an opportunity to build with very low carbon emissions through energy efficiency, insulation and microgeneration.
Material assets	✓		The proposals provide an opportunity for sustainable construction methods and materials to minimise waste. The George Street Mini Masterplan will enhance recreational and open space provision.
Population and human health	✓		The George Street Mini Masterplan incorporates open space, community facilities and employment opportunities which offer potential benefits for the population.

5.3 Framework for Assessing the George Street Mini Masterplan

The SEA Regulations require that the Environmental Report identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant environmental effects of the George Street Mini Masterplan. The Environmental Report will also include measures to avoid, reduce or mitigate any significant effects of the George Street Mini Masterplan.

The George Street Mini Masterplan objectives and proposals will be assessed against the SEA objectives to be agreed through the scoping process. Significant environmental effects of the plan will be predicted to determine whether the George Street Mini Masterplan has negative, positive, uncertain or neutral effects. The proposed approach for the assessment is summarised in Table 5-2 below.

Table 5-2: Assessment sub-tasks and their purpose

Assessment Sub-Tasks	Purpose
1. Taking account of scoping responses	To refine the approach to the SEA and fill essential gaps identified in the environmental baseline.
2. Alternatives	To assist in the development and refinement of the alternatives for achieving the George Street Mini Masterplan objectives.
3. Testing the draft George Street Mini Masterplan objectives against the SEA objectives	To ensure that the overall objectives of the draft George Street Mini masterplan are in accordance with environmental principles and provides a framework for developing options.
4. Predicting and evaluating the effects of the draft George Street Mini masterplan, including alternatives	To predict and evaluate the effects of the George Street Mini masterplan and its alternatives and assist in the refinement of the draft Framework
5. Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects & proposing measures to monitor the environmental effects of draft George Street Mini Masterplan implementation	To ensure all potential mitigation measures and measures for maximising beneficial effects are considered and, as a result, residual effects identified. To propose a monitoring framework to assess the environmental performance of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan.

5.3.1 Taking account of scoping responses

The initial stage of the assessment process will involve taking on-board the responses from the scoping consultation which may involve:

- Refinement of the proposed approach to assessment outlined below
- Suggestions for essential data gaps to be filled in the environmental baseline
- Comments on the proposed approach to consultation on the Environmental Report

5.3.2 Draft SEA Objectives and Indicators

The draft SEA objectives, for each identified SEA topic is provided in Table 4-1. It is likely that these will be further refined in subsequent stages of the SEA process, as more detail is available on the significance of environmental effects.

The key goals, strategies and objectives of the plan will be based on current national Planning Regulations.

In addition to an environmental commentary, the likely significant environmental effects of the key options/ alternatives will be predicted and evaluated. This will be informed by the development of significance criteria and the results will be recorded in an assessment matrix. The purpose of this will be to inform decision-making over selection of options/ alternatives with regards to their potential environmental effects. Proposed criteria with which to assess the significance of predicted effects is shown below in Table 5-3.

Table 5-3: SEA significance criteria

Score	Description
Major positive effect (++)	An action very likely to lead to significant improvement, or a series of long term improvements, leading to large scale and permanent benefits to the SEA objective being appraised. A major effect is also likely to have cumulative and indirect beneficial effects and is also likely to have positive transboundary effects.
Positive effect (+)	An action likely to lead to moderate improvement in both short and long-term, leading to large scale temporary, or medium scale permanent benefits to the objective being assessed, Even when beneficial effects are felt to be temporary, they should not be easily reversible in the long-term (to detriment of the SEA Objective).
Neutral effect (0)	An action which is unlikely to have any beneficial or negative effects on the SEA objective being assessed in either the short or long-term. Neutral scoring should only be used when it is very unlikely that the effect will be neither positive, nor negative. A neutral score is not the same as uncertain where an appraiser is not sure if an effect is likely to be positive or negative, or 'mixed/. Where the appraiser feels that the effects are likely to be both positive and negative(see below for more details).
Negative effect (-)	An action is likely to moderate or loss in both shorth and long-term, leading to large scale temporary, or medium scale permanent negative effect on the objective. An action which may also have limited cumulative and indirect detrimental effects and/or limited degradation of conditions outside the specific strategy area. It is also likely that it will be possible to mitigate or reverse a minor negative effect through policy or project intervention.
Major negative effect (--)	A scheme/measure likely to lead to a significant or severe damage or loss, or series of long term negative effects, leading to large-scale and permanent negative effects on the SEA objective being assessed. A scheme/ measure which may also have significant cumulative and indirect detrimental effect and/or degrade conditions outside the specific scheme area, so will have negative transboundary effects. A scheme/measure which is likely to threaten environmental thresholds or capacities in areas already under threat. The detrimental effects of a scheme/measure which will be hard to reverse and are unlikely to be easily mitigated through policy or project intervention. Any damage or detrimental effect in or to environmentally sensitive areas, issues or landscapes which are recognised and/or protected locally, regionally, nationally or internationally.
Mixed effect (++)/- +/- etc.)	The effect is likely to be a combination of beneficial and detrimental effects, particularly where effects are considered on sub-issue, areas or criterion. For example, a scheme/measure mat enhance the viability of certain protected species or habitats (such as native woodland) but through this, damage existing (non-native) habitats which may themselves be important. Such mixed effects will be hard to predict, but could be significant in the long term, or when taken with others e.g., cumulative or synergistic which may have.
Uncertain effect (?)	The effect of an action is not known, or is too unpredictable to assign a conclusive score. The appraiser is not sure of the effect. This may be the case where an action covers a range of issues, or where the manner in which the action is implemented will have material impact on the effects it will have.

5.3.3 Predicting and evaluating the potential effects of the George Street Mini Masterplan, including alternatives

The George Street Mini Masterplan's objectives and proposals will be assessed against the SEA objectives to be agreed through the scoping process. Significant environmental effects of the plan will be predicted to determine whether the George Street Mini Masterplan has negative, positive, uncertain or neutral effects.

In addition, the effects will further be evaluated to determine damage or otherwise to the receptors in relation to reversibility or irreversibility of effects, risks, duration (permanent, temporary, long-term, short-term and medium term) and cumulative (direct, indirect, secondary and synergetic). Table 5.4 shows the assessment framework that will be used to assess effects of the George Street Mini Masterplan. This will be reported in the Environmental Report.

Proposals will be assessed against the SEA Objectives, in accordance with guidance in planning advice note 1/2010.

To assist assessment against the objectives and questions identified within Table 4-1, the following matrix will be completed based on the significance criteria noted within Table 5-3 (Table 5-4).

Table 5-4: Assessment matrix for plan, strategy and policy issues, and site assessment

Description / summary of option / element / action	
SEA theme	Mitigation/ enhancement
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	
Climatic factors	
Air	
Water	
Material assets	
Soil	
Cultural Heritage	
Landscape	
Population and human health	
Key	
++	Major positive effect
+	Positive effect
0	Neutral effect
-	Negative effect
--	Major negative effect
++/- +/- etc.	Mixed effect
?	Uncertain effect
S	Short term effect
M	Medium term effect
L	Long term effect
Imp	Effect will depend on how the George Street Mini Masterplan is implemented

In line with the requirements of the requirements for SEA, there are various different types of environmental effects that require consideration in SEA. Predicting and evaluating the potential effects of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan may include consideration of the following types of environmental effects:

- Short/ Medium/ Long-term

- Permanent/ Temporary
- Positive/ Negative
- Secondary/ Cumulative/ Synergistic
- Transboundary

5.4 Reporting

An Environmental Report will be produced for consultation with the George Street Mini Masterplan. The Environmental Report will document the entire SEA process and will include the following:

- Non-technical summary;
- An introduction describing the purpose of the Environmental Report ;
- Background information on the draft George Street Mini Masterplan and how it developed;
- A description of the approach taken to the SEA of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan;
- A detailed summary of the findings of the SEA tasks described in the Scoping Stage (Relevant PPS, Environmental Protection Objectives, SEA Objectives, Key Environmental Problems and Sensitive Areas, etc.);
- A detailed summary of the environmental baseline specific to the George Street Mini Masterplan area including a consideration of how this would be likely to change in the absence of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan;
- An assessment of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan objectives, aims and actions and any reasonable alternatives to the proposed actions and types of projects;
- A description of any proposed mitigation and enhancement measures; and
- A description of the approach that will be taken to monitoring the effects of implementing the George Street Mini Masterplan.

5.5 Mitigation and Monitoring

The Environmental Report will consider measures to prevent, reduce or offset any significant adverse effects as far as possible, before measures are considered to mitigate residual adverse effects. Mitigation measures could include changes to alternatives, changes to a specific proposal, inclusion of new provisions, technical measures to be applied, identifying issues to be addressed at a subsequent stage and proposals for changing other relevant plans, programmes or strategies.

Monitoring is an integral part of SEA and if there are any, significant environmental effects should be monitored to check the predictions made during the assessment. A monitoring framework will be developed with input from the George Street Mini Masterplan stakeholders described above. The choice of indicators for monitoring will be informed by the baseline environment study and outcomes from the evaluation. Responsibility for monitoring will also be determined. The key monitoring tasks and their purpose are summarised below in Table 5-5.

Table 5-5: Monitoring tasks and their purpose

Monitoring Tasks	Purpose
1. Post Implementation Review	To measure the environmental performance of the draft George Street Mini Masterplan in order to determine whether its effects are as anticipated, and thereby inform future revisions.
2. Learning on predictions	Ensure that the adverse effects identified inform future revisions of the George Street Mini Masterplan.

6 NEXT STEPS

The next steps of the SEA will involve:

1. Taking into account the responses to this scoping report;
2. Refining baseline information;
3. Preparing the Environmental Report;
4. Consulting on the draft Environmental Report;
5. Taking account of consultation responses;
6. Updating the assessment where appropriate; and
7. Preparing the Post-Adoption Statement.

6.1 Proposed Consultation Timescales and Methods

Publication of the Environmental Report for public consultation is currently programmed for ***Early – Mid February 2023*** and this will be followed by a proposed 6 week period for consultation on the Environmental Report. Following public consultation, the comments received from the SEA Consultation Authorities and other representatives from the public will be taken into account in the final drafting of the George Street Mini Masterplan, which Aberdeen City Council anticipate being adopted by ***tbc*** together with the Post Adoption SEA Statement.

6.2 Anticipated Milestones

The key milestones in the development of the SEA are as follows:

- Submission of SEA Scoping Report to the SEA Gateway – Mid December 2022
 - The Consultation Authorities have **35 days** in which to respond.
- Consultation Authorities scoping response to this document Mid-January 2023
- Preparation of Environment Report – December 2022 to Early February 2023
- Publication of the Environmental Report – Mid February 2023
- Consultation on Environmental Report and George Street Mini Masterplan – Mid February 2023
- Submission of SEA Environmental Report to the SEA Gateway – Mid February 2023
 - Typical consultation periods range from 6 to 12 weeks depending on the scale and nature of the plan being assessed.
- Amendments to the George Street Mini Masterplan (and Environmental Report if required) – ***tbc***
- Adoption of the George Street Mini Masterplan and publication of the Post Adoption SEA Statement – ***tbc***

APPENDICES

A GEORGE STREET MINI MASTERPLAN

B RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PPS

Other Relevant Plans, Policies and Strategies to be analysed in the Environmental Report for their Relationship to the George Street Mini Masterplan

Level	Main Requirements of the PPS	Implications of the PPS for George Street Mini Masterplan
International Level		
Nature Conservation		
Paris Agreement 2015	The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016. Its goal is to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.	United Nations. The Agreement includes commitments from all countries to reduce their emissions and work together to adapt to the impacts of climate change, and calls on countries to strengthen their commitments over time.
International UN Agreements - Kyoto Protocol (2005)	Commitment by industrialised countries to reduce four greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, sulphur hexafluoride) plus two groups of gases (hydrofluorocarbons and perfluorocarbons).	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC or FCCC) protocol aimed at fighting climate change.
UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) (Glasgow)	The COP26 climate change conference took place in Glasgow from 31 October to 12 November 2021. The main goal was to secure global net zero by mid-century and keep a maximum of 1.5 C degrees of warming within reach.	Net zero aligns with the aims of both the Scottish Government and Aberdeen City Council.
The Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC	Protects habitats and species. Gives basis to classify SACs and SPAs	The George Street Mini Masterplan will aim to protect and enhance the natural habitats of associated flora and fauna.
The Birds Directive 2009/147/EC	Protection of wild birds and their habitats	The George Street Mini Masterplan is designed to protect and conserve ecosystem and biodiversity, specifically rare or vulnerable birds.
Water		
Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC	The purpose of the Directive is to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface waters (rivers and lakes), transitional waters (estuaries), coastal waters and groundwater. It will ensure all aquatic ecosystems and, with regard to their water needs, terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands meet 'good status'. Addresses groundwater pollution; flooding and droughts; river basin management planning.	Through the development of the George Street Mini Masterplan, account will be taken to protect water bodies from fragmentation, pollution and degradation.
Waste		

The Landfill Directive 99/31/EC	The Landfill Directive aims to reduce, as far as possible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the negative effects of landfilling waste; and sets targets and timescales for reducing the amount of biodegradable municipal waste (BMW) sent to landfill 	The Framework should reflect the needs of the Landfill Directive, including the infrastructure required to meet municipal biodegradable waste targets.
The Waste Framework Directive 2006/12/EC	Requires the planning system to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide policies and sites for waste disposal. Recover or dispose of waste without endangering human health and without processes or methods which could harm the environment. Liaison between planning authorities and SEPA. Provide the right infrastructure for the new thematic strategy on the prevention and recycling of waste. 	The Framework should ensure it utilises waste management facilities identified under higher-tier plans whilst safeguarding the natural and built environment including designated areas, green belts, open countryside and the coast.
National Level		
Overarching Planning Policy		
Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997	This is the principle piece of legislation governing the use and development of land in Scotland.	The Council must adhere to the requirements of the Act in the preparation and production of the George Street Mini Masterplan.
Planning Etc (Scotland) Act 2006	Amends certain aspects of the 1997 Act, relating to both Development Planning and Development Management. Introduces a new development plan hierarchy: National Planning Framework; Strategic Development Plans; Local Development Plans.	The Council must take account of the requirements of the Act in the preparation and production of the George Street Mini Masterplan, in protecting and enhancing the environment and biodiversity and promoting low carbon economic growth.
National Planning Framework for Scotland 3 (NPF3) (2014)	Provides a framework to guide sustainable growth and development of Scotland. Identifies priorities for strategic investment which will be a material consideration in making sustainable planning policy. It sets out key planning outcomes for Scotland: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A successful sustainable place – supporting economic growth, regeneration and the creation of well-designed places A low carbon place – reducing our carbon emissions and adapting to climate change A natural resilient place – helping to protect and enhance our natural cultural assets and facilitating their sustainable use A connected place – supporting better transport and digital connectivity 	The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to each of these planning outcomes: through developing a more coordinated George Street Mini Masterplan, this could create well designed places, such as regenerating natural and cultural assets, this should enhance the area and increase visitor numbers. Additionally, the role of green infrastructure, vegetation and water bodies will help create carbon sinks which contribute to the aesthetics of the natural environment and the variety of biodiversity.

<p>Draft National Planning Framework for Scotland 4 (NPF4)</p>	<p>NPF4 will, when adopted, set out the Scottish Governments priorities and policies for the planning system up to 2045 and how our approach to planning and development will help to achieve a net zero, sustainable Scotland by 2045. NPF4 differs from previous NPFs in two ways. It incorporates Scottish Planning Policy and the NPF into a single document and will form a part of the statutory development plan.</p>	<p>Once NPF4 is adopted, development associated with the George Street Mini Masterplan should be mindful of Part 3, National Planning Policy Handbook which includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Places (Universal policies) • Liveable Places • Productive Places and • Distinctive Places
<p>Scottish Planning Policy 2014</p>	<p>Economic development should raise the quality of life of the Scottish people through increasing economic opportunities for all, on a socially and environmentally sustainable basis. The planning system should provide strong support for economic development, to both new and expanding businesses, where it is consistent with other national and local policies, in particular the promotion of social justice and sustainable development.</p>	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan should take account of the principles set out in the SPP, and as a result the George Street Mini Masterplan should incorporate elements of the SPP where appropriate.</p>
<p>Strategic Transport Projects Review 2, 2021</p>	<p>The Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 echoes the Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan by identifying the need for a 20% reduction in car kilometres with a modal shift from car to walking, cycling and public transport. The Review also includes a number of recommendations which are pertinent to Aberdeen City Centre, most notably the development of Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART) – a bus-based rapid transit system for the region which could prioritise buses and connect key destinations on the outskirts of Aberdeen to the city centre. A national development around provision of a new Rapid Transit network for the city is also outlined in the draft NPF4.</p>	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan should take account of the review and its recommendations.</p>
<p>A New Future for Scotland's Town Centres, 2021</p>	<p>Specifically in relation to city and town centres, the Scottish Government's 'A New Future for Scotland's Town Centres' (Feb 2021) promotes a set of proposals which will strengthen the role of town centres in planning and the role of communities in shaping their town and town centre. Recommendations include Towns and town centres to be included in NPF4 with a requirement to create and implement town plans; and, Expanded and Aligned Funding of Demonstration Projects in Towns and Town Centres.</p>	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan should take account of the report and its recommendations.</p>

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997	Primary legislation which sets out the legal requirements for the control of development and alterations that affect buildings that are listed, and the framework by which control is maintained.	If appropriate, the George Street Mini Masterplan should take account of this legislation in relation to Listed Buildings.
Cross- Sectoral		
Transport (Scotland) Act 2019	The Act aims to make Scotland's transport network cleaner, smarter and more accessible by empowering local authorities and establishing consistent standards to tackle current and future challenges. The Act seeks to deliver a more responsive and sustainable transport system for everyone.	The George Street Mini Masterplan shall consider the requirements of the ACT.
National Transport Strategy 2 (2020)	The National Transport Strategy sets out a vision for Scotland's transport system for the next 20 years. The vision is underpinned by four priorities: Reduces Inequalities, Takes Climate Action, Helps Deliver Inclusive Economic Growth and Improves our Health and Wellbeing, each with three associated outcomes.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should consider the integration of LTS objectives, actions and committed projects into project.
Getting the best from our land: A land use strategy for Scotland 2016-2021	Scotland's first land use strategy, which identifies key principles for sustainable land use which reflect Government policies on the priorities which should influence land use choices. Sets out a long term vision towards 2050 with three clear objectives relating to economic prosperity, environmental quality and communities.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should aim to conserve Scotland's biodiversity whilst reducing resource depletion and encouraging responsible use of our natural resources.
Air and Climate Change		
Environment Act 1995	Provides the legal basis for the local air quality management (LAQM) regime, secondary legislation and the UK Air Quality Strategy	The George Street Mini Masterplan should include measures to improve local air quality.
Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019	The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 sets targets to reduce Scotland's emissions of all greenhouse gases to net-zero by 2045.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should promote measures to reduce minimise carbon emissions
UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017	The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 Evidence Report is the most up-to-date and comprehensive analysis of the risks and opportunities posed by climate change to the UK	The George Street Mini Masterplan should promote measures to reduce minimise carbon emissions
Heat in Buildings Strategy (2021)	Sets out how the UK will decarbonise our homes, and our commercial, industrial and public sector buildings, as part of setting a path to net zero by 2050.	Refer to and apply as practicable.
Climate Change Plan 2018-2032	This is the third report on proposals and policies (RPP3). It sets out the path to a low carbon economy while helping to deliver	The George Street Mini Masterplan will contribute to delivering on the policies and proposals set out in the plan.

	sustainable economic growth and secure the wider benefits to a greener, fairer and healthier Scotland in 2032.	
Climate Ready Scotland: climate change adaptation programme 2019-2024	The second Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme sets out policies and proposals to prepare Scotland for the challenges that we will face as our climate continues to change in the decades ahead. The Programme is a requirement of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and addresses the risks set out in the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (UK CCRA) 2017, published under section 56 of the UK Climate Change Act 2008	The George Street Mini Masterplan will reflect the changes in the greenhouse gas emissions targets and outline how the Council will contribute to meeting them
Securing a green recovery on a path to net zero: climate change plan 2018–2032 - update	This update to Scotland's 2018-2032 Climate Change Plan sets out the Scottish Government's pathway to new and ambitious targets set by the Climate Change Act 2019. It is a key strategic document on Scotland's green recovery from COVID-19.	The George Street Mini Masterplan will incorporate the updates in the plan
UK Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2011)	The Strategy sets a number of air quality objectives for pollutants to improve and protect ambient air quality in the UK including sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter, lead and ozone.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should provide actions that contribute to reducing air pollution and improving air quality.
Cleaner Air for Scotland 2 (CAFS2) strategy (2021)	Scotland's second air quality strategy, setting out how the Scottish Government and its partner organisations propose to further reduce air pollution to protect human health and fulfil Scotland's legal responsibilities over the period 2021-2026.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should include measures to reduce air pollution
Planning Advice Note 84 Reducing Carbon Emissions in New Development	Provides information on low and zero carbon development through the use of energy efficient and renewable energy systems	The George Street Mini Masterplan should include measures encouraging new development to incorporate low carbon and renewable sources of energy.
Scottish Energy Strategy Position Statement (2021)	The Energy Strategy position statement provides an overview of our key priorities for the short to medium-term in ensuring a green economic recovery, whilst remaining aligned to Scottish Government net zero ambitions.	Refer to and apply "Key Priorities For Energy" as practicable.
Heritage, Design and Regeneration		
Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS 2019)	HEPS should be taken into account whenever a decision will affect the historic environment. This includes in plans and policies that deal with funding decisions or estate management, or other specific topics such as agriculture or energy. It is also a material consideration for planning proposals that might affect the historic	The HEPS shall be taken into consideration when developing the George Street Mini Masterplan to ensure it serves to promote and improve the historic environment, where relevant.

	environment, and in relation to listed building consent and scheduled monument consent ('material consideration' means that decision-makers should take it into account when coming to a decision). Decisions on scheduled monument consent are made in line with Historic Environment Scotland's policy for determining consents at scheduled monuments.	
Our Place in Time: The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland (2014)	A high-level framework produced by the Scottish Government which sets out a 10-year vision for the Scotland's historic environment.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should consider the role of carrying forward this strategy at a local level in order to protect and/or enhance of Scotland's historic environment, particularly listed buildings and other locally important sites.
Creating Places - A policy statement on architecture and place for Scotland (2013)	The policy statement sets out the Scottish Government's overarching position on architecture and place. Architecture and place has an established, strong relationship with planning. Therefore, the policies contained in the document are material considerations in determining planning applications and appeals.	The policy framework for how design issues will be considered in relation to development and the different ways of doing things. The design factors and overarching objectives will be considered when selecting sites for play, open space projects and coordinating green network developments as part of the George Street Mini Masterplan.
Designing Streets: A Policy Statement for Scotland (2010)	Sets the context for good street design and the policies for implementation, planning considerations and embraces the six qualities of successful places as promoted in Designing Places	The policy framework for how design issues will be considered in relation to development and the different ways of doing things. The design factors and overarching objectives will be considered when selecting sites for play, open space projects and coordinating green network developments as part of the George Street Mini Masterplan.
Green Infrastructure: Design and Placemaking (2011)	Provides practical guidance to help achieve successful places.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should promote the use of green infrastructure in development.
Soil		
Scottish Soil Framework (2009)	The main aim of the Framework is to promote the sustainable management and protection of soils consistent with the economic, social and environmental needs of Scotland	The George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of soil outcomes.
Landscape		

Scottish Landscape Forum: Scotland's Living Landscape, Places for People (2007)	Considers how to promote good management of all landscapes, to secure benefits for all. It provides seven key recommendations to the Scottish Government and other public bodies as first steps to delivering better care for Scottish landscapes.	Consider how the George Street Mini Masterplan can maintain and restore natural habitats to ensure biodiversity and landscapes
All Our Futures: Planning for a Scotland with an Ageing Population (2007)	The strategy covers topics such as the role of public services, increased opportunities for older people, better intergenerational relationships, improving health and providing lifelong learning opportunities.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should consider the needs of an ageing population.
Let's Make Scotland More Active: A Strategy for Physical Activity (2003)	Aims to increase and maintain the proportion of physically active people in Scotland setting out targets to 2022.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should promote physical activities.
Let's Get Scotland Walking – The National Strategy (2014)	Let's Get Scotland Walking - the National Walking Strategy sets out a vision where everyone benefits from walking as part of their everyday journeys, and everyone has access to welcoming and safe environments to walk in.	The George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of the national walking strategy and improved opportunities to access both formal and informal greenspaces.
Cycling Action Plan for Scotland 2017-2020	The Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS), sets out a framework aiming to increase cycling across Scotland.	The should encourage cycling and improved opportunities to access cycling infrastructure.
A Long-Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland 2030	This document sets out how we hope Scotland will look in 2030 if more people are walking and cycling for short, everyday journeys allowing us to reap the benefits of active travel. I would like to offer my thanks to members of the working group and the many stakeholders who have helped develop this vision. However, having a vision is only the first stage, our next challenge is to implement it. I am confident that, with our delivery partners, we will be able to achieve this.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should align with the objectives of the long term vision where practicable.
Equality Act 2010	Sets out a framework which prevents individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a more equal society.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should build the needs of people with protected characteristics into its strategic actions.
Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005	Ensures that discrimination law covers all the activities of the public sector; and requires public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. Aims to end the discrimination that many disabled people face and gives disabled people rights in the areas of employment, education, access to goods, facilities and services and buying or renting land or property.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should build the needs of disabled persons into its strategic actions.

Community Empowerment Act 2015	Provides a framework to increase community empowerment and engagement. Targets regeneration and community participation. Requires local authorities to produce a Food Growing Strategy.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should encourage and promote community involvement in the development of the Mini Masterplan, where appropriate.
Natural Conservation		
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)	The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is the primary legislation which protects animals, plants and habitats in the UK.	The George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of the Act.
The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004	The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 places a duty on public bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity and increases protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest.	The George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of the Act.
2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity - A Strategy for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Scotland (2013)	The 2020 Challenge is a supplement to the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy (2004), focused on desired outcomes for 2020. It shows how the Scottish Government, its public agencies, Scottish business and others can contribute to the Strategy's aims as well as supporting sustainable economic growth.	The George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of this strategy.
The Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 1994 (as amended)	In Scotland, the Habitats Directive is translated into specific legal obligations by the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994.	The George Street Mini Masterplan will comply with the Regulations by not adversely affecting European sites or any species listed under the Directive.
The Conservation (Natural Habitats) Amendment (Scotland) Regulations	The Habitats Regulations have been amended in Scotland, most recently in 2019 as a result of the UK leaving the EU. These amendments mean that we must continue to apply the requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directives to how European sites are designated and protected	
Water		
Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011, as amended	Outlines the different levels of authorisations to allow for proportionate regulation depending on the risk an activity poses to the water environment. Some activities require authorisation including point source discharges, impoundments and abstractions.	The George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of these regulations
Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003	Sets out the framework for protecting the water environment that integrates the control of pollution, abstractions, dams and engineering activities in the water environment.	The George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of the importance of the water environment
Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009	Creates a framework in which organisations involved in flood risk management can co-ordinate actions to deliver sustainable and modern approaches to flood risk management	The George Street Mini Masterplan must take into account the provisions of the Act, in particular the assessment of flood risk and the preparation of flood risk management plans.

Scottish Planning Policy - Planning and Flooding	The central purpose is to prevent further development which would have significant probability of being affected by flooding, or which would increase the probability of flooding elsewhere	The George Street Mini Masterplan will contribute to meeting the overall aim of reducing the negative effects of all sources of flooding on the environment.
The river basin management plan for the Scotland river basin district: 2015–2027 (2015)	River basin management plans (RBMPs) set out how organisations, stakeholders and communities will work together to improve the water environment.	The George Street Mini Masterplan will support the protection and enhancement of water bodies.
Scottish Water Strategic Asset and Capacity Development Plan (2012)	Provides a description of Scottish Waters processes and systems for calculating capacity available, at waste/ water treatment works in Scotland.	The George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of the importance of the Plan.
SEPA Groundwater Protection Policy for Scotland v3: Environmental Policy 19 (SEPA)	This policy aims to provide a sustainable future for Scotland's groundwater resources by protecting legitimate uses of groundwater and providing a common SEPA framework to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect groundwater quality by minimising the risks posed by point and diffuse sources of pollution; • Maintain the groundwater resource by authorising abstractions and by influencing developments, which could affect groundwater quantity. 	The George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of the Policy.
Waste		
Scotland's Zero Waste Plan (2010)	The plan outlines Scotland's key objectives in relation to waste prevention, recycling and reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill on the journey to a zero waste Scotland. The plan proposes targets for Scotland's waste	The George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of this plan and the importance of a circular economy in tackling climate change.
Cross- Sector Guidance		
PAN 60: Planning for Natural Heritage	Provides advice on how the land use planning system can contribute to the conservation and enhancement of Scotland's natural environment. It describes the planning system in Scotland as it was at the time when it was published and makes reference to the way that Natural Heritage is considered in both plan-making and decision-making.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to the conservation, enhancement, enjoyment and understanding of the natural environment.
PAN 61: Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems	Describes how planning policy should set the framework for implementing Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) through the development control process.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should consider the role of sustainable urban drainage.
Planning and Waste Management Advice (2015)	The Planning Advice complements the National Planning Framework (NPF3), Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and Scotland's	The George Street Mini Masterplan should consider waste management from the inception

	Zero Waste Plan (ZWP). A low carbon place and ‘circular economy’ are alternatives to the ‘make, use, dispose’ culture which means re-using products and materials continually and growing a low carbon economy. The advice provides step-by-step advice on development planning and development management.	process. It should promote integrated waste management.
PAN 65: Planning and Open Space	Planning Advice Note (PAN) 65 provides advice on the role of the planning system in protecting and enhancing existing open spaces and providing high quality new spaces. Raises the profile of open space as a planning issue. Sets out how local authorities can prepare open space strategies and gives examples of good practice in providing, managing and maintaining open spaces.	The George Street Mini Masterplan aims to improve the quality of open spaces in the city and will set out measures to improve the quality / quantity of publicly accessible open spaces.
PAN 75: Transport and Planning	The PAN aims to create greater awareness of how linkages between planning and transport can be managed. It highlights the roles of different bodies and professions in the process and points to other sources of information. Establishes linkages between planning and transport and how it can be managed.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should promote the use of existing transportation networks and develop new cycling and walking alternatives.
PAN 77: Designing Safer Places	Planning Advice Note (PAN) 77 provides advice on how planning can help to create attractive well-managed environments which help to discourage antisocial and criminal behaviour.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should safeguard safety.
PAN 78: Inclusive Design	Looks at how to improve the design of places so that they can be used by everyone - regardless of age, gender or disability. Makes it a legal requirement to consider the needs of disabled people under the terms of Disability Discrimination legislation	The George Street Mini Masterplan should promote high standard of design.
Regional Level		
Overarching Planning Policy		
Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan 2020	Creates a long-term sustainable framework of settlements in a hierarchy, which focuses major development on the main settlements in the North East. Sets the strategic context for Aberdeen City Local Development Plan which in turn sets the framework for land use development.	By setting the spatial development strategy and supporting policies at a regional level, the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan aims to achieve alignment with the Scottish Governments national outcomes and helps to direct and inform the local interpretation for planning. This will need to be fully reflected within the George Street Mini Masterplan.
Cross- Sectoral		

Regional Economic Strategy – Securing the Future of the North East (2015)	Sets the context for economic prosperity in the North East. The four key strands are investment in infrastructure innovation, inclusive economic growth and internationalisation.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should support sustainable economic growth.
The Economic Action Plan for Aberdeen City and Shire to 2025	Sets out objectives identifying actions to be undertaken towards the longer term economic ambitions for Aberdeen City and Shire.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should support sustainable economic growth.
Nestrans 2040 Regional Transport Strategy (RTS)	The Regional Transport Strategy is a long-term strategy for the areas of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, which sets the vision and direction for transport in the region up to the year 2040.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to meeting objectives set out in the Regional Transport Strategy.
Nature Conservation		
North East of Scotland Biodiversity Partnership - Action Plan	North East Scotland Local Biodiversity Action Plan (NESLBAP) takes action to conserve important species and habitats for our benefit and for future generations.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should promote and protect biodiversity.
River Dee Catchment Management Plan (2007)	The management plan records the current state of the Dee catchment, including water quality, the type and extent of habitats and species in the catchment, and important land management activities, and identifies key issues and puts identifies potential solutions through a series of actions.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering the actions proposed in the Catchment Management Plan.
Local Level		
Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2022	<p>The local development plan is reviewed every five years. Aberdeen City Council intend the next local development plan to be the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2022.</p> <p>On 22 July 2021 Aberdeen City Council submitted to Scottish Ministers the Aberdeen Local Development Plan Proposed Plan 2020 to Scottish Ministers for examination. During November 2021 the reporter commenced the examination of conformity with the planning authority’s participation statement as required by Section 19(4) of the Town and Country Planning Scotland Act 1997 (as amended).</p>	Future development associated with the George Street Mini Masterplan should be mindful of the policies set out within the LDP which are likely to have a direct influence on development.
Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017	The Aberdeen LDP sets the framework for the growth and development and establishes a presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development as defined in Scottish Planning Policy.	The policies set out within the LDP have a direct influence on the development and implementation of the George Street Mini Masterplan in regard to connecting green networks and developing active travel routes.

<p>Policy NE1 - Green Space Network</p>	<p>the Council will protect, promote and enhance the wildlife, access, recreation, ecosystem services and landscape value of the Green Space Network, which is identified on the Proposals Map. Proposals for development that are likely to destroy or erode the character and/or function of the Green Space Network will not be permitted.</p> <p>Where major infrastructure projects or other developments necessitate crossing the Green Space Network, such developments should maintain and enhance the coherence of the network. In doing so, provision should be made for access across roads for wildlife and outdoor recreation.</p> <p>Masterplanning of new developments should consider the existing areas of Green Space Network and identify new areas incorporating Green Space Network. Masterplans will determine the location, extent and configuration of the Green Space Network within the area, and its connectivity with the wider network.</p> <p>Development which has a negative impact on existing wildlife habitats and connections, or other features of value to natural heritage, open space, landscape and recreation, should be mitigated through enhancement of the Green Space Network.</p>	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy NE1</p>
<p>Policy NE3 - Urban Green Space</p>	<p>Permission will not be granted to redevelop any parks, playing fields, sports pitches, woods, allotments or all other areas of urban green space (including smaller spaces not identified on the Proposals Map) for any use other than recreation and sport. Exceptions will be made when an equivalent and equally convenient and accessible area for public space is laid out and made available in the locality by the applicant for urban green space purposes, for example through the replacement of school buildings. In all cases, development will only be acceptable provided that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is no significant loss to the landscape character and amenity of the site and adjoining area; 2. Public access is either maintained or enhanced; 3. The site is of no significant wildlife or heritage value; 4. There is no loss of established or mature trees; 5. Replacement green space of similar or better quality is located in or immediately adjacent to the same community, providing similar or improved health benefits to the replaced area and is 	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy NE3</p> <p>With reference to Section 3.10.3 the badger sett and foraging area needs to be protected and disturbance kept to a minimum.</p> <p>Carefully designed planting should be considered for both badgers and bats to create natural screens and buffer zones to minimise disturbance, whilst providing a green network corridor.</p>

	<p>accessible to that community, taking into account public transport, walking and cycling networks and barriers such as major roads.</p> <p>6. They do not impact detrimentally on lochs, ponds, watercourses or wetlands in the vicinity of the development; and</p> <p>7. Proposals to develop outdoor sports facilities, including playing fields and sports pitches should also be consistent with the terms of Scottish Planning Policy.</p>	
<p>Policy NE4 - Open Space Provision in New Development</p>	<p>The Council will require the provision of at least 2.8ha per 1,000 people of meaningful and useful open space in new residential development. Please see relevant Supplementary Guidance Open Space & Green Infrastructure, detailed below, for information on how to calculate open space requirements, as well as different types of provision and the expected accessibility and quality standards. Public or communal open space should be provided in all residential developments, including on brownfield sites. However, on some brownfield sites it may not be possible to increase the amount of open space, for example where existing buildings on the site are being retained. In these cases, commuted sums towards off-site provision or enhancement of existing open spaces will be sought instead. In areas where the Open Space Audit has shown that existing open space is of poor quality, contributions may be sought to enhance existing provision instead of new provision being required</p>	<p>Policy NE4 does not only apply to residential developments, but also covers green space network and general open space in non-residential developments.</p> <p>Within Supplementary Guidance section 12 it mentions masterplanning/development frameworks that they should make use of the open space typologies set out in the Planning Advice Note 65 wherever possible. An open space plan with the functions and types could be useful.</p>
<p>Policy NE6 - Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality</p>	<p>Development will not be permitted if:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It would increase the risk of flooding: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) by reducing the ability of the functional flood plain to store and convey water; b) through the discharge of additional surface water; or c) by harming flood defences. 2. It would be at risk itself from flooding; 3. Adequate provision is not made for access to waterbodies for maintenance; or 4. It would require the construction of new or strengthened flood defences that would have a significantly damaging effect on the natural heritage interests within or adjacent to a watercourse. 	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy NE6</p>

5. Development on the functional floodplain will only be permitted where its location is essential for operational reasons, and it must be designed and constructed to remain operational during floods and not to impede water flow. Applicants will be required to provide a Flood Risk Assessment where a development is likely to result in a material increase in the number of buildings at risk of flooding, or where it has been indicated in the opportunity sites schedule that one will be prepared. Windfall sites may also require a Flood Risk Assessment. Drainage Impact Assessment (DIA) will be required for new development proposals comprising 5 or more homes or 250 square metres non-residential floorspace. DIA will also be required for developments of any size that affect sensitive areas. DIA should detail how surface water and waste water will be managed. Surface water drainage associated with development must:
6. Be the most appropriate available in terms of SuDS; and
 7. Avoid flooding and pollution both during and after construction.

There is a presumption against excessive engineering and culverting of waterbodies. Natural treatments of floodplains and other water storage features will be preferred wherever possible. There will be a requirement to restore existing culverted or canalised water bodies to a naturalised state where this is possible. Where the Council agrees that culverts are unavoidable for technical reasons, they should be designed to maintain existing flow conditions and aquatic life. Any proposals for new culverts should have a demonstrably neutral impact on flood risk and be linked to long term maintenance arrangements to ensure they are not the cause of flooding in the future. Connection to the public sewer will be a prerequisite of all development where this is not already provided. Private wastewater treatment systems in sewered areas will not be permitted. In areas not served by the public sewer, a private sewer treatment system for individual properties will be permitted provided that the developer demonstrates that there will be no adverse effects on the environment, amenity and public health.

<p>Policy NE9 - Access and Informal Recreation</p>	<p>New development should not compromise the integrity of existing or potential recreational opportunities including general access rights to land and water, Core Paths, other paths and rights of way. This includes any impacts on access during the construction phase of a development. Applicants should provide detail on how public access and safety will be maintained during construction, for example through temporary diversions.</p> <p>Wherever possible, developments should include new or improved provision for public access, permeability and/or links to green space for recreation and active travel.</p>	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy NE9</p>
<p>Policy D4 - Historic Environment</p>	<p>The Council will protect, preserve and enhance the historic environment in line with Scottish Planning Policy, SHEP and its own Supplementary Guidance and Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plan. There will be a presumption in favour of the retention and reuse of listed buildings and buildings within conservation areas that contribute to their character. High quality design that respects the character, appearance and setting of the historic environment and protects the special architectural or historic interest of its listed buildings, conservation areas and historic gardens and designed landscapes, will be supported.</p> <p>The physical in situ preservation of all scheduled monuments and archaeological sites will be supported. Developments that would adversely impact upon archaeological remains, including battlefields, of either national or local importance, or on their setting will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, where there is no practical alternative site and where there are imperative reasons of over-riding public need.</p> <p>In any such case, the applicant must at their own expense:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take satisfactory steps to mitigate adverse development impacts; and • where the preservation of the site in its original location is not possible, arrange for the full excavation and recording of the site in advance of development and the publication/ curation of finding 	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy D4</p>

<p>Policy I1 - Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations</p>	<p>Development must be accompanied by the infrastructure, services and facilities required to support new or expanded communities and the scale and type of developments proposed. Where development either individually or cumulatively will place additional demands on community facilities or infrastructure that would necessitate new facilities or exacerbate deficiencies in existing provision, the Council will require the developer to meet or contribute to the cost of providing or improving such infrastructure or facilities.</p> <p>Infrastructure requirements relating to Masterplan Zone sites and other allocated sites outwith the Masterplan Zones are set out in Appendices 3 and 4. Actions for delivering infrastructure are described in the Local Development Plan Action Programme. Infrastructure requirements and the level of contributions for other development will be assessed using the criteria set out in Supplementary Guidance.</p> <p>The precise level of infrastructure requirements and contributions will need to be agreed with the Council, in consultation with other statutory agencies where appropriate. The level of provision or contribution required will relate to the development proposed either directly or to the cumulative impact of development in the area and be commensurate to its scale and impact.</p> <p>Masterplans will be expected to reflect the infrastructure requirements and contributions identified and should include a Delivery Statement setting out details of how the proposed development and supporting infrastructure will be delivered. New infrastructure will either be provided by the developer or through financial contributions. It will need to be compatible with other Local Development Plan policies.</p>	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy I1</p>
<p>Policy T2 - Managing the Transport Impact of Development</p>	<p>Commensurate with the scale and anticipated impact, new developments must demonstrate that sufficient measures have been taken to minimise traffic generated and to maximise opportunities for sustainable and active travel.</p> <p>Transport Assessments and Travel Plans will be required for developments which exceed the thresholds set out in Supplementary Guidance.</p>	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy T2</p>

	<p>The development of new communities should be accompanied by an increase in local services and employment opportunities that reduce the need to travel and include integrated walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure to ensure that, where travel is necessary, sustainable modes are prioritised. Where sufficient sustainable transport links to and from new developments are not in place, developers will be required to provide such facilities or a suitable contribution towards implementation.</p> <p>Further information is contained in the relevant Supplementary Guidance which should be read in conjunction with this policy.</p>	
<p>Policy T3 - Sustainable and Active Travel</p>	<p>New developments must be accessible by a range of transport modes, with an emphasis on active and sustainable transport, and the internal layout of developments must prioritise walking, cycling and public transport penetration. Links between residential, employment, recreation and other facilities must be protected or improved for non-motorised transport users, making it quick, convenient and safe for people to travel by walking and cycling. Street layouts will reflect the principles of Designing Streets and meet the minimum distances to services as set out in the Supplementary Guidance.</p> <p>Existing access rights, including core paths, rights of way and paths within the wider network will be protected and enhanced. Where development proposals impact on the access network, the principle of the access must be maintained at all times by the developer through provision of suitable alternative routes.</p> <p>Recognising that there will still be instances in which people will require to travel by car, initiatives such as like car sharing, alternative fuel vehicles and Car Clubs will also be supported where appropriate.</p>	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy T3</p>
<p>Policy T4 - Air Quality</p>	<p>Development proposals which may have a detrimental impact on air quality will not be permitted unless measures to mitigate the impact of air pollutants are proposed and agreed with the Planning Authority. Planning applications for such proposals should be accompanied by an assessment of the likely impact of development on air quality and any mitigation measures proposed.</p> <p>Supplementary Guidance sets out the likely circumstances in which applicants must submit an assessment of the potential impact of</p>	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy T4</p>

	particular types of development on existing and future air quality, particularly in and around Air Quality Management Areas. It also provides guidance on the process of air quality assessment and how mitigation measures will be assessed and implemented.	
Policy T5 – Noise	<p>In cases where significant exposure to noise is likely to arise from development, a Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) will be required as part of a planning application.</p> <p>There will be a presumption against noise generating developments, as identified by a NIA, being located close to noise sensitive developments, such as existing or proposed housing, while housing and other noise sensitive developments will not normally be permitted close to existing noisy land uses without suitable mitigation measures in place to reduce the impact of noise. Development within or near to Candidate Noise Management Areas (CNMAs) and Candidate Quiet Areas (CQAs) will not be permitted where this is likely to contribute to a significant increase in exposure to noise or a deterioration of noise conditions in these areas, or where this will reduce the size of, or cause an increase in the noise level within, the CQA.</p> <p>Further information on NIAs, CNMAs and CQAs, including maps of these areas, can be found in the relevant Supplementary Guidance which should be read in conjunction with this policy.</p>	The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering Policy T5
Aberdeen City Council Supplementary Guidance	To provide guidance on policy implementation and forms part of the Development Plan and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.	Much of the Supplementary Guidance are relevant to the George Street Mini Masterplan. A full list can be found on the Aberdeen City Council website at https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building/local-development-plan/aberdeen-local-development-plan/supplementary-guidance-and-technical-advice#995
Destination Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire Tourism Strategy (2018-2023)	Destination Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Tourism Strategy 2018-2023 outlines the region's tourism ambition.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to Tourism Strategy.
Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan	The Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan (CCMP) is a regeneration blueprint that is transforming the city centre while conserving its heritage. The goal is greater prosperity and a better quality of life for all.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering the actions proposed in the City Centre Masterplan

Aberdeen City Local Transport Strategy 2016 - 2021	Ensures the Local Development Plan takes full account of the environment, social and economic implications of transport; Promotes the maximisation of accessibility for all to services and jobs; sustainable and active travel, efficient resource use, as well as safety in delivering transportation.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should consider the integration of LTS objectives, actions and committed projects into project.
Aberdeen Active Travel Action Plan 2021-2026	The Aberdeen Active Travel Action Plan 2021-2026 identifies the actions and interventions that the Council will pursue to make walking and cycling safer and more attractive choices, and to increase the number of active journeys in our city in order to make Aberdeen a healthier, more attractive and economically vibrant place in which to live, work and to visit.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering the actions proposed in the Active .Travel Action Plan
Aberdeen City Air Quality Action Plan	To reduce nitrogen dioxide within the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Aberdeen City Centre, and to a lesser extent reduce particulates (PM ₁₀) through short, medium and long term infrastructure and other projects.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should contribute to delivering the actions proposed in the Action Plan in order to improve air quality with the AQMA and ensure land required to implement the Action Plan is provided timeously
Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2019-2022	Obesity is one of the contributing factors to the development of type 2 diabetes which can lead to other negative impacts on a person's health. Promoting a healthy diet and weight and increasing opportunities for physical activity will go some way to offsetting these effects.	The George Street Mini Masterplan will contribute to the encouragement of physically activity.
Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26	The vision is for Aberdeen to be 'a place where all people prosper'. Four themes are set out: Prosperous Economy, Prosperous People, Prosperous Place and Enabling Technology. It focuses on four priority areas for strategic partnership working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen prospers • Children are our future • People are resilient, included and supported when in need • Empowered, resilient and sustainable communities • Creating a digital place 	The George Street Mini Masterplan should support the themes and priority aims set out in the LOIP.
Aberdeen Socio-Economic Rescue Plan 2020/21	The Plan is an immediate and dynamic response to the impact of Covid19, and aligns to the LOIP strategic themes of Economy, People and Place. While it focuses on immediate actions, it informs the scheduled refresh of the LOIP in 2021.	The George Street Mini Masterplan will take cognisance of the Rescue Plan.
Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap - towards becoming a net zero emissions city by 2045	The Net Zero Aberdeen Routemap - towards becoming a net zero emissions city by 2045 outlines how the city will adapt to changing climate conditions in the coming decades, focusing on six key	The George Street Mini Masterplan should support the theme strategies set out in the Net Zero Routemap

	theme strategies: mobility; buildings and heat; the circular economy; energy supply; the natural environment; and community empowerment.	
Aberdeen City Council Climate Change Plan 2012-25	The Plan sets out the approach, pathway and actions towards net zero and climate resilient Council assets and operations, by 2045.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should support the themes and priority aims set out in the Climate Change Plan.
Aberdeen Adapts: Climate Adaptation Framework	Aberdeen Adapts is a framework for city-wide working on adaptation. Incorporating the views of local organisations and communities, it sets the direction to build long term city resilience.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should ensure the Climate Adaption Framework is considered.
Aberdeen Electric Vehicle Framework	The purpose of the EV framework for Aberdeen from 2020 to 2030 is to encourage and actively cater for a greater uptake of electric vehicles in the city and will support relevant national, regional and local strategies.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should ensure the EV framework is considered.
Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART), Our Vision	The ART proposal is a key component to supporting long term sustainable growth, but will also prove fundamental to addressing local priorities and challenges experienced across the City Region	https://www.nestrans.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Aberdeen-Rapid-Transit-Our-Vision.pdf
Granite City Growing, Aberdeen's food-growing strategy	'Granite City Growing: Aberdeen Growing Food Together 2020' is Aberdeen's first food growing strategy and has been co-produced with a range of community groups and key stakeholders.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should ensure the EV framework is considered.
Aberdeen Nature Conservation Strategy	The strategy aims To conserve Aberdeen City's natural heritage for the benefit of our biodiversity, citizens and visitors, for current and future generations	The George Street Mini Masterplan will consider the Granite City Growing strategy where practicable.
Open Space Audit and Strategy 2011-2016	Aberdeen City's Open Space Strategy sets out a vision and aims to improve the quality of our open spaces in the city. There is growing evidence that quality and accessible open spaces contribute towards improving health, economy, environment and wellbeing. It promotes sustainable development and helps in mitigating the impacts of climate change such as flooding and air pollution and provide green networks by linking various habitats benefiting bio diversity.	Ensure that the George Street Mini Masterplan incorporates the findings of the Open Space Strategy audit and supports the aims of the strategy.
Landscape Character Assessment: Aberdeen City - Landscape Evolution and Influences	This document provides information on how the landscape of the local authority area has evolved. It complements the Landscape Character Type descriptions of the 2019 dataset. The original character assessment reports, part of a series of 30, mostly for a local authority area.	The George Street Mini Masterplan should take account of landscape character and promote good landscape design.

<p>Aberdeen City Waste Strategy 2014-25</p>	<p>Sets out the long term plans to reduce the social, economic and environmental consequences of waste. It aims for Aberdeen to see waste a resource and not a problem, and for it to be a zero waste city, providing long term social, economic and environmental benefits to all.</p>	<p>The George Street Mini Masterplan could attract an increase quantity of visitors and tourists which makes it more prone to litter and waste. The George Street Mini Masterplan should be cognisant of the objectives outlined in the ZWS plan, and adapt accordingly in order to contribute to them.</p>
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C ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE APPRAISAL



George Street Mini Masterplan Environmental Baseline Appraisal



November 2022

CONTROL SHEET

Client: Aberdeen City Council
 Project Title: George Streen Mini Masterplan
 Report Title: Environmental Baseline Appraisal
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Contents

- 1 Introduction 1
 - 1.1 Terms of Reference 1
 - 1.2 Scope of Report 1
- 2 Site Setting and Proposed Development Framework 2
 - 2.1 Location 2
 - 2.2 George Street Mini Masterplan 3
- 3 Environmental Baseline 4
- 4 Population and Human Health 5
- 5 Biodiversity 13
 - 5.1 Description of Local Environment 13
 - 5.2 Potential Effects 16
- 6 Geology and Soil 17
 - 6.1 Description of Local Environment 17
 - 6.2 Potential Effects 19
- 7 Water 20
 - 7.1 Groundwater and Hydrogeology 20
 - 7.2 Potential Effects 21
- 8 Archaeology and Cultural Heritage 23
 - 8.1 Description of Local Environment 23
 - 8.2 Potential Effects 26
- 9 Landscape 27
 - 9.1 Description of Local Environment 27
 - 9.2 Potential Effects 28
- 10 Air 29
 - 10.1 Description of Local Environment 29
 - 10.2 Potential Effects 34
- 11 Noise 35
 - 11.1 Description of Local Environment 35
 - 11.2 Potential Effects 36
- 12 Climate Change 38
- 13 Material Assets 41
 - 13.1 Description of Local Environment 41
 - 13.2 Potential Effects 42

Figures

Figure 2-1: Mini Masterplan Area	2
Figure 2-2: Mini Masterplan Area (Aerial Image)	3
Figure 4-1: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Data Zones	5
Figure 4-2: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Zones – George Street	6
Figure 4-3: Aberdeen City: Birth by Age Group by Year 2018 and 2028	9
Figure 4-4: Aberdeen City: Male Leading Causes of Death. 2020	10
Figure 4-5: Aberdeen City: Female Leading Causes of Death. 2020	10
Figure 4-6: Core Path Network	12
Figure 5-1: Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie and Meikle Loch SPA and extension	14
Figure 5-2: River Dee Special Area of Conservation	15
Figure 6-1: Bedrock Geology	17
Figure 6-2: Superficial Geology	18
Figure 8-1: Aberdeen Conservation Areas	23
Figure 8-2: Conservation Areas in Proximity to George Street	24
Figure 8-3: Historical Character	25
Figure 9-1: Local Character	27
Figure 10-1: Aberdeen City Council AQMA and Location of Diffusion Tubes	30
Figure 10-2: Aberdeen City Council AQMA and Location of Continuous Monitoring Sites	30
Figure 10-3: Map of the Low Emission Zone (LEZ)	31
Figure 11-1: Candidate Noise Management Area in Proximity to George Street	35
Figure 11-2: Candidate Quiet Areas	35
Figure 11-3: Consolidated Day, Evening and Night (Lden)	36
Figure 12-1: UK Government, Local Authority CO ₂ e emissions estimates 2018-2020	38
Figure 12-2: UK Government, Local Authority CO ₂ e emissions 2018-2020	39

Tables

Table 4-1: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Zones - George Street	6
Table 4-2: Total population, Aberdeen City, 1998-2020	7
Table 4-3: Projected population change by age group, Aberdeen City, 2018 and 2028	9
Table 7-1: Water Classification	20
Table 10-1: Aberdeen City Council AQMA	29
Table 10-2: Vehicle types within scope of the LEZ	32
Table 10-3: National Exemptions	33
Table 12-1: Aberdeen City Greenhouse Gas Emissions estimates 2018-2020 (kt CO ₂ e)	38
Table 13-1: Household Waste Generated and Managed in 2021 - Summary Data	41
Table 13-2: Household Waste Generated and Managed Per Person in 2021 - Summary Data	41
Table 13-3: Aberdeen City Business Waste (Tonnes) 2018 (Most Recent)	42

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Terms of Reference

This Environmental Baseline Appraisal provides a desk-based study of the potential for the Aberdeen City Council George Street Mini Masterplan to have significant environmental effects on the site and surrounding environment. The baseline appraisal is supplemented by the initial findings of the ecological fieldwork.

1.2 Scope of Report

The information and recommendations contained within this report have been prepared in the specific context stated above and should not be utilised in any other context without prior written permission from EnviroCentre Limited.

If this report is to be submitted for regulatory approval more than 12 months following the report date, it is recommended that it is referred to EnviroCentre Limited for review to ensure that any relevant changes in data, best practice, guidance or legislation in the intervening period are integrated into an updated version of the report.

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2 SITE SETTING AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

2.1 Location

The area identified for the Mini Masterplan is outlined in Figures 2-1 and 2-2 below. The development of the masterplan will focus primarily within the study area.

However, in order for wider benefits to be leveraged from the investment within the George Street area, the masterplan must acknowledge and respond to opportunities beyond the study boundary, understanding the influence of planned investment / development.

The George Street neighbourhood is located towards the northern boundary of the masterplan area. George Street itself runs North to South, forming a once historic link between the city centre core and areas to the North of the city. The area is defined to the south by the Bon Accord Centre, which serves the historic connection to the City Centre. It is bounded to the south west by Robert Gordon College and by Gallowgate, Spring Garden and North East Scotland College (NES).

George Street hosts a diversity of uses which give the area its own distinct character all of which sit within the wider context of Aberdeen's economy and cultural offer.

Figure 2-1: Mini Masterplan Area

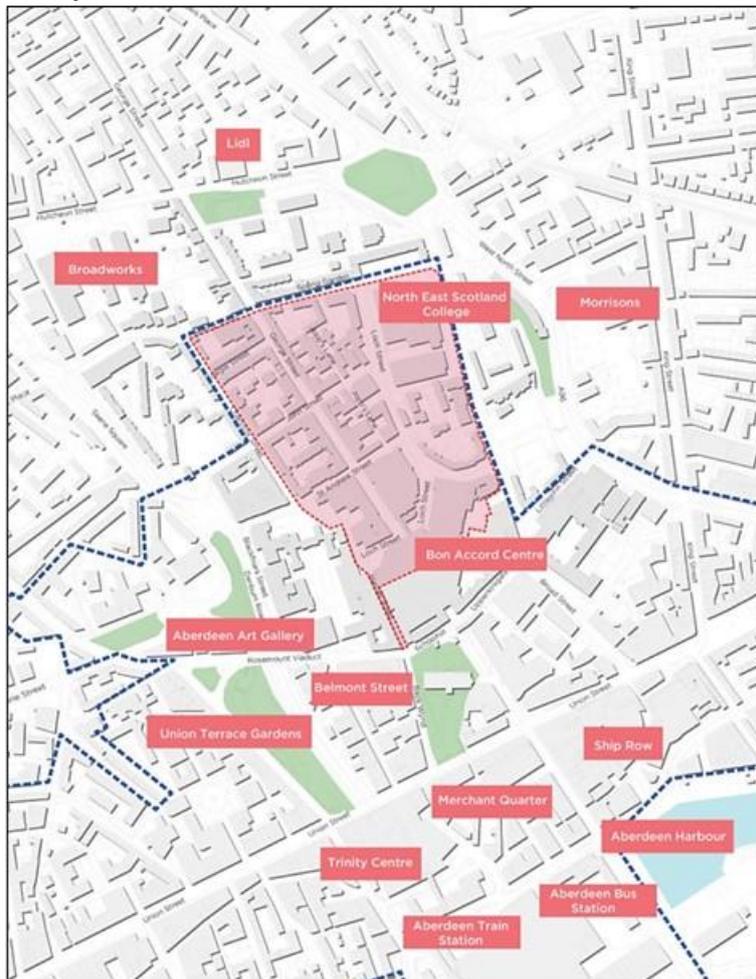


Figure 2-2: Mini Masterplan Area (Aerial Image)



2.2 George Street Mini Masterplan

The Mini Masterplan has set out a vision and objectives to deliver change across George Street. It aims to promote and deliver change from the outset, through short term or medium term interventions whilst longer term opportunities are being developed in greater detail.

Each intervention is to be delivered through projects (both physical and non physical) which will have positive impact on improving the vitality of George Street.

The Council have the ability to both stimulate change and deliver change in areas across George Street; however, the interventions will require collaboration, mobilisation and coordination across community, private and a variety of other stakeholders in order to determine and deliver change.

The potential projects will continue to be co-developed by local stakeholders, community members and Council officers. It is intended to be a 'live' resource which can be updated and reviewed as opportunities emerge, so long as they support the vision and objectives of the Mini Masterplan

3 ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE

The George Street Mini Masterplan has been considered against the environmental setting of the site and its surrounds. This has been undertaken through a review of publicly available desktop information.

The specific topic areas which have been considered are as follows:

- Population and Human Health
- Biodiversity;
- Land;
- Soil and Geology;
- Water;
- Cultural Heritage;
- Landscape;
- Air;
- Climate; and
- Material Assets and Waste.

The following sections note some of the local sensitivities apparent from a high review of available information and data.

4 POPULATION AND HUMAN HEALTH

4.1.1 Description of Local Environment

4.1.2 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is the Scottish Government’s official tool for identifying small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across all of Scotland

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) uses several measures to understand the relative deprivation of areas across Scotland. This is not only in terms of ‘low income’ but can be people who have fewer resources or opportunities in health and education. SIMD ranks data zones from most deprived (ranked 1) to least deprived (ranked 6,976), where 1 is within ‘10% most deprived areas’ and 10 is within ‘10% least deprived area’.

Aberdeen City is one of six Council Areas which includes North Lanarkshire, Moray, East Lothian, Highland and North Ayrshire which have a larger share of the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland Compared with SIMD 2016. levels of deprivation have increased in Aberdeen City. None of these increases are greater than 2 percentage points.

The George Street Mini Mastplan area comprises two data zones (S01006646 and S01006648) (Figure 4-1). Data zone S01006646 is ranked 3,888 out of Scotland’s 6,976 data zones, while S01006648 is ranked 3,506.

Figure 4-1: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Data Zones

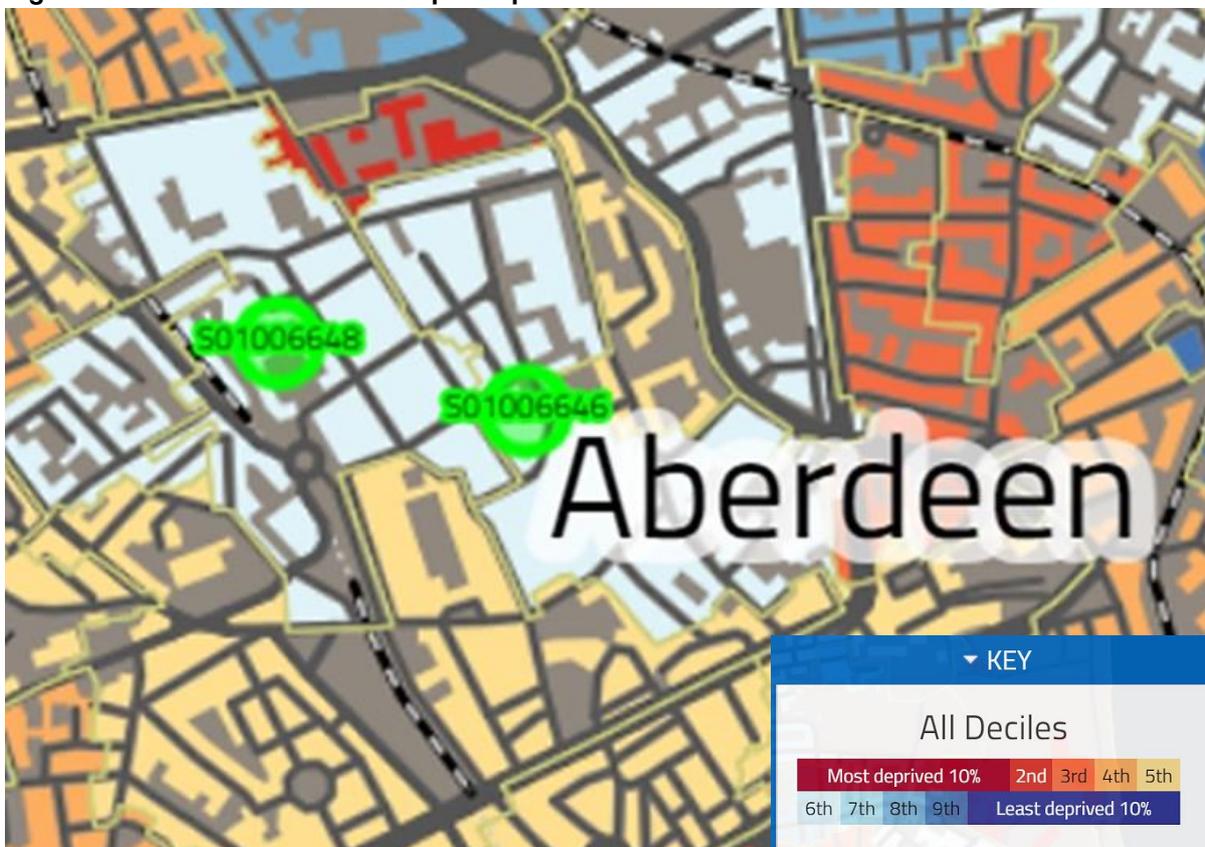


Figure 4-2 and Table 4-1 indicates that both George Street S01006646 and S01006648 are within Decile 6, Quintile 3 which is one of the least deprived areas.¹

Figure 4-2: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Zones – George Street



Table 4-1: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Zones - George Street

Data Zone	Intermediate Zone	Total population	Working age population	SIMD 2020 Rank	Income Domain Rank	Employment Domain Rank	Health Domain Rank	Education Domain Rank	Access Domain Rank	Crime Domain Rank
S01006646	George Street	861	762	3888	4871	5686	4431	1775	4665	311
S01006648	George Street	1751	1611	3506	4103	3531	4607	2898	4732	599

4.1.3 Aberdeen City Population

On 30th June 2020, the population of Aberdeen City was 229,060² over an area of 186 km² (18,600 ha). This results in a population density of 12.3 people per hectare.

¹ Deciles split the datazones into 10 groups, each containing 10% of Scotland's datazones

Quintiles split the datazones into 5 groups, each containing 20% of Scotland's datazones

² <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-estimates/mid-year-population-estimates/mid-2020> (Accessed 24/11/2022)

There was an increase of 0.2% from 228,670 in 2019. Aberdeen City had the 8th highest population in 2020, out of all 32 council areas in Scotland.³

Between 1998 and 2020, the population of Aberdeen City has increased by 6.2%. This is the 16th highest percentage change out of the 32 council areas in Scotland. Over the same period, Scotland's population rose by 7.7% (Table 4-2).

Table 4-2: Total population, Aberdeen City, 1998-2020

Year	Population	% change from 1998	Scotland % change from 1998
1998	215,650	0.0	0.0
1999	214,630	-0.5	-0.1
2000	213,340	-1.1	-0.3
2001	211,910	-1.7	-0.3
2002	210,680	-2.3	-0.2
2003	209,280	-3.0	-0.2
2004	207,820	-3.6	0.1
2005	208,690	-3.2	0.7
2006	209,630	-2.8	1.1
2007	212,470	-1.5	1.8
2008	214,020	-0.8	2.5
2009	217,020	0.6	3.0
2010	219,730	1.9	3.6
2011	222,460	3.2	4.4
2012	224,910	4.3	4.7
2013	227,070	5.3	4.9
2014	228,920	6.2	5.3
2015	230,350	6.8	5.8
2016	229,840	6.6	6.5
2017	228,800	6.1	6.8
2018	227,560	5.5	7.1
2019	228,670	6.0	7.6
2020	229,060	6.2	7.7

In 2020, there were more females (50.2%) than males (49.8%) living in Aberdeen City. There were also more females (51.2%) than males (48.8%) living in Scotland overall.

Between 2018 and 2028, the population of Aberdeen City is projected to increase from 227,560 to 230,170. This is an increase of 1.1%, which compares to a projected increase of 1.8% for Scotland as a whole.

Over the next 10 years, the population of Aberdeen City is projected to increase by 0.1% due to natural change (more births than deaths). Total net migration (net migration within Scotland, from overseas and from the rest of the UK) is projected to result in a population increase of 1.0% over the same period.

Between 2018 and 2028, the 0 to 15 age group is projected to see the largest percentage decrease (-3.2%) and the 75 and over age group is projected to see the largest percentage increase (+16.1%). In terms of size, however, 25 to 44 is projected to remain the largest age group.

³ <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/aberdeen-city-council-profile.html#:~:text=Population%20Estimates,-Last%20updated%3A%20June&text=On%2030%20June%202020%2C%20the.of%20Scotland%20increased%20by%200.0%25.&text=Aberdeen%20City%20had%20the%208th,32%20council%20areas%20in%20Scotland.>
(Accessed 24/11/2022)

The development framework proposals will provide long term significant benefits for the area that will arise through the provision of high quality amenities. Other benefits include the provision of employment and community facilities, integrated transport links, environmental improvements and contributions to the regeneration of related areas. This will ensure the key elements of a sustainable community are looked at holistically.

4.1.4 Migrant Population

In 2019-20, Aberdeen City had the 12th highest level of net migration out of the 32 council areas in Scotland, with a net total of 500 people. This is a decrease of 310 from 810 people in 2018-19⁴.

Net migration is the difference between in-migration (those coming into an area) and out-migration (those leaving an area). Positive net migration means in-migration is higher than out-migration. Negative net migration means out-migration is higher than in-migration.

In Aberdeen City, the net migration rate decreased from 3.5 people per 1,000 population in 2018-19 to 2.2 in 2019-20. In comparison, the rate in Scotland overall decreased from 5.5 to 3.1 people per 1,000 population.

In 2019-20, Aberdeen City was the council area with the 17th highest net migration rate, out of all 32 council areas in Scotland. Between 2018-19 and 2019-20, 24 councils saw a decrease in net migration rates per 1,000 population and 8 councils saw an increase.

In the period 2019-20, net migration in Aberdeen City was higher for females (322) than for males (180). The age group with the highest level of total net migration was 15 to 19 (1,034). In contrast, the age group with the lowest level of net migration was 30 to 34 (-310).

4.1.5 Ageing Population

In terms of overall size, the 25 to 44 age group was the largest in 2020, with a population of 75,582. In contrast, the 75 and over age group was the smallest, with a population of 16,241. In 2020, more females than males lived in Aberdeen City in 4 out of 6 age groups.

Between 1998 and 2020, the 16 to 24 age group saw the largest percentage decrease (-16.5%). The 45 to 64 age group saw the largest percentage increase (+16.4%).

Between 2018 and 2028, the 0 to 15 age group is projected to see the largest percentage decrease (-3.2%) and the 75 and over age group is projected to see the largest percentage increase (+16.1%). In terms of size, however, 25 to 44 is projected to remain the largest age group (Figure 4-3 and Table 4-3).⁵

⁴ <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/aberdeen-city-council-profile.html#migration> (Accessed 24/11/2022)

⁵ https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/aberdeen-city-council-profile.html#table_pop_proj_age (Accessed 24/11/2022)

Figure 4-3: Aberdeen City: Birth by Age Group by Year 2018 and 2028

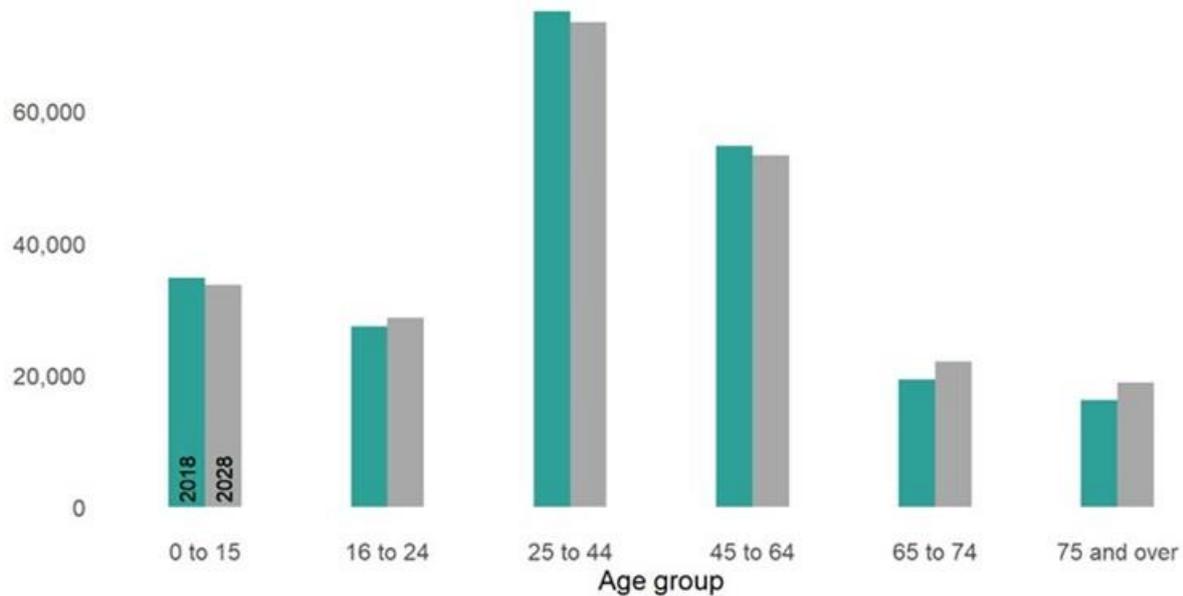


Table 4-3: Projected population change by age group, Aberdeen City, 2018 and 2028

Age group	2018	2028	% change	Scotland % change
All people	227,560	230,170	1.1	1.8
0 to 15	34,833	33,702	-3.2	-6.0
16 to 24	27,357	28,713	5.0	-0.9
25 to 44	75,101	73,500	-2.1	3.1
45 to 64	54,737	53,329	-2.6	-5.5
65 to 74	19,297	22,077	14.4	14.4
75 and over	16,235	18,849	16.1	25.4

In Aberdeen City, life expectancy at birth was higher for females (81.3 years) than for males (76.9 years) in 2018-20.⁶

In Aberdeen City, life expectancy at birth is higher than at Scotland level for both females and males.

Over the period between 2001-03 and 2018-20, female life expectancy at birth in Aberdeen City has risen by 1.6%. This is the 2nd lowest percentage change out of all 32 council areas in Scotland and this is lower than the percentage change for Scotland overall (+2.7%).

Over the period between 2001-03 and 2018-20, male life expectancy at birth in Aberdeen City has risen by 3.8%. This is the joint 20th highest percentage change out of all 32 council areas in Scotland and this is lower than the percentage change for Scotland overall (+4.5%).

In Aberdeen City, life expectancy at age 65-69 was higher for females (20.0 years) than for males (17.3 years) in 2018-20. Male life expectancy at age 65-69 has increased more rapidly than female life expectancy at age 65-69 between 2001-03 and 2018-20.

In Aberdeen City, female life expectancy at age 65-69 is higher than at Scotland level and male life expectancy at age 65-69 is lower than at Scotland level.

Over the period between 2001-03 and 2018-20, female life expectancy at age 65-69 in Aberdeen City has risen by 6.6%. This is the 29th highest percentage change out of all 32 council areas in Scotland and this is lower than the percentage change for Scotland overall (+9.2%).

⁶ https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/aberdeen-city-council-profile.html#life_expectancy (Accessed 24/11/2022)

Over the period between 2001-03 and 2018-20, male life expectancy at age 65-69 in Aberdeen City has risen by 11.3%. This is the 2nd lowest percentage change out of all 32 council areas in Scotland and this is lower than the percentage change for Scotland overall (+16.3%).

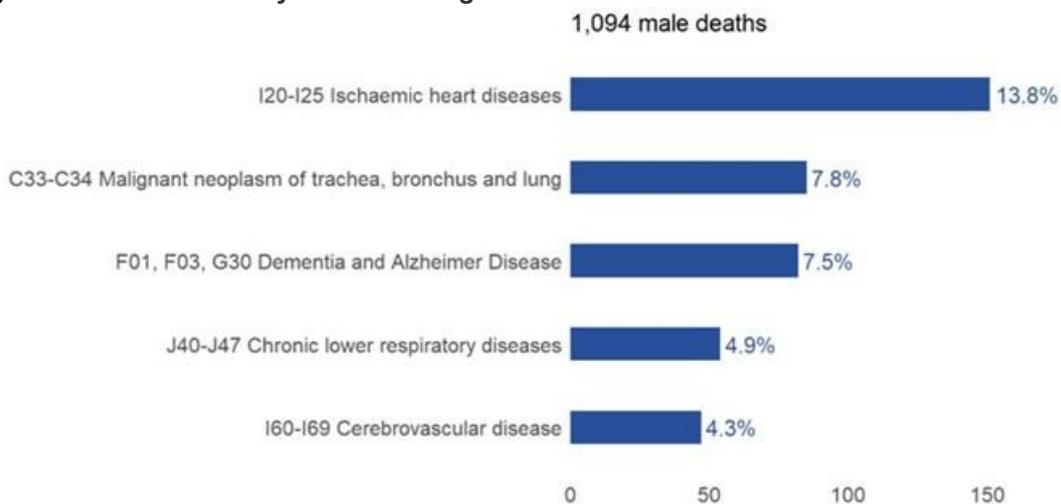
4.1.6 Health

In Aberdeen City, the standardised death rate increased from 10.8 per 1,000 population in 2019 to 11.0 in 2020. In comparison, the rate in Scotland overall increased from 10.6 to 12.0.

In 2020, Aberdeen City was the council area with the 27th highest standardised death rate. Between 2019 and 2020, 2 councils saw a decrease in standardised death rate and 30 councils saw an increase.

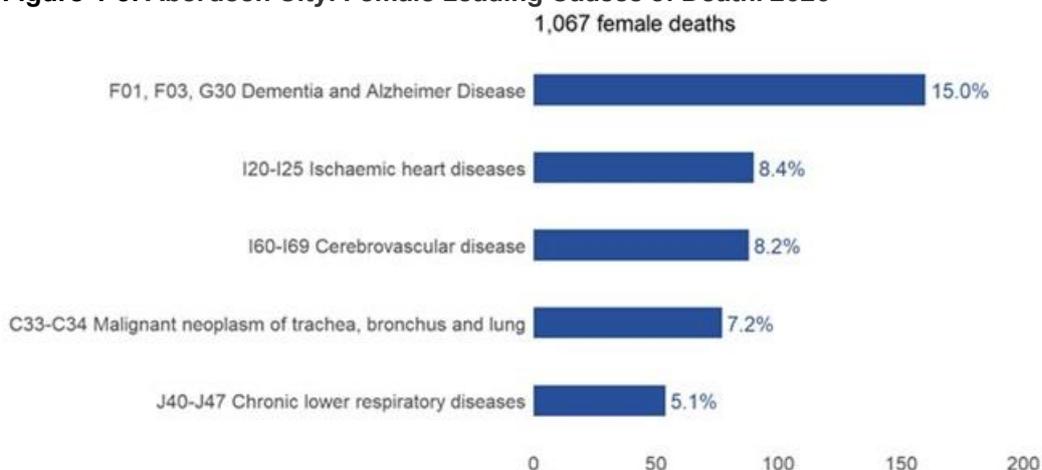
In Aberdeen City, the leading cause of death for males in 2020 was ischaemic heart diseases (13.8% of all male deaths), followed by lung cancer (7.8%). In Scotland overall, the leading cause of death for males was also ischaemic heart diseases (14.1%), followed by dementia and Alzheimer’s disease (7.7%) (Figure 4-4).⁷

Figure 4-4: Aberdeen City: Male Leading Causes of Death. 2020



In Aberdeen City, the leading cause of death for females in 2020 was dementia and Alzheimer’s disease (15.0% of all female deaths), followed by ischaemic heart diseases (8.4%). In Scotland overall, the leading cause of death for females was also dementia and Alzheimer’s disease (14.2%), followed by ischaemic heart diseases (8.6%) (Figure 4-5).

Figure 4-5: Aberdeen City: Female Leading Causes of Death. 2020



⁷ <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/council-area-data-sheets/aberdeen-city-council-profile.html#deaths> (Accessed 24/11/2022)

Scotland has seen increasing levels of obesity over the past ten years and currently one in four adults (25%) in Aberdeen City are obese.⁸ Clinical obesity increases the risk of ill-health and premature death, and is therefore an important driver of life expectancy.

In Aberdeen there are over 55 sites where the Council monitors air quality. These include simple measuring devices and 6 highly sophisticated automatic monitoring sites that work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The automatic monitors measure Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) and Fine particles (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) and are located at Union Street, Market Street, Anderson Drive, Errol Place, King Street and Wellington Road.

Air quality in most parts of Aberdeen is good and unlikely to cause any major health problem. However, there are hot spots of raised nitrogen dioxide, PM10 and PM2.5 levels around busy roads and particularly in the city centre. The raised pollution level is caused by traffic congestion and the number and type of vehicles on our roads.

If an air quality objective is exceeded, or predicted to be exceeded, then the authority must declare the affected area an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The Council has declared the following AQMA's due to Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) and Particulate Matter (PM₁₀) exceedances:

- City Centre
- Anderson Drive/Haudagain/Auchmill Road corridor
- Wellington Road (Queen Elizabeth II Bridge to Balnagask Road)

If health is good, the level of air pollution usually experienced is unlikely to have any serious short-term effects, but on rare occasions when pollution levels are high, some people may feel eye irritation, others may start to cough or have difficulty breathing. Those likely to be more sensitive include people who suffer from heart and lung disease, including asthma and bronchitis, especially young children and the elderly.

Refer to Section 10 for more details on Air Quality.

4.1.7 Transport

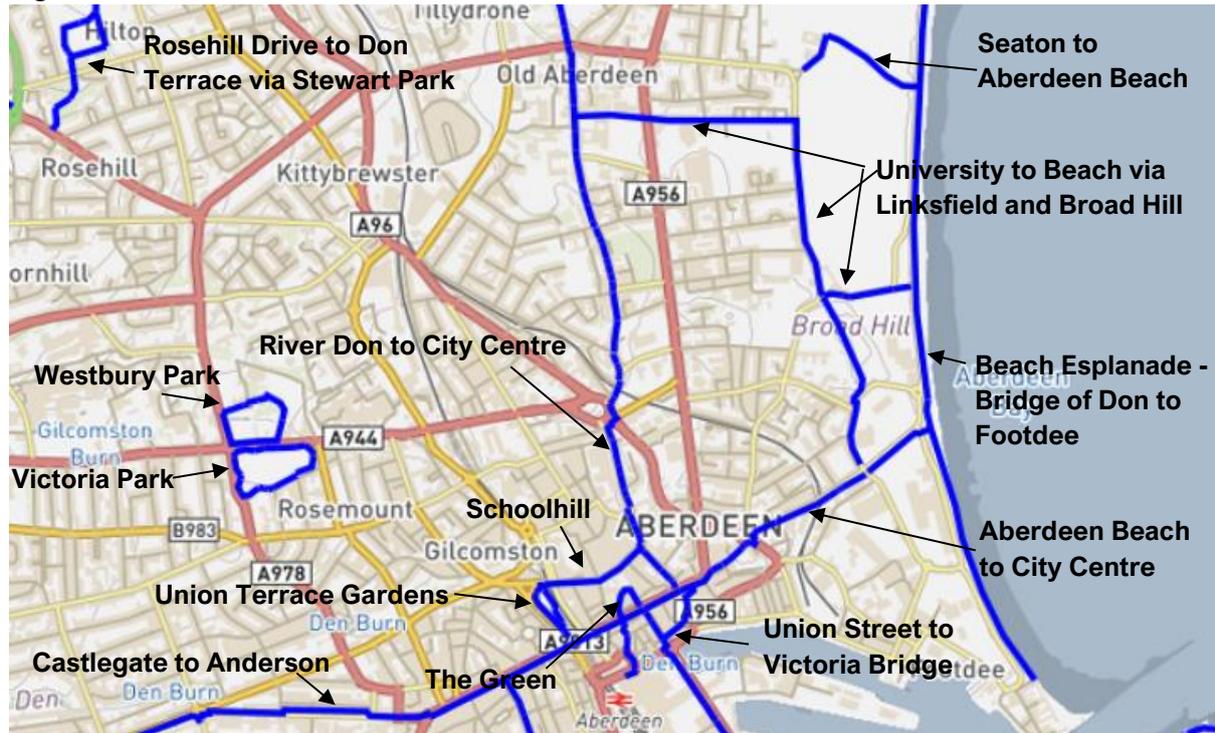
The area has good access to bus, walking and cycling routes and will provide an excellent opportunity for the provision of new infrastructure. The enhancements will benefit the wider area. Viewed in the context of conventional appraisal techniques and when compared to many other UK cities, the George Street area is not physically distant from the city centre or the key transport corridors that serve it.

4.1.8 Core Paths

There are no core paths within the boundary of the George Street Mini Masterplan boundary, however, the River Don to City Centre and Schoolhill core paths are the closest. The River Don to City Centre core path is located to the east of the masterplan boundary at Gallowgate and Schoolhill core path is to the south at the foot of Harriet Street.

⁸ Source: Scottish Health Survey, local authority results 2014-17 inclusive, published 2017
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-results-local-areas-2014-2015-2016-2017/> (Accessed (Accessed 25/11/2022)

Figure 4-6: Core Path Network



4.1.9 Potential Environmental Effects

The Mini Masterplan proposals will provide potential long term health and economic benefits for the area that will arise through the provision of high quality amenities and the promotion of active travel and tourism. The development principle is to revitalise the George Street area and reconnect it to the city centre. Other benefits include the provision of employment and community facilities, integrated transport links, environmental improvements and contributions to the regeneration of related areas. This will ensure the key elements of a sustainable community are looked at holistically.

The Mini Masterplan incorporates open space, recreation and community facilities which offer potential benefits for the population.

Use of core paths will not be restricted as a result of the proposed Mini Masterplan.

5 BIODIVERSITY

5.1 Description of Local Environment

To inform the scoping report a desk study was completed. This involved a search for any statutory and non-statutory designated sites, notable habitats and species within a 5km radius from the site using the following sources:

- NatureScot SiteLink (for information on statutory designated sites);
- National Biodiversity Network's Gateway (NBN Gateway) (for records of protected or notable flora and fauna);
- Scotland's Environment (for information on statutory designated and non-statutory sites);
- Aberdeen City Council Local Development Plan (for non-statutory designated sites); and
- UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and the North East Scotland Local Biodiversity Action Plan NESLBAP (for priority habitats and species).

The findings of the desk study are presented below.

Desk Study

Special Protection Areas

The Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie and Meikle Loch Special Protection Area (SPA) is located approximately approximately 1.2 km east of the George Street Mini Masterplan area at its closest point (straight line). The Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie and Meikle Loch SPA covers a complex area in the north east of Scotland that contains the long, narrow estuary of the River Ythan, the Sands of Forvie on the east bank of the estuary; and the eutrophic Meikle Loch.

Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie and Meikle Loch SPA qualifies under Article 4.1 by regularly supporting populations of European importance of the following Annex 1 species:

- Sandwich tern *Sterna sandvicensis* (1989 to 1991, up to 1125 pairs, up to 7% of the GB population);
- Common tern *Sterna hirundo* (1989 to 1993, up to 265 pairs, up to 2% of the GB population); and
- Little tern *Sterna albifrons* (1989 to 1993, up to 41 pairs, up to 2% of the GB population).

The marine component, immediately offshore of the terrestrial area forms the foraging zone for both Sandwich terns and little terns

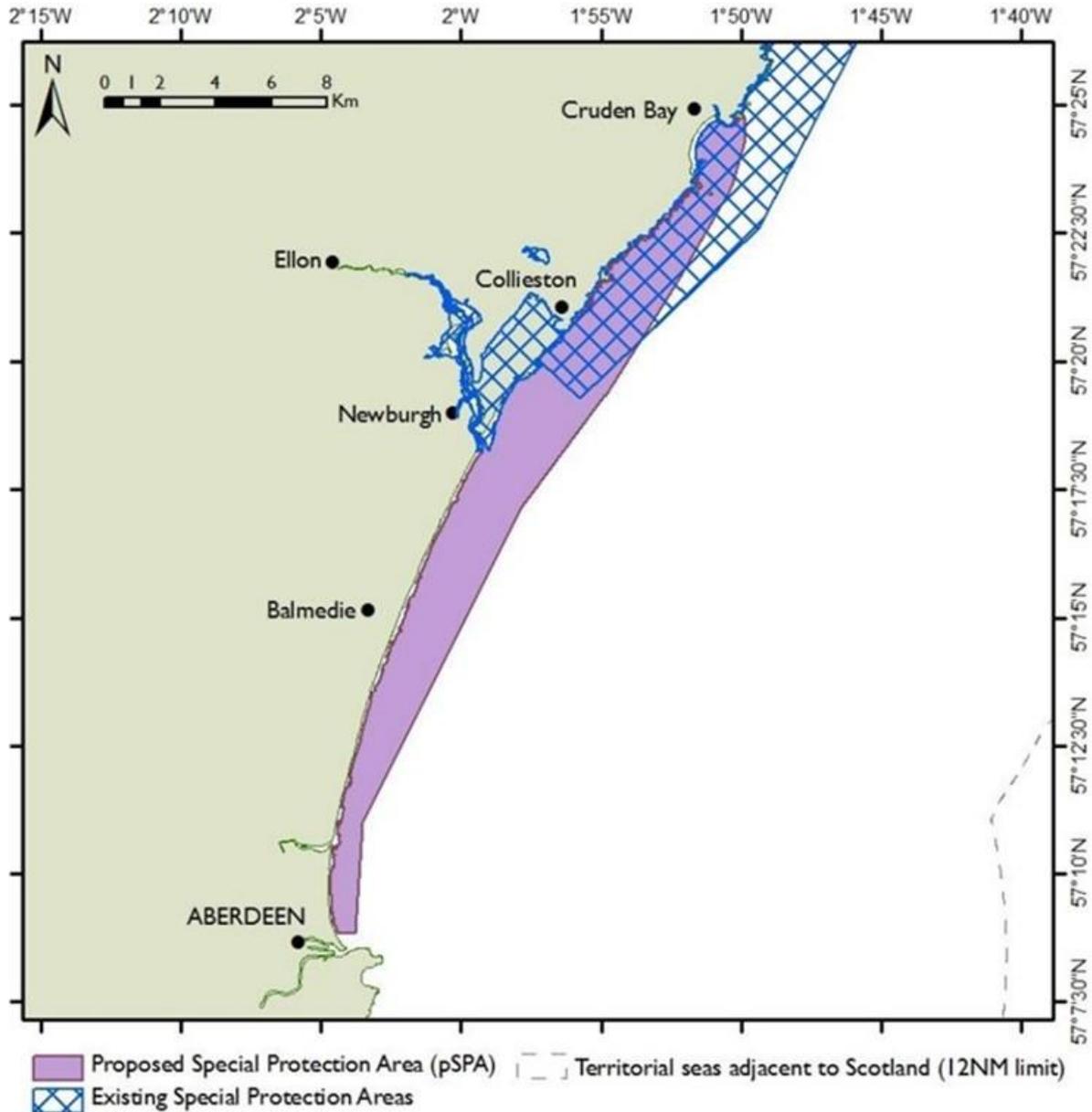
Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie and Meikle Loch SPA further qualifies under Article 4.2 by regularly supporting populations of European importance of the migratory species: pinkfooted goose *Anser brachyrhynchus* (1988/89 to 1992/93 winter peak mean of 17,213 individuals, 9% of the Eastern Greenland/Iceland/UK biogeographic population).

Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie and Meikle Loch SPA also qualifies under Article 4.2 by regularly supporting in excess of 20,000 individual waterfowl. During 1988/89 to 1992/93 the site supported a winter peak mean of 26,400 individual waterfowl, comprising 8,000 waders and 18,400 wildfowl including nationally important populations of the following species: pink-footed goose (17,213 individuals, 9% of the GB population) and eider *Somateria mollissima* (winter peak mean of 1,860 individuals, 2% of the GB population).

In the five-year period 1991/92 to 1995/96, a winter peak mean of 51,265 individual waterfowl was recorded with the assemblage additionally including nationally important populations of: redshank *Tringa totanus* (1,149 individuals, 1% of the GB population) and lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* (2,542 individuals, 0.2% of the GB population).

The SPA encompasses foraging areas potentially used by these terns breeding at this colony (Figure 5-1).

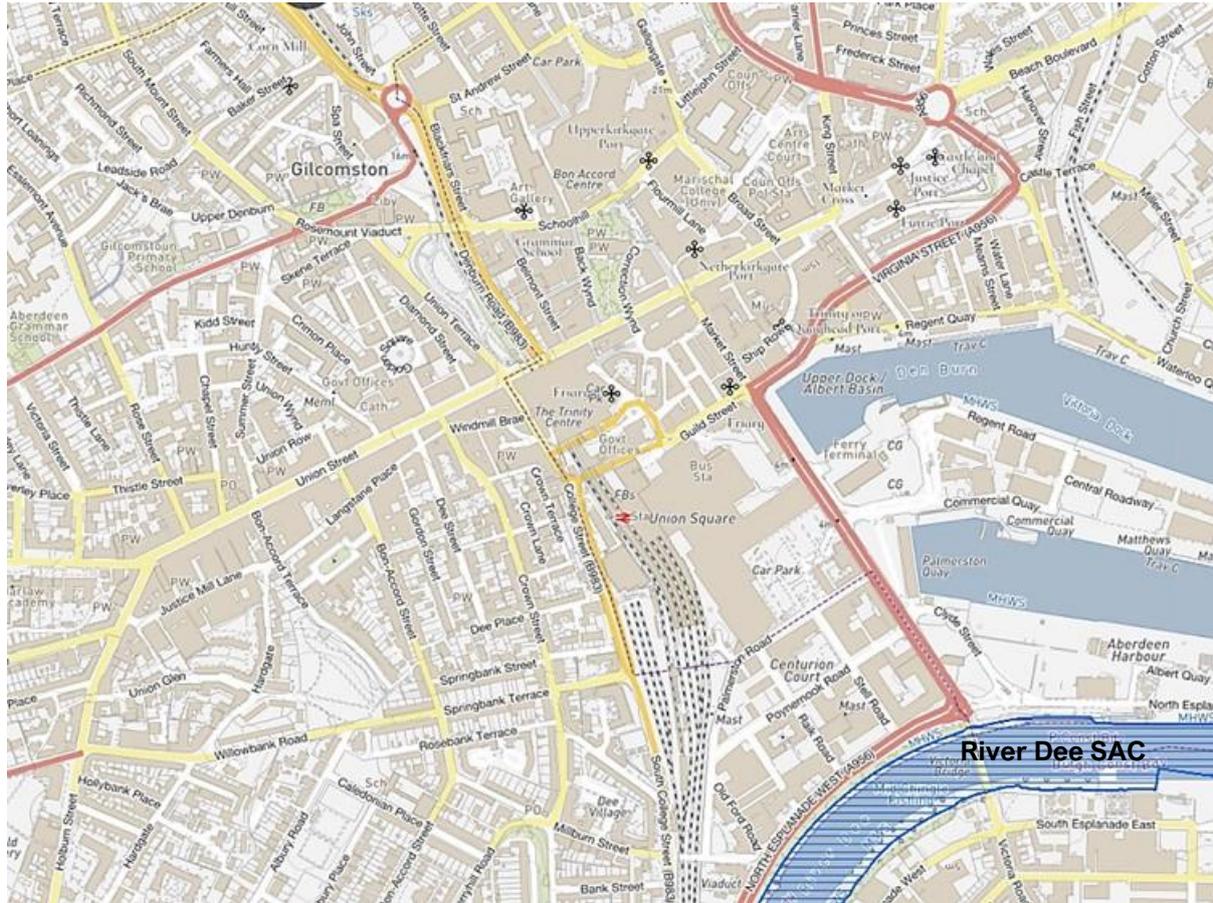
Figure 5-1: Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie and Meikle Loch SPA and extension



Special Area of Conservation

Approximatley 1km south of the George Street Mini Masterplan area at its closest point (Harriet Street) is the River Dee Special Area of Conservation (Figure 5-2).

Figure 5-2: River Dee Special Area of Conservation



Source: Scotland's Environment⁹

Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site are:

- Freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*);
- Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*); and
- Otter (*Lutra lutra*).

Freshwater pearl mussel

The River Dee is a major east coast Scottish river, which flows uninterrupted for some 130 km from its upland reaches in the high Cairngorms to the North Sea. It supports a functional population of freshwater pearl mussel, which is common in the Dee, recorded from a location approximately 30 km from the river source to approximately 6-7 km upstream from its mouth. Juveniles make up approximately 30% of the recorded population, among the highest proportions recorded in Scotland. This indicates that the population is recruiting strongly and is one of the most important in the UK.

Atlantic salmon

The River Dee supports a high-quality Atlantic salmon population in a river draining a large catchment on the east coast of Scotland. There is a weak nutrient gradient along its length, but it is essentially a nutrient-poor river. The high proportion of the river accessible to salmon has resulted in it supporting the full range of life-history types found in Scotland, with sub-populations of spring, summer salmon and grilse all being present. The headwaters which drain the southern Cairngorm and northern Grampian mountains are particularly important for multi sea-winter spring salmon, but there has been a significant

⁹ <https://map.environment.gov.scot/sewebmap> (Accessed 25/11/2022)

decline in their abundance in recent years. The extensive areas accessible to salmon means the River Dee supports a significant proportion of the Scottish salmon resource. In recent years it has contributed about 4 or 5% of all salmon caught in Scotland.

Otter

The Dee is a major east coast Scottish river, which flows uninterrupted for some 130 km from its upland reaches in the high Cairngorms to the North Sea. Surveys have indicated that the otter is found throughout Dee catchment, from its mouth at Aberdeen to many of the high-altitude lochs. The river system contains extensive areas of suitable habitat for otter feeding, resting and breeding, including watercourses with a high fish biomass and islands and marshy areas for resting. This is a strong, high quality population, representative of north-east Scotland.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

A review of Scotland's Environment Interactive Map indicates that there are no SSSI's in proximity to the George Street Mini Masterplan area.

Local Nature Reserves

A review of Scotland's Environment Interactive Map indicates that there are no Local Nature Reserves in proximity to the area covered by the George Street Mini Masterplan.

The Donmouth Local Nature Reserve 2.25km north-east of the George Street Mini Masterplan at its closes point (straight line) supports waterfowl and seal populations. It is not connected to the Mini Masterplan area.

Ancient Woodland

There are no areas of ancient woodland present within the site or within close proximity. The nearest ancient woodland to the site is the long-established (of plantation origin) woodland at Seaton Park approximately 2km north of the site. It is not ecologically connected to the Mini Masterplan.

5.2 Potential Effects

The Mini Masterplan area is of intrinsic low ecological and nature conservation value. The Mini Masterplan proposals will have a cumulative positive impact by providing new green networks, particularly SUDs which will benefit biodiversity.

Faunal interest is limited to bat roost potential which will require assessment prior to the commencement of works on site which involve removal of trees, demolition, renovation etc. The Mini Masterplan includes proposals for tree planting, mini habitats, street greening features such as shrub planting, wild-flowers, edibles and sensory planting to provide ecological enhancement. These measures will have beneficial positive impacts and will assist in increasing biodiversity interest of the area in the long term.

6 GEOLOGY AND SOIL

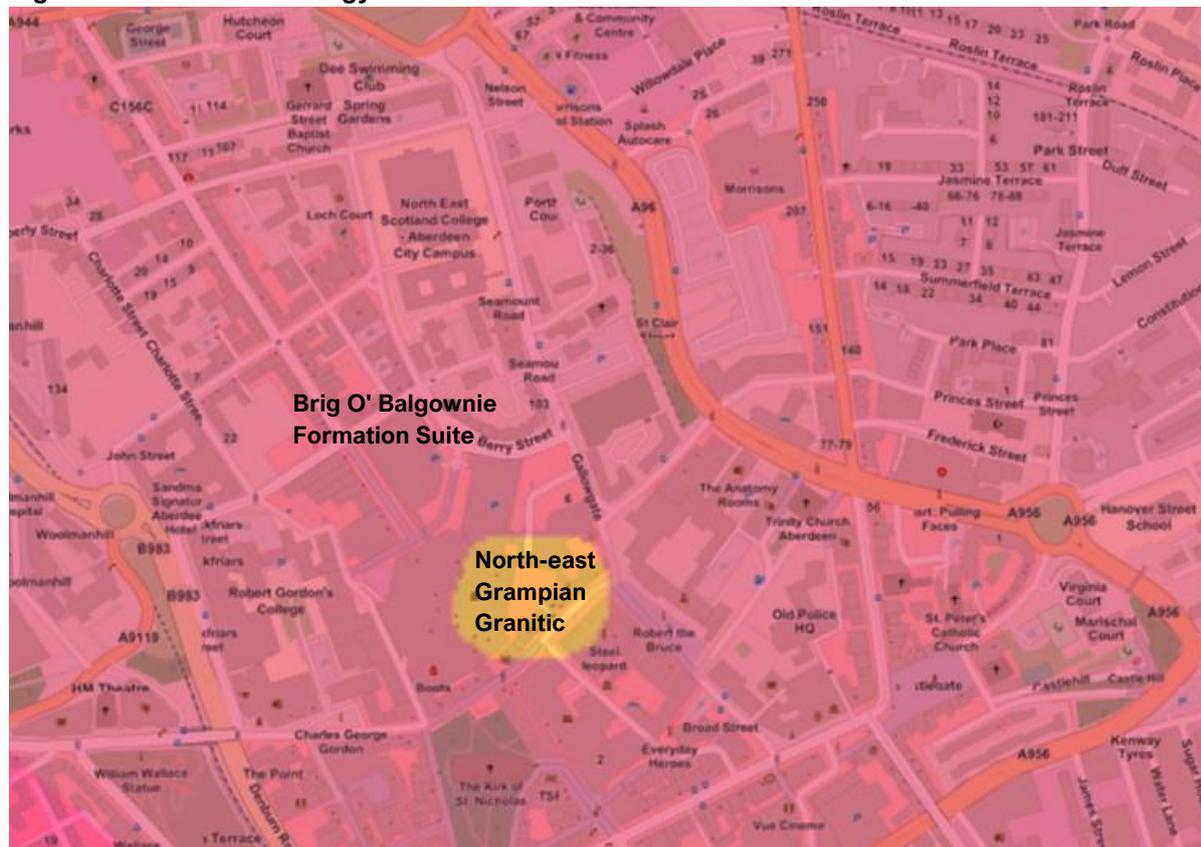
6.1 Description of Local Environment

Bedrock Geology

The British Geological Survey “Geology Viewer” indicates the bedrock geology comprises:

1. **Brig O' Balgownie Formation** - mainly a well-rounded conglomerate with clasts of granite and psammite of local provenance, and some sandstone and mudstone interbeds. Sedimentary bedrock was formed approximately 393 to 419 million years ago in the Devonian Period.¹⁰ The local environment was previously dominated by rivers and alluvial fans. These sedimentary rocks are fluvial in origin. They are detrital, generally coarse-grained and form beds and fans of deposits where rivers flow from upland valleys onto lowland plains.
2. **North-east Grampian Granitic Suite (ordovician)** - Granodiorite. Igneous bedrock formed between 485.4 and 443.8 million years ago during the Ordovician period.

Figure 6-1: Bedrock Geology



Source: BSG Viewer

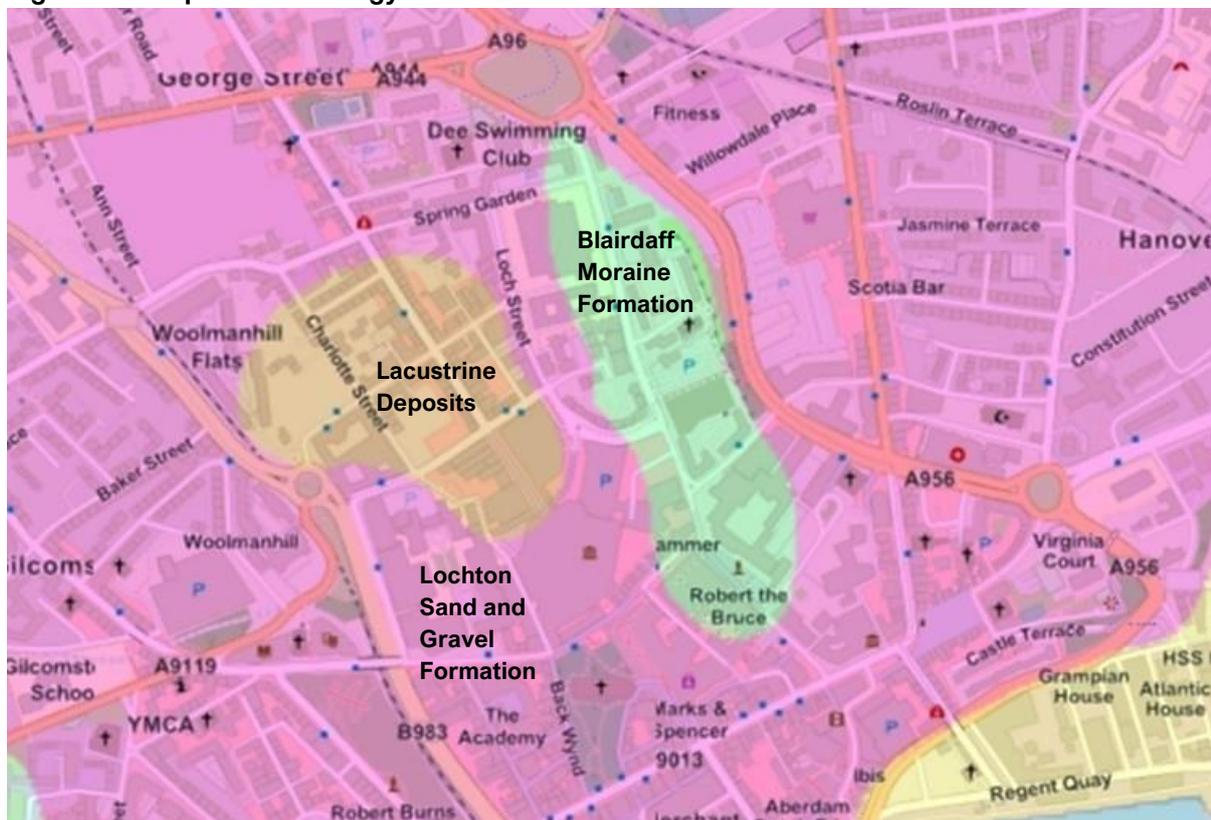
¹⁰ www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer/ (Accessed 24/11/2022)

Superficial Geology

The British Geological Survey “Geology Viewer” indicates. The superficial geology comprises the following:

1. **Lochton Sand and Gravel Formation** - Sand and gravel. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period. These are sand and gravel composed predominantly of clasts of Neoproterozoic metamorphic rocks and Caledonian igneous rocks. Unconformable on bedrock or conformable on Banchory Till Formation or Glen Dye Silts Formation.
2. **Lacustrine Deposits** - Clay, silt and sand. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 2.588 million years ago and the present during the Quaternary period. Lacustrine deposits were laid down as deltaic, lake bottom and shore sediments in lakes. They include clastic deposits, composed of coarse-grained bedload and suspended fine-grained material brought by streams flowing into the lake. Under arid and semiarid conditions evaporites form an important component of lake sediments. Includes fine-grained sediments (i.e. clay and silt), commonly laminated, and can contain thin layers of organic material or sand.
3. **Blairdaff Moraine Formation** - Diamicton, sand and gravel. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 116 and 11.8 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period. Typically yellowish brown, crudely bedded, angular to well-rounded clasts, with extremely variable sorting, of both matrix- and clast-supported clayey gravel, with boulders and sandy diamicton, composed of psammite, metagreywacke, granite and quartzite, with some gneiss, slate and dolerite, elsewhere locally formed of mainly granite or gabbroic rocks, forming hummocky ground and cross-valley moraine ridges. Generally, a sharp, undulating, unconformable contact with a yellowish brown, gravelly clayey sand diamicton of the Banchory Till Formation and other sandy tills of the East Grampian Glacigenic Subgroup.

Figure 6-2: Superficial Geology



Source: BSG Viewer

Soil

The National soil map of Scotland indicates that the Soil Association within Mini Masterplan area is classed as “Built up Land” and there is no data relating to Generalised Soil Type. Therefore, it is classed as “made ground”

Made ground is land where natural and undisturbed soils have largely been replaced by man-made or artificial materials. It may be composed of a variety of materials including imported natural soils and rocks with or without residues of industrial processes or demolition material (such as crushed brick or concrete).

Contamination

Existing features such as car parking areas could contain localised contamination and therefore as part of the development the potential for land contamination should be appropriately assessed and remediated (if required).

6.2 Potential Effects

The Mini Masterplan area is located within the Aberdeen urban area and of therefore has the potential to leach contaminants into the surrounding areas. Without knowing how contaminated material, if any, was dealt with when the site was first developed, it is not possible to discount the possibility that contaminated material will be encountered on site.

During construction excavation of existing fill, subsoil and bedrock may be required for site levelling, for the installation of building foundations, service trenching etc. This will result in a permanent relocation of soil and subsoil at most excavation locations. The excavated materials are expected to include existing fill material, topsoil/subsoil, and some bedrock.

Similar to all construction sites, plant and machinery will require refuelling and so fuel and oil may be stored on site. Managed incorrectly, there is the risk of spills and leaks associated with these operations impacting on land and soils.

No impacts on soils and geology are anticipated during the operational phase. The operational stage of the development will not involve further disturbance to the topsoil, subsoils and geology of the area.

7 WATER

7.1 Groundwater and Hydrogeology

The Geological Survey of Scotland map series indicate conglomerate and sandstone bedrock, of the Brig O’Balgownie Formation, overlain by predominantly raised tidal flat deposits of clay, silt and sand. Some blown sand fronting marine beach deposits, which is consistent with the coastal location of the site, are also present.

7.1.1 Flooding

From a review of SEPA’s flood map, which provides an understanding of how the site may be affected by flooding, the following existing impacts have been determined:

Fluvial Flooding (River)

The Flood Map indicates that areas of the Mini Masterplan site can experiences fluvial flooding during the 1:200 year (0.5%) and 1:1000 year (0.1%) return periods.

Pluvial Flooding (Surface Water)

Surface water flooding, associated with existing hard-standings serving the existing buildings etc. are indicated for the 1:10 year (10%), 1:200 year (0.5%) and 1:1000 year (0.1%) return periods.

Coastal Flooding

The Flood Map indicates that the site does not experience coastal flooding.

7.1.2 Groundwater

Aberdeen is a groundwater (ID: 150491), in the Scotland river basin district. It is 37.8 square kilometres in area. Overall status of the groundwater is good (Table 7-1).

With reference to the SEPA Water Classification Hub, the groundwater has been classified under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) scheme as having good overall status.

Table 7-1: Water Classification

Parameter	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
2: Overall status	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-1: Quantitative status	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-1-1: Quant - Saline Intrusion	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-1-2: Quant - SW Interaction	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-1-4: Water balance	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2: Chemical status	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-1: Chemical - Saline Intrusion					Good
2-2-1-1: CSI - Electrical Conductivity					Good
2-2-2: Chem - SW Interaction	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-2-3: SWI - Specific pollutants	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-2-3-1: SWI - Chromium	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good

2-2-2-3-2: SWI - Iron					Good
2-2-2-3-3: SWI - Zinc	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-2-3-4: SWI - Manganese	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-2-4: SWI - Other Substances	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-2-4-1: SWI - Nitrate	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-2-5: SWI - Priority substances	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-2-5-1: SWI - Cadmium	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-2-5-2: SWI - Lead	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-3: Drinking Water Protected Area	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-3-1: DWPA - Priority substances	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-3-1-1: DWPA - Atrazine	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-3-1-2: DWPA - Simazine	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-3-2: DWPA - Other Substances	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-3-2-1: DWPA - Epoxyconazole	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-3-2-2: DWPA - Nitrate	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4: Chemical - General tests	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-4: CGT - Priority substances	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-4-1: CGT - Atrazine	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-4-2: CGT - Simazine	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-4-3: CGT - Trichloroethene	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-4-4: CGT - Benzene	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-5: CGT - Specific pollutants	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-5-1: CGT - Chromium	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-6: CGT - Other Substances	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-6-1: CGT - Electrical Conductivity	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-6-2: CGT - Epoxyconazole	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-6-3: CGT - Nitrate	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-6-4: CGT - Free Product	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
2-2-4-6-5: CGT - Vinyl Chloride	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
4-1: Water quality	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good

7.2 Potential Effects

Sensitive Receptors

The following receptors have been identified:

- Neighbouring properties and roads;
- Existing drainage infrastructure; and
- Proposed development.

Key Potential Impacts

The potential effects of the proposed development could arise through either the construction or operational phases. These include:

Construction Phase

1. Earthworks, temporary bunding or material stockpiles may alter runoff, hydrology or morphology of water features resulting in changes to flood risk or habitats; and
2. New drainage systems, temporary or permanent, may alter runoff, hydrology or morphology of water features resulting in changes to flood risk or habitats.

Operational Phase

1. Changes in volume and rate of surface runoff from impermeable surfaces such as roofs, car parking areas and access roads may effect flow characteristics resulting in changes to flood risk;
2. Changes to the permeability of surface cover may impact on the underlying hydraulic regime and groundwater recharge; and
3. Surface drainage schemes may alter the flow characteristics of nearby watercourses and flooding characteristics.

8 ARCHAEOLOGY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

8.1 Description of Local Environment

The George Street Mini Masterplan area has a complex pattern of overlapping use that reflects the establishment, development and growth of the adjacent burghs.

World Heritage Sites

A review of Pastmaps¹¹ and Scotland's Environment¹² identified there were no World Heritage Sites within the proximity of the area covered by the George Street Mini Masterplan.

Scheduled Monuments

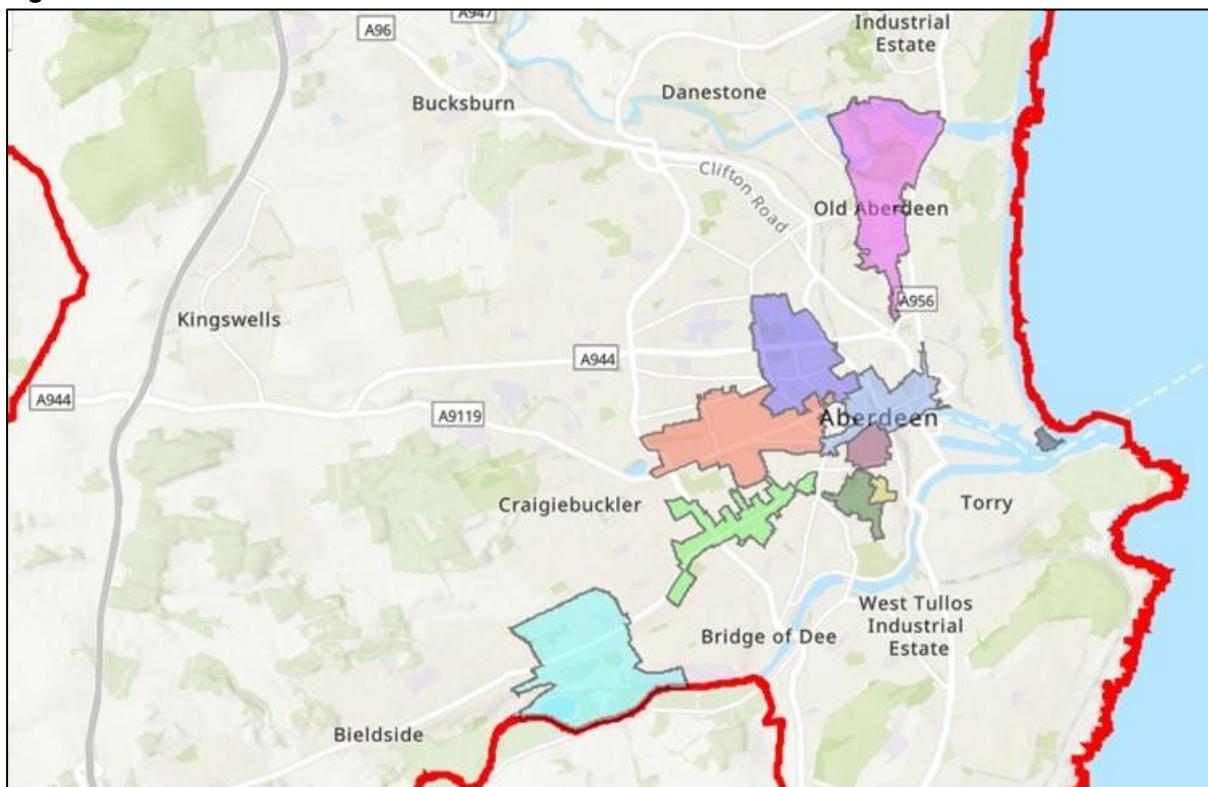
A review of Pastmaps and Scotland's Environment identified there were no Scheduled monuments within the proximity of the area covered by the George Street Mini Masterplan.

Conservation Areas

There are eleven Conservation Areas in Aberdeen. Three are in proximity to the area covered by the George Street Mini Masterplan including, Rosemount Conservation Area, City Centre Conservation Area and Albyn Place/Rubislaw Conservation Area.

All are located outwith the boundary of the area covered by the George Street Mini Masterplan.

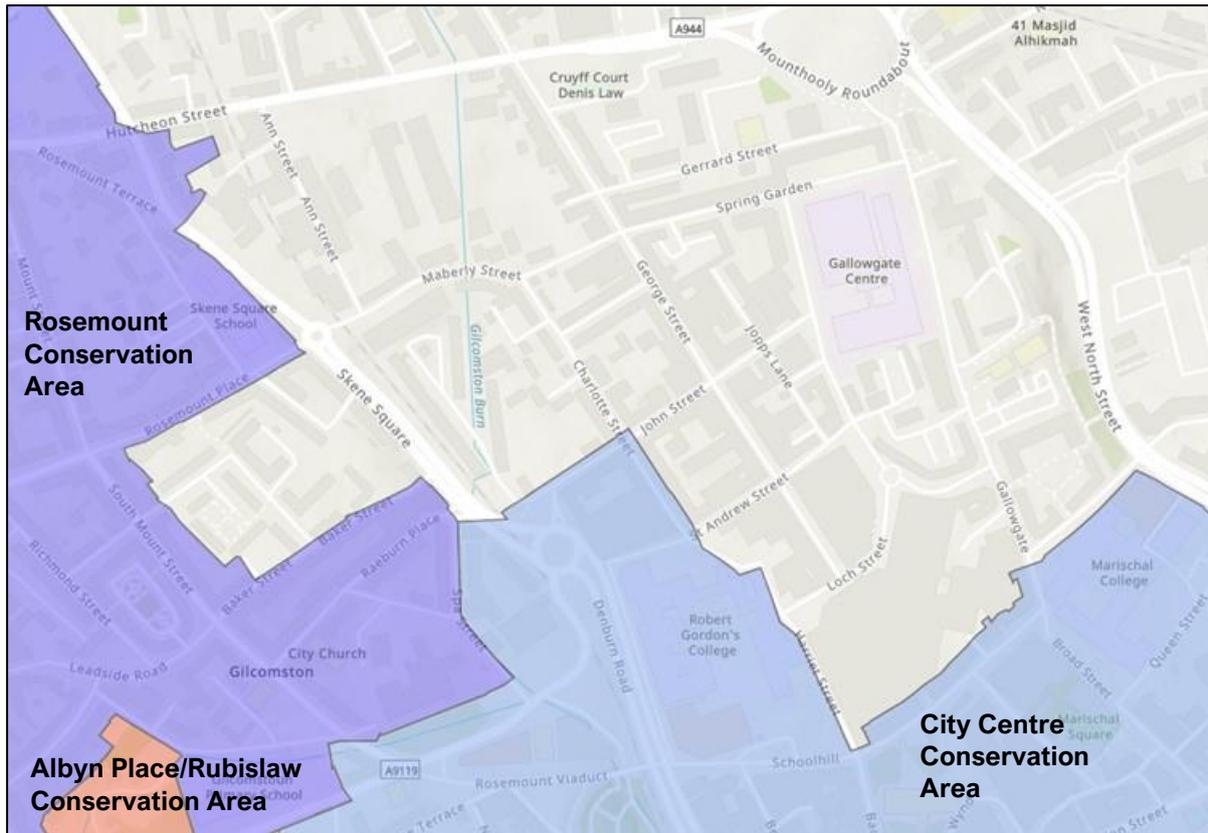
Figure 8-1: Aberdeen Conservation Areas



¹¹ <https://pastmap.org.uk> (Accessed 23/11/2022)

¹² <https://map.environment.go.scot/sewebmap> (Accessed 23/11/2022)

Figure 8-2: Conservation Areas in Proximity to George Street



Garden & Designed Landscapes

There are no 'Garden & Designated Landscapes' within the proximity of the area covered by the George Street Mini Masterplan.

Battlefields

There are no battlefields within the proximity of the area covered by the George Street Mini Masterplan.

Protected Military Remains, Wrecks

There are no 'Protected Military Remains, Wrecks' within the proximity of the area covered by the George Street Mini Masterplan.

Listed Buildings

The George Street area sits just north of the City Centre Conservation Area, with Harriet Street and Gallowgate connecting into the George Street Mini Masterplan area. There are a number of listed buildings / structures surrounding the George Street area and a small number within including:

Within the George Street Mini Masterplan area

- Category B listed 230 George Street And 34 John Street (3-storey, 4-bay Classical Bank)
- Category B listed 261-265 (Odd) George Street (former college building with prominent octagonal tower)
- Category C listed 46 Charlotte Street and Arched Gateway

- Category C listed 26 John Street (3-bay warehouse with ornate Dutch gable to John Street elevation)
- Category C listed 119-127 (Odd Nos) George Street (5-bay commercial and residential building with distinctive wallhead stack and flanking crow-step gables).
- Category C listed 111 Gallowgate

Beyond the Geore Street Mini Masterplan area

- A number of Category B & C listed buildings along Upperkirkgate
- Category A listed Porthill Court Residential tower blocks
- Category A listed Robert Gordon College
- Category B listed Gerrard Street Baptist Church (former united free church)

Figure 8-3: Historical Character



There are a number of buildings identified through the baseline analysis which also add to the overall character and identity of the place, which are identified in the plan adjacent. These buildings have no formal protected designation. The purpose of identifying these is to understand their relationship to George Street and is not intended as a recommendation for formal listing or categorisation.

Norco Building

Northern Co-operative Society's Norco House (most recently occupied by as John Lewis) was built in 1966-70 for the (now-defunct) Northern Co-operative Society.

Designed by Covell Matthews Architects, the building is an example of brutalist, modernist architecture and intended to be a showpiece within the city's architectural make-up. The rippling, mound like profile of the massing of the building was particularly striking and unlike anything within the George Street area. The exposed concrete strips take similar design language from other well known brutalist buildings e.g Preston Bus Station as well as examples from other department store facades in Europe.

The building was taken over by John Lewis and renovated and converted in 1987. The department store was the organisations northernmost store and was further expanded to the east in 1987 as part of the expansion of the John Lewis Partnership into Aberdeen. John Lewis has since closed (2021) and now used by the NHS as a temporary vaccination hub on the ground floor.

Loch Street Soup Kitchen

Aberdeen Public Soup Kitchen was first established as a charity in 1800 in St Mary's Chapel in St Nicholas Church. It supplied a breakfast of coffee and bread and a lunch of bread, soup and a piece of beef or mutton to the needy of the city.

The Soup Kitchen moved to Loch Street in 1838 and this new building was opened by Lord Provost Stewart in December 1894. The ground floor dining room had accommodation for at least 50 people and the tables were marble topped. In 1926, a total of nearly 27,000 meals were provided with funding still coming from charitable donations since few could afford even the two pence for the lunch.

The building survived major developments in the surrounding area but in recent years its charitable purpose was no longer thought necessary, and it was converted into a café in the mid 1990s. In 2022, the building still stands at 41-43 Loch Street, with the covered walkway for the Bon Accord Centre to its south. It is occupied by an outlet of the Jo Malone London fragrance and candle store.

8.2 Potential Effects

New development has the potential to put pressure on, or be constrained by, built and cultural sites.

Development pressures can put pressure on listed buildings, especially those in a poor state of repair and considered at risk.

It is important to note, that previously unknown archaeological artefacts can emerge, and as such, a watching brief may be required.

9 LANDSCAPE

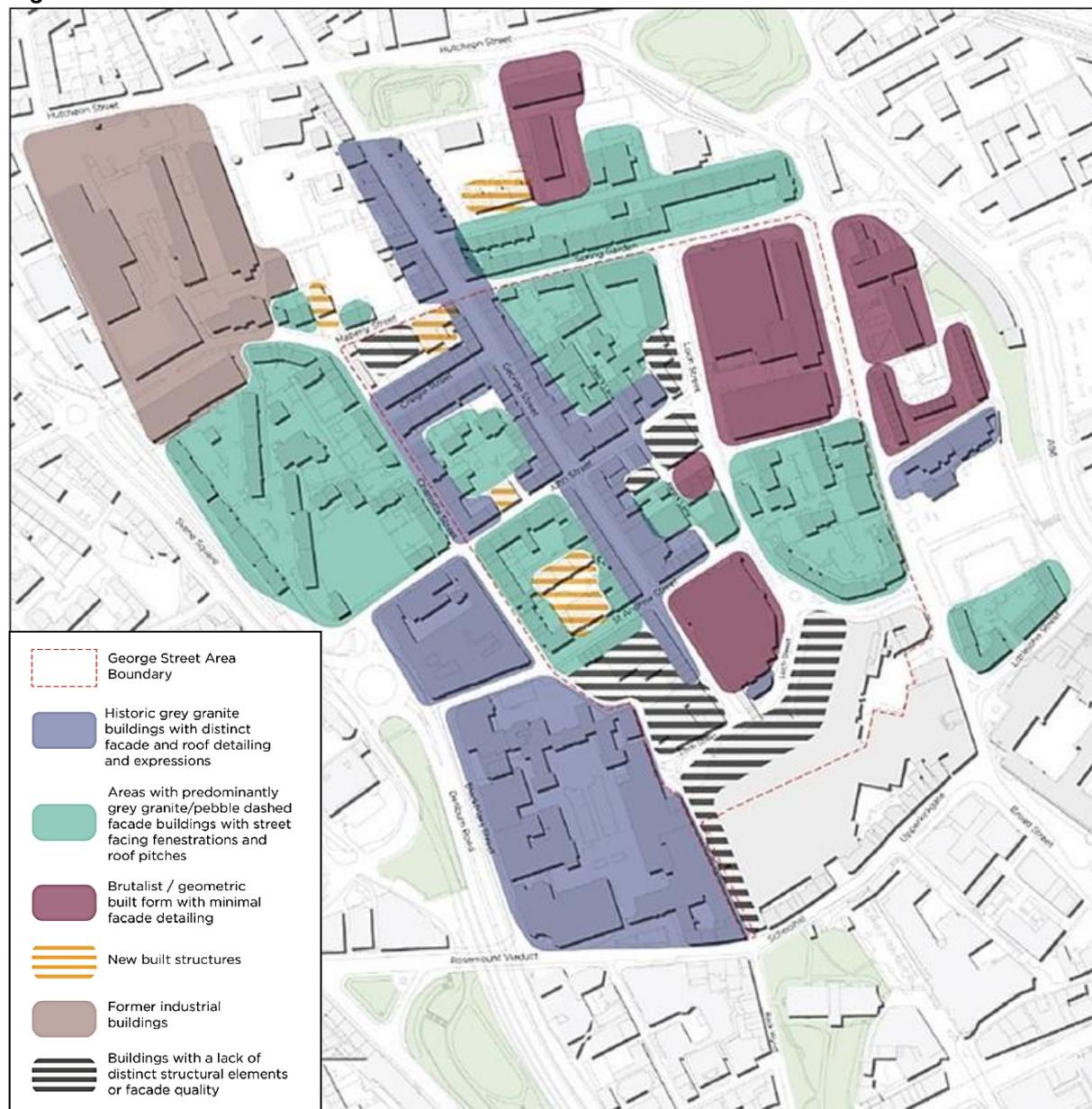
9.1 Description of Local Environment

The section of George Street within the Mini Masterplan area is predominately a mixed use urban high street. George Street is comprised of primarily granite tenement buildings with small local retail shops at ground floor, complemented by small flatted residential units on the upper floors.

Within this retail offer, units are dominated by a variety of independent health and beauty shops, takeaways and repair shops, creating a vitality to the area

George Street sits to the northern fringes of a dynamic part of Aberdeen City Centre. The area can be broadly characterised into six character areas based on their location and type and uses found across the area (Figure 9-1).

Figure 9-1: Local Character



In addition to these immediate characters; to the south lies a number of leisure and cultural destinations and established city quarters (Belmont Quarter Merchants Quarter and Ship Row), some of which are undergoing phased regeneration programmes.

With reference to local townscape character and what it means to the Mini Masterplan:

- George Street is the focus of character and identity with intact building architectural features and could be reinforced to create a sense of centre;
- John Street & Craigie Street are most visually and architecturally connected to George Street;
- Areas to south and east lack strong, cohesive character and could experience greater degree of intervention;
- Historic texture / materials within intact core add positive character and could be celebrated; and
- Street art works successfully to animate & add colour contrast in areas with poorer quality townscape.

9.2 Potential Effects

The inappropriate scale and insensitive siting of future new development may adversely affect landscape / townscape characteristics (e.g., changing its landscape/ townscape character type, not respecting local topography/contours).

New development not fitting in with the landscape's capacity to absorb further developments (e.g. design, layout and sense of place), therefore, there is a need to promote suitable development capacity.

There could be mixed effect for landscape/townscape.

10 AIR

10.1 Description of Local Environment

In order to inform the Scoping Report, the 2022 Air Quality Annual Progress Report (APR) for Aberdeen City Council (the most up-to-date report available) was reviewed.

The main pollutants of concern associated with road traffic emissions are NO₂ and PM₁₀.

Aberdeen City Council has declared three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) (Table 10-1).

Table 10-1: Aberdeen City Council AQMA

AQMA	Description	Pollutants
Aberdeen City Centre AQMA	Market St, Union St, King St between Castle St and Roslin Terrace, Virginia St, Commerce St, Guild St, Bridge St, Holburn St between Great Southern Road and Union St, Victoria Rd, Torry between Queen Elizabeth II bridge and Crombie Rd and West North Street King St to 100m north of junction with Littlejohn St.	Nitrogen dioxide NO ₂ , Particulate Matter PM ₁₀
Anderson Drive AQMA	All of Anderson Drive from the Bridge of Dee including Haudigan roundabout, part of Gt Northern Road from 815 GNR to Auchmill Road, part of Auchmill Rd from GNR to the junction with Howes Road.	Nitrogen dioxide NO ₂ , Particulate Matter PM ₁₀
Wellington Road AQMA	From the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge to Balnagask Road.	Nitrogen dioxide NO ₂ , Particulate Matter PM ₁₀

The closest AQMA to the boundary of the George Street Mini Masterplan is the Aberdeen City Centre AQMA (Figure 10-1). The location of diffusion tubes are also identified in Figure 10-1.

Continuous Monitoring Sites

There are two automatic monitoring sites in proximity to the George Street area at Errol Place (CM1) and Union Street (CM2) (Figure 10-2).

The Errol Place and Union Street sites are part of the UK's Automatic Urban Network. All sites are part of the Scottish Government data reporting process and subject to independent audit

Errol Place is representative of typical residential properties close to the city centre but not adjacent to a major road and provides urban background data. Union Street continuous monitoring site is on busy city centre road and are representative of population exposure for NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. Union Street is the city's main shopping street with shops on the ground level and commercial premises and flats on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors. Almost all the city's bus routes pass along at least part of Union Street and the inside lane of both sides of the road are designated bus lanes.

Figure 10-1: Aberdeen City Council AQMA and Location of Diffusion Tubes

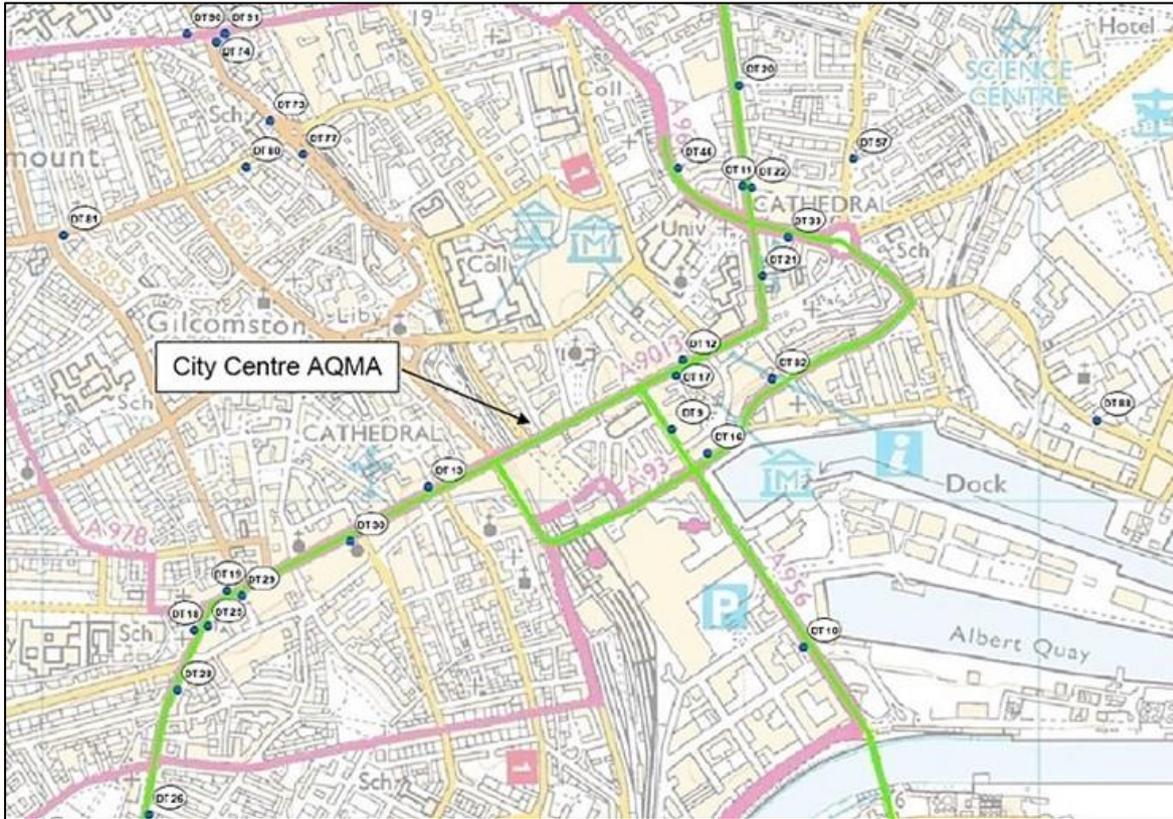


Figure 10-2: Aberdeen City Council AQMA and Location of Continuous Monitoring Sites



Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂)

Monitored NO₂ levels at all automatic monitoring sites continue to be below the annual mean air quality objective of 40 µg/m³. NO₂ levels have been decreasing since 2015. NO₂ levels at all automatic monitoring sites have been below the objective level since 2018

The NO₂ automatic monitoring data collected at all sites in 2021 increased slightly on 2020 levels. This was to be expected following a relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions in relation to the twelve months previous

There were no exceedances of the hourly mean objective at any automatic or diffusion tube sites in 2021. The hourly mean has not been exceeded at any automatic site in the last 7 years.

Particulate Matter (PM₁₀)

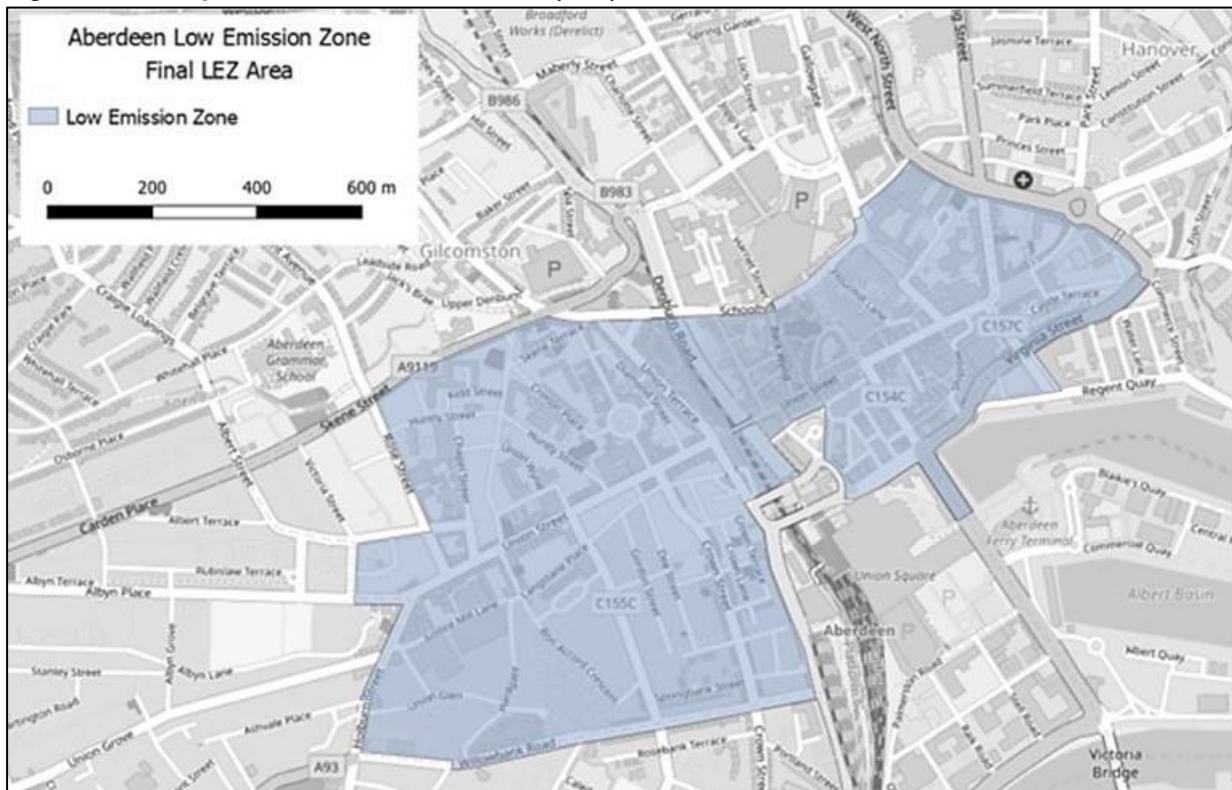
The PM₁₀ annual mean measured at each automatic site in 2021 were below the objective level and marginally lower than levels measured in 2020, other than Union Street and King Street which saw marginal increases.

No exceedances of the annual mean were recorded at any of the continuous monitoring sites. No exceedances of the objective have been recorded at any site since 2016

Aberdeen Low Emission Zone (LEZ)

Following approval from Scottish Ministers, Aberdeen City Council is introducing a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) in Aberdeen City Centre (Figure 10-3).

Figure 10-3: Map of the Low Emission Zone (LEZ)



The LEZ is an area of Aberdeen City Centre where the driving of vehicles which do not meet the specified emissions standards is prohibited. The aim of the LEZ is to improve air quality within the City Centre Air

Quality Management Area (AQMA) to ensure compliance with the Scottish Government’s air quality objectives, particularly for the pollutant nitrogen dioxide (NO₂).

The LEZ came into effect from 30th May 2022 and will operate for 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. A 2-year grace period (during which enforcement of the LEZ will not take place) for both residents and non-residents of the LEZ area and for all non-exempt vehicle types will commence from this date, meaning that enforcement will take place from 1st June 2024.

The LEZ has been introduced in response to longstanding issues of poor air quality in the Aberdeen City Centre AQMA. Air pollution is believed to be a contributing factor in a number of serious health problems suffered by individuals, and the number of health concerns linked to poor air quality is growing every day.¹³ This has a disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable members of society, particularly the young, elderly and those with chronic heart, lung and respiratory conditions. Air pollution is therefore a significant Public Health concern and a LEZ is an effective means of responding to this. This accords with the precautionary public health approach to air pollution advocated in the Scottish Government’s Air Quality Strategy, *Cleaner Air for Scotland 2* (CAFS2).¹⁴

The Aberdeen City Council document ‘Low Emission Zone (LEZ) Scheme’ states that Air Quality modelling has shown that, even with the delivery of ambitious transport improvements in the City Centre, such as those identified in the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan, emissions exceedances will remain unless tailpipe emissions are also addressed, While the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting travel restrictions led to air quality improvements in 2020 and 2021, the medium to long term impacts of the pandemic on transport and travel remain uncertain, therefore the pandemic is not a reason for delaying action.¹⁸

The LEZ applies to all vehicle types specified in the table below, unless subject to an exemption (Table 10-2).

Table 10-2: Vehicle types within scope of the LEZ

Vehicle	Vehicle Category	Description
Light passenger vehicles	M1	Vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of passengers and comprising no more than eight seats in addition to the driver’s seat.
Minibus	M2	Vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of passengers, comprising more than eight seats in addition to the driver’s seat, and having a maximum mass not exceeding 5 tonnes.
Bus and coach	M3	Vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of passengers, comprising more than eight seats in addition to the driver’s seat, and having a maximum mass exceeding 5 tonnes.
Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs)	N1	Vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of goods and having a maximum mass not exceeding 3.5 tonnes.
Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs)	N2	Vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of goods and having a maximum mass exceeding 3.5 tonnes but not exceeding 12 tonnes
	N3	Vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of goods and having a maximum mass exceeding 12 tonnes.

¹³ www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-05/LEZ%20Summary.pdf

¹⁴ www.gov.scot/publications/cleaner-air-scotland-2-towards-better-place-everyone/

A number of vehicle types are exempt from LEZs in Scotland, meaning that any restrictions do not apply to them (Table 10-3).

Aberdeen City Council can also grant and renew time-limited exemptions to any vehicle type that is not covered by a national exemption, meaning the registered keeper of the vehicle would be exempt from LEZ enforcement for the period of time that the exemption applies.

The legislation allows for the LEZ to be suspended for the duration of events of local or national significance. The LEZ can also be suspended in emergency situations, such as an incident on the wider road network that requires all vehicles to be temporarily diverted through the LEZ area (but only where vehicles follow prescribed diversionary routes).

Table 10-3: National Exemptions

Vehicle type or classification	Description
Emergency vehicles	<p>The vehicle is being driven by any person who is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertaking their duty as a constable; • providing a response to an emergency at the request of the Scottish Ambulance Service Board; • exercising the functions of the Scottish Ambulance Service Board, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Her Majesty's Coastguard or the National Crime Agency.
Historic vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vehicle was manufactured or registered under the Vehicle Excise and Registration Act 1994 for the first time at least 30 years ago; • The vehicle is no longer in production; and • The vehicle has been historically preserved or maintained in its original state and has not undergone substantial changes in the technical characteristics of its main components
Vehicles for disabled persons	<p>The vehicle is being driven by any person who is in receipt of a badge (a blue badge) that has been issued under Section 21(2) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a passenger in the vehicle has been issued with a badge under that Section of that Act; or • a badge for the vehicle has been issued under Section 21(4) of that Act; or • a reduction in annual rate of vehicle excise duty applies because the vehicle is being used by a disabled person in receipt of personal independence payment at the standard rate; or • Vehicles registered with a 'disabled' or 'disabled passenger vehicles' tax class e.g., the vehicle is exempt from payment of vehicle excise duty under paragraph 19(1) or 20(1) of schedule 2 of the Vehicle Excise and Registration Act 1994 (exemptions from excise duty for vehicles used by disabled persons).
Showman vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicles described as either “showman’s goods vehicle” or “showman’s vehicle” according to Section 62(1) of the Vehicle Excise and Registration Act 1994. Note: these are highly specialised vehicles used for the purposes of travelling showmen, where the vehicle is used during the performance, used for the purpose of providing the performance or used for carrying performance equipment.

10.2 Potential Effects

Potential exists for an increase in traffic in the vicinity of the surrounding road network and in turn increases in the pollutants NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} which are most commonly associated with traffic emissions.

Future activities have the potential to impact the adjacent City Centre AQMA, however, the George Street Mini Masterplan aims to encourage infrastructure, including traffic management that reduces the impact of the existing road network to promote alternative forms of travel, including walking and cycling, whilst improving public realm. The promotion of active travel and public transport may positively benefit the City Centre AQMA.

11 NOISE

11.1 Description of Local Environment

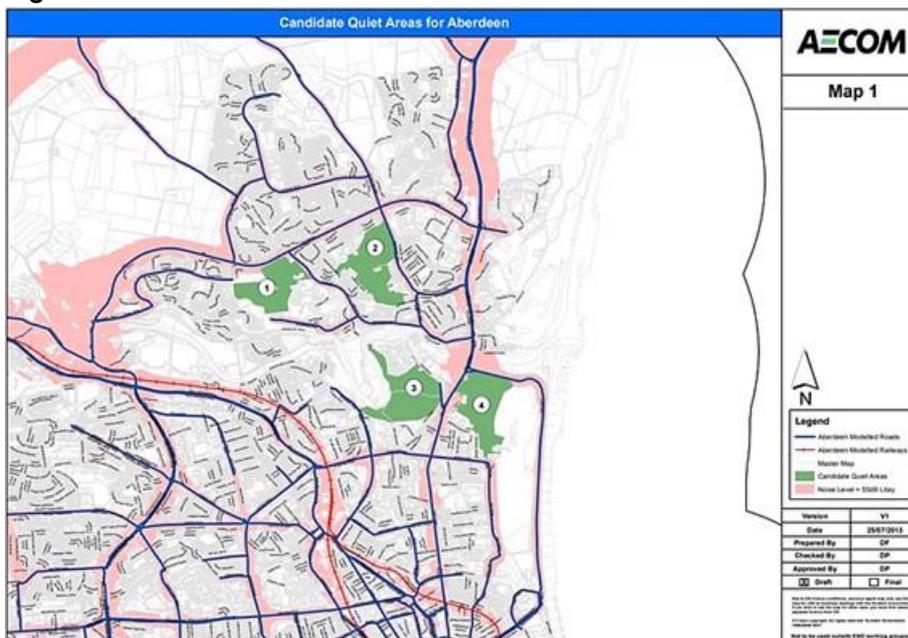
Existing noise sources surrounding and within the Mini Masterplan area include general noise found within a city centre including road traffic noise. There are also a range of cafes, restaurants, public, commercial and retail properties and educational facilities.

There are no Candidate Noise Management Areas (closest being, 8- Littlejohn Street, Mealmarket Street, King Street) (Figure 11-1) or Candidate Quiet Areas (Figure 11-2) within the proposed Mini Masterplan boundary.

Figure 11-1: Candidate Noise Management Area in Proximity to George Street

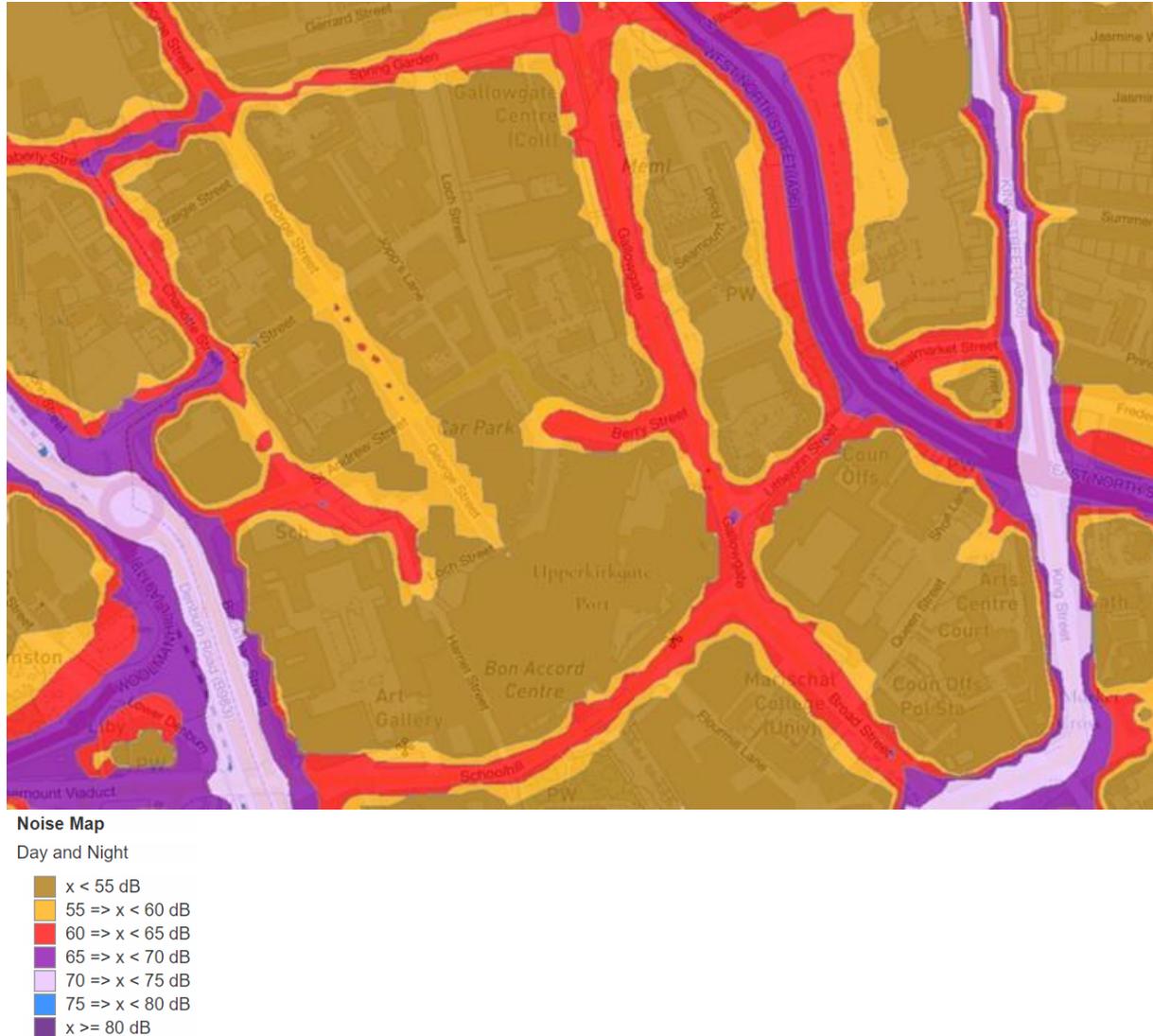


Figure 11-2: Candidate Quiet Areas



George Street Mini Masterplan area is characterised by an urban noise environment. Figure 11-3 provides a strategic overview of the annual average noise levels at 4m above ground level on a 10m calculation grid associated with road, rail, industrial and aircraft within Scottish agglomerations such as Aberdeen City.¹⁵

Figure 11-3: Consolidated Day, Evening and Night (Lden)



On review of the noise map above (Figure 11-3), it is noted that noise levels vary in the surrounding area, with the variations largely associated with road transport links. George Street is shown to have relatively low noise levels when compared with the surrounding area with the road network itself being slightly higher.

11.2 Potential Effects

The Mini Masterplan proposals have the potential to change noise levels compared to the existing situation due to potential changes in traffic flow on existing roads. Development specific noise impacts resulting from the masterplan proposals could be reported further to support future planning applications by way of Noise Impact Assessments.

¹⁵ <https://noise.environment.gov.scot/noisemap/> (Accessed 24/11/2022)

Key Potential Impacts

The key potential noise impacts at each area in the development can be summarised as follows:

- Potential road traffic noise generated by the development has the potential to impact on existing noise sensitive receptors; and
- Potential for commercial and entertainment noise from proposed attractions to impact on existing sensitive receptors.

12 CLIMATE CHANGE

Emission reductions set under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 were updated under the Climate Change Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 to net zero by 2045.

Total CO₂e emissions data for Aberdeen City is set out in Figure 12-1, with the change in CO₂e emissions from 2018 to 2020 indicated by sector in Table 12-1 and Figure 12-2.¹⁶ Table 12-1 indicates 2018 is the first year agriculture and waste management are included within the data,

Figure 12-1: UK Government, Local Authority CO₂e emissions estimates 2018-2020

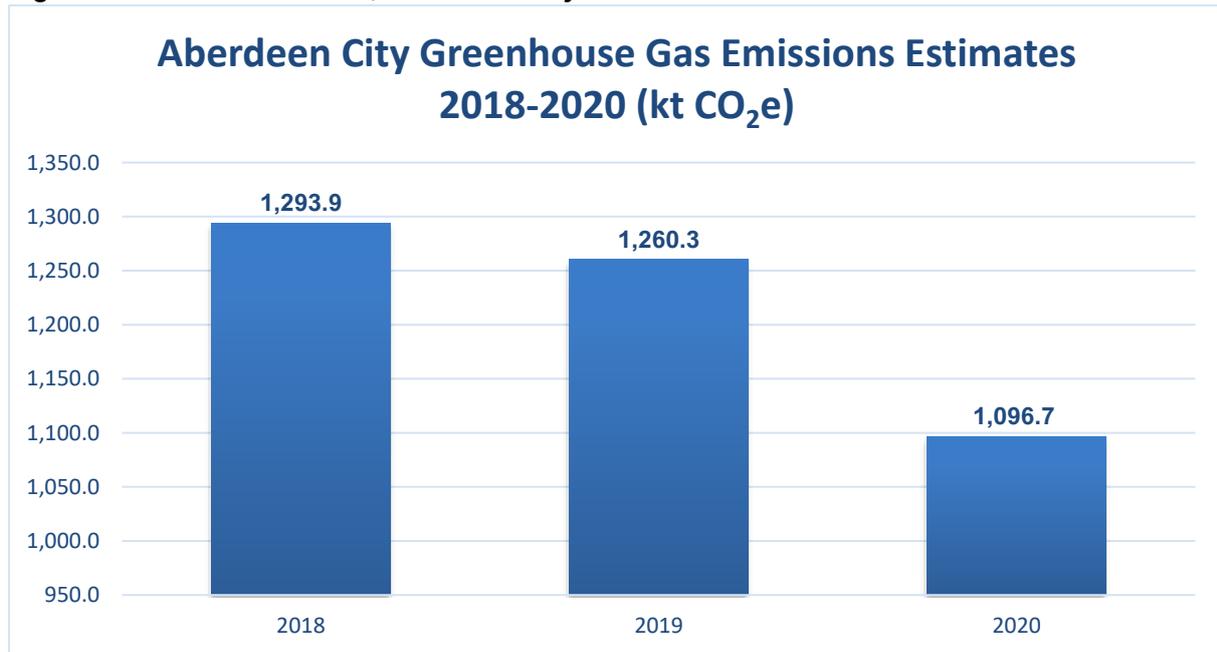
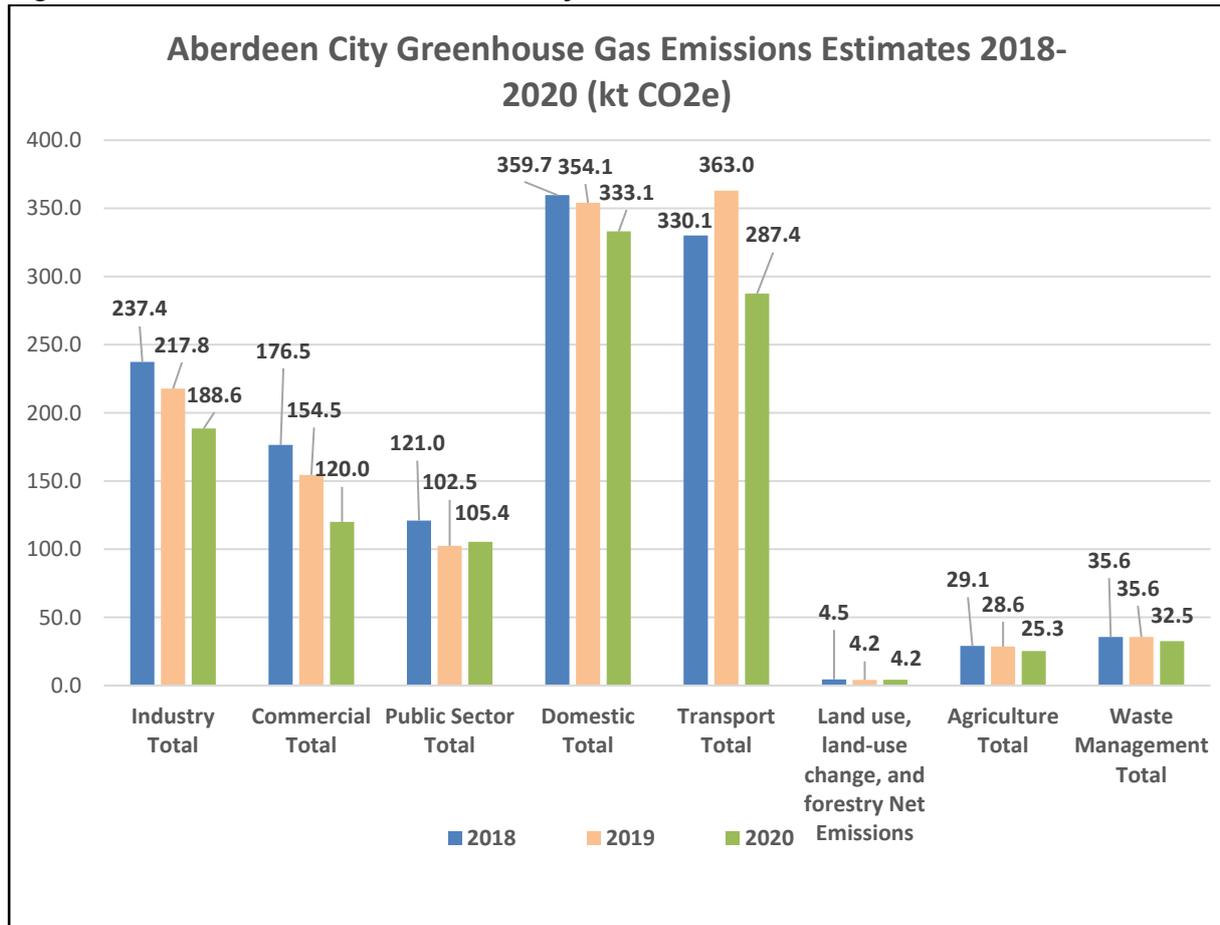


Table 12-1: Aberdeen City Greenhouse Gas Emissions estimates 2018-2020 (kt CO₂e)

Calendar Year	Industry Total	Commercial Total	Public Sector Total	Domestic Total	Transport Total	LULUCF Net Emissions	Agriculture Total	Waste Management Total	Grand Total	Population ('000s, mid-year estimate)	Per Capita Emissions (tCO ₂ e)	Area (km ²)	Emissions per km ² (kt CO ₂ e)
2018	237.4	176.5	121.0	359.7	330.1	4.5	29.1	35.6	1,293.9	227.6	5.7	205.6	6.3
2019	217.8	154.5	102.5	354.1	363.0	4.2	28.6	35.6	1,260.3	228.7	5.5	205.6	6.1
2020	188.6	120.0	105.4	333.1	287.4	4.2	25.3	32.5	1,096.7	229.1	4.8	205.6	5.3

¹⁶ <https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/723c243d-2f1a-4d27-8b61-cdb93e5b10ff/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions> (Accessed 29/11/2022)

Figure 12-2: UK Government, Local Authority CO₂e emissions 2018-2020



12.1.1 Potential Environmental Effects

The Mini Masterplan sets out a vision which aims to promote local enterprise, encourage social mobility and respond to the climate change crisis through environmental improvements. The balance and delivery of these will have various positive impacts for the neighbourhood as a whole.

The Mini Masterplan will set out a best practicable sustainable solution to meeting the objectives set out within the strategy. This would be carried out through a Sustainability Assessment, which sets out potential criteria to provide well defined benefits across each of our People, Place and Economy objectives.

Two of the three proposals retain the Norco House building, both its brutalist building envelope and its interior floor slabs and column grids.

This approach allows for a retrofit first approach to Norco House in response to the climate crisis and the increasing demand on our natural resources. It looks at retention and reuse in order to minimise the carbon produced through demolition, landfill and extraction of new materials for new development.

Norco House in particular is a building with high embedded carbon due to its concrete construction. Demolition of this building, the removal and processing of the waste and the redevelopment of the site would all produce more carbon emissions.

Demolition isn't just an environmental problem. It is frequently undesirable on social and economic grounds. Research by the London School of Economics identified that demolition is both costly and

unpopular in many instances. Retrofit of existing buildings can be cost-effective, depending upon local market conditions because it conserves and enhances existing places and neighbourhoods. As for carbon emissions, retrofit makes sense because of the substantial embodied energy savings made in re-purposing existing buildings, compared with the ultra-high embodied energy costs of demolition and rebuild.

With regards to restoration, retrofit measures must be sympathetically and responsibly implemented. Inappropriate restoration measures can lead to unintended consequences and actually damage buildings. Design is the most important factor in determining GHG emissions over a building's lifetime. By the time the construction process begins, the majority of decisions affecting the project's GHG emissions are locked in. The ability to influence a building's lifetime emissions is highest very early in a project and before construction has started.

Fundamental design decisions—such as new construction versus upgrading, building size and shape, level of insulation, and floor-space flexibility—can have a significant impact on emissions for decades to come.¹⁷

The Mini Masterplan also looks to reduce private car use by providing people with a choice on how they travel. Ensure there is adequate transport infrastructure in place, including provision for walking and cycling.

¹⁷ <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/engineering-construction-and-building-materials/our-insights/call-for-action-seizing-the-decarbonization-opportunity-in-construction> (Accessed 29/11/2022)

13 MATERIAL ASSETS

13.1 Description of Local Environment

The land on which the site is situated is a material asset. It has been zoned for development through the appropriate Development Plan process and as such the use of this material asset in a manner compatible with the zoning designation and the development framework, is entirely appropriate.

Other material assets in terms of water services, electricity, and other utilities are locally and the proposed developments within the development framework can readily connect to same.

The construction and operation of the proposed development elements will utilise material assets (access road and construction materials) but given the scale of the development this will be considered at the project level.

Significant progress has been made in recent years with regard to waste management in Aberdeen. The Zero Waste Plan establish a framework for reforming the waste management system in Scotland and sets targets for improving the sustainability of waste management up until the year 2025. In 2013 Aberdeen recycled 37% of waste. By 2020 this figure had risen to 45.6% (Table 13-1). Nevertheless 10% of all household waste is destined for landfill.¹⁸

Table 13-1: Household Waste Generated and Managed in 2021 - Summary Data

Local Authority	Generated (tonnes)	Recycled (tonnes)	Recycled (%)	Other diversion from landfill (tonnes)	Other diversion from Landfill (%)	Landfilled (tonnes)	Landfilled (%)	Carbon Impact (TCO _{2e})*	2020 Recycled (%)
Aberdeen City	93,747	42,574	45.4	41,799	44.6	9,376	10.0	224,549	45.6
Total Scotland	2,483,304	1,061,042	42.7	757,913	30.5	663,533	26.7	5,901,520	42.0

Table 13-2 indicates that 0.41 tonness of household waste was generated per person in 2021, with an associated carbon impact of 0.99 TCO_{2e} per person.

Table 13-2: Household Waste Generated and Managed Per Person in 2021 - Summary Data

Local Authority	Generated (tonnes per person)	Recycled (tonnes per person)	Other diversion from landfill (tonnes per person)	Landfilled (tonnes per person)	Carbon Impact (TCO _{2e} per person)
Aberdeen City	0.41	0.19	0.18	0.04	0.99
Total Scotland	0.45	0.19	0.14	0.12	1.08

¹⁸ <https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/waste/waste-data/waste-data-reporting/household-waste-data/> (Accessed 25/11/2022)

In addition, the Aberdeen City Council area also generates 192,155 tonnes of business waste (Figure 13-3).¹⁹ This is selected businesses waste in Scotland, including factories, utility and transport companies, shops, offices, hotels, restaurants, schools and hospitals. As there is no statutory duty for businesses to report to SEPA on the waste they generate, SEPA derives the information from statutory waste data received from operators of licensed and permitted waste management sites, and from operators of activities exempt from full waste management licensing.

Table 13-3: Aberdeen City Business Waste (Tonnes) 2018 (Most Recent)

Waste type	Tonnes
Spent solvents	3,394
Acid, alkaline or saline wastes	601
Used oils	10,750
Chemical wastes	17,609
Industrial effluent sludges	10,977
Health care and biological wastes	1,322
Metallic wastes, ferrous	5,673
Metallic wastes, non-ferrous	1,611
Metallic wastes, mixed ferrous and non-ferrous	81,306
Glass wastes	4,766
Paper and cardboard wastes	2,863
Rubber wastes	39
Plastic wastes	173
Wood wastes	3,985
Textile wastes	3
Discarded equipment (excluding discarded vehicles, batteries and accumulators wastes)	1,381
Discarded vehicles	1,645
Batteries and accumulators wastes	1,122
Animal and mixed food waste	4,920
Vegetal wastes	3,761
Animal faeces, urine and manure	8
Household and similar wastes	22,315
Mixed and undifferentiated materials	1,617
Common sludges	99
Mineral waste from construction and demolition	3
Other mineral wastes	10,018
Combustion wastes	7
Soils	186
Mineral wastes from waste treatment and stabilised wastes	1
Total	192,155

13.2 Potential Effects

Government policy on keeping household costs down affects how much councils can charge for Council tax.

Substantial owner housing in City although it is higher in Aberdeenshire. House prices for first time buyers may be a constraint as so is the general economic climate.

Aberdeen City has shown a trend of diminishing established supply of land for business use as previous allocations are developed. However, we might expect the marketable supply to recover with

¹⁹ <https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/waste/waste-data/waste-data-reporting/business-waste-data/> (Accessed 25/11/2022)

the adoption of the Local Development Plan in February 2012, which allocated significant new sites for employment uses.

For Aberdeenshire, (within the strategic growth areas), there has been a trend of diminishing established supply of land for business use. The marketable supply has remained around a consistent level.

Aberdeen City and Shire Employment Land Audit indicates there is an uneven supply of employment land which has impacts on ability to work and live within a close proximity thus increasing the likelihood of people travelling to work by private means. Economic growth will be constrained without a reasonable supply of land which is immediately available.

Mix of new development and protection of existing assets wherever possible.

At the project stage, the proposals should provide an opportunity for sustainable construction methods and materials to minimise waste. The development framework will aim to enhance recreational and open space provision.

Aberdeen City Waste Strategy (ACWS) 2014-2025 states Site Waste Management Plans are required for all development work across Aberdeen. They stipulate how a construction company intends to reuse and minimise on-site waste.²⁰

²⁰ <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-02/2014-2025-Waste-Strategy.pdf> (Accessed 25/11/2022)

