



RIBA Stage 3 Summary

Aberdeen City Centre Streetscape Projects

Union Street Central, Aberdeen Market to Guild Street, Schoolhill & Upperkirkgate, Union Street East & Castlegate, Union Street West & West End

November 2022

Participant

Aberdeen City Council
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB

Contact

Claire McArthur
Interim Policy & Strategy Manager at
Aberdeen City Council

Cost Advisor

Currie & Brown
150streetVincent St
Glasgow
G2 5NE

Contact

Nigel Walker
Director

Development Partner

hub North Scotland
Enerco House
18 Albert Street
Aberdeen
AB25 1XQ

Contact

Stephen Knight
Associate

Building Services Engineer

DSSR
28 Speirs Wharf
Glasgow
G4 9TG

Contact

Bill Chalmers
Director

Architect

Ryder Architecture
221 West George Street
Glasgow
G2 2ND

Contact

Chris Malcolm
Partner

Civil and Structural Engineer

Fairhurst
88 Queens Road
Aberdeen
AB15 6YQ

Contact

Alastair Scott-Kiddie
Partner

Landscape and Placemaking

LDA Design
Sovereign House
158 West Regent Street
Glasgow
G2 4RL

Contact

Rory Wilson
Associate

Town Planning

Keppie Design
160 West Regent Street
Glasgow
G2 4RL

Contact

Chris Mitchell
Associate Director

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1. City Centre Vision & Overview

“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.”

City Centre Masterplan

The Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan (CCMP) was initially prepared in 2015 and sets out an ambitious regeneration blueprint to transform the city centre while conserving its proud heritage. The masterplan was shaped following extensive public consultation & unanimously approved by Aberdeen City Council in June 2015. An updated City Centre and Beach Masterplan which links the city centre projects to wider aspirations for Aberdeen’s beachfront was also unanimously approved by the Council in August 2022.

City Centre Vision

As part of the CCMP, Aberdeen City Council aspire to deliver a transformative regeneration of public realm works across Aberdeen City Centre over the next 5+ years. This includes the rejuvenation of over 65,000m² of public realm, split across 6 key public realm ‘streetscape intervention’ areas within the historic core of Aberdeen:

- Belmont Quarter
- Aberdeen Market
- Union Street
- Schoolhill & Upperkirkgate
- Castlegate & Justice Street
- West End

Highlighted by the Covid-19 pandemic, access to quality open space has never been more important - the way the city is experienced by people is critical to maintaining its attraction and social and economic success. Given changes to the way we shop and the reduction in retail activity generally, the streetscape intervention proposals look to enhance the existing public realm, creating an active and attractive centre in order to animate and encourage visitors in to the heart of the city.

The streetscape intervention proposals seek to promote a cleaner and greener city centre - a place where people naturally inhabit to shop, walk, wheel and, most importantly, to dwell. All the proposals follow the public realm objectives outlined on this page, as well as the wider Aberdeen City Council smart objectives presented in the City Centre and Beach Masterplan.



Public Realm Specific Objectives



To create an exceptional public realm that respects and enhances Aberdeen’s key heritage and cultural assets.



Enlarge and enhance public and pedestrian space to create a safe and vibrant environment for all.



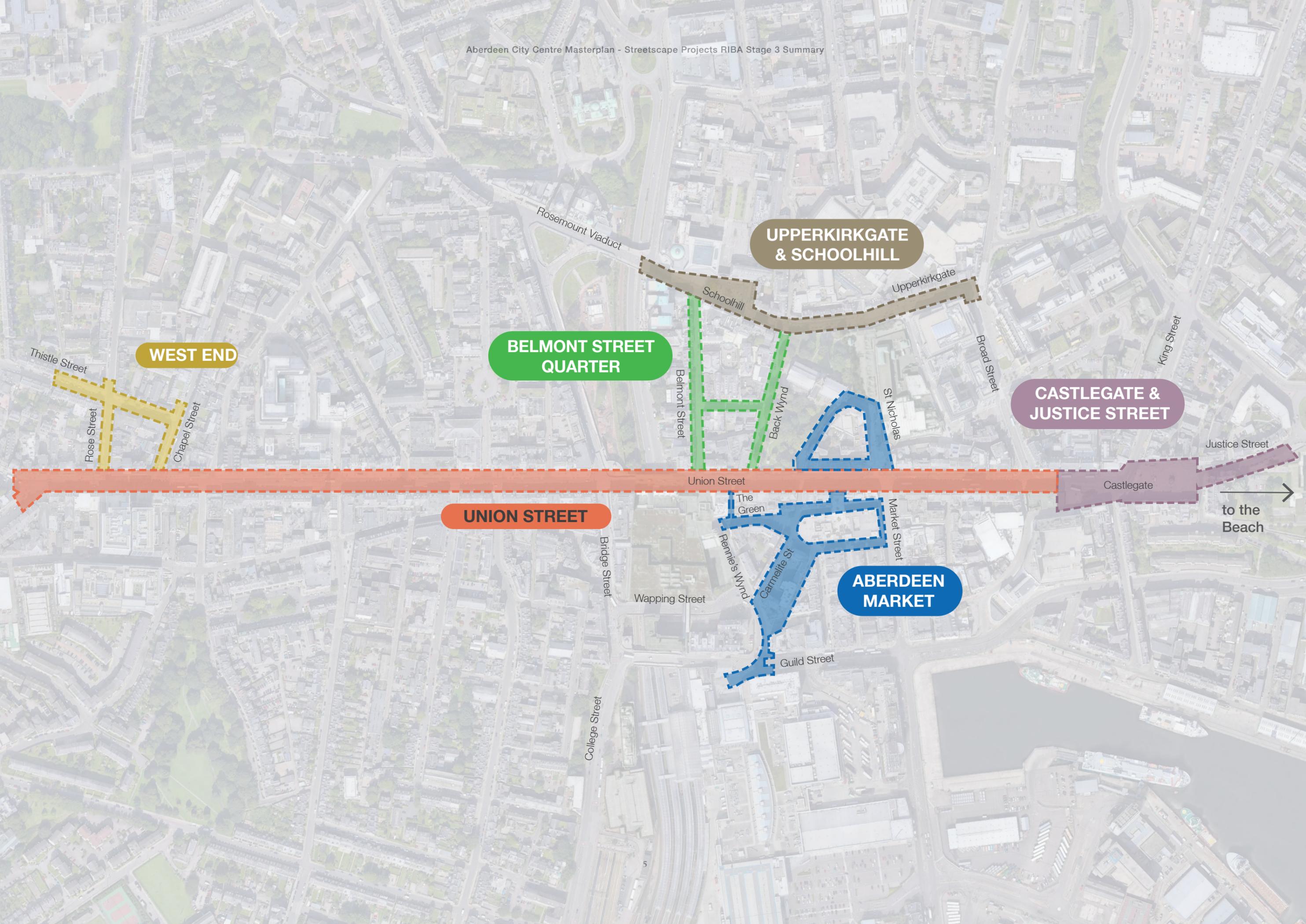
Prioritise pedestrians, active travel and access for people with disabilities or impairments.



Ensure an adaptable and resilient public realm that can meet existing and future needs and trends.



Encourage the economic sustainability of Aberdeen City Centre through the provision of appealing public spaces.



WEST END

Thistle Street
Rose Street
Chapel Street

BELMONT STREET QUARTER

Belmont Street
Back Wynd

UPPERKIRKGATE & SCHOOLHILL

Rosemount Viaduct
Schoolhill
Upperkirkgate

CASTLEGATE & JUSTICE STREET

Justice Street
Castlegate
to the Beach

UNION STREET

Union Street
The Green
Rennie's Wynd
Carmelite St
Market Street
St Nicholas
Wapping Street
Guild Street

ABERDEEN MARKET

Bridge Street
College Street

Introduction

Document Purpose & Process

This document forms a summary of the RIBA Stage 3 proposals. The technical information is split into the following intervention areas:

Union Street Central,
Aberdeen Market Streetscape,
Schoolhill and Upperkirkgate,
Union Street East, Castlegate and Justice Street,
Union Street West and West End.

It should be noted that the RIBA Stage 3 submission for the Belmont Quarter is following a separate delivery programme and is not included in this summary document.

This document provides an overview of the holistic city centre public realm vision and objectives, including the cohesive strategy for play, events, art, materiality, greening, lighting and street furniture. The key moves are then set out for each of the intervention areas.

This document should be read in conjunction with the associated technical RIBA Stage 3 packages and with the previously issued RIBA Stage 1 & 2 documents for further background and contextual information. It should also be reviewed in conjunction with the movement and transport strategy being prepared by SYSTRA.

Engagement

Overview

Extensive engagement has been carried out throughout the preparation of the city centre masterplan proposals. This has been led by Streets-UK, who have worked closely with Aberdeen City Council and the wider consultant team to ensure the vision, objectives and key messaging has been effectively communicated and the wider community / key stakeholders feel like they have had the chance to comment and influence the outcomes. All of this engagement has built off the previous consultation carried out as part of the city centre masterplan, in particular the consultation exercise that was held in Summer 2021 entitled “The Future of Aberdeen City Centre” which received over 7,600 responses.

Key Stakeholders

As part of the ongoing design development of the Streetscape Interventions, update meetings have been held with the under noted stakeholders:

- Community Council Forum
- City Centre Community Council
- George Street Community Council
- Aberdeen Inspired Business Networking
- Disability Equity Partnership
- ACTUP
- North East Sensory Services (NESS)
- Aberdeen Civic Society
- Cycle Forum Representatives
- NESCoI
- George Street Stakeholders,
- Children and Young People, and
- City Centre and Beach Masterplan Stakeholder Forum

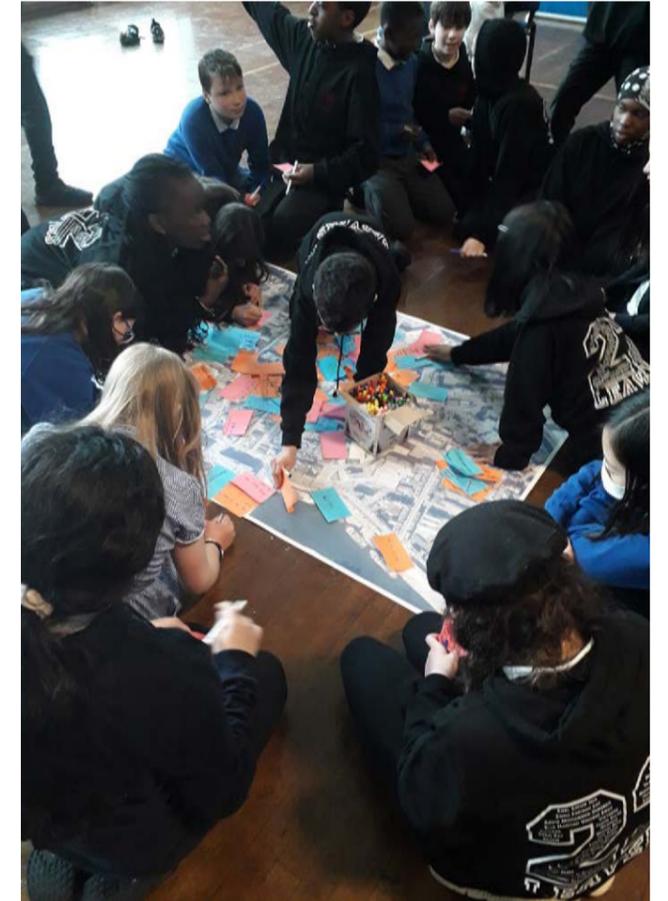
During these meetings the key stakeholder groups have had the opportunity to ask questions, provide feedback and raise concerns with work-in-progress proposals allowing the design team to make changes accordingly.

Children and Young Persons Engagement

In order to engage with a broad range of children and young people, a number of separate engagement initiatives were undertaken targeting different age groups. Local high schools were sent an information leaflet with a QR code linking to an online survey as well as an opportunity to draw/ write ideas about what they would like to see in their city centre. City walking tours and follow up workshops were held with local primary school students. Summer/October holiday programmes (focused on exploring the CCMP via drama) that young people signed up to take part in. The emerging themes from all of the children and young persons engagement suggest an affinity for green spaces and sustainable design, a desire for more seating and play areas, a safe and clean city, and more colour to help enliven the streets.

As part of the Public Consultation event in October, a local artist was commissioned to prepare a child friendly map of the city centre, with streetscape intervention areas and historic buildings and significant spaces highlighted.

Key areas where children’s play can be accommodated were extracted from the plan and young people were given the opportunity to draw ideas for play in these locations. The design team will follow up with the schools involved in the next stage of design.



Engagement

Local Businesses

Local businesses have been specifically targeted for engagement to ensure their needs and aspirations are understood and met within the proposals. This has included newsletter drops, online surveys and in person activity.

Public Consultation

In addition to ongoing stakeholder engagement, a focused period of public consultation has been undertaken from 3rd – 17th October 2022. Consultation material was on display at the Bon Accord Centre for the duration of this period with a member of staff being on hand every day. In addition:

- Business Briefings were offered with the design team and transport consultants being available on 6th and 7th October. Businesses were offered the opportunity to book an appointment to meet the team and discuss specific issues. This was promoted by the Council and Aberdeen Inspired.
- The design team was available on 6th, 7th and 8th October to meet the public in the Bon Accord centre.
- A live online engagement event was held on the evening of 12th October.
- Material was available to view and comment on online.
- Feedback was able to be submitted in written form or online.
- The bespoke event with NESS was supported by an interpreter.

All of the above activity was promoted by the Council's communications team.

Public Consultation Findings

A total of 219 responses were made. The consultation asked people to comment on specific elements of proposed streetscape interventions and then give more general feedback.

- 93% of respondents agreed with the proposals for greening and planting.
- 89% agreed that holding events would attract more people into the city centre.
- 85% liked the idea of introducing art installations.
- 80% agreed with the inclusion of play spaces within public realm.

Wider feedback indicated that the following themes were most popular:

- Trees and greening – 62 comments
- Improved pedestrian accessibility – 46 comments
- Less cars and better air quality – 37 comments
- The plans would improve vibrancy and attract footfall – 36 comments
- More attractive for cycling – 19 comments
- Outdoor café culture – 15 comments

Matters raised can be grouped into the following themes:

- Cycling infrastructure proposed not safe/ inadequate segregation – 98 comments
- Inadequate public transport to encourage modal shift/behaviour change – 40 comments
- Funding & deliverability – 25 comments

- Maintenance – 17 comments
- Impact of city transport changes on business and work access – 14 comments
- Retail over capacity – 13 comments
- Antisocial behaviour – 7 comments

Responses to key issues raised can be summarised as:

- Cycling infrastructure has been accommodated where possible. Its provision is constrained by available space.
- Public transport provision – is not directly related to this project but is being tackled under the Bus Partnership Fund and Aberdeen Rapid Transport.
- Funding, deliverability and maintenance – are all matters that the Council will manage.
- Impact of city transport changes on business and work access – Separate Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders are being promoted and will be consulted on.
- Retail over capacity – A separate Empty Shops and Vacant Premised Action Plan is being prepared by the Council.
- Antisocial behaviour – The fall in footfall in the city centre means that anti social behaviour both appears and is more prevalent. The Council and its partners are considering how best to ensure a more coordinated response.

For detailed information on ongoing engagement, please refer to Appendix F: Engagement Report.

Illustrative Masterplan

WEST END

UNION STREET WEST

Music Hall

Union Terrace Gardens

Union Street Building Improvements
(External and Internal)

UNION STREET
CENTRAL

The Trinity
Centre

Illustrative Masterplan continues on the next page

Aberdeen Art Gallery

Robert Gordon's College

SCHOOLHILL & UPPERKIRK GATE

Marischal College

Bon Accord Centre

BELMONT QUARTER

Kirk of St Nicholas

UNION STREET EAST

Smith's Screen

JUSTICE STREET

To the Beach

UNION STREET CENTRAL

Aberdeen Market

CASTLEGATE

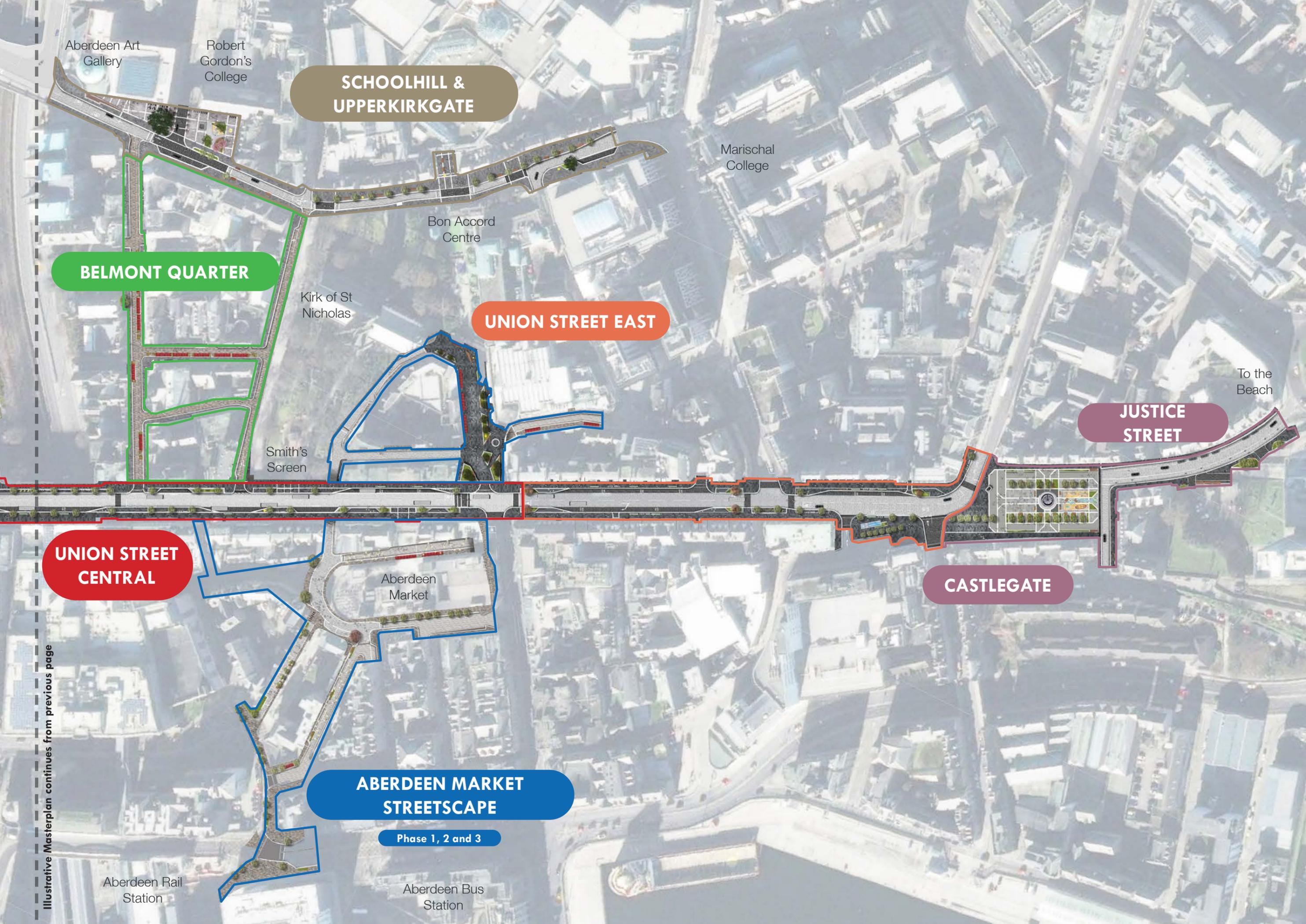
ABERDEEN MARKET STREETScape

Phase 1, 2 and 3

Aberdeen Rail Station

Aberdeen Bus Station

Illustrative Masterplan continues from previous page



Phasing

Phasing Overview

While all of the Streetscape project areas are currently being brought forward to RIBA Stage 3, the proposed upgrades to the city centre are planned to be built out over the next 5+ years as per the phasing strategy outlined on this page and shown on the plan opposite. Belmont Quarter is following a separate process, with an anticipated start date within Q2 2023.

The proposed phasing of work is subject to change based on engagement outcomes, available funding streams and other project parameters. All phasing and timescales are also dependent on utilities and underground services.

Phase 1: Union Street Central

Anticipated start date: Q3 2023

Work Duration: 15 months

- Access only for buses, taxis, cycles, and time restricted servicing
- Two lane carriageway with bus laybys
- Widened pavements where possible to prioritise pedestrian/ wheeled movement
- Street greening and tree avenue
- Spaces to sit, meet and rest
- Enriched public realm through addition of play, art, enhanced lighting & area for events
- Key buildings to be celebrated through pavement design
- Future proofed for pedestrianisation

Phase 2: Market Streetscape (Phase 1)

Anticipated start date: Q1 2024

Work Duration: 6 months

- Phase 1 - Carmelite St, Hadden St, Wapping St & Guild St, East Green & Market Street
- Phase 2 (Subject to Funding) – Carmelite Lane, Trinity St, Carnegies Brae, St Nicholas St, Netherkirkgate and Correction Wynd
- Improved accessibility between Union St & train/ bus stations through pavement widening & wayfinding interventions.
- Enhanced public realm experience through street greening, new lighting & street furniture
- New accessible parking bays to allow access to Union Street through the Market Building

Phase 3: Schoolhill & Upperkirkgate

Anticipated start date: Q4 2024

Work Duration: 14 months

- Rationalisation of carriageway in favour of pedestrian/ wheeled movement
- One-way system introduced eastbound between Belmont Street and Harriet Street
- Upperkirkgate, between Harriot St and Flourmill Lane, to become pedestrian, cycle and emergency vehicle access only, with one-way eastbound access for service vehicles (at restricted times only)
- Enhanced setting to the Art Gallery and enriched public realm through addition of play, art, enhanced lighting and street trees
- Incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) where possible e.g. rain gardens
- Access to Robert Gordon's College reconfigure

Phase 4: Union Street East, Castlegate and Justice Street

Anticipated start date: Q4 2025

Work Duration: 21 months

- Widened pavements where possible to prioritise pedestrian / wheeled movement
- Paving upgrade to improve accessibility and quality of the public realm
- Enhanced pedestrian and cycle connectivity through Castlegate towards the Beach, including clear wayfinding
- Trees and planting introduced at Castlegate and Plainstaines
- Enriched public realm through addition of play, art, enhanced lighting and area for events to Castlegate
- Vehicular access to Union Street East limited to buses, taxis, cycles, local access only.
- Vehicular access to Justice Street limited to taxis, cycles and local access only (two ways).
- Vehicular access for servicing during service window / restricted times of the day only
- Proposals allows for potential future bus route through Castlegate and Justice Street (one way eastbound)
- Incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) wherever possible e.g. rain gardens
- Careful consideration to Justice Street materiality to mark the shift between the City Centre and Beach Boulevard (in liaison with Beachfront design team)
- Cycle parking provision to allow convenient access and stopping throughout the area
- Large refuse bin storage provision to lower the current prominence of large bins on the street

Phase 5: Union Street West & West End

Anticipated start date: Q3 2027

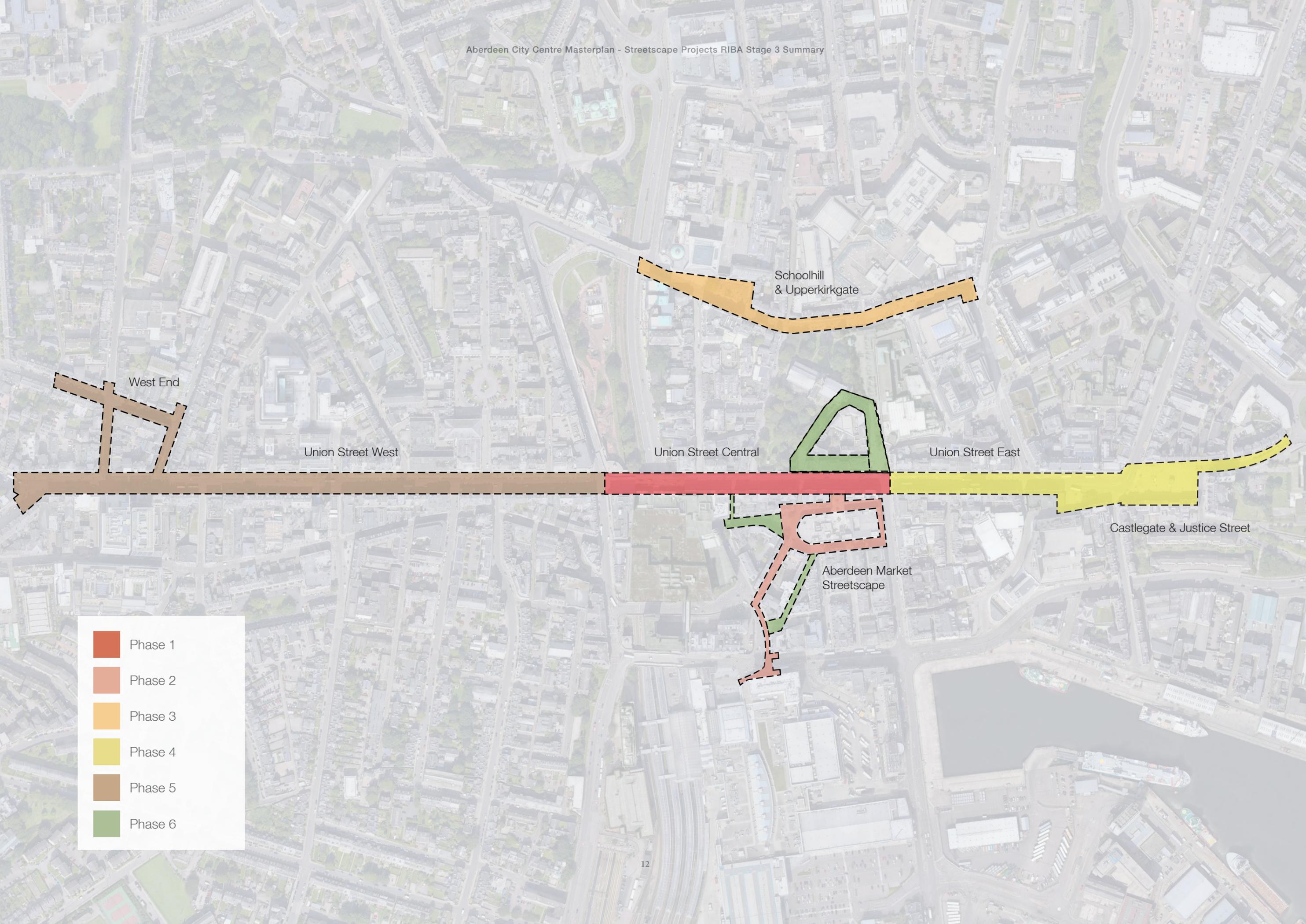
Work Duration: 19 months

- Widened pavements to prioritise pedestrian/ wheeled movement
- Key buildings to be celebrated through pavement design
- Increase seating and spill out areas
- Introduction of planting and trees
- Reapportioning of carriageway space within Rose St, Thistle St and Chapel St to better respond to service needs and to increase space for people
- Integrate semi-permanent café spill out areas, accessible parking and taxi ranks
- Taxi ranks combined to create one full time rank on Union Street West.

Phase 6: Market Streetscape (Phase 2&3)

Anticipated start date: TBC

Work Duration: TBC



West End

Union Street West

Union Street Central

Schoolhill
& Upperkirkgate

Union Street East

Castlegate & Justice Street

Aberdeen Market
Streetscape

- Phase 1
- Phase 2
- Phase 3
- Phase 4
- Phase 5
- Phase 6

Play & Art

A strategy towards play, art, events and urban greening is being developed alongside the public realm upgrades to help bring life and colour into the city. These strategies look holistically at the whole city centre, building off the strengths of Aberdeen and seek to externalise activity that has previously been internalised. Play, and Art can introduce colour into the public realm, adding notes of warmth in the 'Granite City', special moments in the everyday experience.

Play

The proposals include two 'destination play areas', one in Union Terrace Gardens (close to completion) and one in Castlegate. Further to this, secondary and incidental play elements are proposed to be embedded in the design throughout the city.

Key considerations are noted below:

- Ensure that the relevant outcomes of the extensive Youth Engagement undertaken to date are embedded with the development of the design proposals moving forward.
- 'The city should be a playground that creates moments of joy in the day to day'.
- The play strategy should focus on the creation of spaces that allow for imaginative, adventurous, and creative play while also creating opportunities for social interaction, learning and storytelling.
- Ensure inclusive designs for all ages, background and abilities.
- Ensure sensory play is interwoven within the design, to create a design able to stimulate different senses: visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, vestibular.

Art Integration

Building off existing strengths, such as the beauty and history of Aberdeen's built environment and the success of events such as Spectra and NuArt festivals, must be at the forefront of the development of the proposals.

Key considerations are noted below:

- 'The city should offer stimuli for creativity everywhere you look'. Art features may be embedded into the day-to-day enjoyment of Aberdeen's city centre and collaborating in make explicit the vibrant character of the city.
- The art strategy should aim to create spaces that allow for interpretation, acknowledging that the city is an ever-changing backdrop for arts and animation.
- Where possible, local artists should be involved in the development of the proposals as to ensure meaningful, place-based responses - recognising it is not just about 'artists', it is also about community, youth, schools, ...
- Ensure children's voices are heard and visible within art interventions within the city.
- Acknowledge art as an attractor - drawing people into the city centre, identifying 'Instagram' / iconic moments that make Aberdeen unique.



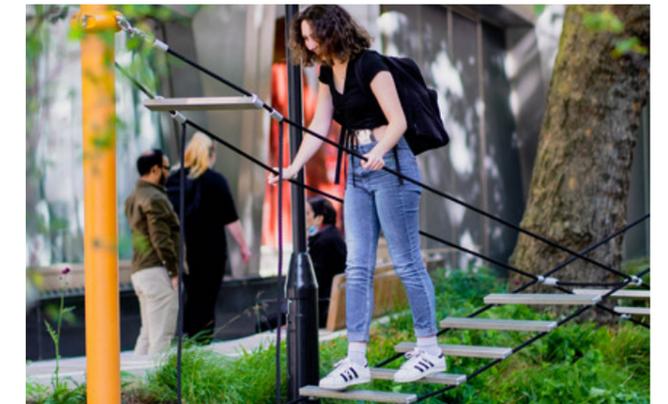
Build off existing strengths



Non prescriptive play & colour



Play for all senses



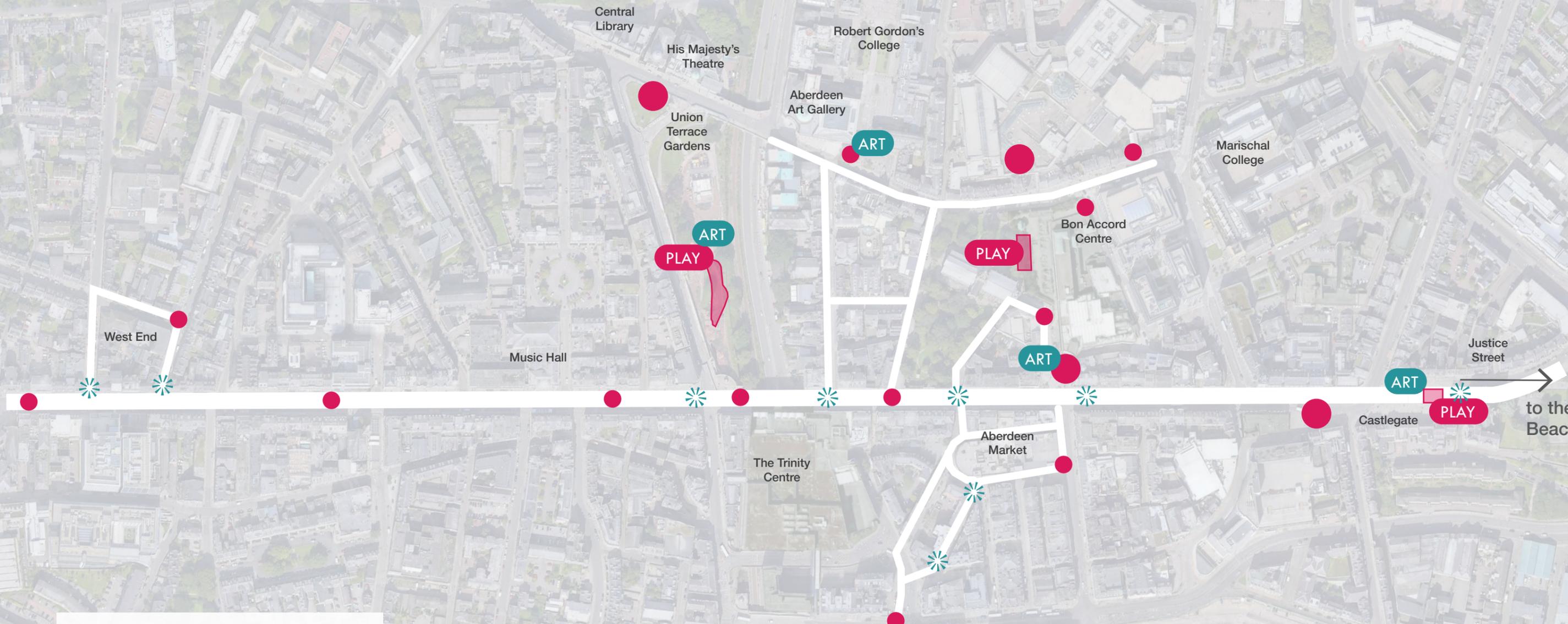
Play & nature integration



Integrate art into public realm



Introduce colour through art & playful elements



-  Destination play areas
-  Secondary play opportunities
-  Primary art opportunities
-  Play along the way opportunities
-  Secondary art opportunities

Events Strategy

A strategy towards play, art, events and urban greening is being developed alongside the public realm upgrades to help bring life and colour into the city. These strategies look holistically at the whole city centre, building off the strengths of Aberdeen and seek to externalise activity that has previously been internalised.

Events

Aberdeen City Council is working to expand Aberdeen's events capacity, and being ambitious with the type, number and scale of events the city can hold. This ranges from city wide festivals that would take over all of the key streets and public spaces within the city centre, to daily events, such as buskers in a doorway or campaigners on a street corner.

A strong calendar of year-round events will help animate Aberdeen, inviting visitors and residents alike to spend more time in the city centre.

It is proposed that an events specialist is brought on board within the next phase of work, to ensure a robust and meaningful event strategy is formed. This would help future proof the city centre design proposals as to ensure that the proposals can accommodate the ambition of the city going forward.

Key considerations are noted below:

- A strong events strategy would make Aberdeen a more liveable city for its existing residents, but also attract new ones, as well as visitors - helping to boost the local economy.
- Events make the city feel like somewhere that is continuously evolving, creating more opportunities for participation, and therefore rendering the city more open.
- The strategy will look into the activation of spaces - to turn 'movement' into 'stickiness', encouraging people to spend time and money within the city centre.

- In addition to the square in front of Marischal College (currently in use for the Christmas Market and other temporary events), there are three primary events spaces proposed within the City Centre Masterplan Area: Union Terrace Gardens (close to completion), Castlegate, Schoolhill & Upperkirkgate (pedestrianised section). These spaces have the potential to hold larger events, such as music concerts, seasonal markets, fitness classes, outdoor cinemas and mini-festivals.
- There are a number of spaces identified as secondary event spaces (the squares at Schoolhill and St Nicholas Square, etc), which have the potential to hold smaller events, such as weekly markets, food trucks, pop up shops and educational workshops.
- Potential for tertiary spaces have been identified across the city centre. These spaces could host more informal type of events, animating the city in between the larger event spaces. Such spaces are made possible by the proposed widening of footpaths and creation of 'activity zones' throughout the city centre, which allow for more space for incidental events to occur.

Short Term Strategy

There is opportunity to start building momentum around events prior to the completion of the public realm upgrades. This would enable testing ideas, encourage participation and increase excitement about the longer-term plans for the city, via elements of tactical urbanism/low-cost measures. Such events could include an element of public engagement to gauge opinions on the temporary measures being tested (such as changes to traffic patterns, introduction of colour, etc).



Markets & festivals



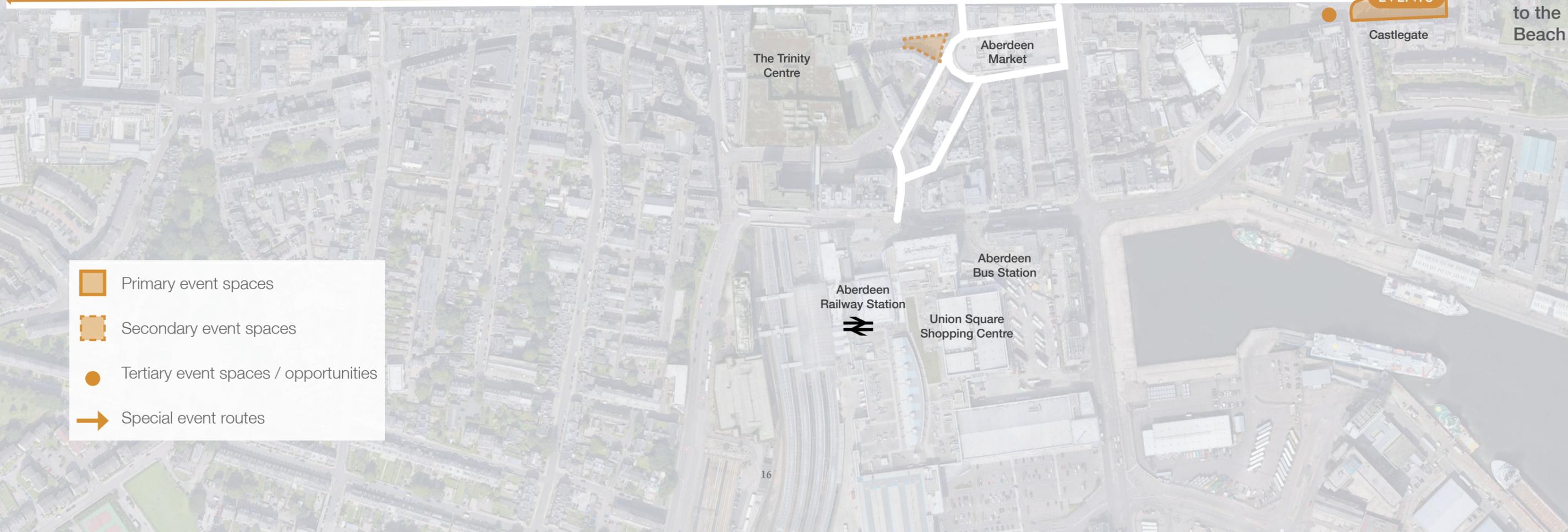
Big Bounce Event at Schoolhill and Upperkirkgate



Outdoor cinemas & community events



Community days - celebrate heritage



- Primary event spaces
- Secondary event spaces
- Tertiary event spaces / opportunities
- Special event routes

Urban Greening

A strategy towards play, art, events and urban greening is being developed alongside the public realm upgrades to help bring life and colour into the city. These strategies look at the whole city centre, building off the strengths of Aberdeen and seek to externalise activity that has previously been internalised.

Overview

Trees make places work, look and feel better.

With the extent of the planned public realm upgrades, there is significant opportunity to 'green' the city through integration of trees, planters and rain gardens. This will play a key role in climate proofing the city, supporting the health and well-being of its residents while also generally making the city more attractive and colourful.

To enable this to happen, Aberdeen needs to think beyond the constraints of today to imagine what the city could be. This will require a co-ordinated approach towards design, implementation and maintenance. Aberdeen has a rich history in horticulture, proving that the city has the expertise, values and ambition to realise the city centres potential as an 'urban arboretum'.

Constraints

There are a number of existing constraints to be considered with the 'greening' proposals for Aberdeen's city centre such as underground utilities, street lighting, CCTV view shafts, environmental conditions and maintenance requirements. However it is important to be risk aware, not risk adverse.

All of these constraints have been factored into the designs and will be designed around where possible through use of green/ blue details, raised planters and species selection. As highlighted, this takes a co-ordinated approach.

Proposals

Castlegate, Schoolhill and St Nicholas Street are the primary opportunities for green nodes within the masterplan. These nodes will include feature/ wayfinding trees, seating areas, raingardens and have potential for play integration.

Union Street is the key 'avenue' of Aberdeen. Trees will be planted at regular intervals all along the length of the street, promoting symmetry and the feeling of formality to respect the rich historic environment. Low level planters will provide additional opportunities for greening, promoting biodiversity while adding to the overall attractiveness.

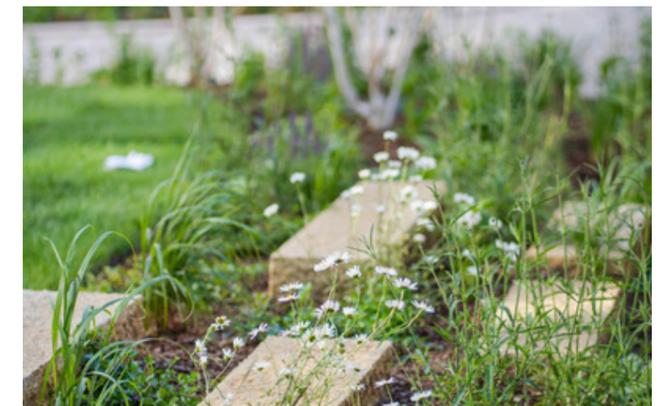
Street trees will be integrated where possible throughout the rest of the masterplan intervention areas, working around existing constraints. In addition to this, smaller opportunities have been identified, such as planters within outdoor cafe areas, window boxes for businesses, hanging baskets and movable planters where in ground greening is challenging.

Benefits of Urban Greening

- Good for **people** - spending time around trees can improve physical and mental health while also increasing the feeling of safety.
- Good for the **economy** - streets with trees typically have a higher property value than those without.
- Good for **local business** - people are more likely to dwell in attractive spaces, spending more money in local businesses.
- Good for the **climate** - trees aid city cooling, negating the effects of urban heat islands while providing shade and shelter.
- Good for **pollution reduction** - urban trees are excellent air filters, absorbing CO2 and producing O2, sequestering carbon.
- Good to **combat flooding** - trees reduce the impact of heavy rain, regulating water flow and improving water quality.
- Good for **biodiversity** - trees and areas of planting provide vital habitat that would re-introduce a variety of beneficial species to the city centre.
- Good for making **attractive spaces** - overall, trees make attractive spaces.



Seating made more attractive with greening



Rain gardens to combat flooding & aid resilience



Increased biodiversity & education opportunities



- Primary greening opportunities
- Secondary greening opportunities
- Rain gardens
- Avenue planting
- Secondary street planting

Planting

The following images are indicative of the look and feel of the planting palette proposed across the city centre masterplan area. Consistency in planting strategy will help tie together the city centre as a cohesive place, while also reducing individual maintenance requirements. However in some key areas, unique species may be specified to create a feature moment or respond to existing characteristics of place. For more information around exact species selection, please refer to the outline specification issued as part of the technical pack.

As highlighted on the previous page, there are a number of constraints that have been considered in the planting selection such as environmental conditions, servicing and maintenance.

Further consultation will be undertaken with Aberdeen City Council and other relevant stakeholders to determine the final selections, ensuring all needs are met.



Avenue Planting



Flowers - Colour & Biodiversity



Raised Planter Beds



Feature Trees & Wayfinding Trees



Grass Species



Wild flower Mix - Colour & Biodiversity



Street Trees



Flowers - Colour & Biodiversity



Rain gardens - SUDS

Street Furniture

The proposed street furniture palette responds to the existing materiality and character of the city centre and is largely consistent across all of the intervention areas. This will help tie the city centre together as a cohesive 'place', while occasional differences will help accentuate the unique characteristics of key spaces.

The images shown are indicative of the style and quality of products envisioned for the masterplan, however further consultation will be undertaken with Aberdeen City Council and other relevant stakeholders to determine the final selections, ensuring all needs are met.



Timber Wall Seat



Feature Seating



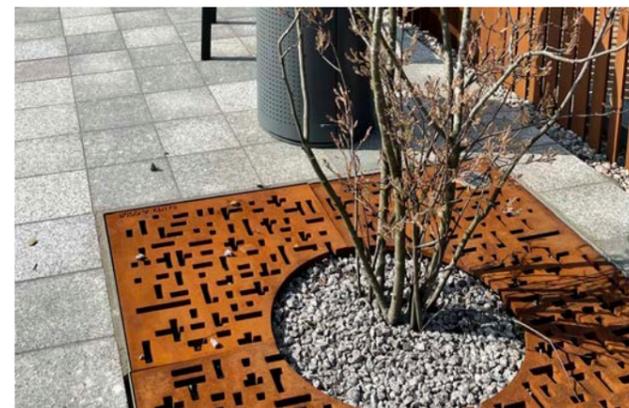
Stone Cube Seating



Playful Seating



Wayfinding Totem



Tree Grills



Bollards



Bike Racks



Bike Tool-station



Litter & Recycling Bins



Playful Seating & Play Elements

Materials

The proposed material palette is largely consistent across the whole of the city centre masterplan and responds to the existing character and materiality of Aberdeen, ensuring the historic character is preserved and celebrated. Consistent materiality will help tie the city centre together as a cohesive place, while special moments celebrate the unique characteristics of key spaces.

The proposed material palette can be broken down by the following:

- Primary & Secondary Streets
- Tertiary Streets
- Special Areas

The images shown are indicative of the colour, sett and quality of products envisioned for the masterplan, however further consultation will be undertaken with Aberdeen City Council and other relevant stakeholders to determine the final selections, ensuring all needs are met.

Wherever possible, indigenous stone will be specified for use within hard landscaped areas, reducing transportation requirements whilst supporting a circular economy and in particular investment within the local Scottish stone industries.

Primary & Secondary Streets



Carriageway - Pale Grey Avochie Granite Setts

Tertiary Streets

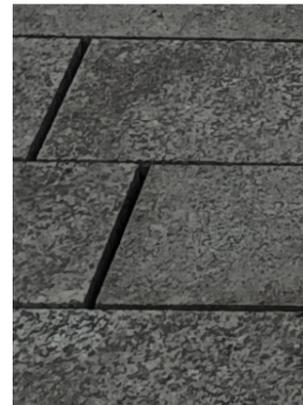


Carriageway - Mixed Granite Setts

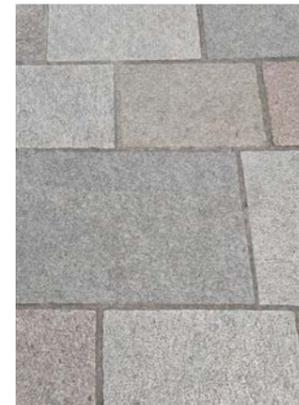
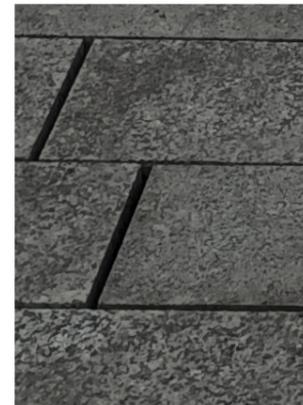
Special Moments



St Nicholas Square - Feature Paving



Pavement - Dark Whinstone Slabs & Cubes



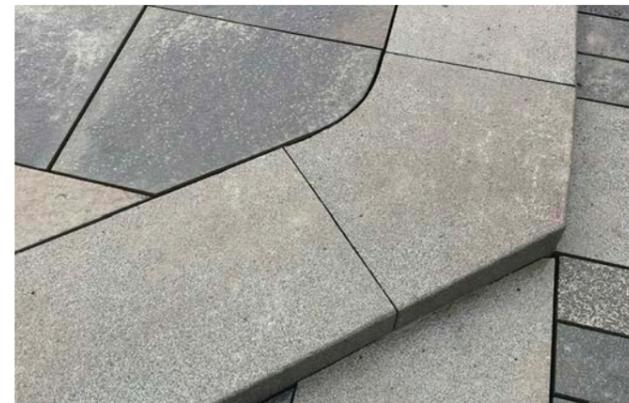
Pavement - Dark Whinstone Slabs or Mixed Granite Slabs (depending on location)



Castlegate - Green Schist Stone



Lay-bys / pedestrian thresholds / vehicular overrun on pavements - Dark Whinstone Setts



Kerbs - Pale Granite



Schoolhill - Mixed of Greys and Pink Granite

Lighting

Lighting is key as it shapes urban life after dark, which is a significant amount of time throughout the winter months for Aberdeen. Good lighting not only prevents crime and makes a city feel safe, it supports 24 hour economies and animates the cities streets/ public spaces. Lighting can also bring colour, movement and playfulness to the city while spotlighting historic buildings and creating iconic moments.

The proposed lighting strategy across the masterplan has four key typologies as outlined below. Ultimately, the lighting strategy for each of the intervention areas will be slightly different based on existing lighting, character and constraints. Further details around this will be developed within RIBA Stage 4 following engagement with ACC and the relevant stakeholders.

Ambient lighting - to sufficiently light all streets and public spaces

Accent and nodal lighting - permanent lighting that highlights key features of the city such as landmarks, monuments, trees and seating areas

Feature lighting - distinct moments that add a layer of playfulness and uniqueness to the city, could be wayfinding, art installation or similar

Temporary lighting - lighting associated with events, exhibitions or themed for time of year such as Christmas

The images shown are indicative of the type of lighting envisioned, however further consultation will be undertaken with Aberdeen City Council and other relevant stakeholders to determine the final selections, ensuring all needs are met.



Wall Mounted Lights



Tree Uplighters



Feature Lights



Lighting Columns



Accent Lighting to Street Furniture



Wayfinding Signage Lit Up



Building to Building Lighting



Temporary Lighting - SPECTRA Festival



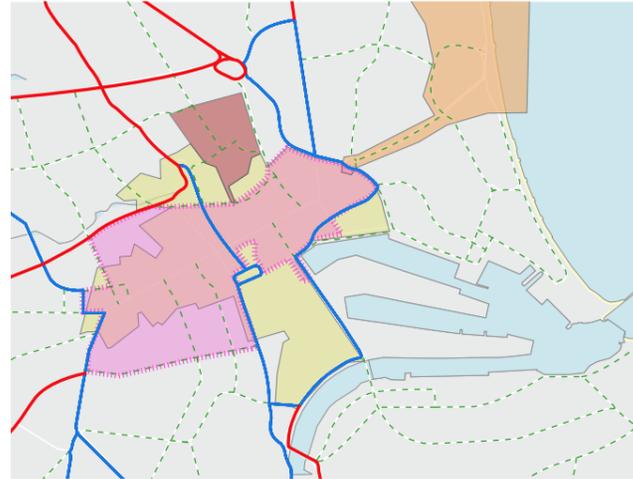
Wayfinding Constellation Lights

Movement

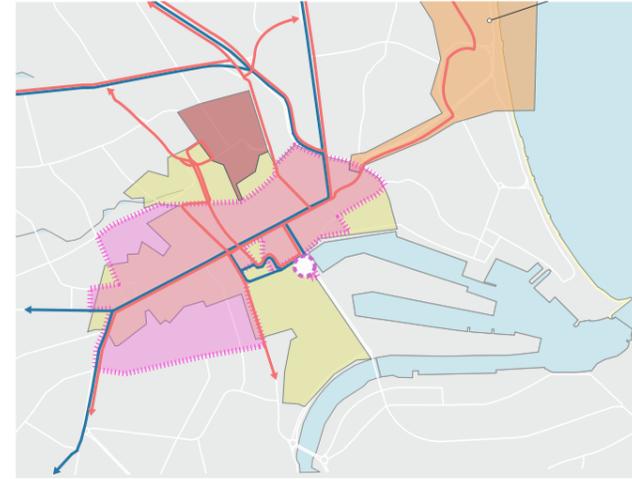
As part of the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan (CCMP), changes are being made to some roads in Aberdeen city centre. An overview of the proposals can be found on the plans opposite, as provided by SYSTRA.

On a wider scale, the proposed changes will avoid unnecessary traffic going through the city centre and will improve connections between the city centre and the Beachfront. Within the city centre, the proposed changes will make it easier and safer for people to move around by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport, and result in a less polluted city centre environment. While there will be a significant reduction in general traffic to the city centre, access will still be possible to all properties, car parks and other destinations. However in some cases the routes that cars can take to get to these destinations will change.

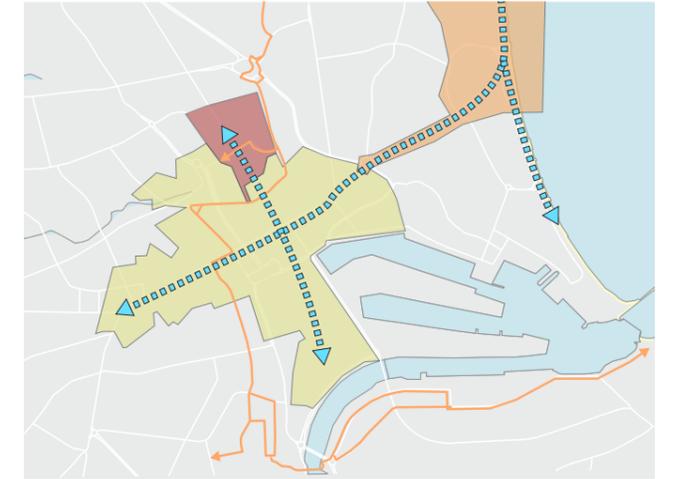
Plans prepared by SYSTRA.



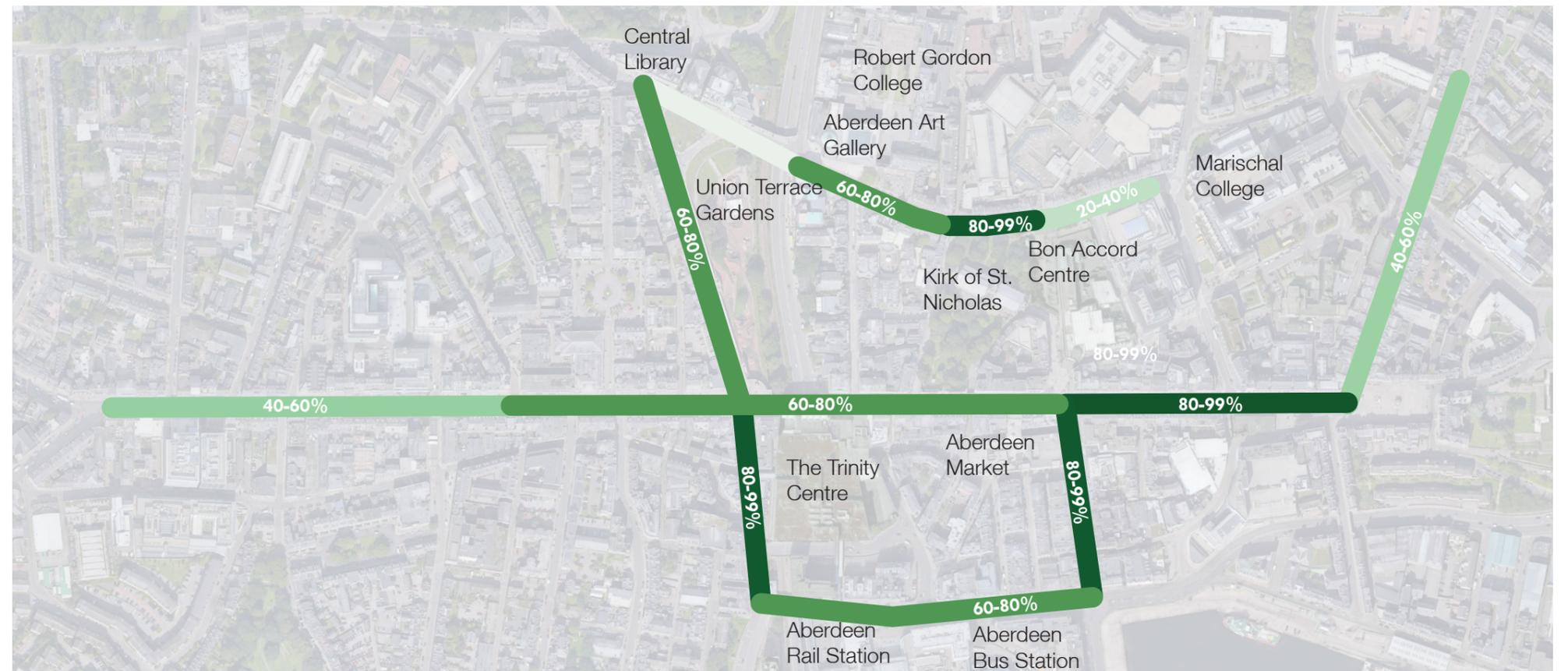
Proposed Road Hierarchy



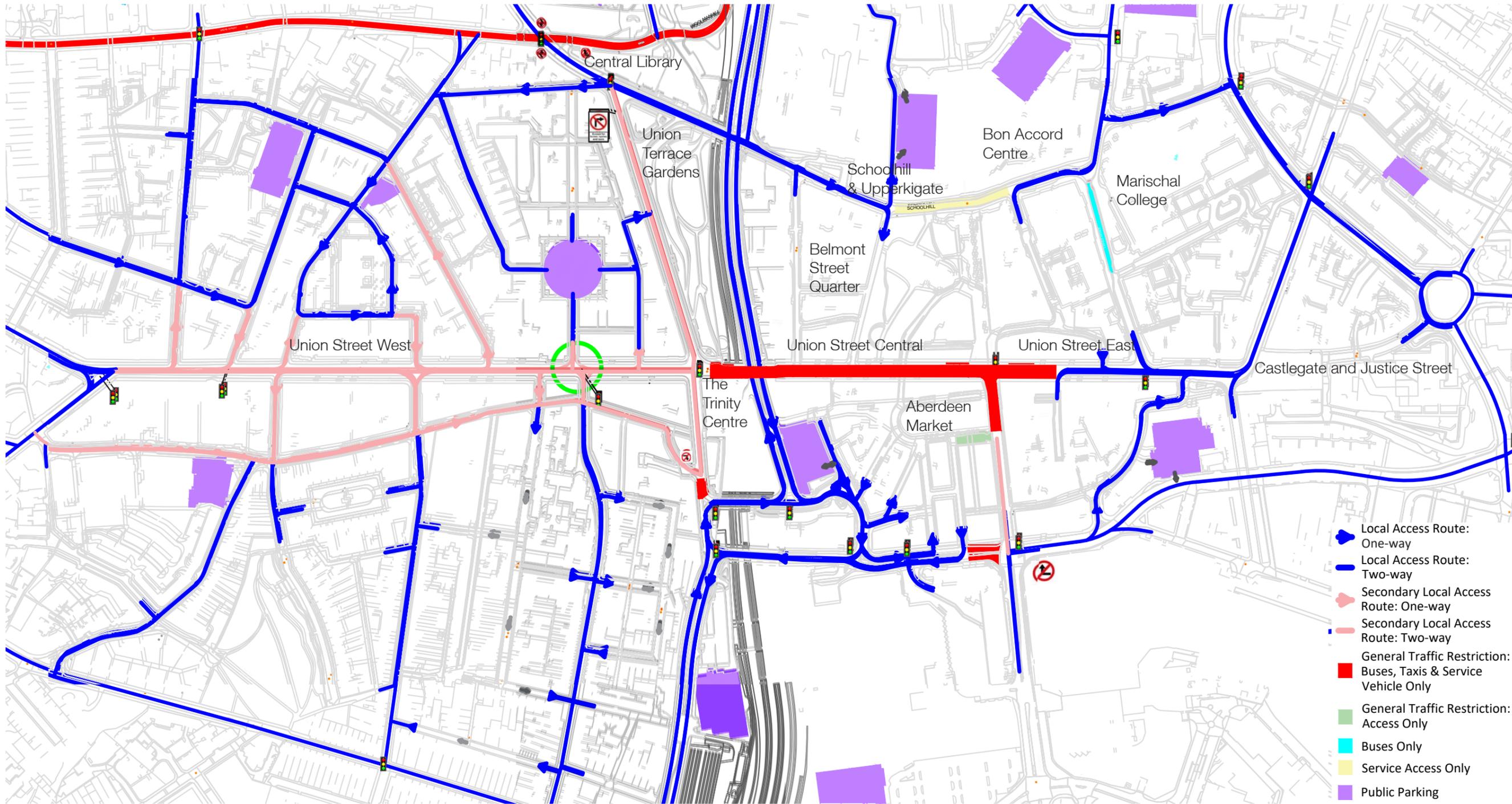
Proposed Bus Routes



Proposed Active Travel Routes



Anticipated Reduction In General Traffic. Data provided by SYSTRA. Comparison between 2019 baseline & full City Centre Masterplan proposals.



Plan prepared by SYSTRA.

2. Union Street Central Key Moves & Overview

Key Moves

- Create a focal point in the heart of the City Centre between Bridge St & Market St.
- Improve connections between, The Market, Union Terrace Gardens and The Art Gallery.
- Create plaza spaces in front of key buildings allowing people to gather and celebrate the city's rich heritage.
- Provide a space that is flexible and adaptable for future needs.
- Create seating areas to provide rest stops, activate the area and support local businesses.
- Add colour and life through play, public art and lighting.
- Increase number of trees and planted areas to soften the space, adding colour, shade, shelter and seasonality.

A Flexible Design

The proposals for Union Street Central have been designed as to allow for the maximum degree of flexibility to ensure that they are adaptable to current and future needs of the City of Aberdeen. The design is adaptable to enable full pedestrianisation in the future should this be desired.

Rationalised Carriageway

The existing streetscape will be reapportioned to favour pedestrians, cyclists and public transport over vehicles. This involves narrowing the carriageway to allow pavements to be widened. Carriageway widths are designed to enable cyclists and buses to safely share the road and have been designed to the cycle-by-design standards.

Activity Zone

By narrowing the carriageway, space is now available for a consistent 'activity zone' along the length of Union Street Central that accommodates all street furniture, planters, street trees, outdoor cafe areas, wayfinding signage, play, cycle parking and other activity. It also provides a zone for bus lay-bys and loading bays. Having this dedicated zone allows the pedestrian zone to be clutter free for ease of movement for all and also provides a buffer to the vehicle carriageway. This zone creates a multitude of opportunities for people to dwell and spend time within the street.

Enriched Public Realm

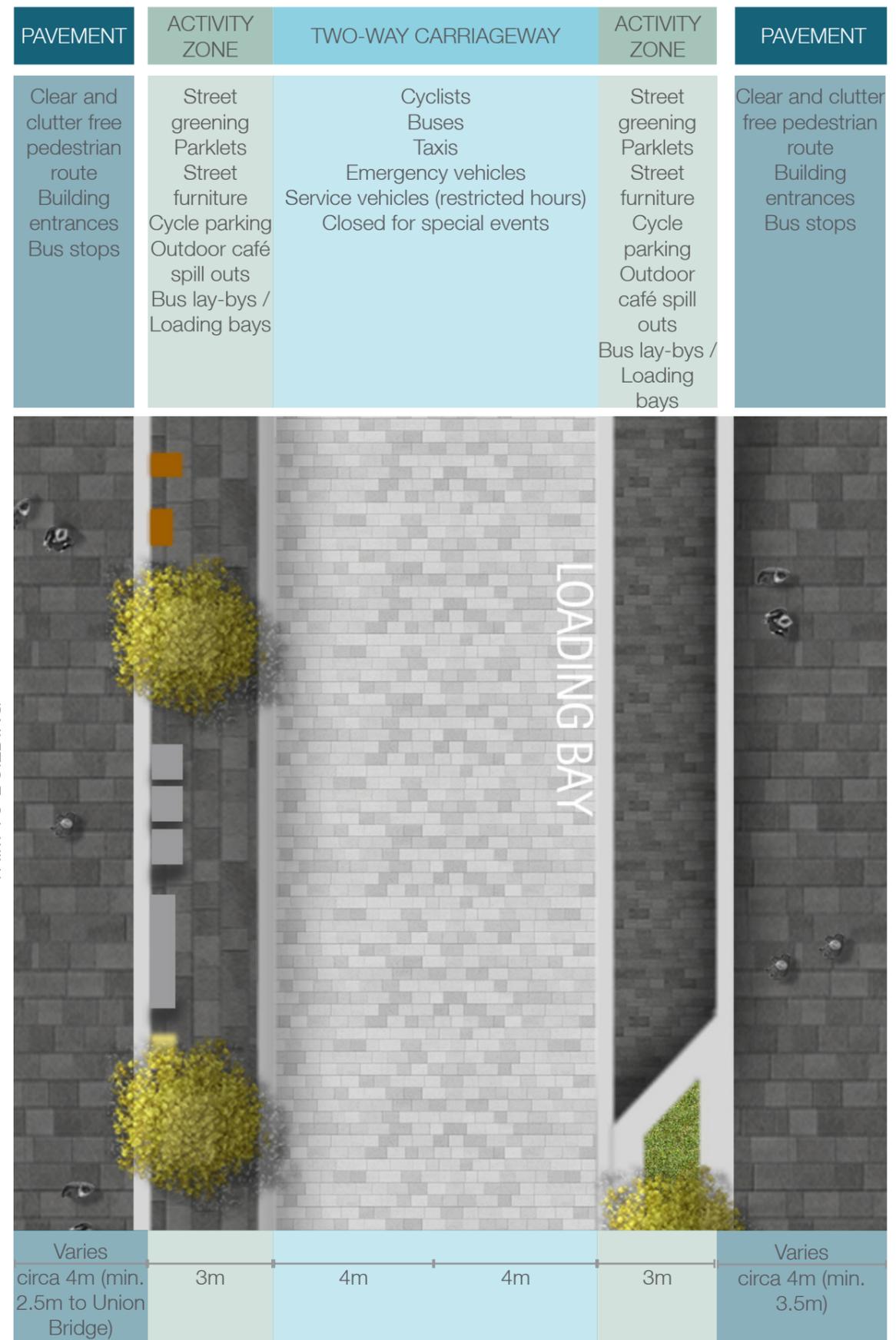
Proposals include the introduction of incidental play, planting, art and lighting within the space, further enhancing the activity and bringing animation to the public realm. Details around how this will be integrated will be further investigated during Stage 4, following more engagement with ACC and relevant stakeholders.

Street Greening

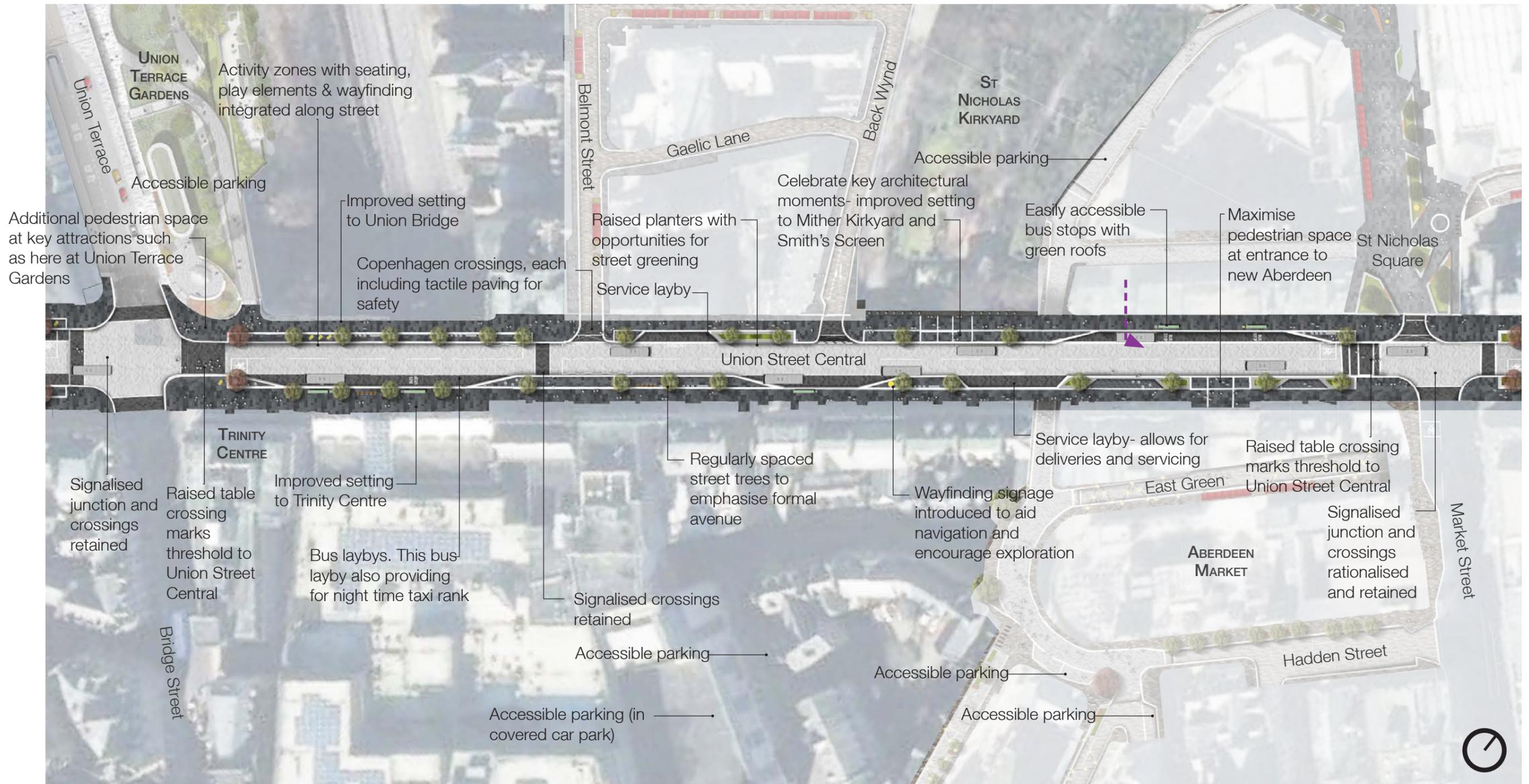
The 'activity zone' allows for raised planters and regularly spaced trees along the length of Union Street Central, helping create a formal avenue, while enhancing the seasonality and biodiversity within the area, softening the space generally and afford a degree of shade and shelter.

Material Palette

The proposed materials are in line with the holistic masterplan material strategy: a simple and elegant palette of timeless and robust materials. Wherever possible, indigenous stone is specified, in keeping with the surroundings.



Illustrative Plan



Union Street Central Visual

Existing



Proposed



3. Aberdeen Market to Guild Street

Key Moves & Overview

Key Moves

- Celebrate the unique character of the area by creating spaces for people to dwell and spend time.
- Recognise and build upon the area's reputation for street art.
- Improve pedestrian and cycling connectivity through the Market, recognising its importance as a key link between the train station, bus station and the city centre.
- Increase seating and spill-out spaces to help animate the space.
- Increase number of trees and planted areas to soften the space, adding colour, shade, shelter and seasonality.
- Enhance wayfinding to and within the area to aid legibility.
- Tie in with the new Market Building currently being delivered.

Connectivity

A key move of the market area is to improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity between the public transport stations, the market, Union Street and beyond. This will be achieved through limiting two-way through traffic, widened pavements where possible, improved wayfinding signage and by making the area generally more attractive to pass through by introducing street greening, lighting and upgrading materiality. As key through-routes, Carmelite Lane and Street will have a one way system with street trees introduced and feature lighting making them more attractive. Further to this, a large pedestrian crossing will be introduced at Guild Street alongside widened pavements throughout the area outside the station.

Enriched Public Realm

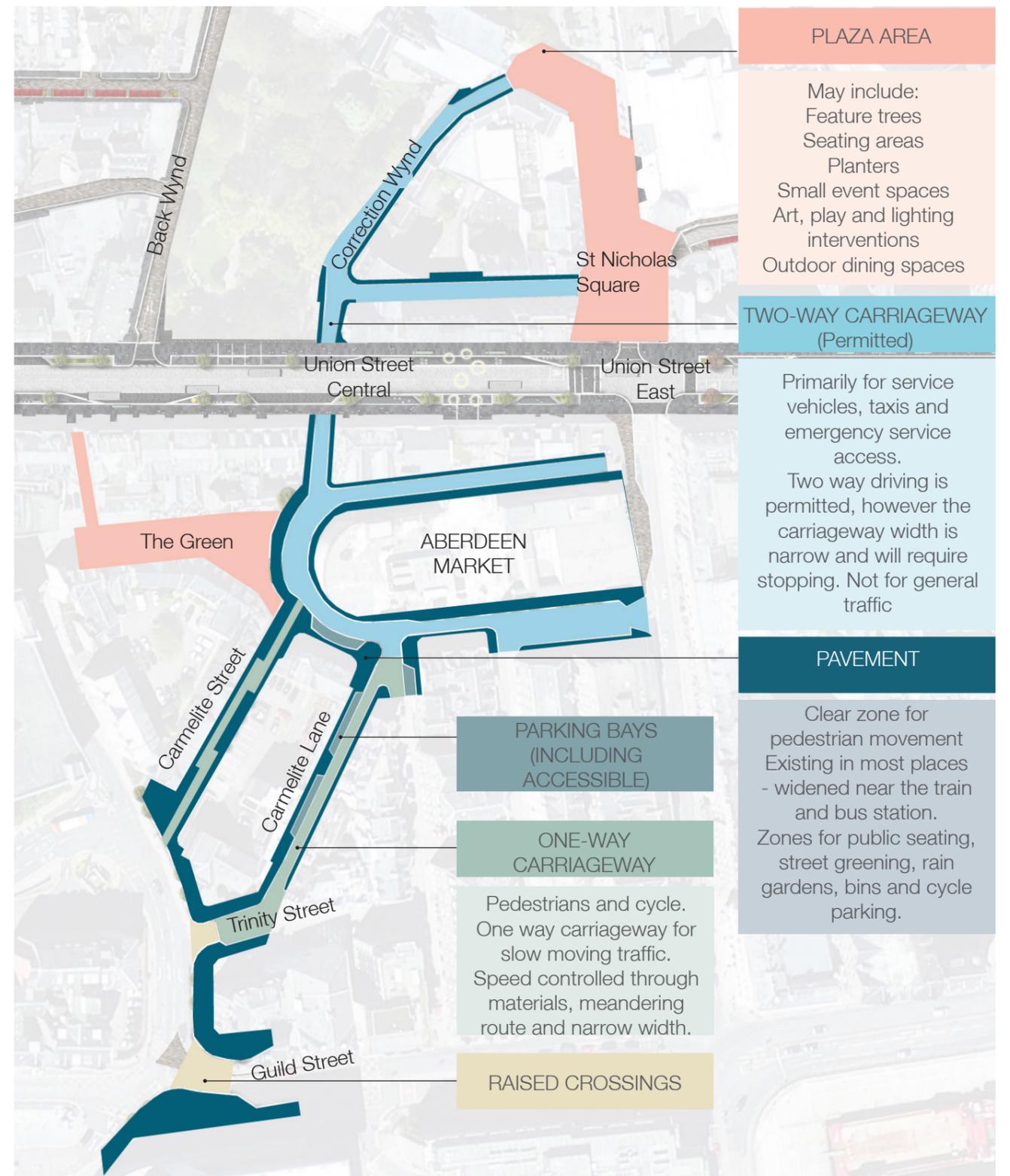
Proposals seek to build off the areas reputation for street art by creating opportunities for local artists. Proposals also include opportunities for incidental play and lighting that build off and celebrate the unique characteristics of the area such as the tunnels, narrow streets and historic buildings. This will enhance activity within the area and bring further animation to the public realm. Details around how this will be integrated will be further investigated during Stage 4, following more engagement with ACC and relevant stakeholders.

Street Greening

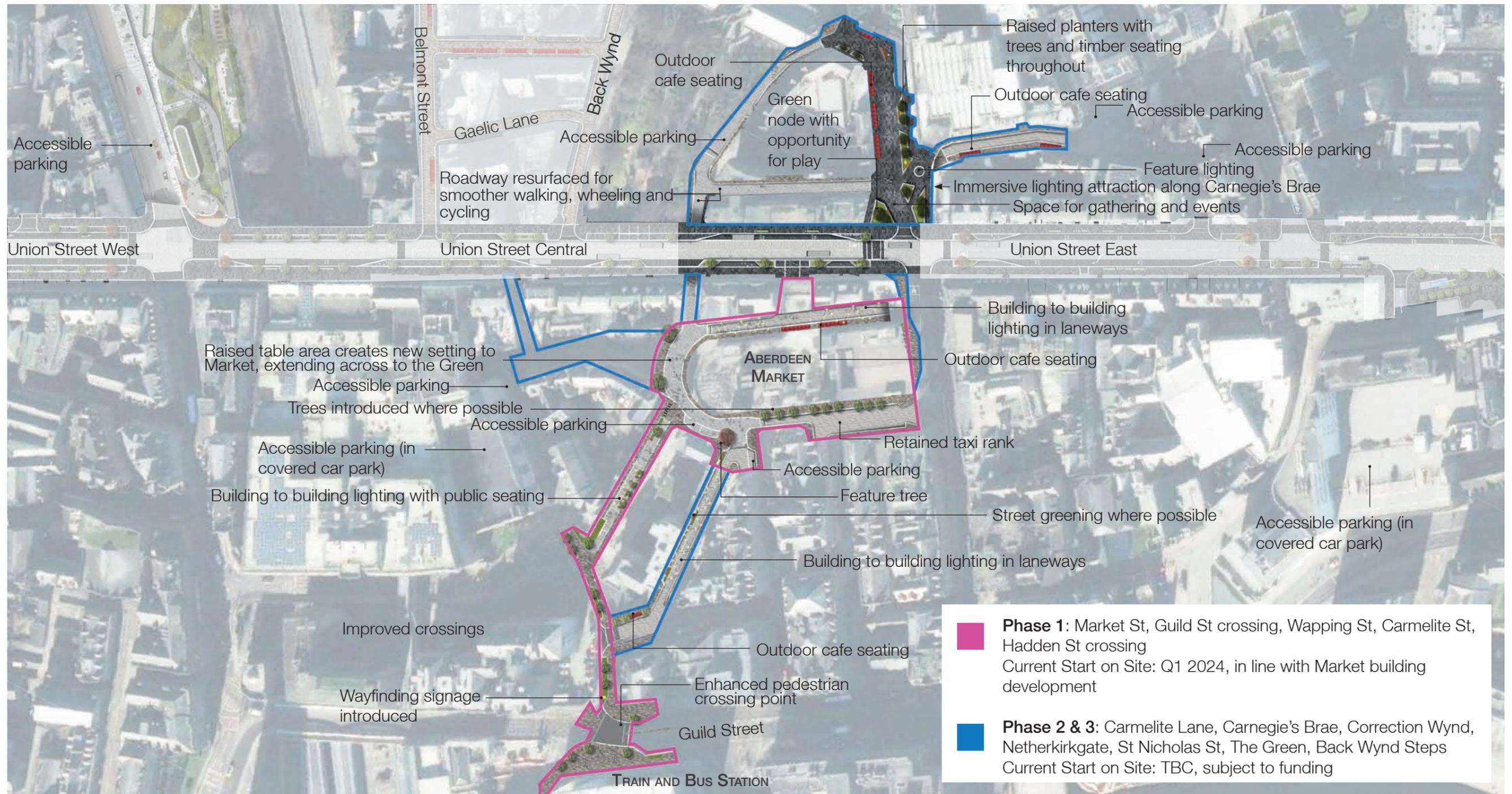
There a number of existing street trees within this area that will be retained where possible. Where upgrades to footpaths are proposed and space allows, new raised planters and street trees will be introduced enhancing the seasonality and biodiversity within the area. The plaza space on St Nicholas Street presents an opportunity for a 'green node' with feature trees and larger planted areas.

Material Palette

Much of the Merchant Quarter is comprised of natural stone paving, predominantly a mix of granite flags on pavements and granite setts on roadways. There is a mix of pink and grey granites with a section of solely grey tones in The Green. Generally, materials are in good condition within this area so will be retained and made good where possible. Any new materials introduced will tie in with existing as per the holistic materials strategy: a simple and elegant palette of timeless and robust materials. Wherever possible, indigenous stone is specified, in keeping with the surroundings.



Illustrative Plan



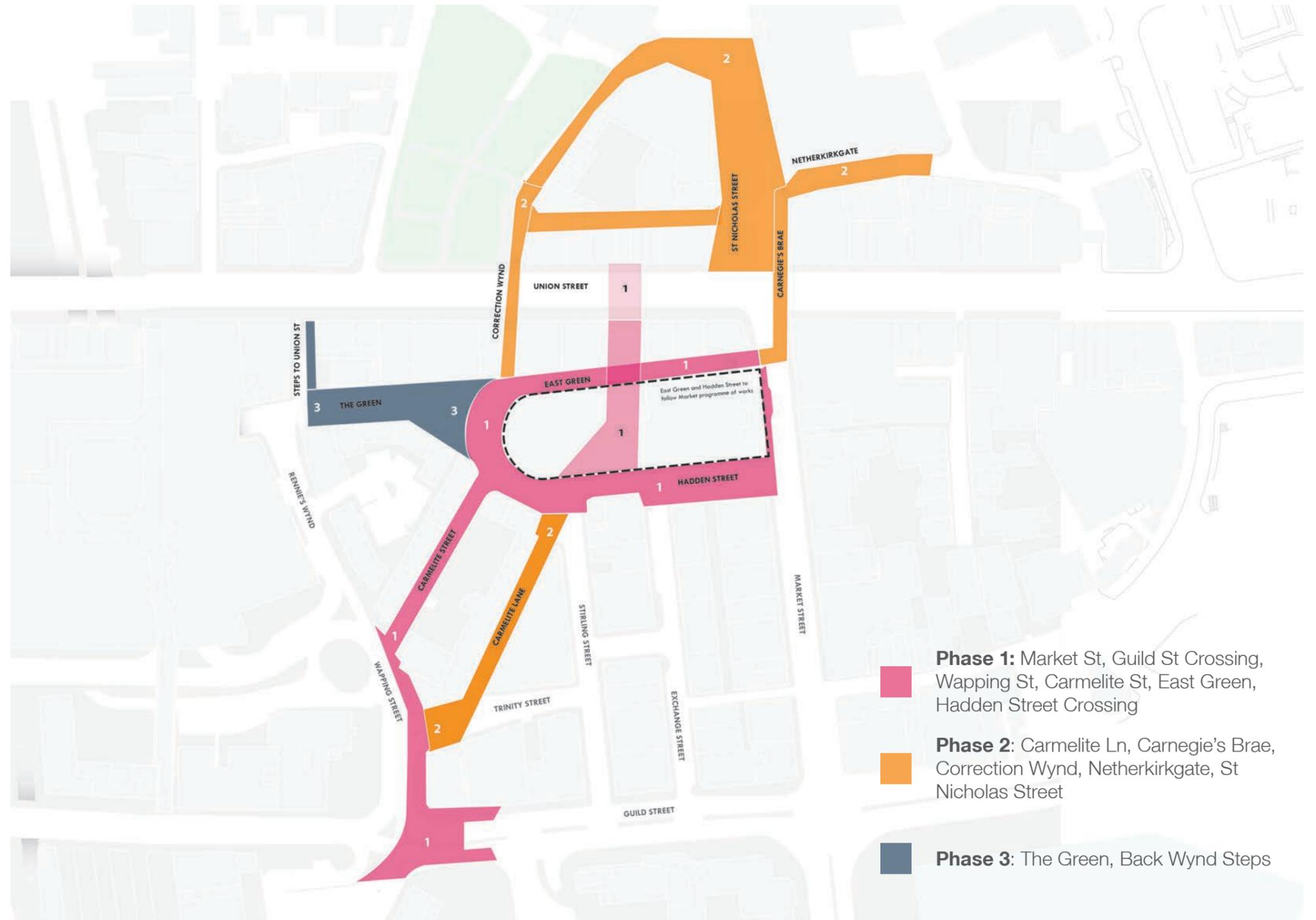
Phasing

The scope area is split into three key phases which can be undertaken within different time-scales. They are ranked by importance and urgency in regenerating the Merchant Quarter into a safe, vibrant and exciting area.

Phase 1 was recommended and agreed with full council at February 2022 committee to be delivered alongside construction of the Aberdeen Market. It prioritises the connection between Union Street, the market and down to the stations via Carmelite Street. This initial phase will also see accessible parking provision improved on Hadden Street for ease of access to the Market. East Green will also form part of phase 1, including the restoration of historic setts, improvement of accessibility and the activation of the street with spill-out seating and lighting to compliment the new Market.

Phase 2 includes additional areas instructed by full council at February 2022 committee to also progress to RIBA stage 3. It includes the regeneration of Carmelite Lane. Carnegie's Brae also forms part of phase 2, rejuvenating a currently dangerous and unwelcoming route, there is an urgent need to improve the character and environment within the tunnel to encourage safe passage by the public.

Phase 3 consists of projects that form part of the long term streetscape vision however, currently out with scope. This includes The Green and the Back Wynd Steps, making good of existing paving and rationalising spill out seating and eateries.



Aberdeen Market Visual

Existing



Proposed



Carmelite Street Visual

Existing



Proposed



4. Schoolhill & Upperkirkgate Key Moves & Overview

Key Moves

- Prioritise walking, wheeling and cycling.
- Widen footpaths and improve street crossing points to allow for safer and more comfortable pedestrian movement.
- Create seating areas to animate the area and allow people to dwell.
- Add colour and life through play, public art and lighting.
- Increase number of trees and planted areas to soften the space, adding colour, shade, shelter and seasonality.
- Introduce rain gardens as a means of sustainable drainage.
- Enhance the setting of the Art Gallery and improve the connections through to Union Terrace Gardens

Rationalised Carriageway

The existing streetscape will be reappropriated in favour of pedestrians over vehicles. Where possible, carriageways have been reduced in width as to allow pavements to be widened. Narrower carriageways will also slow the movement of cars, generally improving safety for other street users. Along Upperkirkgate, the carriageway will be closed to general traffic (as per the existing temporary measures).

Widened Footpaths

Footpaths have been widened generally to allow greater, safer and more comfortable pedestrian movement. It is proposed that the northern pavement (sunny side of the street) within Upperkirkgate will be widened significantly which will allow for greater pedestrian movement along the main shopping section of the street. An at grade crossing is introduced within this section of the street, connecting both sections of the Bon Accord Centre.

Seating and Spill Out Space

The proposed reappropriation of space allows for the introduction of public seating which will offer opportunities for rest for the less able whilst encouraging visitors to dwell. The introduction of a plaza space outside the Aberdeen Art Gallery will enable outdoor dining and other artistic / cultural / civic activities to spill out into the public realm, adding life and animation.

Enriched Public Realm

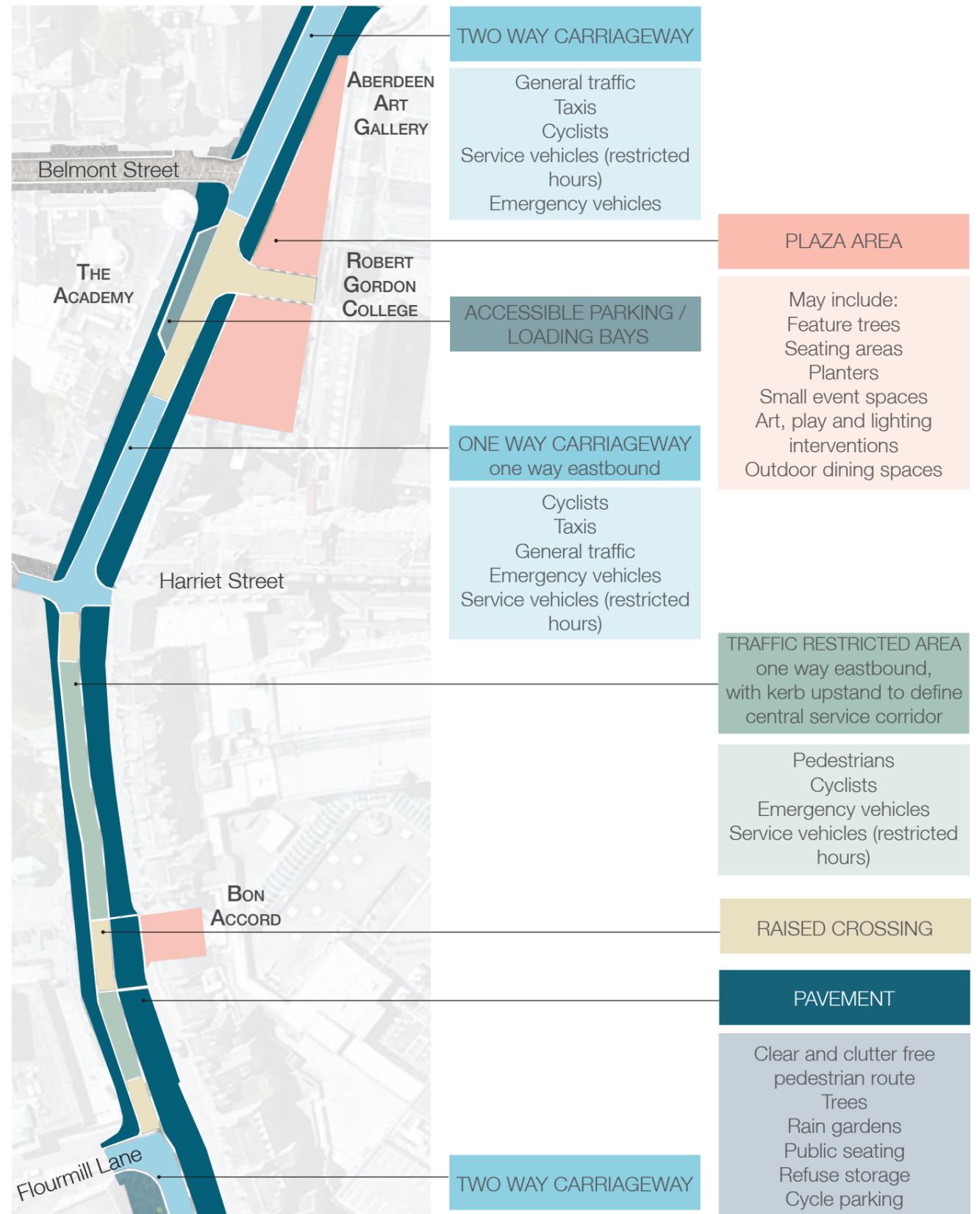
The proposals allow for the incorporation of play, public art, and feature lighting at appropriate locations. Details around how this will be integrated will be further investigated during Stage 4, following more engagement with ACC and relevant stakeholders.

Greening & Sustainable Urban Drainage

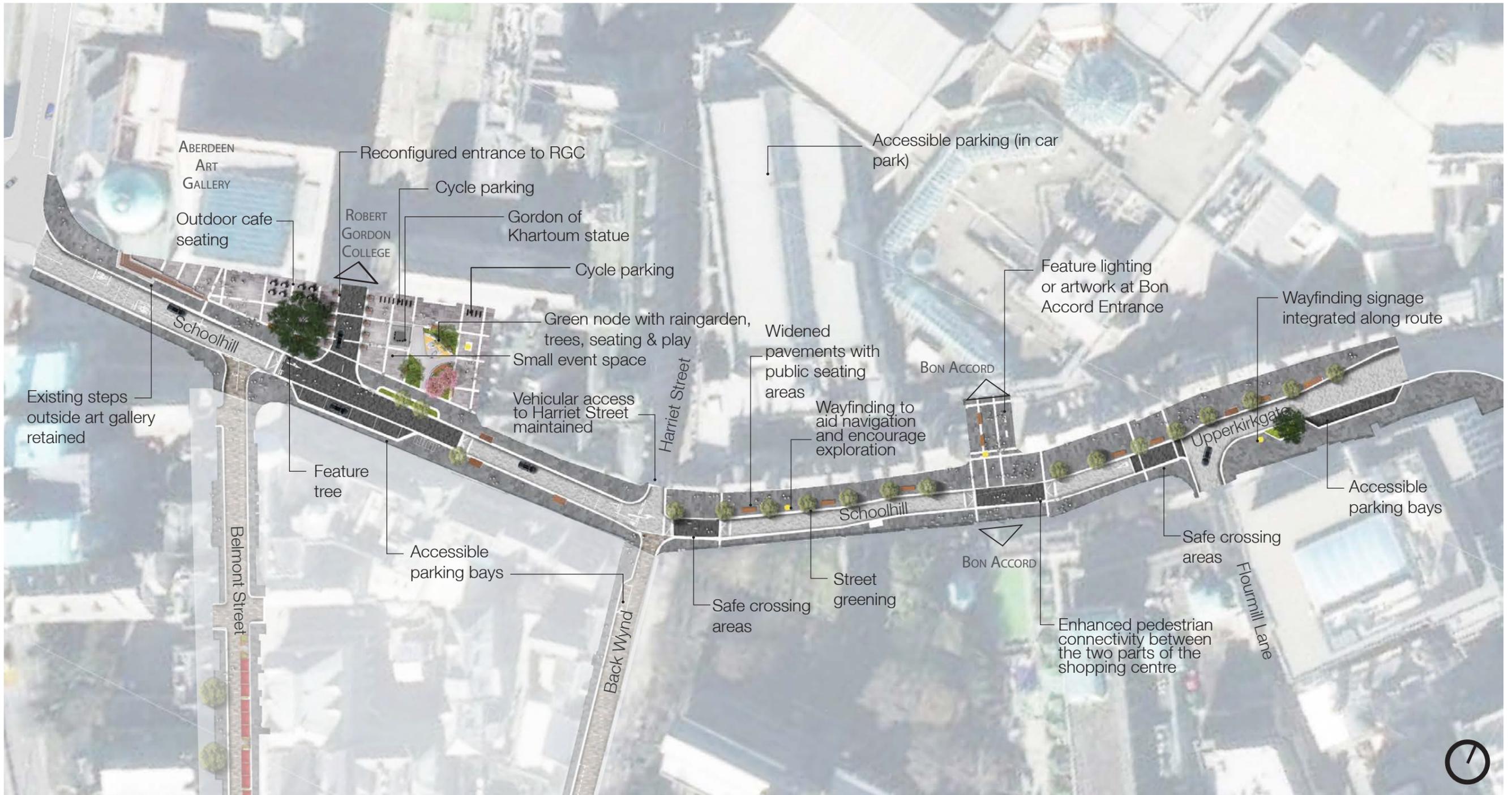
Following careful assessment, one of the four existing trees in the area will be retained, while more new street trees are proposed. The iconic Wych elm tree in the square (recommended for removal following tree survey) will be replaced with a suitable size specimen to compare with the existing tree's recognisable presence as landmark for the area. Rain gardens will also be introduced here helping to attenuate rainwater run-off from the surrounding paved areas.

Material Palette

The existing pavement materials are generally in good condition (Caithness), and will be retained and made good wherever possible. There is an opportunity to reuse reclaimed stone uplifted from other Intervention Areas, subject to assessment of their condition. New materials are in line with the holistic material strategy: a simple and elegant palette of timeless and robust materials. Wherever possible, indigenous stone is specified, in keeping with the surroundings. To respond to context feature paving is also proposed to tie in with the context - to be further developed in RIBA Stage 4.



Illustrative Plan



Schoolhill Visual

Existing



Proposed



Schoolhill Visual

Existing



Proposed



5. Union Street East & Castlegate

Key Moves - Union Street East

Key Moves

- Prioritise walking, wheeling and cycling.
- Widen footpaths and improve street crossing points to allow for safer and more comfortable pedestrian movement.
- Create seating areas to provide rest stops, activate the area and support local businesses.
- Increase number of trees and planted areas to soften the space, adding colour, shade, shelter and seasonality.
- Enhance public plaza at Plainstones to accommodate events, street greening and seating.
- Retain access to public transport, including buses and taxis.

Rationalised Carriageway

The existing streetscape will be reapportioned in favour of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. This involves narrowing the carriageway to allow pavements to be widened and limiting access for general traffic. Carriageway widths are designed to enable cyclists and buses to safely share the road and have been designed to the cycle-by-design standards. Signalised crossings retained and raised crossings to side streets introduced.

Widened Pavements & Activity Zone

By narrowing the carriageway, space is now available for a consistent 'activity zone' along the length of Union Street East that accommodates all street furniture, planters, street trees, outdoor cafe areas, wayfinding signage, play, cycle

parking and other activity. It also provides a zone for bus lay-bys and loading bays. Having this dedicated zone allows the pedestrian foot path zone to be clutter free for ease of movement for all while also providing a buffer to the vehicle carriageway. This combined zone creates a multitude of opportunities for people to dwell and spend time within the street.

Enriched Public Realm

The proposals allow for the incorporation of play, public art, and feature lighting at key locations, particularly in the space outside Plainstones. Details around how this will be integrated will be further investigated during Stage 4, following more engagement with ACC and relevant stakeholders. A common approach will be taken to the whole of Union Street to ensure continuity.

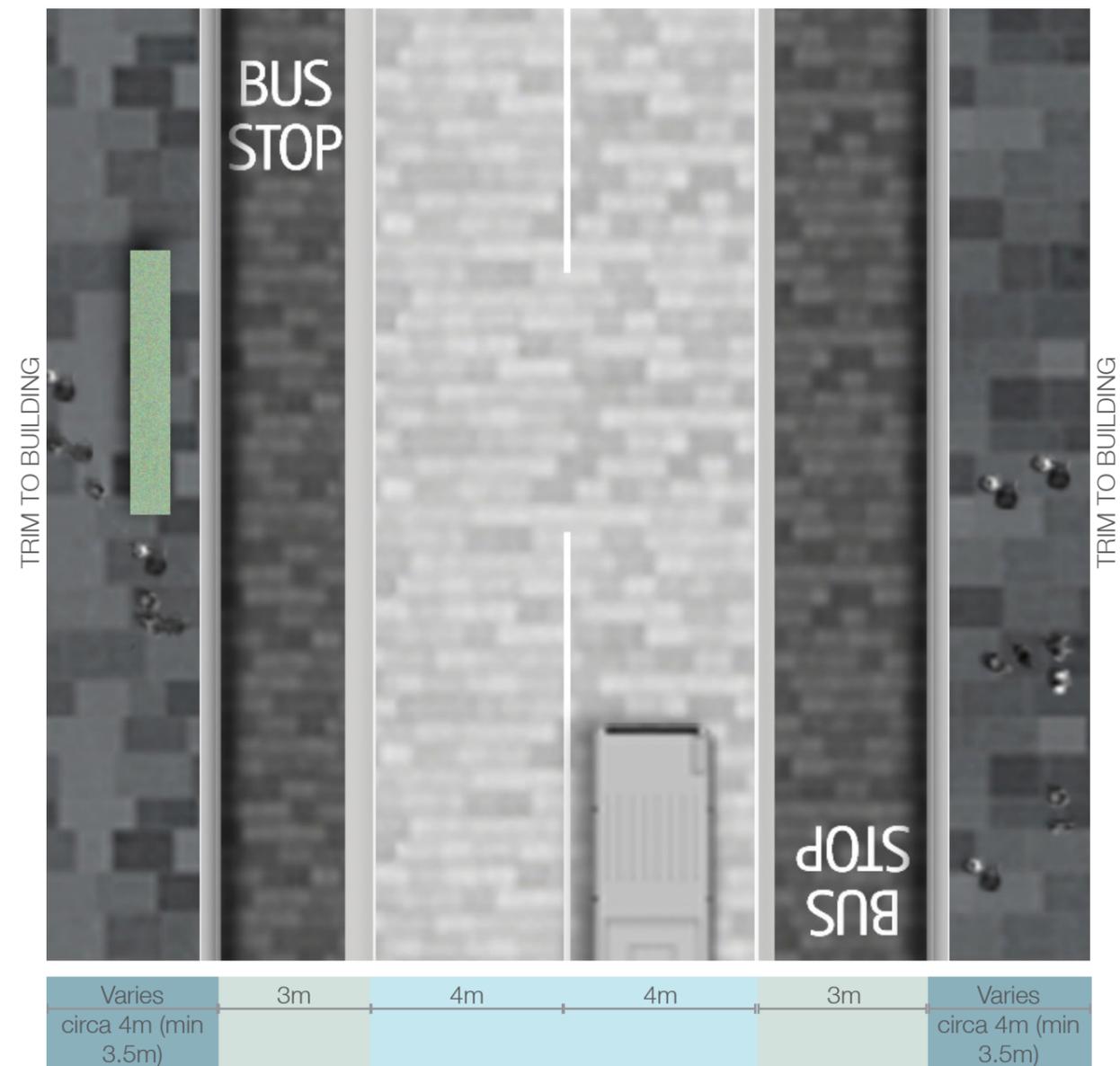
Street Greening

The 'activity zone' allows for low level planters and street trees where possible, enhancing the seasonality and biodiversity within the area, softening the space generally and giving a degree of shade and shelter.

Material Palette

The proposed materials are in line with the holistic masterplan material strategy: a simple and elegant palette of timeless and robust materials. Wherever possible, indigenous stone is specified, in keeping with the surroundings.

PAVEMENT	ACTIVITY ZONE	TWO-WAY CARRIAGEWAY	ACTIVITY ZONE	PAVEMENT
Clear and clutter free pedestrian route Building entrances Bus stops	Street greening Parklets Street furniture Cycle parking Outdoor café spill outs Bus lay-bys / Loading bays	Cyclists Buses Taxis Emergency vehicles Service vehicles (restricted hours) General traffic	Street greening Parklets Street furniture Cycle parking Outdoor café spill outs Bus lay-bys / Loading bays	Clear and clutter free pedestrian route Building entrances Bus stops



Key Moves - Castlegate

Key Moves

- Re-establish Castlegate as the civic heart of the city
- Create an accessible, attractive, and flexible space for day to day use, civic gatherings and events.
- Increase the attractiveness of the area for residents, businesses, and visitors whilst creating a key destination within the city.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity, especially to the beach.
- Increase seating and spill-out spaces to provide rest and animate the space.
- Add colour and life through play, public art and lighting.
- Increase number of trees and planted areas to soften the space, adding colour, shade, shelter and seasonality.
- Introduce rain gardens as a means of sustainable drainage.

A Flexible Design

The proposals for Castlegate have been developed as a clutter free and flexible space at the heart of the square, which forms a setting to the historic Mercat Cross. The square is framed by trees, fixed seating elements and herbaceous planting to enclose the space at different levels, all combined to create a welcoming and habitable place for people to be in and enjoy.

Seating and Spill Out Space

Opportunities for public seating have been maximised within the proposals. These include the provision of long linear benches and associated planting which help frame the central events space within the square, whilst encouraging people to dwell and spend time within it. In addition to this, clearly delineated generous spill-out spaces are proposed immediately adjacent to the ground floor business

premises, along the pavements either side of the square.

These interventions combine to introduce a more comfortable human scale within the space whilst assisting with the overall animation of Castlegate. It is intended that these elements will provide additional interest, helping to activate and animate the public realm, to draw people of all ages into the space and encourage them to linger.

Enriched Public Realm

A destination play area is proposed within the eastern zone of Castlegate, which could incorporate elements of water and nature play. Provision is made to include art interventions within the space, details of which will be developed during the next phase of the design. Feature lighting will enhance the space further, to tie in with the developing events strategy.

Street Greening

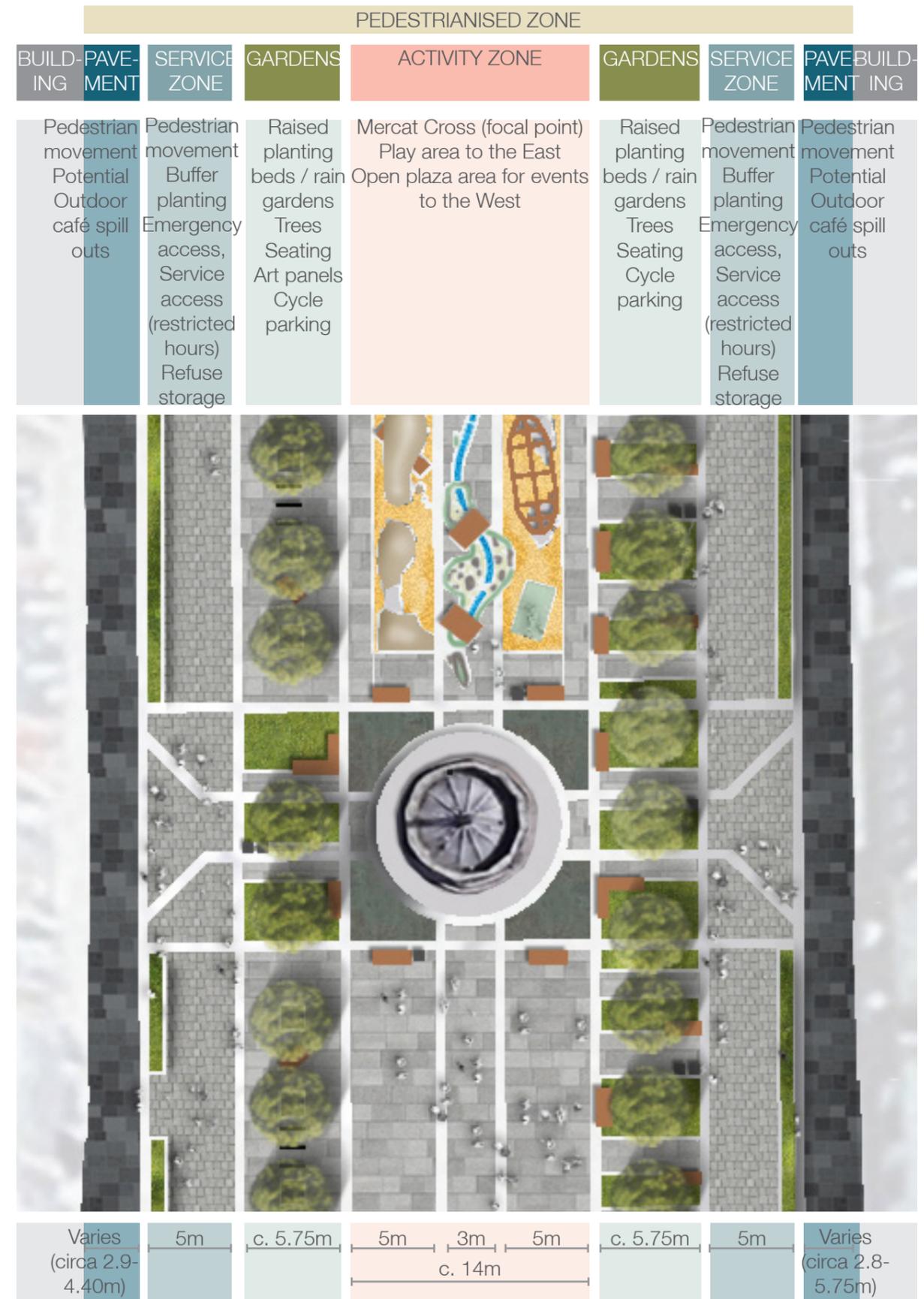
Tree planting to the edges of the space helps to frame and soften the main square space. Additional low-level planting is also proposed as further enhancement, a mix of planting associated with public seating to bring down the scale of the square, to increase biodiversity, add colour and seasonality, and inspire closer contact with nature.

Sustainable Urban Drainage

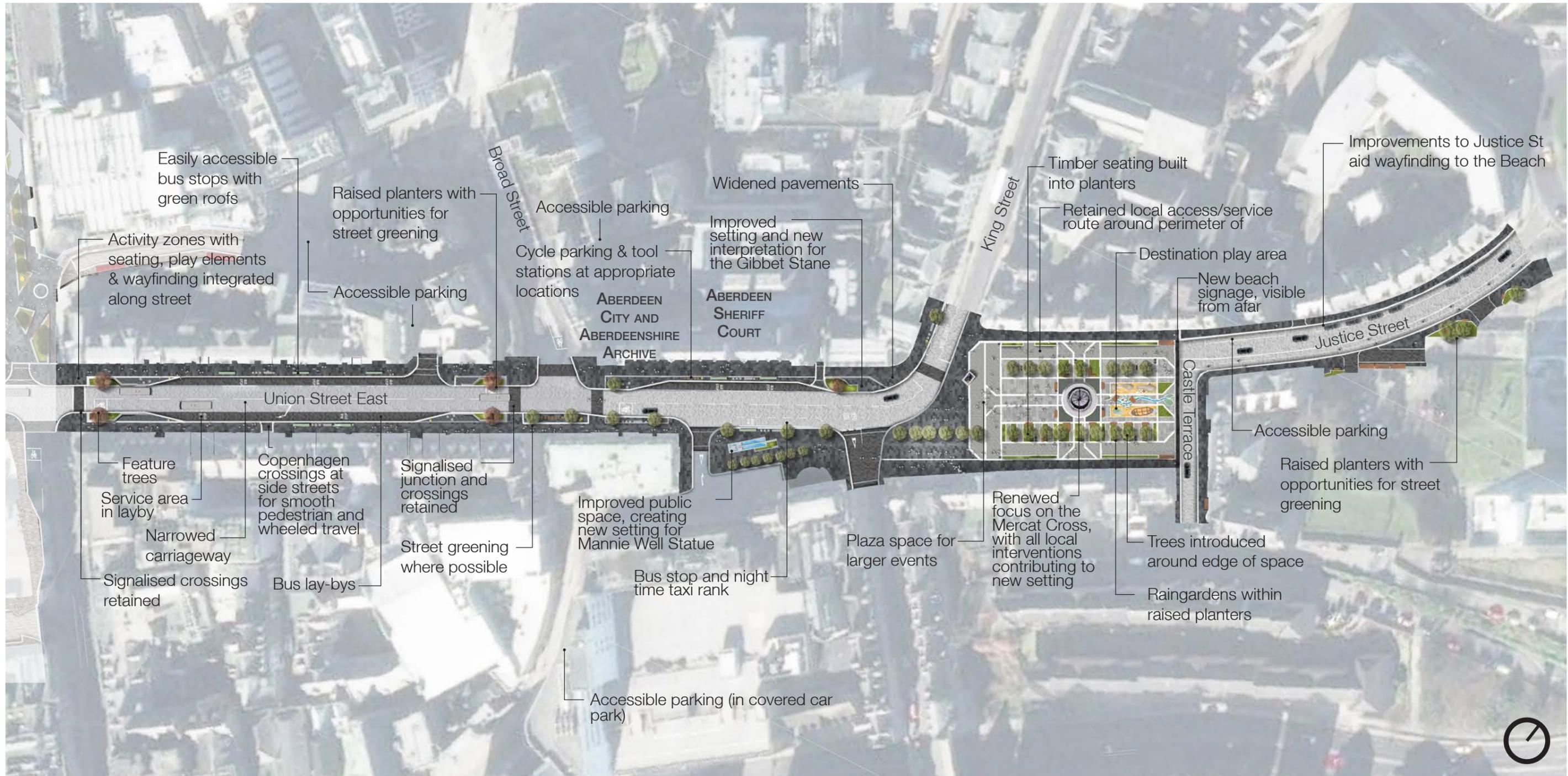
The proposal seeks to introduce rain gardens to the edge of the main square, with the intention to help attenuating rainwater run-off from the surrounding paved areas.

Material Palette

The proposed materials are in line with the holistic material strategy, however Castlegate does also incorporate the use of a different stone (Green Schist), to highlight the character of the area and enhance the materiality of place. New smooth paving reflects the historic patterns, to ensure the historic character is respected while accessibility is improved.



Illustrative Plan



Union Street East Visual

Existing



Proposed



Castlegate Visual

Existing



Proposed



Street greening and trees

Play area

New setting to the Mercat Cross

New high quality smooth paving

New cycling infrastructure

5. Union Street West & West End

Key Moves - Union Street West

Key Moves

- Prioritise walking, wheeling and cycling.
- Widen pavements and improve street crossing points to allow for safer and more comfortable pedestrian movement.
- Create plaza spaces in front of key buildings allowing people to gather and celebrate the city's rich heritage.
- Create seating areas to provide rest stops, activate the area and support local businesses.
- Increase number of trees and planted areas to soften the space, adding colour, shade, shelter and seasonality.
- Improve access to public transport, including buses and taxis.

Rationalised Carriageway

The existing streetscape will be reapportioned in favour of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. This involves narrowing the carriageway to allow pavements to be widened. Carriageway widths are designed to enable cyclists and buses to safely share the road and have been designed to the cycle-by-design standards. Signalised crossings are retained and raised crossings to side streets are introduced. In addition to this, clutter free plaza spaces are proposed at key locations such as outside the Music Hall.

Widened Pavements & Activity Zone

By narrowing the carriageway, space is now available for consistent 'activity zone' along the length of Union Street West that accommodates all street furniture, planters, street trees, outdoor cafe areas, wayfinding signage, play, cycle

parking and other activity. Having this dedicated zone allows the pavement to be clutter free for ease of movement for all and also provides a buffer to the vehicle carriageway. This zone creates a multitude of opportunities for people to dwell and spend time within the street.

Bus & Loading Zone

Where wide enough, a dedicated bus and loading bay will be incorporated within Union Street West. This will enable the activity zone to run continuously, creating more opportunities for street greening and amenity.

Enriched Public Realm

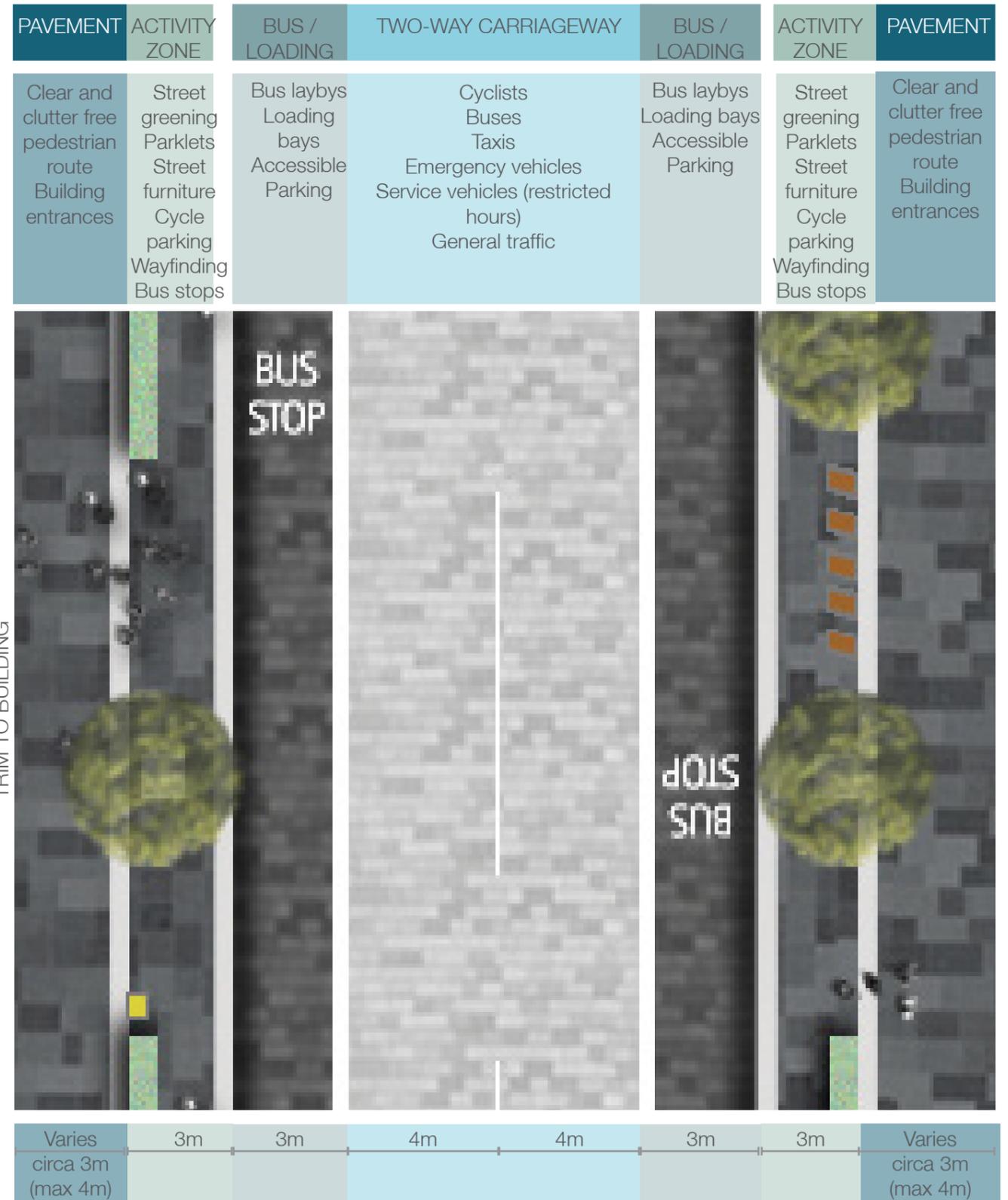
The proposals allow for the incorporation of play, public art, and feature lighting at key locations, particularly outside key heritage buildings such as the Music Hall. Details around how this will be integrated will be further investigated during Stage 4, following more engagement with ACC and relevant stakeholders. A common approach will be taken to the whole of Union Street to ensure continuity.

Street Greening

The 'activity zone' allows for raised planters and regularly spaced trees along the length of Union Street Central, helping create a formal avenue, while enhancing the seasonality and biodiversity within the area, softening the space generally and afford a degree of shade and shelter.

Material Palette

The proposed materials are in line with the holistic masterplan material strategy: a simple and elegant palette of timeless and robust materials. Wherever possible, indigenous stone is specified, in keeping with the surroundings.



Key Moves - West End

Key Moves

- Support the West End businesses by increasing the attractiveness of the area.
- Celebrate the unique character of the area by creating spaces for people to dwell and spend time.
- Prioritise pedestrian movement and create opportunities for outdoor seating to help animate the area.
- Widen pavements where possible, to allow greater and safer spaces for pedestrians, reducing conflicts with other street users.
- Increase number of trees and planted areas to soften the space, adding colour, shade, shelter and seasonality.
- Add colour and life through play, public art and lighting.

Rationalised Carriageway

The proposals seek to reapportion carriageway space within Rose Street, Thistle Street and Chapel Street as to better respond to and service the needs of the area.

Clear, unobstructed pavements will be maintained, whilst space from the carriageways will be allocated to 'flexible zones' either side of these. These flexible zones within the streetscape are designed to potentially accommodate café spill-out areas, public seating, accessible parking, taxi ranks and elements of street greening where appropriate.

The apportioning of the space within these 'flexible zones' will be further considered through appropriate engagement during the next stages of the project.

Widened Pavements

Current pavement widths are maintained generally and widened where space permits. In addition to, this 'Copenhagen crossings' have been introduced at key junctions within and adjacent to the area including the egress points onto Union Street. These crossings subtly denote to drivers that the area is a space for people to occupy first and foremost.

Seating and Spill out Space

The proposed reapportioning of space within the street allows for the introduction of public seating within the area which will offer welcoming amenity to all and opportunities for rest for the less able whilst encouraging a wide range of visitors to the West End. The proposals also allow for the provision of external cafés where appropriate, further animating the public realm.

Enriched Public Realm

The public realm will be enriched through the considered placement of planting and feature lighting within the streetscape. The designs propose the introduction of building to building lighting creating a 'ceiling of lights' over the streets further enhancing the unique qualities of the areas whilst bringing a human scale to the streetscape. Proposals will be developed within the next stage of work.

Street Greening

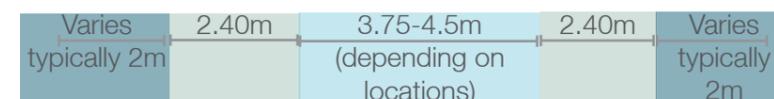
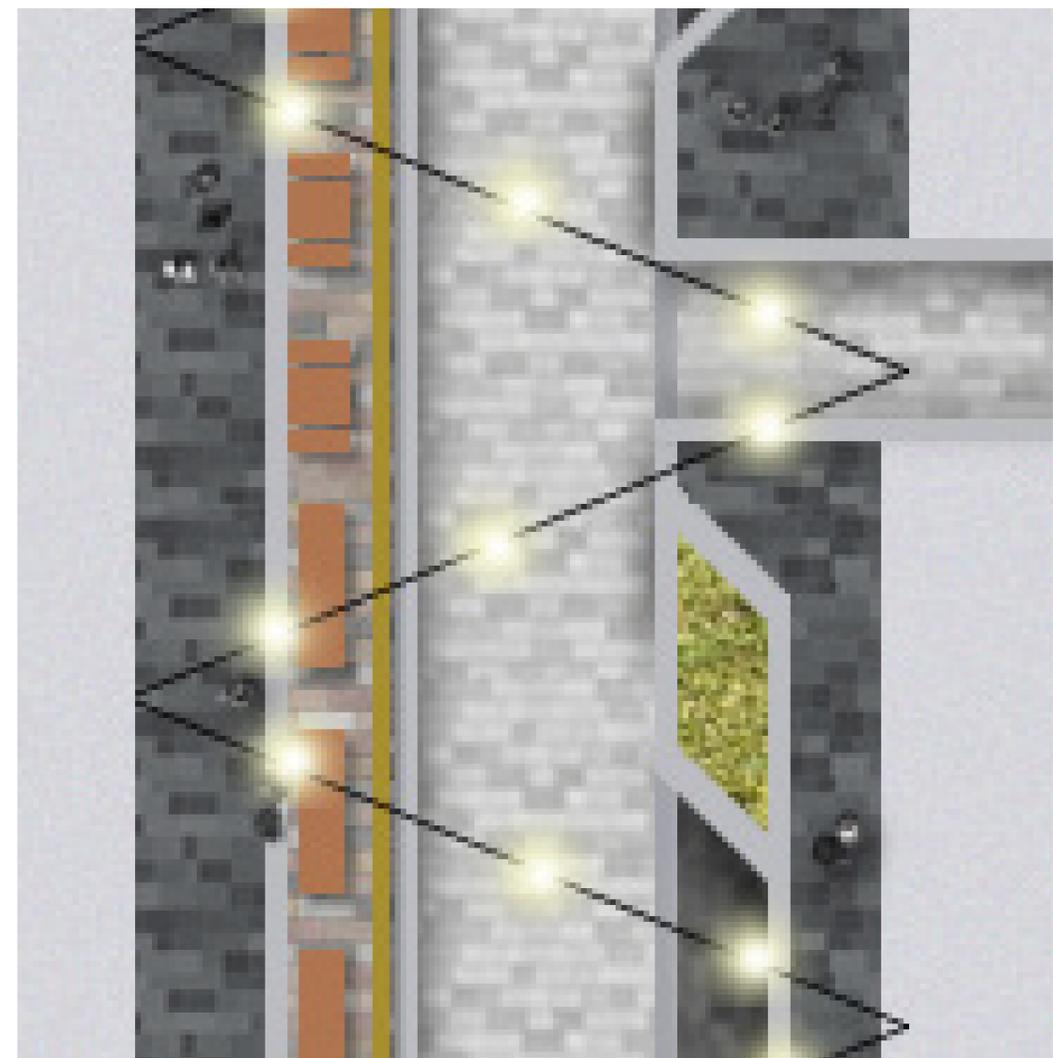
Trees will be introduced where possible alongside raised planters. Outdoor cafe areas will have provision for planting also.

Material Palette

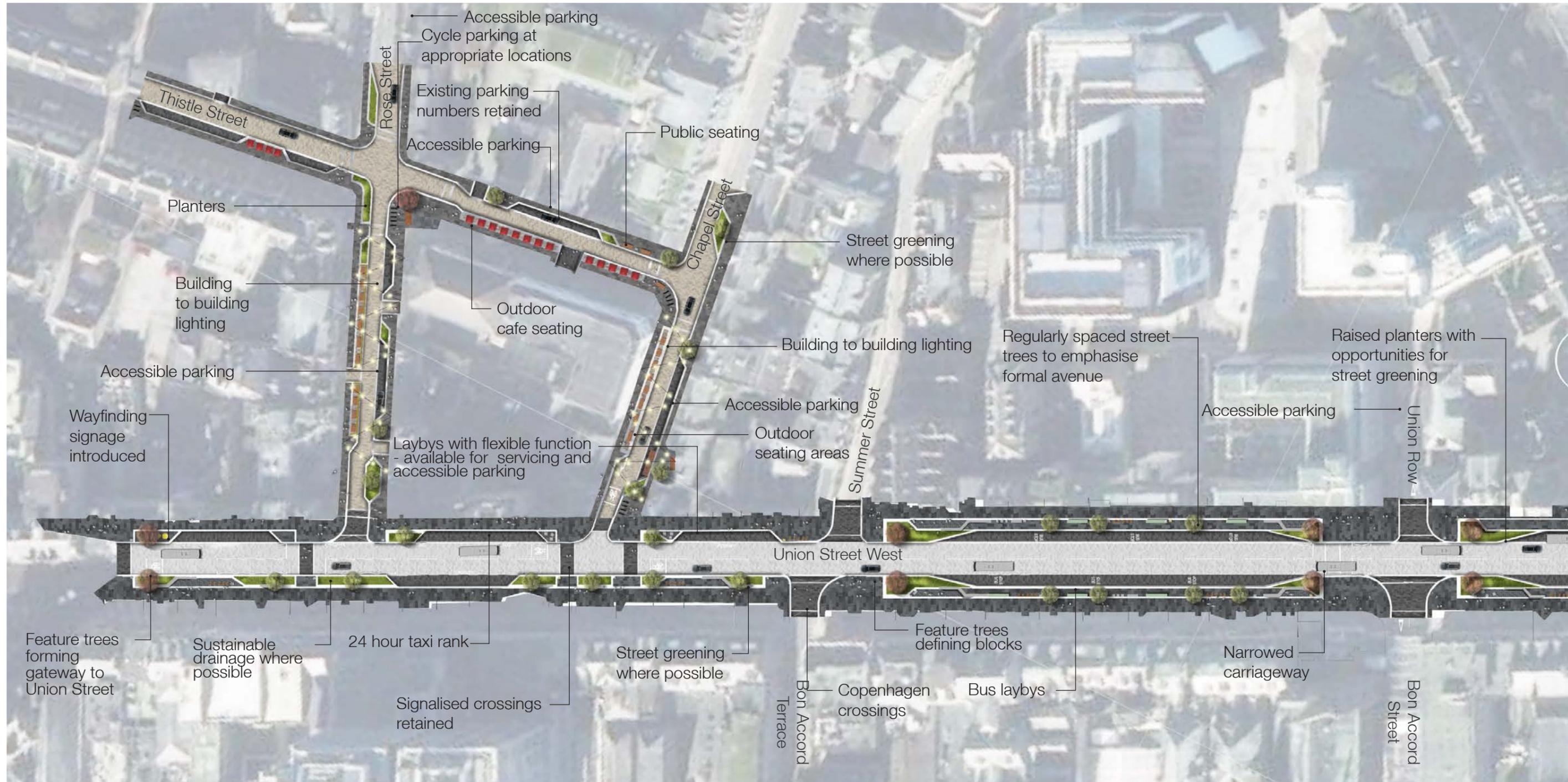
The proposed materials are in line with the holistic masterplan material strategy: a simple and elegant palette of timeless and robust materials. Wherever possible, indigenous stone is specified, in keeping with the surroundings.

*Zoning concepts consistent throughout West End Streets, however exact dimensions will change based on existing conditions.

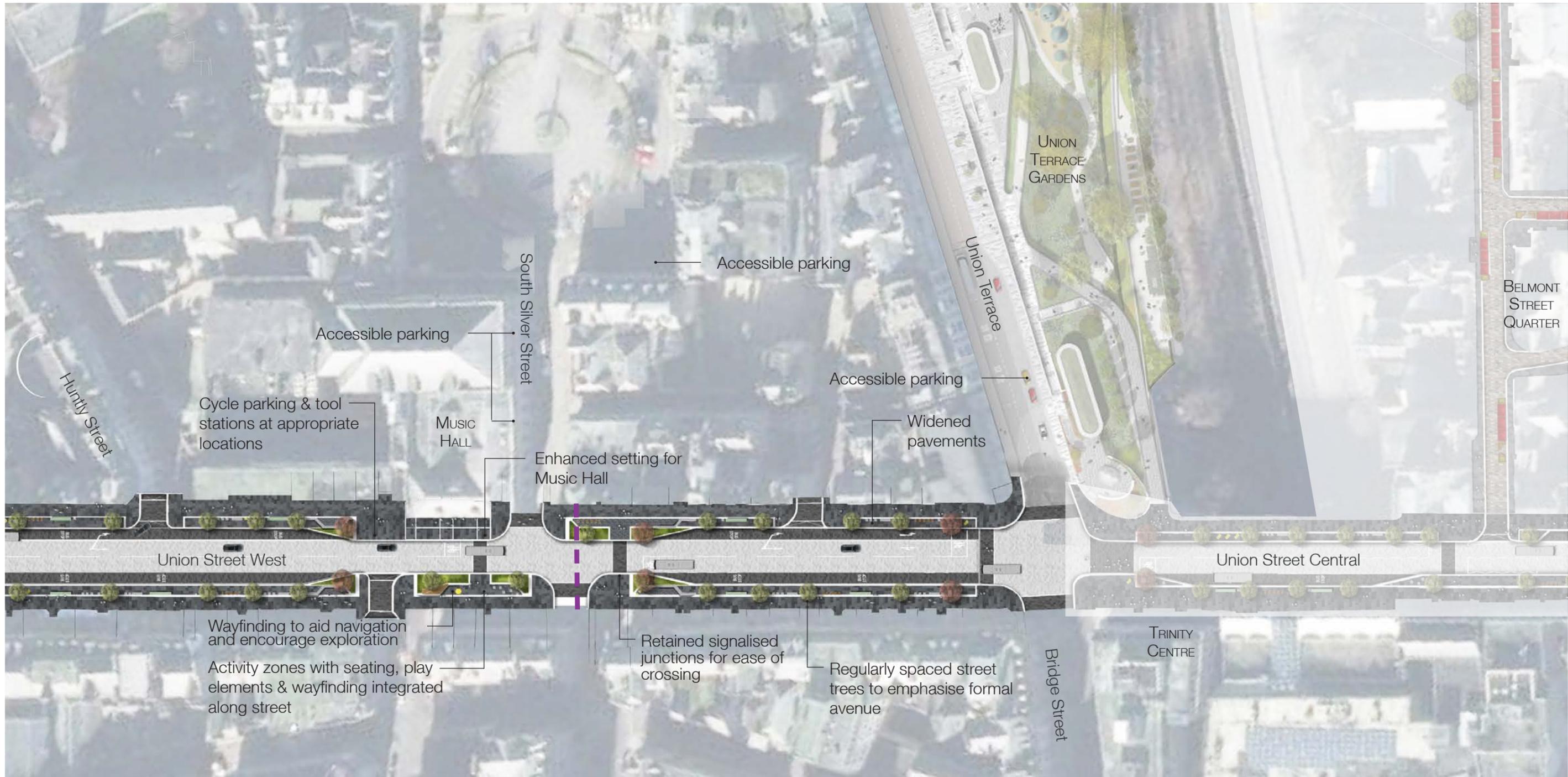
BUILD-ING	PAVE-MENT	FLEXIBLE ZONE	ONE-WAY CARRIAGEWAY	FLEXIBLE ZONE	PAVE-MENT	BUILDING
Ground floor businesses	Clear and clutter free pedestrian route	Outdoor café spill outs Trees Public seating Planters / Rain gardens Wayfinding	Cyclists General traffic Service vehicles (restricted hours) Emergency vehicles	Trees Parking bays Rain gardens Cycle parks	Clear and clutter free pedestrian route Building entrances	Ground floor businesses



Illustrative Plan



Illustrative Plan



Union Street West Visual

Existing



West End Visual

Existing



Proposed



LDĀ DESIGN

London

209 – 215 Blackfriars Road
London SE1 8NL
United Kingdom
+44 (0) 20 7467 1470

Bristol

Studio 4B
36 King Street
Bristol BS1 4DZ
United Kingdom
+44 (0) 117 203 3628

Cambridge

The Courtyard
17A Sturton Street
Cambridge CB1 2SN
United Kingdom
+44 (0) 1223 949054

Exeter

Kings Wharf, The Quay
Exeter EX2 4AN
United Kingdom
+44 (0) 1392 260 430

Glasgow

Sovereign House
158 West Regent Street
Glasgow G2 4RL
United Kingdom
+44 (0) 1412 229 780

Manchester

Hilton Square
3 Tariff Street
Manchester M1 2FF
United Kingdom
+44 (0) 161 359 5684

Oxford

Worton Rectory Park
Oxford OX29 4SX
United Kingdom
+44 (0) 1865 887050

Peterborough

17 Minster Precincts
Peterborough PE1 1XX
United Kingdom
+44 (0) 1733 310 471

www.lda-design.co.uk

LDA Design Consulting Ltd
Registered No: 09312403
17 Minster Precincts, Peterborough PE1 1XX

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