

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
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EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Beachfront Masterplan – Short-Term Intervention Update
REPORT NUMBER	COM/22/292
DIRECTOR	Steven Whyte
CHIEF OFFICER	Craig Innes
REPORT AUTHOR	Craig Innes
TERMS OF REFERENCE	21

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. This report provides Members with updates specifically on the preparation of the Beachfront Masterplan Phase A works (Urban Park, Events Park and Broadhill Landscaping and Structures) progression through to Full Business Case (FBC).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. Note the update from the Chief Officer – Commercial & Procurement on progress of the short-term interventions to FBC: Urban Park, Events Park and Broadhill Landscaping and Structures.
- 2.2. Note the update from the Chief Officer Strategic Space Planning on the 6 week consultation period carried out on the Draft Development Framework; accompanying Environmental Report; the findings of the resulting Engagement Report and agree that an updated Development Framework be reported back to the next meeting Council on 26th April 2023.
- 2.3. Instruct the Chief Officer – Commercial & Procurement to progress with all relevant statutory consents that will be needed to be obtained before any works proceed, and start early discussion with the Planning Authority prior to any applications being submitted.
- 2.4. Instruct the Chief Officer – Commercial & Procurement to take the Beachfront Masterplan Phase A Works to Full Business Case (FBC) and report the FBC to Council on 23rd August 2023.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

Beachfront Development Framework

- 3.1. Officers were instructed at the 12 November 2021 meeting of the City Growth and Resources Committee to progress work on a Beachfront Development

Framework (to sit as a sister document to the City Centre Masterplan 2015) and report back in June 2022. Officers presented the Draft Beachfront Development Framework and Executive Summary to Council on 28 June 2022 and were subsequently instructed to undertake a period of public consultation on the Draft Framework and its accompanying Environmental Report. The outcomes of the public consultation were to be reported back to Council within six months, including any recommended revisions to the Draft Framework resulting from the consultation.

- 3.2. Public consultation on the Draft Beachfront Development Framework and associated Strategic Environment Assessment Report took place over a 6 week period during September - October 2022. The consultation was publicised through the Council's website and social media platforms, as well as via email to key stakeholders and consultees, with target consultations with key groups also taking place. Drop-in sessions were also held at the Beach Ballroom on Tuesday 13 September (2-8pm), Thursday 29 September (2-8pm) and Saturday 8 October (12-6pm). It is estimated that around 500 people attended the drop-in sessions over the course of the 3 days and community events and meetings.
- 3.3. Targeted consultation was also undertaken with children and young people including visits to 6 primary and 2 secondary schools on 3rd, 4th and 5th October meeting with 450 young people and participating in a model building challenge, and a theatre-based workshop for 10- to 17-year-olds run at the Beach Ballroom on the 17th, 18th and 19th of October as part of the Autumn in the City programme.
- 3.4. Responses to the consultation were collated and reviewed and a detailed summary of the issues raised is captured in the Consultation Summary Report (Appendix A). Consultation feedback will be made available online, subject to approval of recommendation 2.2 above.
- 3.5. The consultation attracted 713 responses with 55% of those generally supportive of the contents of the Development Framework, 24% uncategorised / neutral and 21% generally unsupportive.
- 3.6. The areas that drew the most comments related to: -
 - Traffic and Transport Management.
 - The Beach Village.
 - The Boardwalk and associated projections onto the beach.
- 3.7. Appendix A contains recommendations on how matters raised could be addressed and can be summarised as:
 - Traffic Management, public transport and parking – light touch changes recommended to Development Framework to ensure appropriate emergency water safety access.
 - Traffic Management, public transport and parking – improved communications required to explain permitted vehicle movements and parking arrangements.

- Water safety, access and location of beach village – recommendation that Development Framework should consider locations for additional beach village location towards Fittie.
- Design and safety of boardwalk/pier – recommendation that ongoing engagement with key stakeholders such as the Aberdeen Water Safety Group and beach users should occur as designs progress from high level concept stage

Next Steps

- 3.8. Officers have reviewed the feedback and will now consider what amendments to the Development Frameworks should be made. A revised Development Framework will therefore be presented to Council at the April 2023 Committee for consideration.

Beach Projects

- 3.9. The contents of this report align with requests made by Council on 28 June 2022 to update on progress in the current period and the anticipated next steps going forward.

- 3.10. This report focuses on the:

Public realm including the urban park, Broadhill landscaping and events field.

- 3.11. A separate report has been prepared to address all other elements of the Beachfront masterplan including:

- Provision of new leisure facility;
- Refurbishing Beach Ballroom;
- Beachfront Energy Centre;
- Streetscape works including Beach Boulevard and City Centre connections.

- 3.12. A range of pre-construction planning, and cost development activities have been progressed since the June 2022 Council meeting.

Appendix B – Project Phasing sets out the current timetable of design/consultation activities, business case preparation and pre-construction planning activities being taken forward in 2023 and beyond.

- 3.13. The key features of the Beachfront Projects are shown in Appendix C where they are numbered one to nineteen (including Justice Street roundabout). This report covers the short term interventions (Phase A):

- New Urban Park: Play Park, Sports Area & Pump Track
- Events Park: New Amphitheatre, Events Field, Gateway Building
- Landscaping: Landscape Mounding
- Broadhill: Public Realm & Landscaping
- Beach Hub Building

3.14. The short-term Phase A interventions take cognisance of the following medium and long term interventions:

Medium Term Interventions:

- New Canopy Features
- Beach Ballroom Plaza
- Broadhill (Structures)
- Pedestrian Spine
- Beach Boulevard

Longer Term Interventions:

- Beach Village
- Beach Ballroom
- New Stadium
- New Leisure Facility
- Boardwalk
- New Slipway
- Energy Centre
- Justice Street Roundabout

Public Realm Overview

3.15. Detailed phasing and market appraisal studies have continued in the period as a result of on-going market volatility. The adoption of a phased pre-construction and construction strategy for the public realm projects is continuing which will achieve a greater level of certainty in delivery. This approach, which has been developed in conjunction with the design team, allows for the up-front delivery of the works that does involve transport/roads related consultation and approvals processes. This approach ensures that the impact of inflation associated with current market conditions is mitigated to ensure best value.

3.16. The Phase A projects can be delivered independently from the medium to longer term interventions of Phase B and C (longer term interventions). This will involve some temporary road closures to facilitate the construction works.

3.17. RIBA Stage 1 Preparation and Brief was reached and approved for Phase A and B of the works.

3.18. Phase A Projects (Short Term):

- Urban Park: Play Park, Sports Area and Pump Track, Canopies
- Events Field: Amphitheatre, Events Field, Gateway and Hub Building
- Broadhill: Landscaping and viewing structures

3.19. This initial phase of works encompasses the majority of short-term interventions noted above, the exception being the reconfigured beach landscaping which will be delivered as part of the medium-term interventions.

- 3.20. These have progressed in the period through the Concept Design stage as per programme Appendix B.
- 3.21. Delivery is currently on programme with Hub Stage 1 approval anticipated in Q1 2023 with Hub Stage 2 approval in Q3 2023 which would enable an estimated site start in Q3 2023 (Appendix B)
- 3.22. Next Steps:
This phase of works, following approval of the Hub Stage 1 proposal will progress to RIBA Stage 3 Developed Design. At this stage any changes instructed as a consequence of the Development Framework process carried out will be incorporated. Engagement on statutory approvals will commence in this period including Planning, Technical Standards and Public Utilities.

Community Involvement and Engagement

- 3.23. A detailed consultation plan covering the Beach Development Framework was prepared and implemented. A consultation report is contained in Appendix A.
- 3.24. The consultation sought views on three topics:
- The Beach Development Framework
 - The Strategic Environmental Assessment
 - Temporary transport interventions implemented on Beach Boulevard and South Esplanade.
- 3.25. A total of 713 online and hard copy responses were received with the following headlines:
- Development Framework - 55% generally supportive of the contents of the Development Framework, 24% uncategorised/neutral and 21% generally unsupportive
 - Strategic Environmental Assessment -there were 57 relevant responses with 22 being positive, 20 negative and 4 neutral and 11 unclear.
 - 52% of the 484 responses to the temporary transport interventions have a preference that they should be removed
- 3.26. On 12th September, the public consultation stage of engagement was launched. The six-week programme of activity comprised:
- Consultation information being available to view on line via the Council's Consultation Hub
 - In person drop in consultation events staffed by design team representatives and council officers, held in the Beach Ballroom on
 - Tuesday 13th September, 2pm-8pm
 - Thursday 29th September, 2pm-8pm
 - Saturday 8th October

- Local community events held in Footdee and Seaton. These were designed in conjunction with local community representatives to reflect local requirements:
 - In Fittie (Footdee), on 11th October a public drop in, presentation and “town hall” style meeting was held from 5pm-7pm.
 - In Seaton, on 19th October an informal drop in was held from 10am to 2pm to coincide with a weekly coffee & conversation session.
- A live online webinar style event was held on 13th October from 5.30-6.30pm where the Council’s Senior Responsible Officer and design team members gave a short presentation with a Q&A session.
- A summary display of information in the reception area of the Council’s Marischal College.
- Parallel Children & Young Person engagement including:
 - An awareness ‘road trip’ to 6 primary and 2 secondary schools took place on 3rd, 4th and 5th October meeting with 450 young people and participating in a model building challenge.
- Theatre-based workshop for 10 to 17 yr olds run at the Beach Ballroom on the 17th, 18th and 19th of October as part of the Autumn in the City programme.

3.27. Appendix A documents the matters raised as part of the consultation. Positive comments can be themed as support for:

- Regeneration benefits
- Stadium, Leisure and Ice Rink Facilities
- Beach Village
- Boardwalk/Pier
- Reduction in traffic/active travel infrastructure
- Improved connectivity with city centre

Matters raised can be grouped into the following themes:

- Traffic management, public transport and parking
- Water safety and access
- Location of beach village
- Design and safety of boardwalk/pier
- Football Stadium
- Funding & deliverability

3.28. Appendix A contains recommendations on how matters raised should be addressed and can be summarised as:

- Traffic Management, public transport and parking – light touch changes to ensure appropriate emergency water safety access.

- Traffic Management, public transport and parking – improved communications required to explain permitted vehicle movements and parking arrangements.
- Water safety, access and location of beach village – Development Framework should be considered locations for additional beach village location towards Fittie.
- Design and safety of boardwalk/pier.
- Football Stadium – is the subject of a separate business case to be determined by Council.
- Funding and deliverability.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. The Council Budget meeting on 10 March 2021 outlined a funding commitment totalling £150M from the General Fund Capital Programme over financial years 2021/22 to 2025/26 to ensure the Council transforms the City Centre and the Beach area.
- 4.2. A UK Government Levelling-Up funding application for the second phase of inward investment support was submitted following consultation on the 22nd July 2022. Clarifications have been addressed and successful applicants are expected to be confirmed in December 2022. A total investment support package of £20m has been applied for.
- 4.3. It is widely reported that Brexit (increased tariffs and product manufacturer delays), manufacturing delays associated with the Covid Pandemic, supply issues due to the conflict in Eastern Europe and the energy crisis are resulting in unprecedented price increases across the UK. The cost impact of these issues on the project continue to be monitored by the project team and necessary allowances have been included in the cost plan in-line with current industry forecasts and those of the supply chain.
- 4.4. The Council will continue to facilitate the next phase of design works with Hub North Scotland Limited and the supply chain of current contractors who will undertake works relating to two or more workstreams allowing lower cost.
- 4.5. The forecast development and delivery costs for each medium to short term intervention are listed below. This includes budgets relating to construction, design, advisory, statutory consents, surveys, planning activities and business case assembly. All pre-construction costs have been fully market tested to demonstrate best value. Construction costs are budget forecasts with affordability caps having been established and will be subject to a detailed open book market testing procedures during the next stages of planning.

Phasing	Project	Total Development Cost to Financial Close & Full Business Case (£)	Construction Costs (inc Optimism Bias) (£)	Optimism BIAS %
1	New Play Park	2,375,000	31,959,000	9%
2	Events Area	678,000	14,352,000	10%
3	Temporary Landscape	145,000	3,025,000	6%
7	Broad Hill	219,000	4,611,000	10%
		3,417,000	53,947,000	
	Levelling-Up (Pending Approval)		-20,000,000	

4.6. Note the Optimism Bias has been offset through recent movements in inflation. This is based on the cost reports as at December 2022 and associated design from that period.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The Beachfront Development Framework will inform planning applications, but each application will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the Planning Authority. With the Phase A statutory approval applications and public utilities applications likely to take place in next period.
- 5.2. The Council has commenced extensive title examination of areas covered within the Beach Masterplan to determine if there are any ownership, third-party right, and/or Common Good Land issues affecting the review site. No material issues have been identified to date as part of this process.
- 5.3. As each project proposal progresses, they will be examined and managed within the professional scope of property / conveyancing industry accepted standards, ensuring all due diligence exercises and pre-contract enquiries are complete and satisfactory.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The Draft Beachfront Development Framework has gone through the Strategic Environmental Assessment process and is accompanied by a Draft Environmental Report which has also been subject to public consultation.
- 6.2. The Draft Development Framework makes reference to commitments by ACC through the Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026 to aim for a net-zero operational development with active travel at its core which will create a key sense of 'Place' to the Beachfront.
- 6.3. The Development Framework also makes reference to Net Zero and Sustainability Policies and sets out the aspirations, Aberdeen City Council's 'Net Zero Aberdeen Route map towards becoming a net zero emissions city by 2045' sets out the approach, pathway and actions towards net zero and climate resilient Council assets and operations, by 2045. Energy-efficient design proposals will require to be incorporated within any design proposals and concept masterplan alongside renewable and low carbon energy sources, with consideration necessary to understand how further decarbonisation could be achieved in the future.
- 6.4. In addition to the energy approach the Draft Development Framework will seek to promote biodiversity and the protection of the natural assets found within the Beachfront area. Any development will require to be cognisant of the recommendations of the suite of Aberdeen City Council guidance documents.
- 6.5. The Draft Development Framework makes reference to the Energy Strategy - the energy strategy for the proposals still requires to be fully developed but is likely to include one Energy Centre located at the potential Leisure Centre to serve the entire development.
- 6.6. Again, reference is made in the Draft Development Framework to Net Zero Carbon Aspirations – the project gives a platform to incorporate new & innovative technologies and systems, to provide a net zero carbon, electricity, heating, and cooling solution to serve the load demands of the development. Additionally, there is scope for a solution which aligns with Aberdeen City Council's hydrogen strategy, to generate demand and interest in hydrogen as a power source in order to achieve their climate goals and to capitalise on the unique skills-base of the region.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic	Failure to proceed with the Beachfront Masterplan impacts on wider City commitments and economic targets.	Continue to work collaboratively to achieve the masterplan delivery and wider advantages.	M	Yes
Compliance	Council title issues and other competing third-party rights.	The Council have undertaken an extensive title examination and engagement of a Third-Party review.	L	Yes
Operational	Beach Boulevard/Beach promenade traffic arrangements Sufficient capacity of resources with Councils teams to meet programme objectives	Significant consultation with Council Roads and Planning Teams, Bus companies and Emergency services planned. Resource review ongoing and augmented support through the PMO	M M	Yes Yes
Financial	Budget pressures due to current market volatility.	Robust budgets established. Independent monitoring process established. With PMO early supply chain mitigations action plan established across the programme.	M	Yes

	Removal or reduction in anticipated funding Streams.	Continual engagement and monitor of ongoing funding applications.	M	Yes
Reputational	Failure or delay in proceed with the recommendations	Continue to work collaboratively to achieve the masterplan delivery and wider advantages.	M	Yes
Environmental & Climate	No significant risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Impact of Report	
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	Supports the delivery of Economy Policy Statement 4 – Increase city centre footfall through delivery of the City Centre Masterplan. 1. – Continue to maximise community benefit from major developments.
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	Supports Outcome 1 10% increase in employment across priority and volume growth sectors by 2026.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Supports Outcome 7 Child Friendly City which supports all children to prosper and engage actively with their communities by 2026.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	Supports Outcome 14 Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by 42.5% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate Supports Outcome 15 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026.
Regional and City Strategies	The report supports the priorities in the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) investment in infrastructure, regenerating our city centre, unlock development potential, improve the deployment of low carbon transport, to enable Aberdeen to realise development opportunities in the City Centre Masterplan.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Neutral Impact
Data Protection Impact Assessment	DPIA Screening Questions completed. Neither a brief DPIA or full DPIA is required at this stage
Other	Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report (Appendix C)

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Council Decisions 13 December 2021
<https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/g7675/Decisions%2013th-Dec-2021%2010.30%20Council.pdf?T=2>
- Report to Council 28 February 2022
<https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/s129266/220228%20City%20Centre%20Masterplan%20Update%20Report.pdf>
- Council Decisions 28 February 2022
<https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/g8184/Decisions%2028th-Feb-2022%2010.30%20Council.pdf?T=2>

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Development Framework Consultation Report
Appendix B: Delivery Timeline
Appendix C: Key Features Legend

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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