THE STUDENT QUARTER, ROSE STREET, INVERNESS

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT — *Revision A (March 2014)*

in support of PLANNING APPLICATION for
the demolition of former Rose Street Hall and decked car park to the South and thereafter a phased redevelopment to provide Multi-Storey Student Accommodation, Shops, Food & Drink Premises, Public Space & Environmental Enhancement

Inverness Properties Ltd

Contents

1. Introduction

Inverness Properties Ltd has appointed GH Johnston Building Consultants Ltd to prepare proposals for a new multi storey mixed use development for submission as a full planning application for land at Rose Street, Inverness. This will comprise flatted student accommodation on the upper floors to serve the existing student population within Inverness as well as the future demand from the new University of the Highlands and Islands Campus under development at Beechwood. Retail and other commercial units are proposed for the ground floor to help increase the diversity of retail, food and drink establishments in Inverness City Centre. In such respects the development seeks to meet the criteria and aspirations for a student and business hub outlined in the Inverness City Centre Development Brief (ICCDB), as adopted by the Highland Council in March 2013.

From mid December 2012 to the end of February 2013, informal pre-application advice was sought and initial public consultation undertaken in line with statutory and non-statutory procedures for *Major* planning applications. In the subsequent pre-application advice response the proposed development was broadly supported and viewed positively by Highland Council officials and their consultees subject to the satisfactory resolution of a number of matters of detail raised. More specifically it was advised:

> *"The site forms a key city centre regeneration site that provides a positive opportunity to improve the appearance, streetscape and circulation of the area. The design of the development is fundamental to its success, its scale, height and massing must complement the surrounding area including the setting of several nearby Listed Buildings and the neighbouring Conservation Area."*

The advice included concerns about the scale and layout of the development, as presented with the pre-application submission, in respect of integration with the existing townscape, accommodation of a bus link through the site and disabled parking and the connection/opening up of the site with Academy Street/ Farraline Park. These matters have since been addressed in taking the proposals forward.

As a development proposal in the *Major* category there is a statutory requirement for such an application to be accompanied by a *Design and Access Statement* outlining the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development. More specifically it:

(i) explains the policy or approach adopted as to design and how any policies relating to design in the development plan have been taken into account;
(ii) describes the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and demonstrates how the design of the development takes that context into account in relation to its proposed use; and
(iii) states what consultation has been undertaken on issues relating to the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development and what account has been taken of the outcome of any such consultation.

This statement therefore illustrates the form of development that the applicant, local stakeholders and ultimately the planning authority aspire to see developed on the land. It includes a townscape analysis and visual impact assessment which inform the master plan layout, details of the siting, scale and massing of buildings, building design detailing and materials. It also indicates requirements for road, pedestrian and cycle access, drainage, landscaping, civic and circulation space.

The public and stakeholder consultation process is outlined further in Section 5 of this statement. The key issues raised and how these have been addressed together with full details of this process, the arrangements and responses are contained in the accompanying Pre-application Consultation Report.

The brief for developing this application site now focuses on the requirement to provide student accommodation for 274 students above ground floor level complimented by ground floor commercial uses in three blocks varying in height from five to eight storeys. This follows on from the multi-storey development approved in 2012 for 105 student flats and ground floor retail use on land to the west, previously known as Phase 1 of the development.

The proximity of existing adjacent retail servicing access, readily accessible bus and train services and adjacent public (and disabled) car parking, including the City Centre's main multi storey public car park a short walk away, alleviates the need to provide additional on–site facilities. This was recognised in a previously consented scheme for offices and retail units on the site of the approved 105 student flats as well as in approving two applications for the redevelopment of 92-94 Academy Street for a hotel or flats and retail units.

2. Site Details

2.1 Location, site plan and ownership

The site for redevelopment is located to the rear and north east side of Academy Street, west of Farraline Park and south west of the Rose Street multi-storey car park. The retail units in the conversion of the former *Safeway* supermarket and its pay and display car park lie to the north west. The site lies adjacent to the Inverness (Riverside) Conservation Area, the boundary of which runs along the rear of properties on the north east side of Academy Street. See location plan with the application site outlined in red (Figure 1) below. The full extent of land in the Rose Street area owned by the applicants, Inverness Properties Ltd, is outlined in blue on the plan below right (Figure 2). The remainder of the application site owned by the Highland Council.

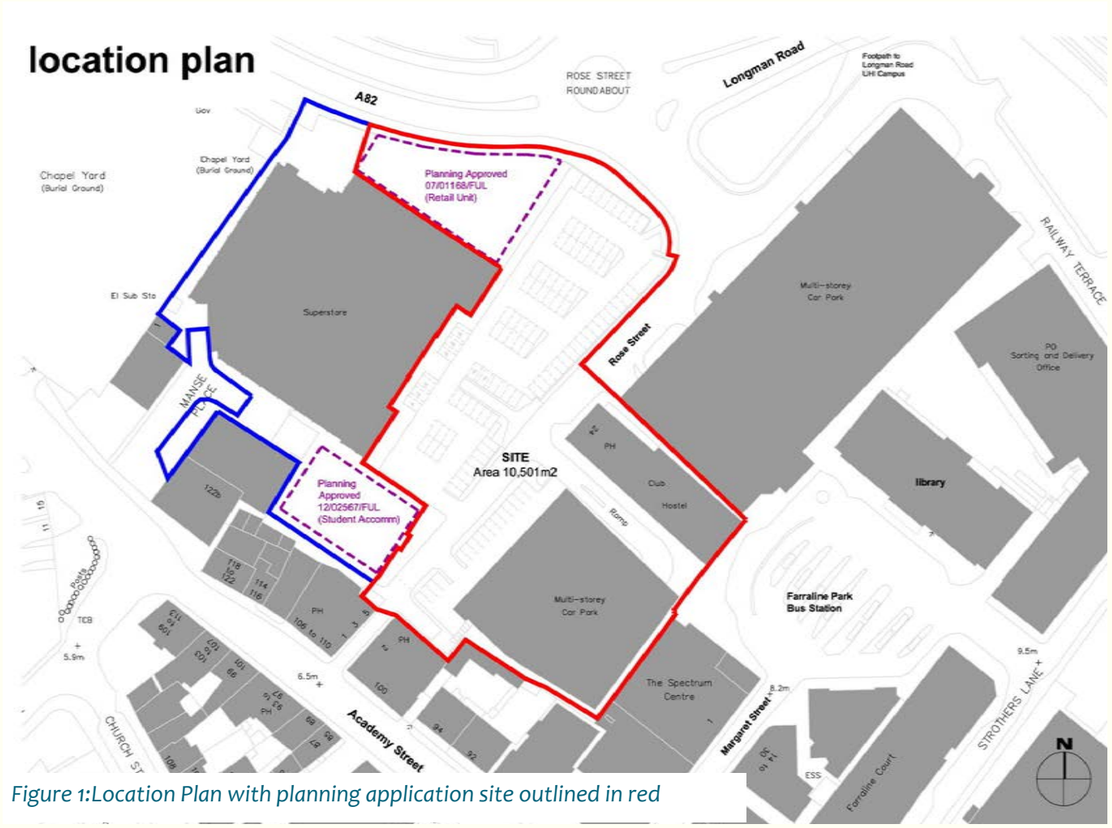


Figure 1:Location Plan with planning application site outlined in red

2.2 Description – physical/environmental characteristics

The site extends to 1.05 hectares (2.6 acres). It is irregular in shape and comprises of the following: -

(i) The former Rose Street drill hall building, which is an undesignated historic building but not Listed. This now houses a night club, a back-packer/tourist hostel, a hot food take-away and a newsagent shop. This is constructed mainly from red sandstone walls. Most of the roof is pitched with a traditional slate covering and large glass skylights. However, there are flat and felted sections of roof which are in a poor condition.

(ii) The two level pay and display car parking with its ramped access from the Rose Street level, previously built as part of the former *Safeway* supermarket development. The upper deck structure is constructed from concrete and steel and has a mainly synthetic stone clad parapet wall with a somewhat shabby appearance.

(iii) The undeveloped area of the retail park on the north side of the former *Safeway* building with planning permission for additional retail floorspace, which has not been taken up.

(iv) The south eastern section of Rose Street, extending through to Academy Street and forming a tarred access to car parking and service areas.

(v) The pedestrian access lane between Rose Street and the city's bus station in Farraline Park surfaced with concrete slabs. On the bus station side it has a dated looking synthetic stone clad entrance feature.

The site is relatively flat and apart from the former drill hall building has a hard surface which is either tarred or slabbed. A high stone boundary wall encloses the lower car park deck on the south east and south west and sides. There is a relatively open aspect into the site from its north east approach along Rose Street from Longman Road. There are no Listed buildings on the site but it lies adjacent to a number of such buildings fronting Academy Street.

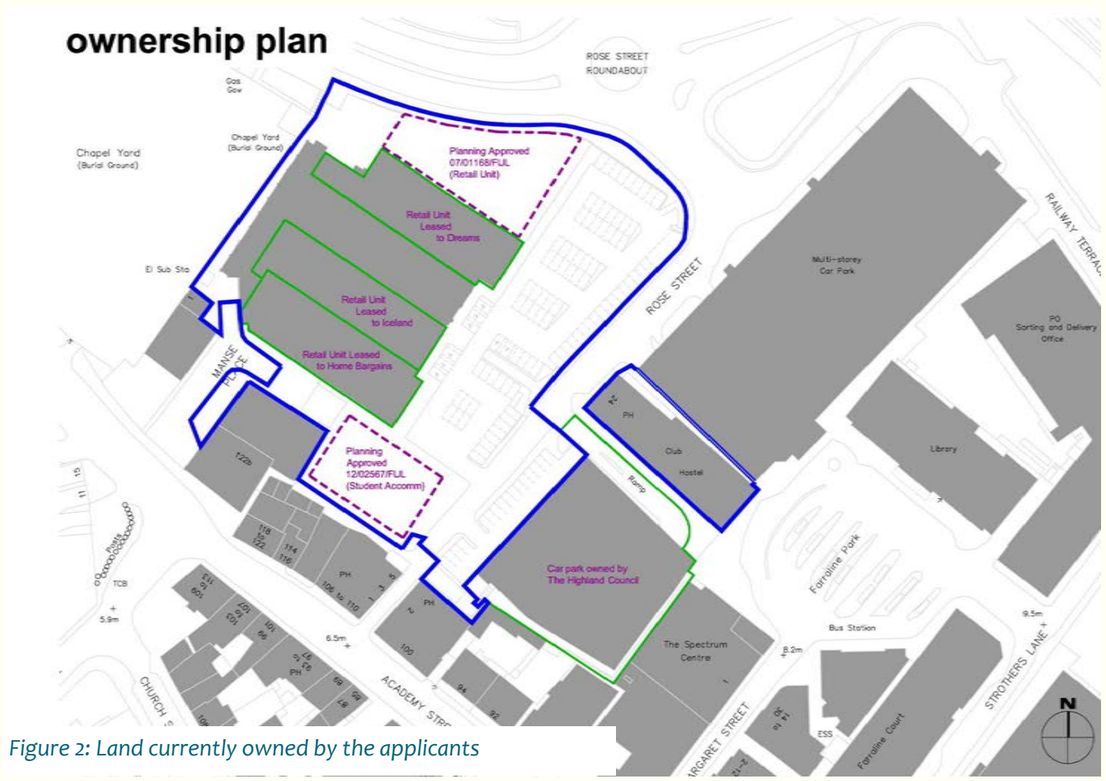


Figure 2: Land currently owned by the applicants

2.3 Surrounding Uses

Adjacent to the site are the following buildings and uses: -

(i) To the north east - the Rose Street/Old Town car park, which comprises ten split level parking areas, with an overall height of equivalent to around five storeys.

(ii) To the east - the Farraline Park bus station concourse and the flat roofed building housing the Spectrum Community Centre.

(iii) To the south and south west - a varied mix of two to five storeys high buildings fronting Academy Street. The rear elevations of offices (Ballantyne House), small shops, a public house and some limited residential accommodation overlook the site.

(iv) To the west and north west - modern retail units with open car parking facilities.

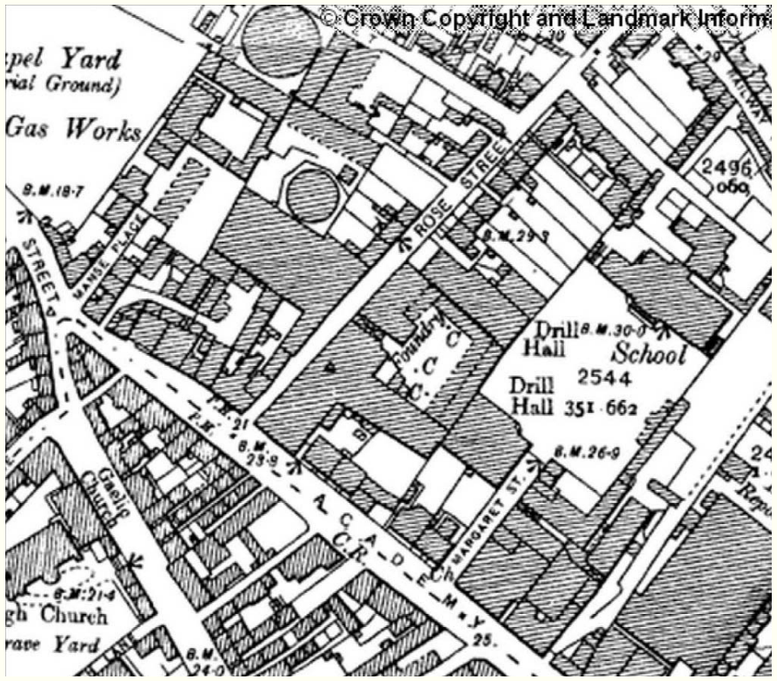


Figure 3: extract from Ordnance Survey map circa 1904/5

2.4 History and Archaeology

In addition to containing the former Rose Street Hall, the long-since demolished Rose Street Foundry operated by AI Welders was sited on the area currently occupied by the decked car park area (see photos above right). In this regard the Council's Archaeologist suggests the potential for buried historic features or remains relating to the Foundry or medieval Inverness surviving beneath the ground. Archaeological evaluation is therefore recommended following demolition and excavation for the development area to allow the identification and recording of any such features.

The site formed part of the redevelopment to provide the *Safeway* supermarket in the late 1980s but since then the most recent planning applications for the current application site were for the former Rose Street Hall. This included the approved changes of use from a public house to a backpackers hostel (Ref. No: 05/01299/FULIN) and from a nightclub to two retail units and nightclub (Ref. No: 06/01178/FULIN).

On adjoining land the most recent proposal was for what was previously know as Phase 1 of the student flats and ground floor retail units development approved in 2012 (Ref. No: 12/02567/FUL). This site was also the subject of a previous planning consent for ground floor retail units and four floors of offices above (08/00415/FULIN). Other proposals for adjoining land relate to the conversion of the former *Safeway* store to smaller retail units, relevant alterations to the front elevations and shop front signage from 2007 to 2010.

2.5 Site Investigations

Consulting engineers Stuart McTaggart Ltd and Terra Tek have undertaken preliminary assessments of the topographical, hydrological, geological and geo-environmental (Phase 1) aspects. These provide the basis for determining the requirements and ground conditions for drainage and building on the site and the need for further detailed site and contamination assessments. Full investigations will be undertaken in advance of preparing Building Warrant applications and a full Drainage Impact Assessment will also be carried out, particularly once the guidance from Scottish Water and SEPA on drainage and flood risk issues to be covered are clarified. The initial site investigations also include an assessment of the location and capacity of all utilities – foul and surface water drainage, water supply, gas, electricity and telecommunications.

The drainage statement and covering letter of 30 October 2013 from Stuart McTaggart and the geo-environmental report from Terra Tek and a number of accompanying drawings lodged in support of the planning application cover all of these aspects in detail.

2.6 Infrastructure/Services

Existing foul and surface water drainage, water supply, gas, electricity and telecommunications infrastructure run under and parallel to the road carriageway of Rose Street. Detailed requirements for connection to these networks have been requested and will be agreed with the relevant utility company once full assessments and network designs have been completed.

(i) Drainage

The area has been densely developed since the 1860's with drainage taken to a combined sewer on an un-attenuated basis. The existing combined foul and surface water public sewers located under the existing in Rose Street carriageway provide an opportunity for connection to the development. Invert levels indicated on the Scottish Water GIS system (copy included as an appendix to the engineers' report) would suggest that there is adequate depth for connections to the sewer by gravity means. The sewer systems from the development will be separate foul and surface water systems with disconnecting manholes prior to entering the existing combined sewer.

Scottish Water have requested a full DIA report in order to consider the overall impact of the surface and foul discharges on the combined sewer system. Proposed foul discharge figures have been submitted to Scottish Water and will be considered fully when the DIA is instructed.

The proposed development, with the incorporation of an open square, presents the opportunity to provide a single underground system which will incorporate the surface water run-off from each block and with treated and attenuated discharge to the existing combined sewer on Rose Street. This complies with the requirements of the Scottish Water design guide *Sewers for Scotland and CIRIA C697, The SUDS Manual* Type C, as identified in the Highland Council sustainable design guide. Each individual block will need to be connected separately to a storage structure involving a filtration system (where levels allow) providing one level of treatment to roof areas and two levels to hard landscaped areas, per CIRIA guidance. The exception to this may be where new buildings front adjacent streets and minimal roof areas may require to discharge directly, subject to Scottish Water agreement.

(ii) Water Supply

Scottish Water has advised that there is sufficient capacity in the Inverness main Water Treatment Works and also the local network to service the demands from the development.

(iii) Access, Movement and Transport

The main vehicular access to the site is from Longman Road and Rose Street. A secondary access from Academy Street is currently available via Strothers Lane (one way), Railway Terrace and Rose Street. A service access is exists from Academy Street between the two public houses and currently serves the rear of these and adjoining properties. This also serves as one of two pedestrian/cycle accesses into the application site and is controlled by permanent bollards. The other pedestrian/cycle access is located between the Rose Street hall and car park access ramp and links the site with Farraline Park and the bus station.

The proximity to the bus station in terms of transport movements is a significant advantage in terms of the location of the site. Similarly, local service bus stances in Academy Street and the railway station are a short walk from the site. Off-street public car parking is available within the site and in the adjacent Rose Street /Old Town multi-storey car park.

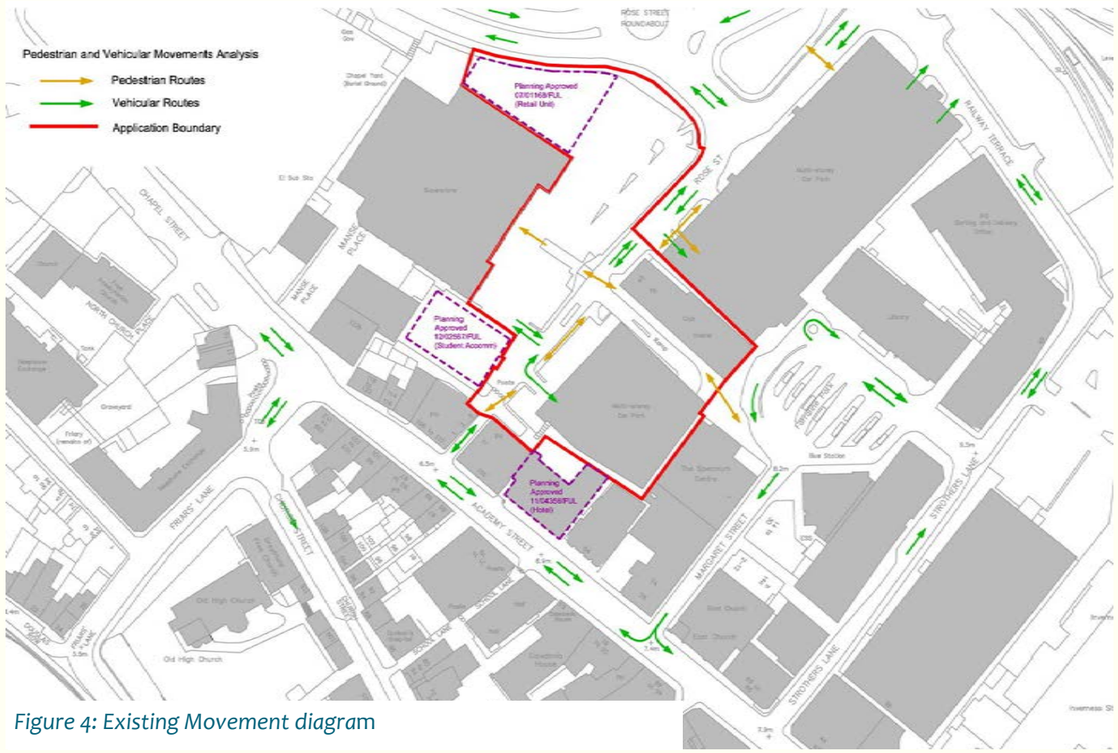


Figure 4: Existing Movement diagram

3. Planning Policy Context

3.1 National Planning Policy and Advice

The following general Scottish Government policy, advice and good practice reports provide the policy framework and guidance, which this Design Statement accounts for.

(i) Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) is the consolidated statement of national planning policy and includes the following policies which are most relevant to the proposed development and have been accounted for in preparing the proposals: -

Town Centres and Retailing refers to town centres being the focus for a mix of uses and retail and leisure uses as fundamental to the concentration of other activities located there. It also so refers to the range and quality of shopping, wider economic and social activity, integration with residential areas and the quality of the environment being key influences on the success of a town centre.

Improving Town Centres, indicates what factors should be taken into account in terms of improvement, including the need to promote new opportunities for development, using master planning and design exercises, taking account of historic and conservation considerations as well as the need for good access at all times to all sectors of the community, for the delivery of goods, for waste collection and by foot, public transport or car.

Housing advises that development plans should address the need for houses in multiple occupation (HMO) typically from students.

Historic Environment particularly in relation to the formation of development proposals within or adjacent to Conservation Areas or affecting Listed Buildings and archaeological sites or their settings. This advises of the importance of assessing the impact of proposed development on the historic environment and its setting, how it is intended to fit into the townscape, the view from it or how it is seen from around, or areas that are important to the protection of the place, site or building.

Archaeology including ensuring that developers undertake appropriate excavation, recording, analysis, publication and archiving before and/or during development.

Transport, emphasising the need to reduce travel and the dependence on the car through the connection of new development to local services by walking, cycling and public transport (where available). It also advises of the circumstances then a Transport assessment should be carried out for development proposals.

Drainage, in conjunction with Planning Advice Note 79 *Water and Drainage*, including the need for drainage assessments and the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) to ensure that the proposed arrangements for foul and surface water drainage are adequate.

(ii) Planning Advice Note 83: *Master Planning*, which promotes the use of master planning to create better places with high quality environments, good connections and well-designed, energy efficient, homes.

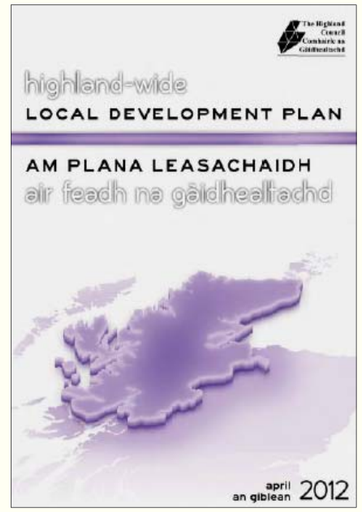
(iii) Planning Advice Note 68: *Design Statements*, which explains what a design statement is, why it is a useful tool, when it is required and how it should be prepared and presented. In this regard this Design Statement explains the design process, outlines the design principles and illustrates the design solution.

(iv) *Master Planning – Designing Successful Places*, which promotes good quality housing design and place-making throughout Scotland through two key design policy documents ***Designing Places*** and ***Designing Streets***. These emphasise the 6 qualities of successful places:

1. *Distinctive*
2. *Safe and pleasant*
3. *Easy to move around*
4. *Welcoming*
5. *Adaptable*
6. *Resource efficient*

3.2 Local development plan policy

The development plan relevant to the site comprises the Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) 2012 and the Inverness Local Plan (ILP) 2006 (as continued in force). Following adoption of the HwLDP, only certain parts of the ILP continue in force as part of the development plan.



(i) The Highland Wide Local Development Plan

The following General Policies in this spatial strategy for the Highland Council area as a whole are particularly relevant to the proposed development: -

Policy 3: City Centre Development outlines the Council's support for development proposals for the city centre which maintain and strengthen its vitality and viability. It commits the Council to preparing supplementary guidance that highlights specific opportunities for redevelopment and enhancement. The Council have since prepared, consulted upon and adopted this supplementary guidance, the Inverness City Centre Development Brief (ICCDB). Key elements of the ICCDB relevant to the proposed developments are provided below.

Policy 28 Sustainable Design outlines the Council's support for developments which promote and enhance the social, economic and environmental well-being of the people of Highland. The policy lists a range of criteria against which proposals will be assessed and indicates the need for a Design Statement. This Statement accounts for *Policy 28* and the Council's *Sustainable Design Guide* (as approved on 16 January 2013). In such regards the proposed development:

- is compatible with public service provision as there is adequate spare capacity in terms of water and sewerage;
- is accessible by public transport, cycling and walking as well as by car;
- seeks to maximise energy efficiency in terms of location, layout and design, and will seek to utilise renewable sources of energy and heat;

- may be potentially affected by contamination from previous uses of the site;
- will seek to minimise the generation of waste during the construction and operational phases;
- does not impact on non-renewable resources;
- does not impact on other resources such as habitats, cultural heritage or air quality;
- the design and siting of buildings seeks to minimise the impact on the townscape of the city centre and views of Listed buildings and the Conservation Area ; and
- promotes the use of appropriate materials.

Policy 29 Design Quality and Place Making requires new development to be designed to make a positive contribution to the architectural and visual quality of the place in which it is located and to consider the incorporation of public art as a means of creating a distinct sense of place and identity.

Policy 30 Physical Constraints requires developers to consider whether their proposals would be located within areas of constraints as set out in Physical Constraints: Supplementary Guidance. Where a proposed development is affected by any of the constraints detailed within the guidance, developers must demonstrate compatibility with the constraint or outline appropriate mitigation measures to be provided.

Policy 31 Developer Contributions allows the Council to seek from the developer a fair and reasonable contribution in cash or kind towards additional costs or requirements for improved public services, facilities, infrastructure or public art where relevant to a development. For example, the improvement of the pedestrian links to Academy Street.

Policy 33 Houses in Multiple Occupation, which include student flats, promotes the provision of high quality accommodation across Highland.

Policy 40 Retailing promotes retailing in the city centre as a first priority taking into account *Policies 28* and 29.

Policy 56 Travel requires development proposals that involve travel generation to include sufficient information with the application to enable the Council to consider any likely transport implications and requires that such developments can served by the most sustainable modes of travel.

Policy 57 Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage requires all development proposals to be assessed taking into account the level of importance and type of heritage features, the form and scale of the development, and any impact on the feature and its setting in the context of the policy framework of heritage features.

Policy 66 Surface Water Drainage requires all proposed development to be drained by Sustainable Drainage Systems.

Policy 75 Open Space requires the proposed development to provide for an element open space accessible by foot and linked to the wider city centre network.

(ii) The Inverness Local Plan (March 2006)

In this The Local Plan City of Inverness Inset Map (Figure 5, right) indicates the site as lying within the city centre area of where a number of policies and proposals. This includes 1 and 2, which are most relevant to the proposed development.

Policy 1: USES, seeks to strengthen and enhance the city centre as the focus for retail, commercial and business activity and encourages the redevelopment and upgrading/modernisation of property for such purposes. It also states that the emphasis throughout the wider city centre is on mixed uses and enhancing viability and vitality as well opportunities for redevelopment in the area post-2006.

Policy 2: DESIGN, advises that *"development/ redevelopment should ensure continuity in the streetscape" and that "adding height to buildings at landmark sites or focal points could be acceptable where there is no prejudice to the City Centre skyline or main vistas".*

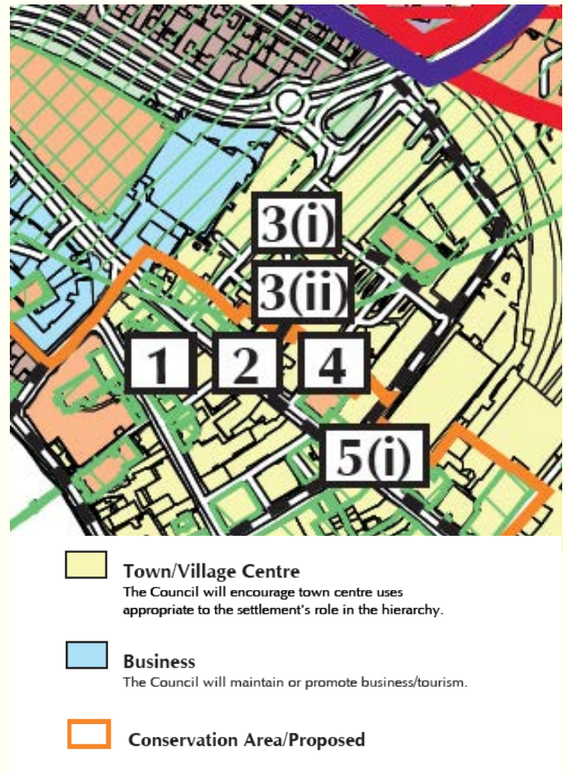


Figure 5: Extract from Inverness Local Plan City Inset Map

(iii) The Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan as Proposed (November 2013)

This Plan has just been published for formal consultation purposes up until 13 December 2013. It indicates the site as lying within a larger area of 5.9 hectares in Inverness City Centre designated for mixed uses as follows: -

IN5 - North East of Academy Street. Development in accordance with the Council's already approved detailed guidance: Inverness City Centre Development Brief and planning permission 12/02567/FUL for 100-120 student flats and retail units and notably: retail units restricted to Class 1; streetscaping improvements between Academy Street and the area surrounding the site.

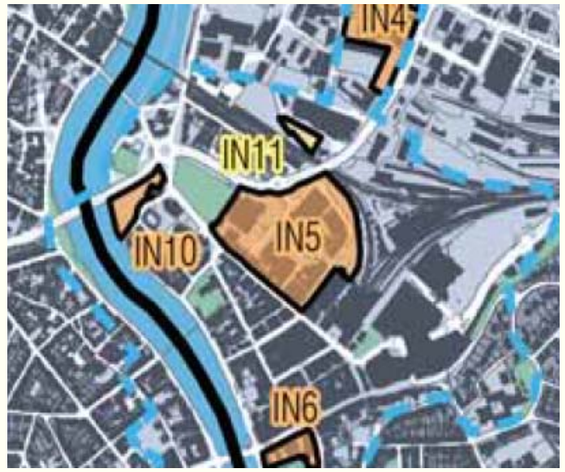


Figure 6: Extract from Proposed Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan Central and West Inverness Inset Map

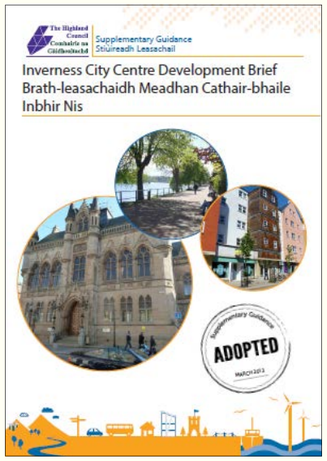
3.3 Local development plan supplementary planning guidance

The following Highland Council Supplementary Planning Guidance is most relevant to the proposed development: -

(i) The Inverness City Centre Development Brief (Adopted March 2013)

The proposed development site falls within the boundary of Inverness City Centre as defined in the ICCDB. The site lies within one of five key city centre districts, East of Academy Street, where specific major regeneration opportunities are identified in the brief.

A key aim of the brief is to strengthen the vitality and viability of the city centre, particularly the reinvigoration of the Old Town area of Inverness City Centre through the creation of a dedicated business district, student hub, improving the retail offering, civic square and streetscape improvements. The plan below taken from the ICCDB shows preferred land uses in the area in the short to medium term.



The ICCDB anticipates that the development of the new University and Highlands and Islands Campus over the coming years will result in the need for dedicated student accommodation both on and off campus. It considers the city centre provides an ideal setting for the creation of a student hub and that this could play a key role in the regeneration of Inverness city centre. Such uses would exploit the valuable characteristics of the area including its central location, transport links, height of existing buildings and views over the city. The proposed land uses are therefore wholly consistent with the development brief.

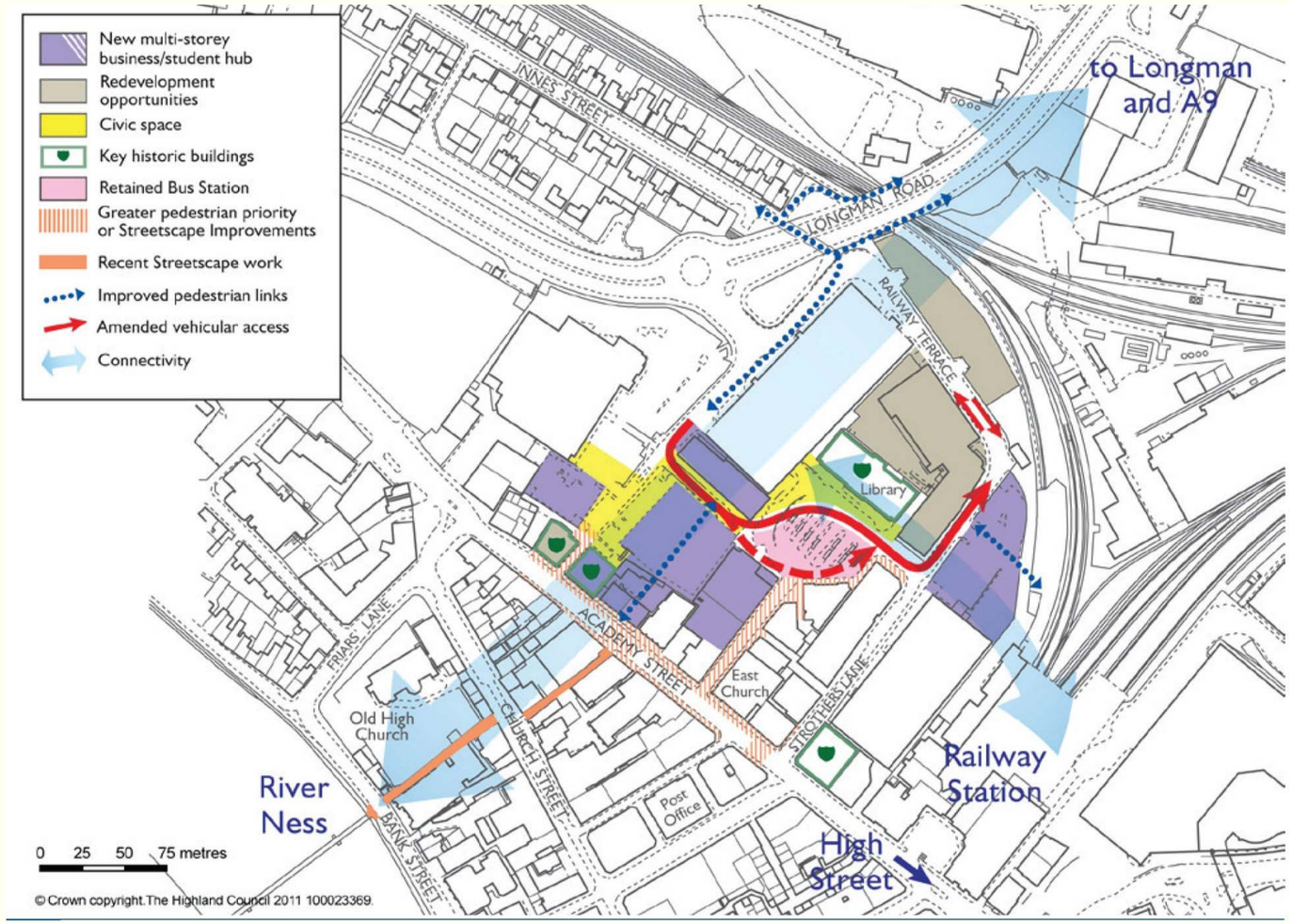
The ICCDB notes that due to its physical characteristics and surrounding land uses the area has potential for multi-storey development. It considers this would help to add to the value of development by offering excellent views of the river and over the city from the upper floors and the feasibility of uses, such as retail, office, tourism, housing and parking. However, any such new development in this area must be of the highest quality and demonstrate clearly how it sits within and complements the surrounding area including the neighbouring Inverness (Riverside) Conservation Area.

The ICCDB also emphasises that the formation of dedicated civic spaces presents an important opportunity for the Academy Street area. It illustrates an opportunity for a civic space in the Rose Street area in conjunction with streetscape improvements on Rose Street and Academy Street.

The plan from the ICCDB shown right (Figure 7) illustrates an amended vehicular access through the site linking Rose Street and Railway Terrace through Farraline Park. It is intended this link would be restricted to buses; allowing buses to enter and exit the bus station from the dual carriageway without having to negotiate narrow city centre streets. However, this has been considered further and whilst the re-routing of buses through this link will require further work, for example, the complete reconfiguration of the bus stances, it will impact on the ability to form a reasonable civic space, residential amenity of the proposed flats and access to the retail units. In addition, the implied reduction in the footprint of the development, the number of bed spaces and commercial floorspace will undermine the overall viability of the proposals. Furthermore the applicants support the longer term aspirations of the Brief to see the bus station be relocated to allow better integration with the railway station and the whole of Farraline Park to become the main civic hub for the City. The map opposite shows this long term vision of the area East of Academy Street.

The ICCDB recognises that movement and access have a critical role in making Inverness a sustainable and functional place. As shown on the plan below (Figure 7), improved pedestrian links between Farraline Park and Academy Street are a requirement of the ICCDB. The brief also explains that a short term opportunity may be for the widening of pavements and pedestrian crossings on Academy Street and Margaret Street and a further key proposal is to provide greater connections from the A82 and existing college sites into the City Centre and through to the river frontage.

Figure 7: Preferred Land Uses plan from the ICCB



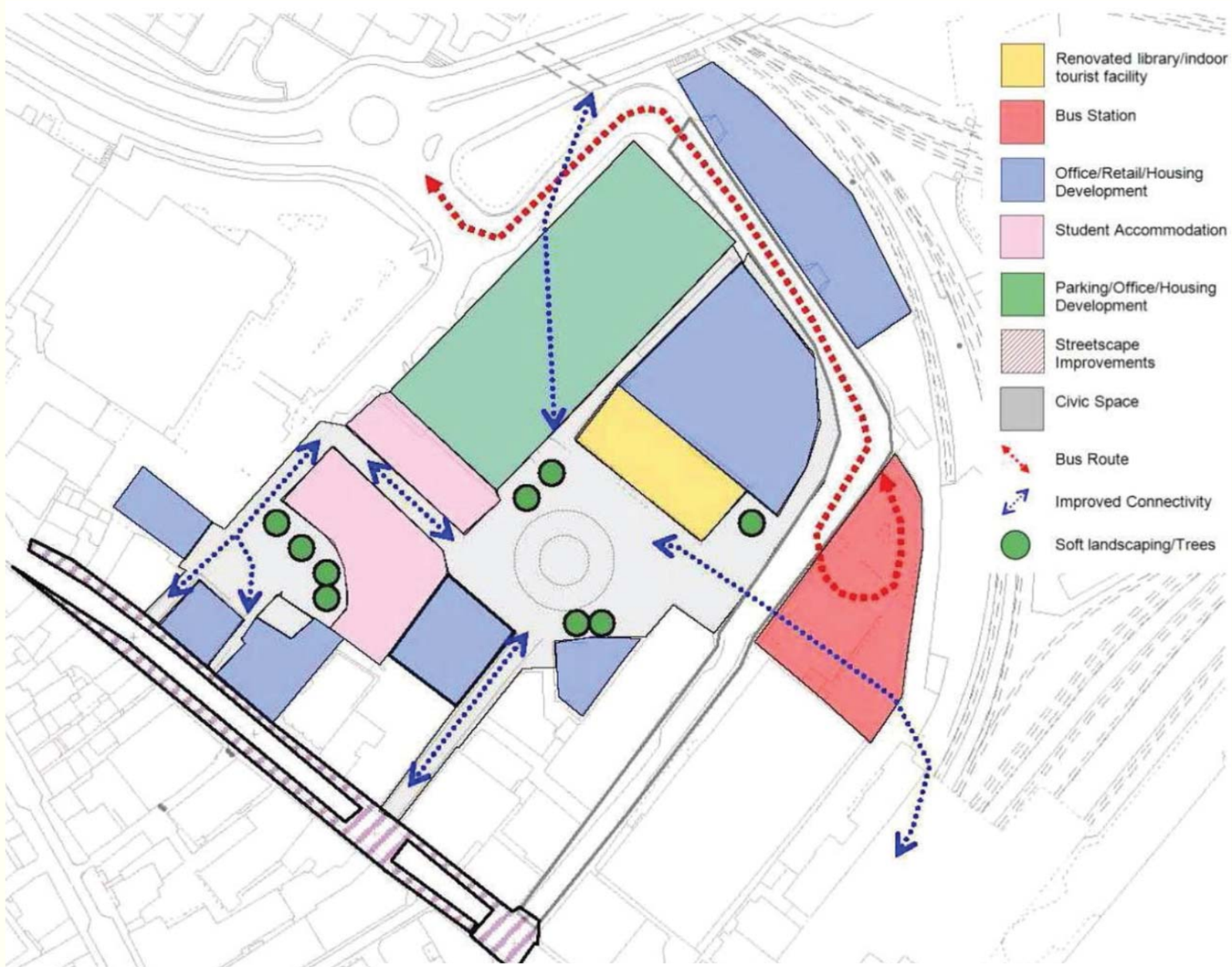


Figure 8: Long term vision of the area East of Academy Street from ICCB

Overall, the development has the potential to help meet the criteria and aspirations for the city centre as outlined in the Brief, notably to:

- improve its commercial vitality and viability;
- make it the most attractive and desirable place for businesses to locate;
- enhance the user experience for tourists and other visitors;
- increase the connectivity and active travel to, from and within; and
- provide much needed vitality and re-generation of a key area.

The Student Quarter is one of the key sites which has the ability to kick start further development, and effective partnership working between the Council, businesses, landowners, developers and residents. It has, at its heart, the provision of a new civic space incorporating green spaces which will enhance the overall environment within this part of the City Centre as well as help meet the deficit of civic and green space for residents, workers and visitors to enjoy. It also has the potential to act as a catalyst for further adjoining development opportunities to allow people to live and work within the confines of the City Centre and so stimulate life and activity to the benefit of the wider area.

(ii) Other Supplementary Planning Guidance

In the wider context of the guidance on Developer Contributions, the Highland Council has advised of the likelihood that contributions will be sought towards:

- **Transport**: contributions to the provision of public transport and the necessary associated infrastructure and to the provision of, or connection to, cycle and pedestrian routes;
- **Green infrastructure**: such as open space, which will be provided within the development;
- **Street level and public realm enhancement**: either through contributions to or direct provision of linkages to Academy Street to tie in with future works there;
- **Public Art**: likely to be provided on site in association with the open space/civic square and/or part of the street level enhancements.

4. Visual Analysis and Development Context

4.1 Townscape analysis/context - visual impact

Views from around the city centre and beyond

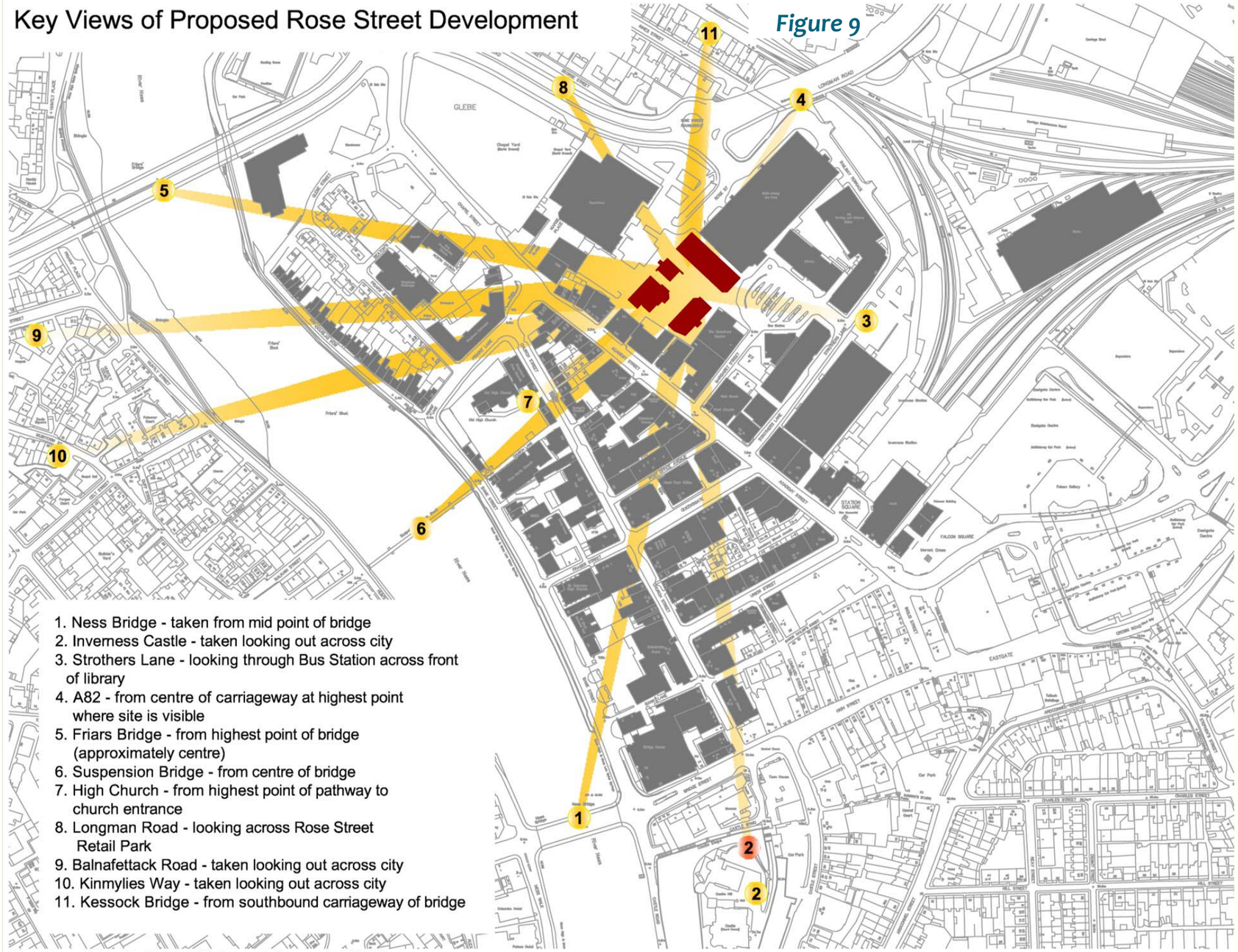
In order to assist with the visual interpretation and impact of the buildings within the setting a 3-dimensional model of the city centre was prepared to show the massing to inform views of the proposed buildings from key viewpoints within the city centre and selective peripheral locations identified in discussion with the Highland Council Conservation Officer. This is to enable better visual interpretation of the buildings insofar as they affect the sky line or integrate into it when seen from numerous locations. This exercise builds on the visual and townscape assessment undertaken during consideration of the previously approved development (formerly Phase 1), where there a number of locations around the centre of Inverness from which future buildings on the site will be visible from. Added to this are the peripheral locations of the Kessock Bridge and the hillside suburb of Scorguie and Kinmylies, where elevated panoramic views of most of the city and the centre are obtained. These are indicated and assessed as follows, aided by photo montage illustrations and line of sight diagrams.

The design of the building is deliberately stepped up from the rear of Academy Street, from 9 storeys to 8 storeys adjacent to the Rose Street car park. To further reduce any perceived visual impact the building has a profiled and dynamic façade creating a vertical emphasis with a limited colour pallet, which allows it to be read as a number of faces rather than a flat façade and sit comfortably within the skyline.

The buildings as proposed have been designed to build in height to the north to maximise daylight and sunlight into the public spaces, as demonstrated in the Landscape Statement and to ensure that when viewed from Academy Street and historic Church Street and the High Church the buildings simply cannot be seen. This is illustrated in the viewpoint photographs and accompanying sections.

Key Views of Proposed Rose Street Development

Figure 9



Viewpoint 1: Centre of Ness Bridge

The massing and elevation of the buildings on the river frontage, notably the Mercure Hotel, and those behind up to Academy Street, coupled with the angle of elevation, serve to conceal the proposed buildings.

Viewpoint 2: Inverness Castle

The elevation of the viewpoint looking towards the site would suggest that it may be possible to view some the upper storeys of the buildings though the view would be fragmented by other buildings in the foreground.

Viewpoint 3: Strother's Lane approach into Bus station

The view from Strother's Lane shows the buildings situated between the Spectrum Centre and the Rose Street/Old Town Multi Storey car park. If viewed from further back at the Strothers Lane point of access it will be partly framed by the Farraline Court building which has considerable height and is in the foreground.

Viewpoint 4: Longman Road

Approaches from Longman Road look towards the rear of the properties on Academy Street. Many of the buildings between Academy Street and Longman Road have a bulky form, such as the Rose Street Car Park, the Ironworks Venue, Ballantyne House, the Spectrum Centre and the existing retail units within the former Safeway supermarket building. As such, only the rear elevations of a few of the Academy Street historical buildings can be seen from Longman Road. The form and scale of the proposed buildings will be substantially taller than those immediately adjacent and will help to off-set the proximity and bulk of the Rose Street Car Park and the visually similar height of BT telephone exchange building at the north west end of Academy Street. The dynamic façade with a limited colour pallet will also serve to break up the perceived scale of the building when viewed from this direction.

△

Viewpoint 5: Friars Bridge

There will be an oblique view of the buildings from the bridge with the rear of the BT telephone exchange building immediately to its right and some 80 to 150metres closer. The vertical emphasis of the proposed gables will be greater due to the oblique view and will break up the mass of the buildings. Their position further from the telephone exchange building will give the impression of a height similar to the former, particularly that of the tower on the internal corner of the exchange.

Viewpoint 6: Greig Street Bridge

There will be a significant view of the buildings from this bridge and from its northern approach along Huntly Street. The building eaves line will project above the ridge lines of the flanking Old High Church and the North Free Church. However, its impact from the riverside is less than the existing BT telephone exchange and the Government offices on Church Street.

Viewpoint 7: High Church Entrance

A person standing at either of the entrances to the High Church would not view the building due to the close proximity and height of 115 Church Street. The only line of sight towards the building would be from the top of the steps to the church from Church Street. Ground levels and heights of buildings on Church Street would serve to conceal the proposed buildings from this viewpoint.

△

Viewpoint 8: Longman Road/Shore Street

The majority of the building mass is shielded by the Rose Street retail park for most of its height and counter-balanced by the woodland surrounding the Chapel Yard burial ground.

Viewpoint 9: Balnafettack Road/Crescent, Scorguie, 2.2 km north west of the city centre

This location is at a much higher elevation and most of the houses with a view look down on the city centre where existing taller buildings are barely noticeable. As with viewpoints 10 and 11 the taller buildings tend to form one large mass with the rest of the city centre townscape and merge well with the backdrop as will the proposed buildings.

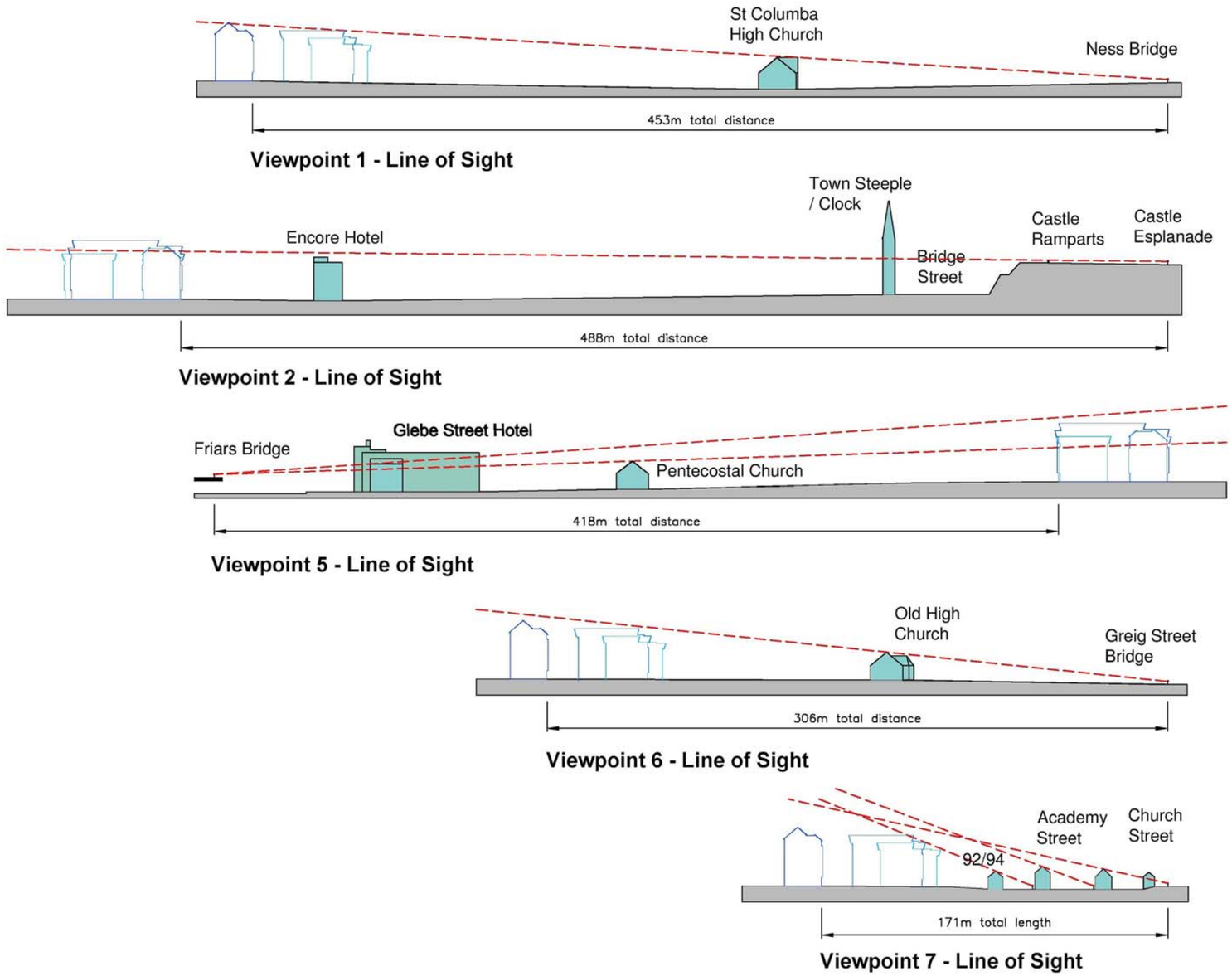
Viewpoint 10: Kinmylies Way, 1.9 km north west of the city centre

From this location many houses have a view of the city centre from an elevated position. However, as with viewpoints 9 and 11, from here the existing taller buildings tend to form one large mass and the backdrop also helps to absorb them into the wider townscape. The proposed buildings will be visible but as with the view from the Kessock Bridge they will not appear to protrude significantly above the existing.

Viewpoint 11: The Kessock Bridge, 1.9 km north of the city centre

Vehicles drivers and passengers heading north on the bridge generally do not have a view of the city centre. This view is therefore one that vehicle drivers and passengers have from the south bound lane of the bridge, whilst heading towards the city, but only if they look towards the right of the direction they are travelling as most will be looking forward or south east. This is not a significantly elevated view and as such the existing taller buildings of the city centre are not that prominent given the distance they are viewed from. Indeed with the backdrop of other buildings and the rising ground above Castle and High Streets the existing buildings tend to merge with the overall townscape. This backdrop will also serve to help integrate the proposed buildings so that they will not appear to protrude significantly above the existing when viewed from the bridge.

Figure 10: Line of sight diagrams



Close up view from Academy Street

The site lies approximately 300m north west of Inverness city centre, some 20m behind the frontages of Academy Street, one of the main thoroughfares into and out of the city. Academy Street has a great variety of street frontages in the vicinity of the site including two-and-a-half storey stone built buildings with shops on the ground floor and either flatted accommodation or vacant stores above, topped with slated roofs. Adjacent to these sit the ornate three storey AI Welder's building from circa 1870, which sits adjacent to the higher recently approved five storey hotel, and Ballantyne House, a five storey brick multi facetted office building. All of very different design and character.

The existing structures along Academy Street would conceal the buildings from view for the majority of its length from Inglis Street all the way down to the Encore Hotel, where they may be glimpsed beyond the recently approved hotel. Thereafter it would be seen looking up Rose Street beyond the Phoenix and Deeno's Bars. Across from these buildings they will be hidden by the buildings opposite. These views are based upon a pedestrian of average height walking down the south west pavement. In a car the views would be further restricted.

Comparative Massing

Consideration has also been given to the height and massing of the proposed buildings in relation to existing buildings, except churches, within a one kilometre radius of the site. These comparisons have been considered in relation to the tallest of the proposed buildings, B1.

Many of the tall buildings near to the city centre such as the BT Exchange building, the Encore Hotel, Ballantyne House, the Mercure Hotel, Inverness College, the Rose Street Car Park and River House all have a predominately flat roof block form which sit uncomfortably within the city roofscape and are very visually obtrusive. Their form is alien to the skyline of Inverness and many can be seen from important viewpoints looking into the city centre.

Eden Court Theatre has an overall mass around 15% less and a height only around 7m lower than the proposal submitted. The theatre (now Listed) abuts the original Bishop's Palace which has a much lower height. There are also open views to it from two sides, including the river. It dominates its neighbours.

The Mercure Hotel can be viewed from a number of important viewpoints. Set within the historic streetscape it is only 5m lower than the proposed student accommodation buildings on the river frontage and has a mass only around 15% smaller. The flat roof exacerbates the rectangular block form of the building, making it sit uncomfortably and obtrusively within the city skyline.

Other large buildings such as the Inverness College, the Eastgate Centre, and Rose Street Car Park Multi Storey each have a visible mass that is more than double that of the proposals submitted despite being around 50% lower.

The proposed hotel at the former Glebe Street swimming pool site has a visible mass some 30% bigger than the proposals and sits around 6m lower.

4.2 Local architecture and identity context

Function and Type

Much of the character and appearance of the city centre and its buildings is generated by their function or use. Typically it comprises of a mixture of commercial, residential, leisure. public and administrative buildings and facilities. Building types vary from single storey terraced houses to 7 storey hotels, and one-off structures such as the Old High Church. Mixed use flatted properties predominate with retail or service premises on street level and residential above. Large hotels have followed this pattern often with a bar and shops at street level.

Scale

Building scale, its height and breadth and their relationship, has a fundamental influence of the townscape. Scale often reflects the building period. The earliest remaining buildings are 3 to4 storeys or up to 14 metres in height. More modern buildings dating from the 1960s range from 5 to 8 storeys equivalent. See figures 11 and 12 on pages 20 and 21.

Architectural detail and building materials

Architectural detail reflects both a building's function and the period of its construction. The buildings along Academy Street, the river frontage and to the rear of Academy Street are very different and piecemeal in their appearance as they have been built over a period of 150 years or more, utilising a variety of construction styles and scale from dressed stone, rubble, wet harl and slate on the earlier smaller scale buildings and churches, to concrete panel, brick and composite metal cladding on more recent buildings. The exception being the BT Exchange building, which is of a large scale, faced in dressed stone. As such, there is a huge palette to draw upon, recognising that perhaps the larger scale buildings favour a panel system of façade treatment. This context is illustrated in the images on page 22.

Figure 11: Scale of surrounding buildings

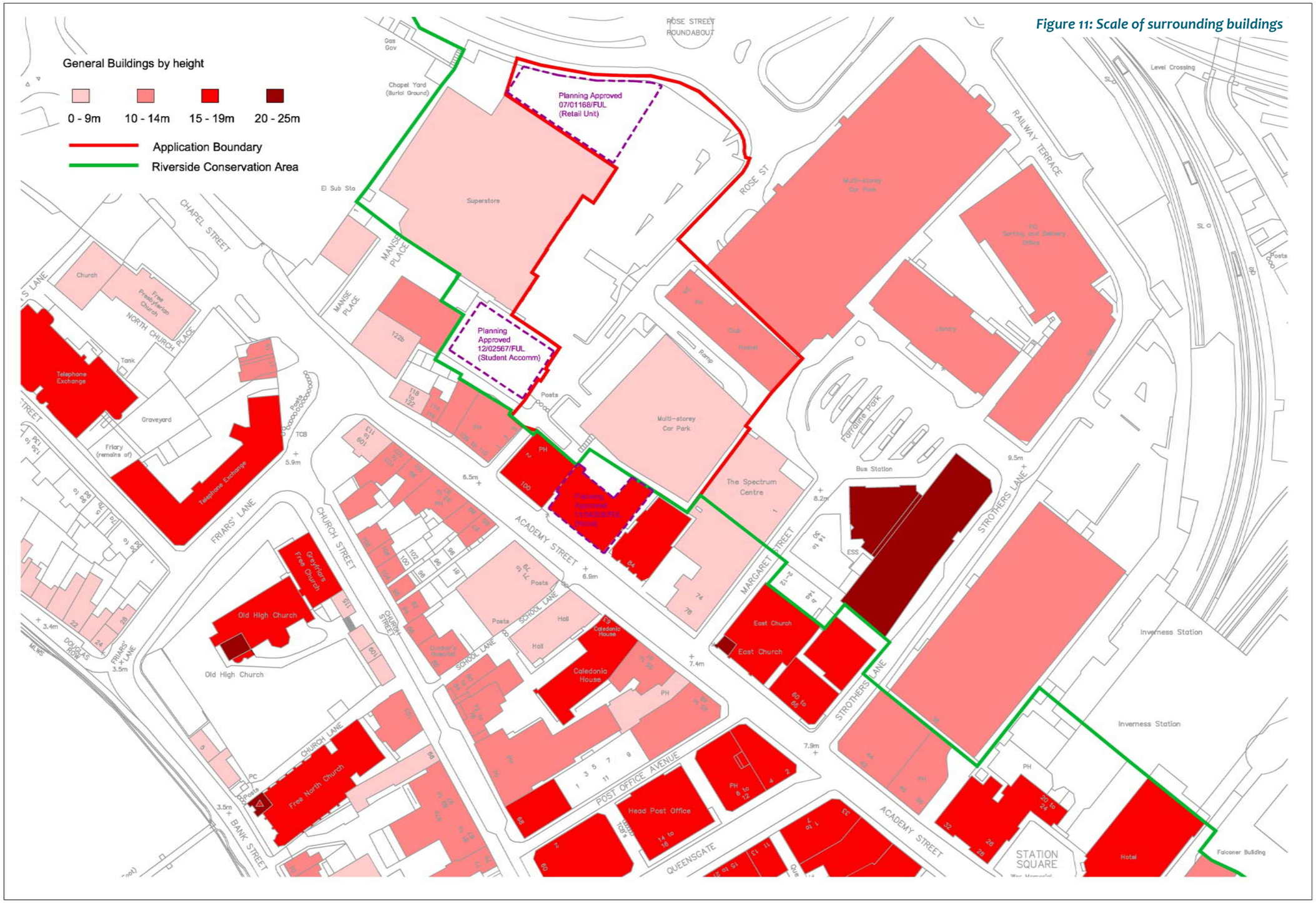
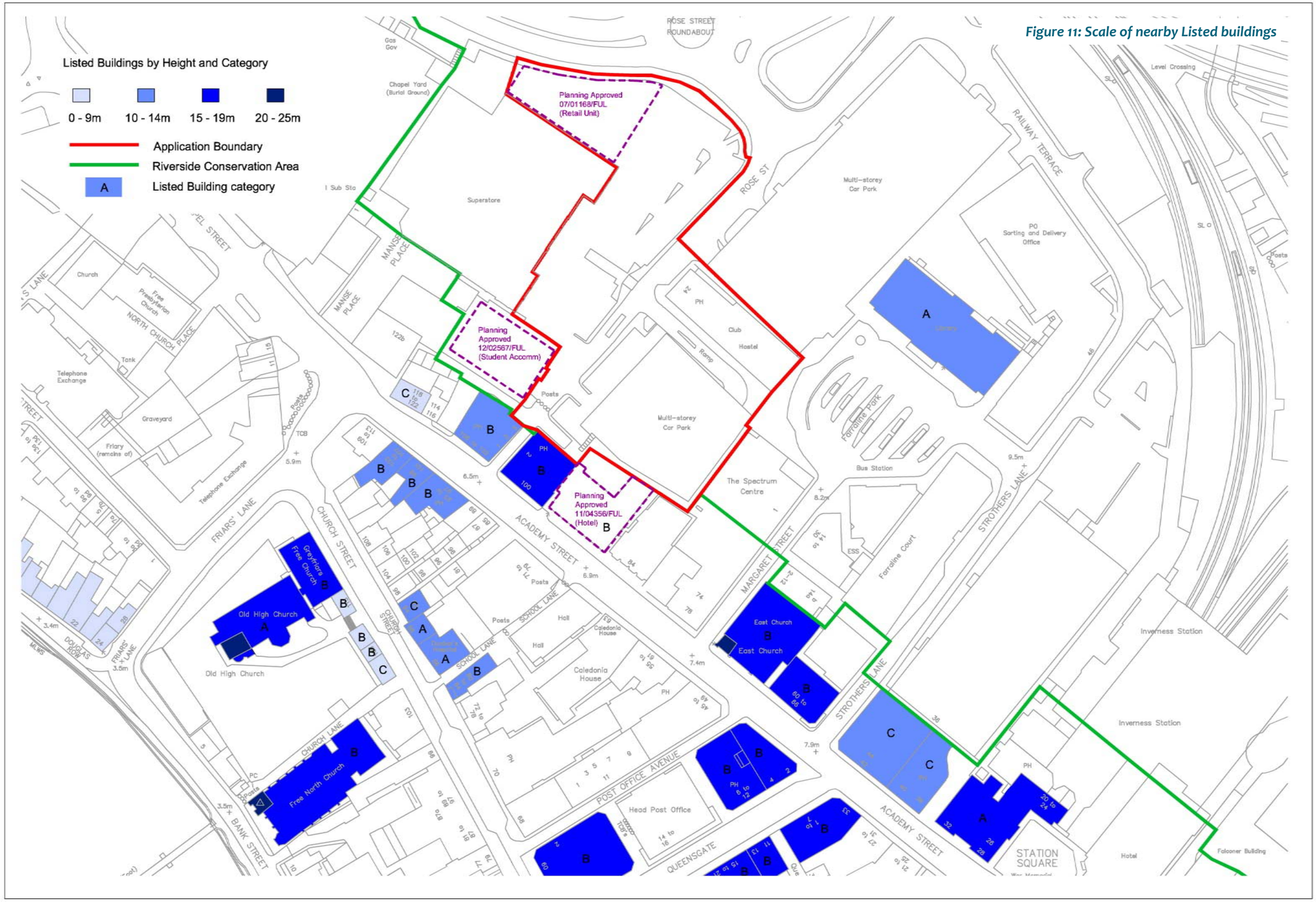


Figure 11: Scale of nearby Listed buildings




Facing Block / Stone Cladding - Eastgate Shopping Centre - Phase 1 & Phase 2


Roughcast, Stone Cladding & Slate - Strothers Lane


Composite Panel, Steel Roofing - Retail Units - Rose St.


Concrete Frame & Panel - Car Park - Rose St.


Painted Concrete Panel, Encore Hotel - Academy St


Painted Concrete Panel - Encore Hotel - Academy St


Stone & Panel - BT Exchange - Friars St


Concrete Frame, Metal Cladding - Post Office - Queensgate


Stone & Slate, Facing Block & Slate - Church St.


Stone & Slate - Al Welders - Academy St


Classical Stone & Concrete Panel / Infill - High St.


Concrete Frame & Cladding - Mercure Hotel - Bank St. & Church St.


Steel Frame, Render, Stone Facing - Premier Inn - Huntly St.


Concrete Frame, Render - Bridge House - Bank St.

Stone & Slate - Academy St


Concrete Frame & Panelling - Moray House - Bank St.

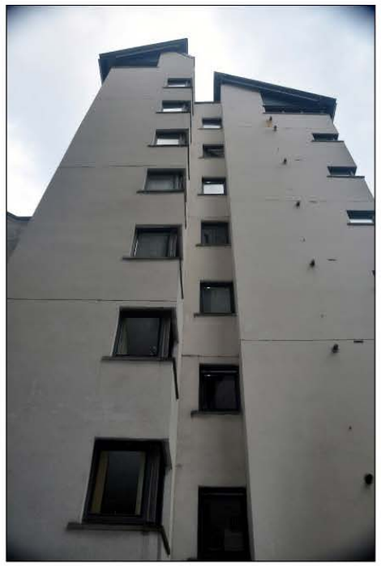

Roughcast, Brick, Slate Roof - Ballantyne House - Academy St


Brick & Slate - Ballantyne House - Academy St.

Examples of scale, design and materials of city centre buildings within 500 m of the application site

4.3 Examples of similar accommodation developed elsewhere

Just as relevant are the many other examples of high rise student accommodation approved and built successfully in other Scottish and UK cities (see photo illustrations on page 23). Many of these have been built within Conservation Areas, including in the Old Town of Edinburgh, which is also a World Heritage Site. The good quality and acceptability of these in such sensitive city-scapes has therefore influenced the design of the proposed Student Quarter at Rose Street.



EXAMPLES OF SCOTTISH MULTI-STOREY STUDENT & RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION

OTHER EXAMPLES OF STUDENT ACCOMMODATION IN THE UK

5. Pre-application Consultation

The need to take engage with the Planning Authority and key stakeholders to obtain views in advance of the submission of a planning application is not only of vital importance towards seeking acceptance of the development proposals but is a statutory requirement. Since December 2012 informal and statutory pre-application consultation has been carried out with a number of relevant stakeholder organisations and the general public. This included taking up the opportunity to have a pre-application meeting with the Highland Council Planning and Development Service and their consultees to obtain written views on the proposed development.

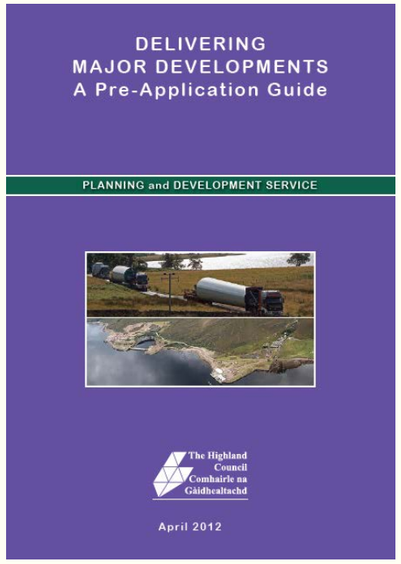
5.1 Community/Public Engagement events

In line with statutory requirements a stakeholder workshop was held in January 2013 inviting inputs to developing a design solution. This sought to involve a cross-section of local business and amenity group interests to collaborate and express ideas and aspirations. The following organisations were invited and most participated in the workshop and/or made comments: -

1. The Academy Street Traders Association
2. Inverness BID Limited
3. Inverness Civic Trust
4. Inverness Licensed Trade Association
5. Inverness Chamber of Commerce
6. Crown Community Council
7. Inverness Old Town Art
8. Hi-Arts
9. Inverness City Heritage Trust
10. Ark Estates (Scotland) Ltd – applicants for 92-94 Academy Street

In addition, the four Central Ward members of the Highland Council were invited to observe the proceedings.

This workshop was followed on the same day by a public exhibition and the issue of a questionnaire to invite views. This questionnaire and the exhibition board information were also posted on the GH Johnston Building Consultants Ltd website for those interested but unable to attend the exhibition. While only a handful of questionnaires were returned with comments, the substance of these was extremely helpful in preparing proposals for the site.


DELIVERING
MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS
A Pre-Application Guide

PLANNING and DEVELOPMENT SERVICE

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

April 2012


The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2008

Planning Application

Pre-application Consultation

Inverness Properties Ltd is conducting pre-application consultation on the following development proposal: -

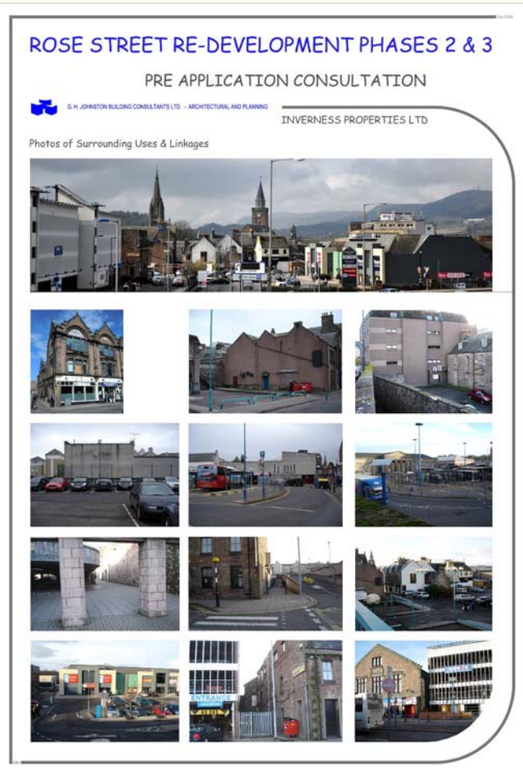
Redevelopment of the former Rose Street Hall and car park to the south and west to provide multi-storey student accommodation (Phases 2+3), Hotel, Tourist Hostel, Shops, Food and Drink premises (licensed and unlicensed), Offices, Civic Square and Environmental enhancement at Rose Street, Inverness.

Further information can be obtained from G.H. Johnston Building Consultants Ltd, Willow House, Stoneyfield Business Park, Inverness, IV2 7PA between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday to Friday - tel. 01463 237229/Fax. 01463 243258/email admin@ghjohnston.co.uk

A drop in public exhibition will be held in the Spectrum Centre (Concourse Room) on Tuesday 29 January 2013 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. This will be preceded by an invited Stakeholder workshop on design principles and master planning from 1.30 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. the same day.

Questionnaires will be available at the exhibition on 29 January for comments and on the G.H. Johnston Building Consultants Ltd website – www.ghjohnston.com. Any comments should be made to G.H. Johnston Building Consultants Ltd by post, fax or email at the address above by **Friday 22 February 2013.**

PLEASE NOTE: No application has been submitted to The Highland Council in relation to this proposal. Any comments made to the prospective applicant are not representations to the Council and would not be considered as part of any future application. However, comments will be used by the consultants to help prepare the master plan and work up detailed proposals to be exhibited in March 2013 before an application is lodged. There will also be an opportunity to make representations to the Council on the planning application after it is submitted.

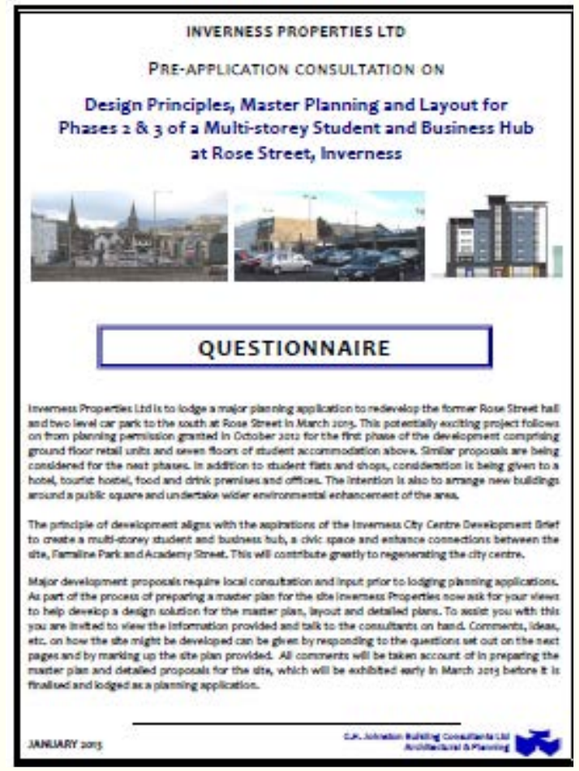

ROSE STREET RE-DEVELOPMENT PHASES 2 & 3

PRE APPLICATION CONSULTATION

G.H. JOHNSTON BUILDING CONSULTANTS LTD. - ARCHITECTURAL AND PLANNING

INVERNESS PROPERTIES LTD

Photos of Surrounding Uses & Linkages


INVERNESS PROPERTIES LTD

PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION ON

Design Principles, Master Planning and Layout for Phases 2 & 3 of a Multi-storey Student and Business Hub at Rose Street, Inverness

QUESTIONNAIRE

Inverness Properties Ltd is to lodge a major planning application to redevelop the former Rose Street hall and two level car park to the south at Rose Street in March 2013. This potentially exciting project follows on from planning permission granted in October 2012 for the first phase of the development comprising ground floor retail units and seven floors of student accommodation above. Similar proposals are being considered for the next phases. In addition to student flats and shops, consideration is being given to a hotel, tourist hostel, food and drink premises and offices. The intention is also to arrange new buildings around a public square and undertake wider environmental enhancement of the area.

The principle of development aligns with the aspirations of the Inverness City Centre Development Brief to create a multi-storey student and business hub, a civic space and enhance connections between the site, Farraline Park and Academy Street. This will contribute greatly to regenerating the city centre.

Major development proposals require local consultation and input prior to lodging planning applications. As part of the process of preparing a master plan for the site Inverness Properties now ask for your views to help develop a design solution for the master plan, layout and detailed plans. To assist you with this you are invited to view the information provided and talk to the consultants on hand. Comments, ideas, etc. on how the site might be developed can be given by responding to the questions set out on the next pages and by marking up the site plan provided. All comments will be taken account of in preparing the master plan and detailed proposals for the site, which will be exhibited early in March 2013 before it is finalised and lodged as a planning application.

JANUARY 2013

G.H. Johnston Building Consultants Ltd Architectural & Planning

5.2 Development and Review of the Design

Subsequent to these consultation events the agents made a presentation to the Inverness Civic Trust in February 2013 when a number of comments were made. Since then the agents have met with leading members of the Civic Trust and the Inverness BID group to discuss the evolving proposals.

Pre-application advice from the Highland Council recommended that prior to submission of an application the Inverness Design Review Panel (PLACE) be consulted in order to assist with securing the creation of an exemplar development in this key city centre site. A submission was made to PLACE in late September this year. The Panel hearing took place shortly after and comments were made in writing in mid October.


place The Inverness Design Review Panel

place Better places for all people

ARMB/LM/PLACE
28 October 2013

Gary Johnston
G H Johnston Building Consultants Ltd
Willow House
Stoneyfield Business Park
Inverness
IV2 7PA

RECEIVED 29 OCT 2013

Dear Gary

Rose Street Phase II; Design Review

All comments have been carefully considered and a number of changes made to improve the planning application submission. Full details of the pre-application procedures, public engagement and responses are contained in the separate Pre-application Consultation Report (or Statement of Community Consultation) .

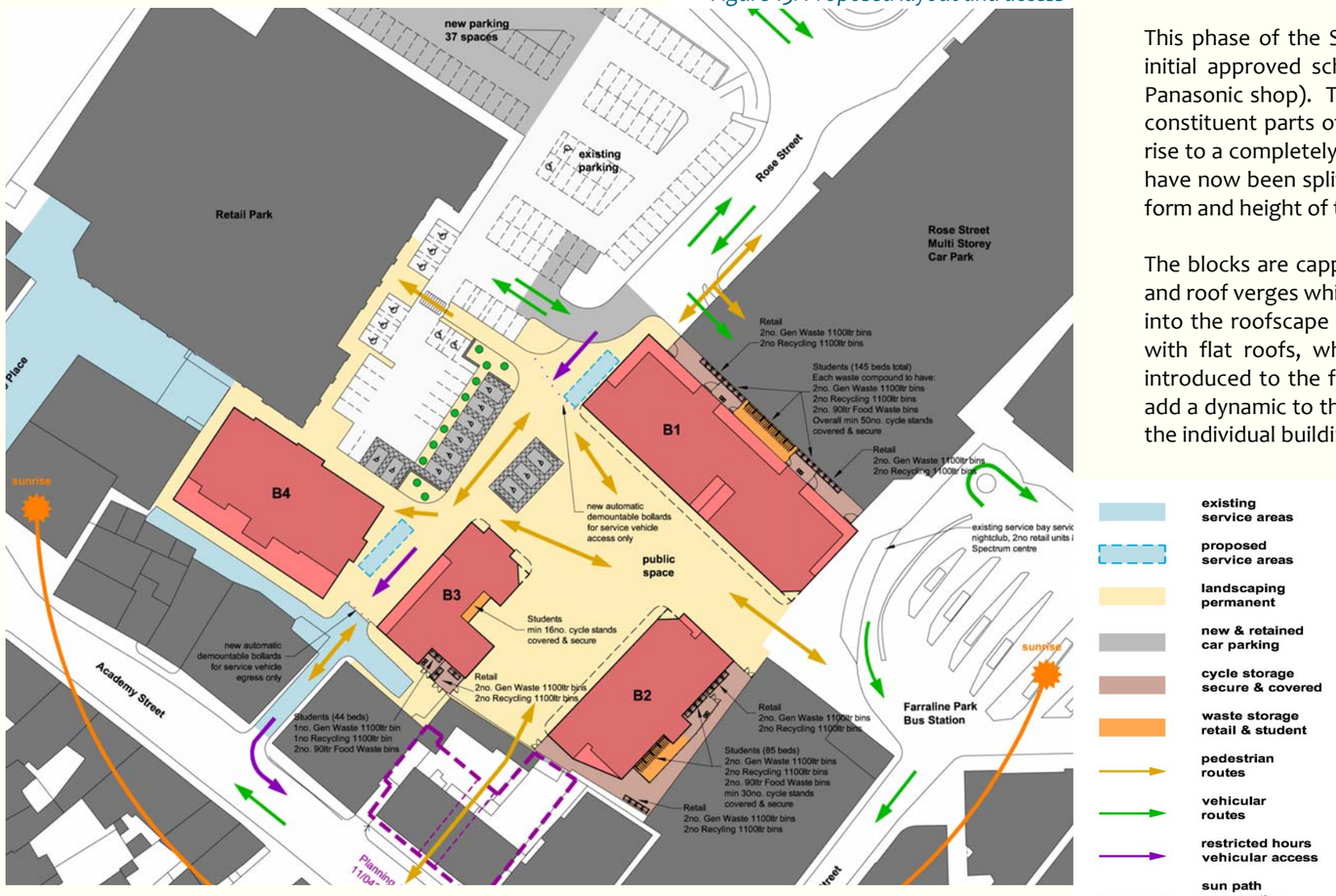
6. Design Principles and Proposed Development

6.1 Introduction

The proposed development comprises of three buildings with associated disabled car parking, landscaping and public realm area. These buildings (ref B1 to B3) will be developed as multi-storey student accommodation blocks with retail and food and drink space provided on the ground floor and varying in height from 5 to 8 storeys. These will be arranged on the same orientation as surrounding buildings to create a substantial public realm area or open space (see Figure 13 below). The design principles for the siting, layout and design of the buildings are derived from:

- relevant national and local planning policies, guidance and advice;
- the townscape analysis;
- local architecture, scale, materials and immediate surroundings;
- pre-application advice and ongoing consultation with Council officials and key stakeholders; and
- accessibility considerations.

Figure 13: Proposed layout and access



6.2 Building Design, Scale & Height

Building B1 lies adjacent to the Rose Street car park, Building B2 adjacent to the Spectrum Centre and Building B3 adjacent to Rose Street. These have been considered in relation to the buildings around to ensure that sun path is optimised in so far as is reasonably practicable. In the development of the design the overall heights of the buildings have been discussed with the Planning Authority and form the basis for the overall massing. Earlier designs were also presented to the Inverness Design Review Panel, PLACE, when some of the members raised concerns about the overall height. As a consequence the heights were reduced by one storey.

The proposed buildings are contemporary in design. The overall form reflects the repetitive nature of the floor plates, whilst the façade treatments seek to be visually dynamic so as not to present a monolithic form, allowing them to sit sympathetically within an already fragmented and variable skyline, both from long views and from close views into the site.

This phase of the Student Quarter at Rose Street would therefore be different to that considered for the initial approved scheme for what is now known as Building B4, (proposed on a site to the rear of the Panasonic shop). The form of the buildings has been completely reconsidered taking into consideration the constituent parts of the individual flats and their linearity in relation to the block orientation. This has given rise to a completely different aesthetic appearance and massing to that approved for Building B4. The blocks have now been split into flat widths longitudinally to form double gable staggered blocks to break down the form and height of the buildings and to introduce some interesting massing.

The blocks are capped with a pitched roof design rather than a flat roofed solution with overhanging eaves and roof verges which add interest, more domestic scale shadow form and variation which will fit comfortably into the roofscape in this Inverness context. The least successful buildings on the Inverness skyline are tall with flat roofs, which appear very clumsy and visually intrusive. Curved "sail" wall panels have been introduced to the frontages, which orientate some bedroom windows along the length of the building and add a dynamic to the façade to create interest and variety. This also helps to break down the overall scale of the individual buildings.

The limited palette of materials suggested include standing seam metal roof for the pitched roofs, white render, horizontal zinc cladding in two colours and ceramic granite over large areas of the ground floor retail podium. This fragmented approach breaks down the appearance of the buildings into a more domestic scale.

It is intended that retail, food and drink accommodation will be provided on the ground floor throughout all three blocks which will form a podium base to the flats above on each of the three blocks. The division of these spaces is extremely flexible and can accommodate small units or mini supermarket accommodation to allow a variety of potential users to the site.

6.3 Creating a Sense of Place

Scottish Government guidance on *Designing Places* (2001) sets out clear national planning policy support for higher design standards. It aims to improve the quality of the environment for everyone and identifies 6 key qualities which make a successful place. Each of these elements can be applied to The Student Quarter as follows: -

1 Distinctive

The proposed Student Quarter at Rose Street in Inverness is contemporary in design, forming a cluster of multi-storey buildings and a two storey café. The form of the buildings is distinctive using a limited palette of materials of materials and colour to emphasise the individual elements within each building and by adding dynamic curved 'sail' walls to the frontages. The roofs are a contemporary twist on a traditional roof with significant overhangs and a projecting ridge. These cap the buildings and create a fragmented roof form. They emulate and develop traditional architectural design. All of these features blend to create energy efficient contemporary buildings and sustainable living. The building cluster of varying heights create a public space at ground level landscaped with granite paving, trees and stone walling of a human scale.

2 Safe and Pleasant

Current routes through this site are dark and create areas for loitering and undetected anti-social behaviour. As a result car park under the raised deck is barely used unless there is no alternative. The proposals create a public space with low walls and seating which welcomes those who wish to pass through or stay a while whilst meeting others or taking a refreshment break. Rose Street itself will be pedestrianised from the current road closure behind Academy Street up the a newly formed access into the retail park car park, removing pedestrian and vehicular conflict. The proposed road surfacing allows for shared use along the original line of the street but with restricted hours servicing in a similar manner to that operating along Inverness High Street. A sense of enclosure will be provided at the pedestrianised section by the buildings and by soft landscaping to shield parked cars in the adjacent car park. '*Designing Streets*' has been considered as an exemplar for these public areas.

3 Easy to get to and to move around

The proposal site is located within 400m of the railway station and lies immediately adjacent to the bus station with associated taxi ranks. Private vehicles can be parked in the immediately adjacent retail park and the Rose Street multi-storey car parks. The city centre core area is no more than a 200m walk away where shopping and leisure facilities are located in addition to those which will be provided on site. The site is also 300m from the National Cycle Network Route and the Highland Council have aspirations enhance nearby existing routes and to link the city centre to the new UHI Campus.

4 Welcoming

The design of buildings and how they relate to each other and public areas is vital to creating a welcoming and attractive development. The incorporation of features in this development such as hedging and stone walling and quality street signage, feature areas and a pedestrian friendly environment will provide a welcoming appearance.

5 Adaptable

The buildings have been designed as student accommodation with retail space on the ground floor, the subject of this application. Whilst capable of being adapted to residential/family living on the upper floors and potentially office accommodation on the first and second floors, there are additional parking requirements for such uses and planning permission would be required. As such, these alternative uses do not form part of this application. The ground floors are designed to be predominantly open plan initially and can easily be sub-divided to suit a variety of retail or office needs and sizes.

GROUND LEVEL Retail Floor - 395m² Gross External Area

LEVELS 1-4 Student Accommodation - 370m² GEA - Each Floor 10 Beds

6 Resource Efficient (Sustainable)

This development is designed to be sustainable in terms of its location, its layout and in the design and orientation of individual buildings. The location within the city centre, close to the railway station and bus station should encourage students to lead a more sustainable and healthy lifestyle by walking and cycling more with less dependency on private transport. The development is located where it can benefit from local employment, sustainable transport opportunities and capacity in existing infrastructure networks.

Siting the buildings to take advantage of south, east and westerly aspect especially on the upper floors is possible by virtue of the building's elevation to take advantage of solar gain and provide shelter from the weather will reduce the need for artificial lighting, heating and cooling in the buildings. The planting of trees and hedging will provide additional shelter. Appropriate on site renewables may be employed where practical to do so. Constructing the buildings from materials which have a low embodied energy and incorporating good insulation levels, ventilation, water, energy saving and waste management techniques will be more resource efficient and reduce pressures on the environment and infrastructure use. This will reduce the cost of fuel bills and emissions making the building cheaper to run in the future.

The Sustainable Design Checklist and how it relates to the development is submitted with the application.

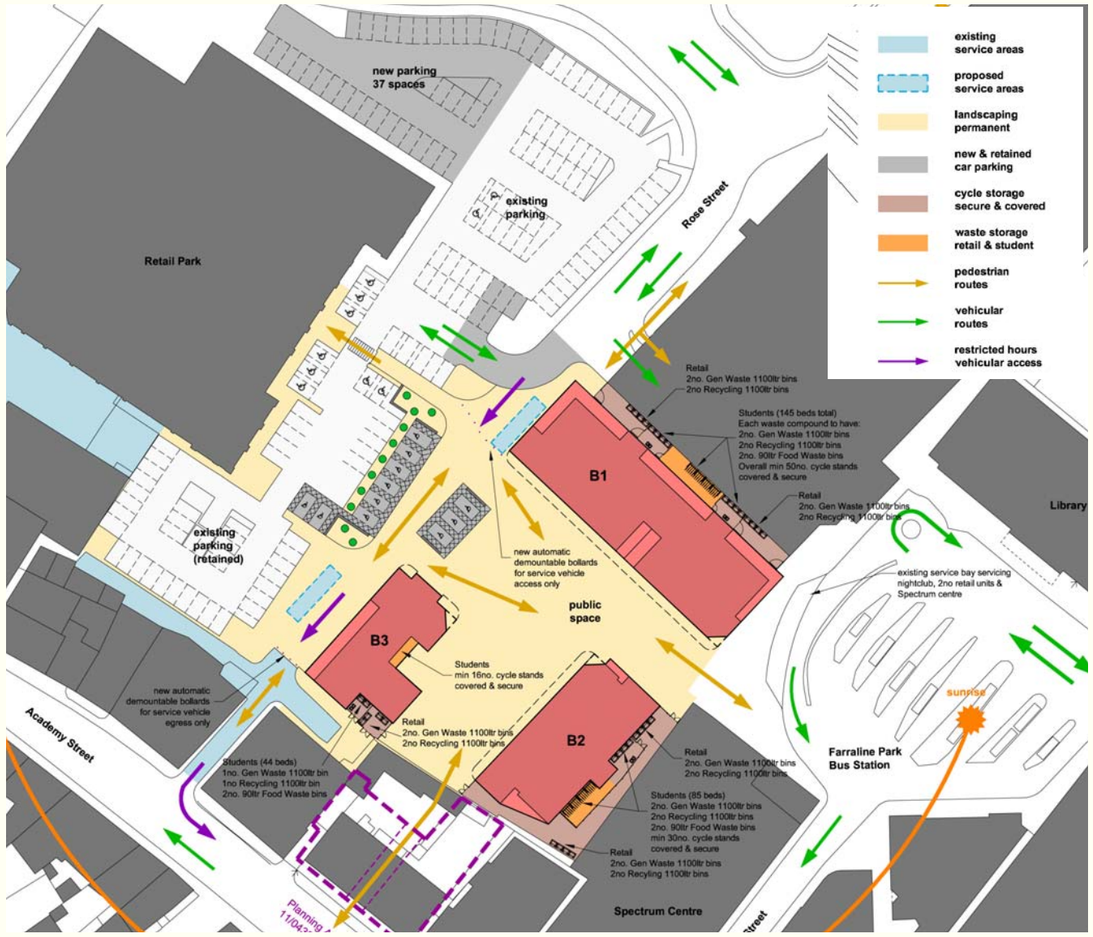
6.4 Accessibility

Waterman Transport and Development has been commissioned by Inverness Properties Limited to prepare a Transport Statement in support of the proposed development. Several discussions were undertaken with The Highland Council TEC Services regarding the layout and proposed means of access and to agree the scope of the assessment and Transport Statement.

Vehicular Access

Vehicular access to / from the development site will continue to be promoted via the A82 Trunk Road, Rose Street Roundabout, which is easy accessible from the A9 Trunk Road, and positioned on the strategic road network through the centre of Inverness. It is considered that there will be minimal traffic generation associated with the proposals.

Figure 14: Access and parking



Parking

It is not considered necessary or desirable to provide dedicated general car parking facilities for this type of development in a city centre location. Following a review of similar types of developments throughout Scotland it has been confirmed that this is standard practice and encouraged by Local Authorities. Potential residents will be advised in advance that there is no associated free car parking with the accommodation and that town centre car parking will be available to residents, if needed, on an ad hoc basis at the local rate. Nonetheless, almost 400 students will be arriving and departing at the start and finish of the academic of term and/or year with considerable belongings. As a result, a short term drop off/pick up, unloading area will be required and a management strategy for this developed and agreed prior to occupation.

Whilst the proposed development will result in a loss of approximately 170 car parking spaces, there is availability within the surrounding car parks to accommodate the general shortfall. Furthermore, as part of the development proposals and the reworking of the adjacent retail park pay and display car park, an additional 37 car parking spaces will be introduced to the area. This reworked car park will have an additional number of disabled parking bays. Such parking will also be available on a temporary basis in the phased development of the site.

Sustainable/Public Transport

Transport planning policy, indicates that vehicular movements should be discouraged where possible, particularly in town centre areas. Policy dictates that travel should be encouraged by sustainable modes of travel and reduced availability of car parking within the city centre. This site is also ideally located and the nature of the proposed use will help encourage more sustainable travel by creating jobs and accommodation adjacent to the central transport hub and will introduce people to the area who do not rely on travel by private vehicle. Measures will also be introduced to enhance access to the existing local and regional bus services from Rose Street with a public realm area creating a sense of place and that further promotes connectivity with the surrounding area.

In addition, the proposed development will assist in providing links to the existing and proposed cycle routes to connect the site with the new UHI campus. A Residential Travel Plan will be issued to each student upon occupation to provide upfront information on the available sustainable travel opportunities. Details of servicing agreements between the university and the local bus operators will also be included within the welcome pack.

Servicing Strategy

Existing premises: The service access to existing shops beyond the boundary of the site to be developed will not be affected by the proposals as they do not encroach onto existing road infrastructure. Currently there is access to these service areas from Academy Street which will also not be affected by the development.

General servicing arrangements for the proposed development: Servicing strips and refuse store areas will be provided at the rear of each of the proposed buildings. However, servicing and refuse collection will be undertaken from Rose Street utilising a collapsible bollard system. Service and refuse vehicles will enter Rose Street from the A82 Rose Street Roundabout and exit onto Academy Street in a forward gear. Each building can be easily serviced from the controlled section of Rose Street within 45m of building entrance. Nonetheless, given the position of Building B2, additional servicing space will be provided at the rear of Building B3 to allow a service / refuse vehicles to reverse behind building B3 providing ease of access to B2 and servicing options for the end user.

Waste Collection for new retail units and student accommodation: Waste management will be undertaken by a private contractor collecting waste from communal waste bins provided within a designated area at each building, within adjacent Service Areas located to the north of Building B1 and to the south east of Building B2 and the south east of Building B3. Service vehicle access is described and illustrated within the Appendix F of the accompanying Transport Statement. Bins will be provided for commercial and student accommodation users alike, including for recycling. Frequency of collection would be arranged in consultation with the appointed waste management contractor.

Retail Servicing: There is currently existing retail servicing access from a loading bay located near to the Spectrum Centre at Farraline Park which will be used to service the retail units at the south east end of Building B1 and potentially the units within Building B2. A loading bay area is designated adjacent to the north west corner of Building 1 adjacent to the service area to serve the units at the north west end of B1. B3 and potentially B2 will be serviced from the existing service access to the south of B3. Access to these service areas off Rose Street will be restricted hours and bollard controlled as outlined within the Transport Statement to avoid pedestrian and vehicular conflict. Service vehicle access is described and illustrated within the Appendix F of the accompanying Transport Statement.

Emergency Access: All proposed buildings entrances will be accessed within 45m of the public road, which is the maximum distance detailed within the Building Scotland Act 2003 for fire appliance access. Additionally, vehicle swept paths diagrams in the Transport Statement indicate that a fire tender can negotiate the proposed landscaping within the public realm space to access each building with sufficient space available to operate high reach apparatus. Fire tenders will be able to enter the site in a forward gear from Rose Street and into the public realm area between Buildings B1 and B3. The vehicle has adequate space to manoeuvre in a forward gear into a position adjacent to B2 and exit the public realm through the same gap back on to Rose Street and then on to Academy Street. Buildings B3 and B4 can also be accessed directly from Rose Street.

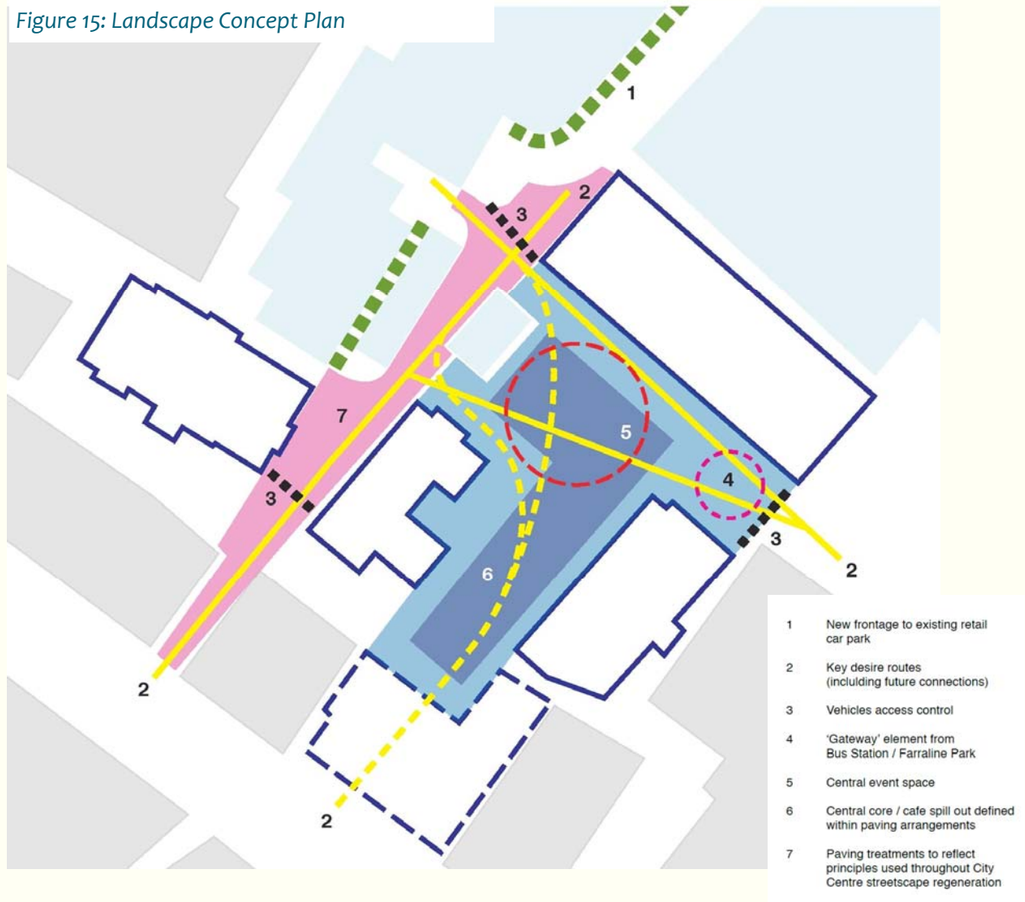
6.5 Landscape Design — Public Space

The design process for the proposed development examined the opportunity to create a desirable civic space providing a focal point for the users of the area connecting to Farraline Park and the Retail Park at Rose Street with further connectivity possible on to Academy Street. The recently approved layout for redeveloping 92 – 94 Academy Street for 31 flats and 2 retail units indicates a potential link. The space and how it will interact with the buildings and surrounding uses is extremely important to create an area attractive, useful and relevant was considered by Landscape Architects Ian White Associates.

In addition, a further free standing building between blocks B1 and B3 with an edge on to the line of Rose Street has been included as a café facing on to the square to help recreate the historical linearity of Rose Street with buildings fronting it and to provide a meeting and focal point within the civic space itself. Floor plans and elevations have been refined based upon the 3 dimensional model taking into consideration the public space to be created and the ground floor commercial accommodation which will interact with it.

Below is the Landscape Concept Plan developed in the early part of the accompanying Landscape Design Statement and used to develop the detailed design of the space in phases. The detailed plans are included in the next sub-section, 6.6 Phasing.

Figure 15: Landscape Concept Plan



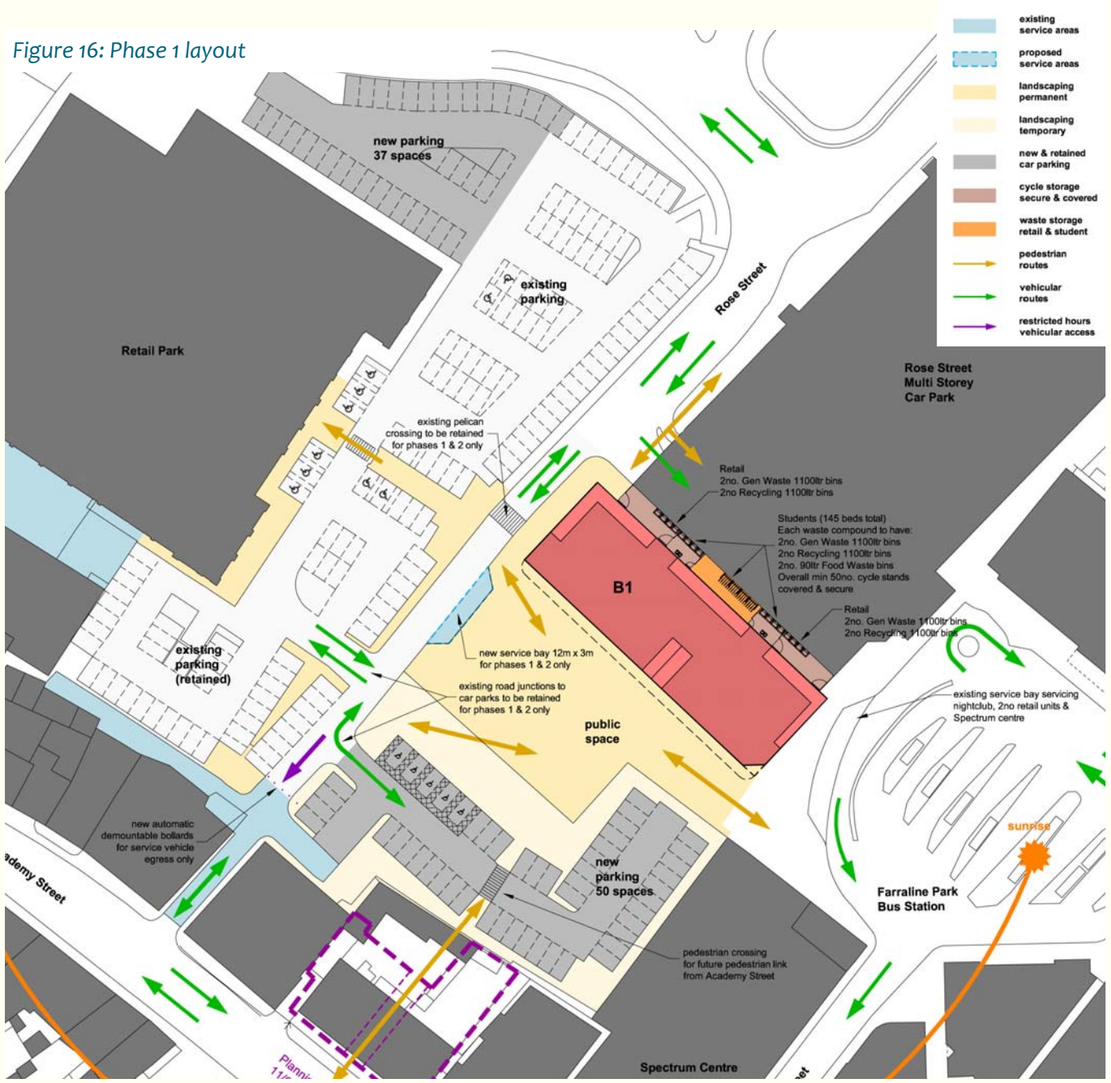
6.6 Phasing

The development proposals that this Design and Access Statement accompanies are split into three distinct phases. However, there is a fourth phase that is the building approved in 2012 (planning application reference 12/02567/FUL). All four phases are described in more detail in the pages that follow, aided by relevant illustrations.

Phase 1

The initial Phase is for this application intended to cater for initial student demand for UHI academic session commencing August 2015, will be building B1 located adjacent to the Rose Street Car Park, together with significant landscape improvements.

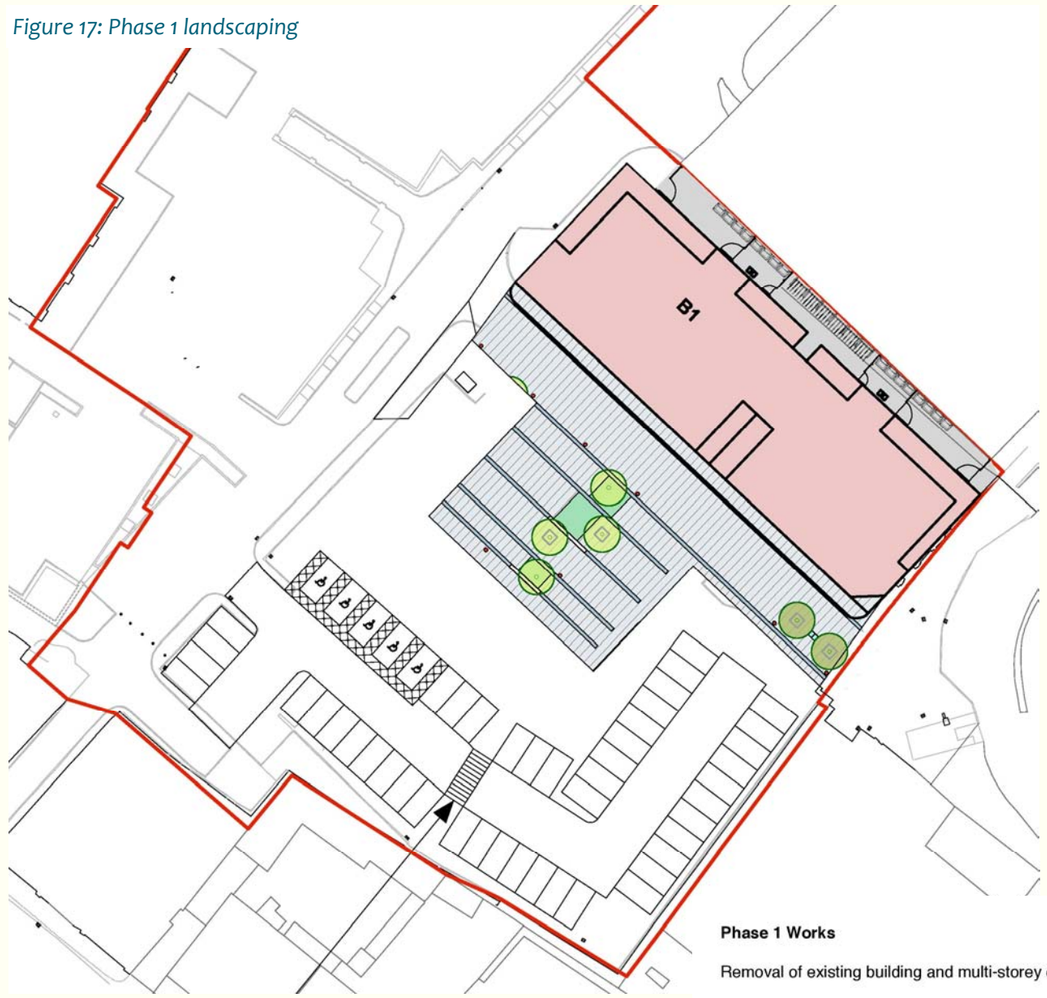
Figure 16: Phase 1 layout



This will comprise 145 student bedspaces and 761 sq m of commercial floorspace.

This initial phase will also involve the demolition of the Rose Street Hall and raised deck car park to make way for the buildings and creation of public space incorporating hard and soft landscaping (to areas which would not be affected by future phases) and the formation of a street level car park where these future phases would be located. Pedestrian linkages between Rose Street and Farraline Park would be greatly enhanced. Vehicular access and pedestrian links along Rose Street would be retained as existing. Servicing will be effected by the existing service bay at Farraline Park and a new service bay at the north west end of Building B1.

Figure 17: Phase 1 landscaping



Phase 1 Works

Removal of existing building and multi-storey car park

Temporary finishes to be provided along Rose Street adjacent to both new buildings.

Temporary car park to be constructed using existing access from Rose Street.

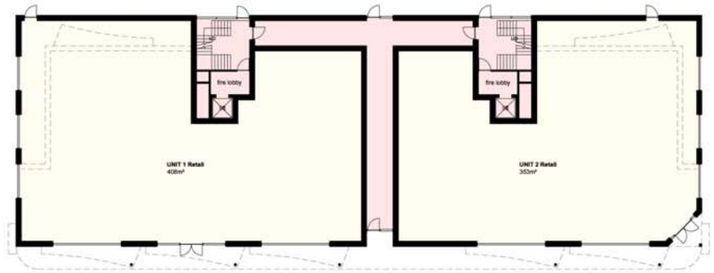
All temporary tie ins to be constructed in asphalt

Figure 18: Phase 1 floor plans and elevations

LEVEL 7 Student Accommodation - 337m² GEA - 7 Beds

LEVEL 6 Student Accommodation - 638m² GEA - 18 Beds

LEVELS 1-5 Student Accommodation - 822m² GEA - Each Floor 24 Beds



GROUND LEVEL Retail Floorspace - 976m² Gross External Area

ELEVATION FACING CAR PARK (NORTH EAST)

ELEVATION FACING NEW SQUARE (SOUTH WEST)

ROSE ST ELEVATION (NORTH WEST)

FARRALINE PARK ELEVATION (SOUTH EAST)

Phase 2

This phase would see the construction of building B2, associated hard and soft landscaping and the reduction of the car park spaces provided in Phase 1. This will comprise 85 student bedspaces and 426 sq m of commercial floorspace.

The intention will be to complete this phase in time for the UHI Academic year commencing August 2016. The new landscaping would not be affected by future phases and the car park would be restricted to the area where these future phases would be located. Pedestrian and vehicular linkages as in Phase 1 would be retained and servicing to existing businesses would not be affected. Servicing to building B2 would be from the existing service area to the rear of the Deeno's Bar (Al Welders) and the loading bay at Farraline Park.

Figure 19: Phase 2 layout

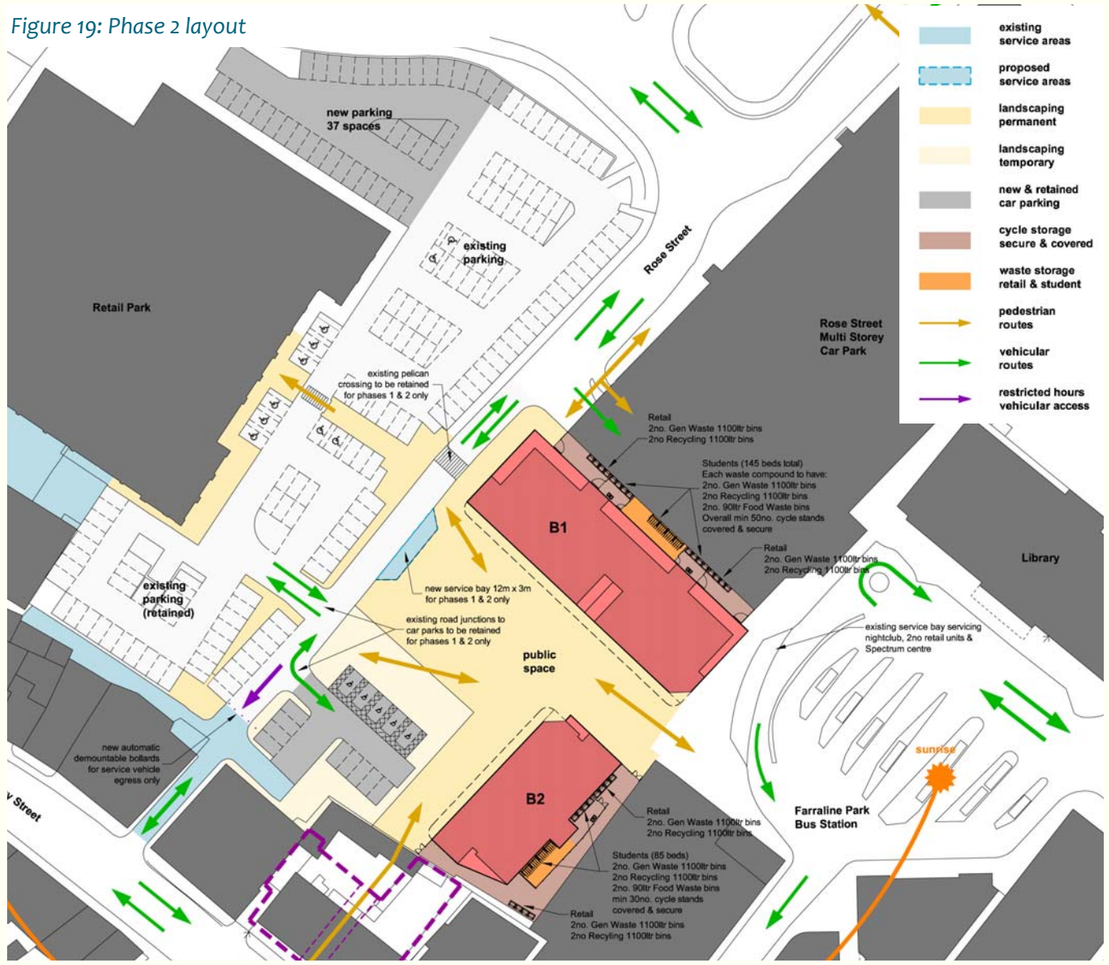
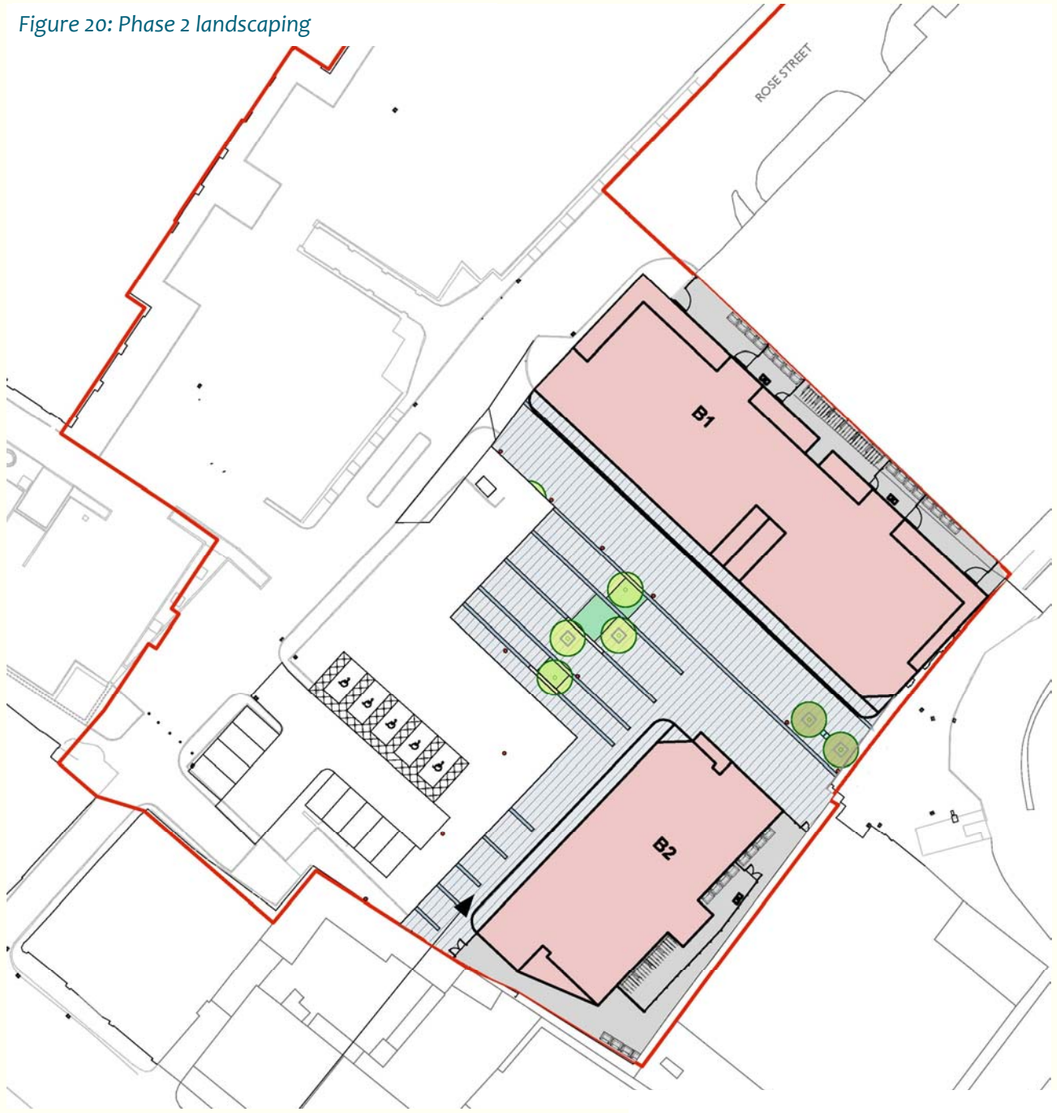


Figure 20: Phase 2 landscaping



Phase 2 Works

Construction of B2 and adjacent finishes.

Temporary car park reduced to accommodate B2

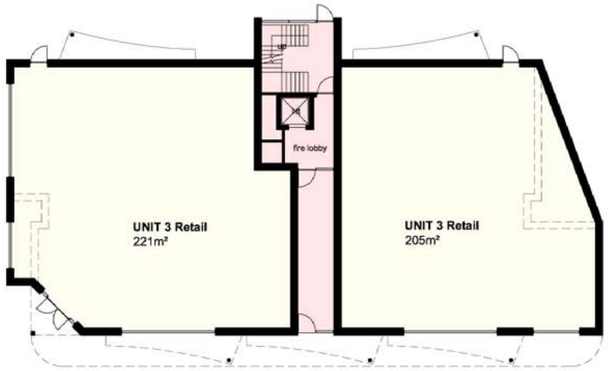
New finishes tie into Phase 1 works and extended to accommodate future link to Academy Street.

All temporary tie ins to be constructed in asphalt

Figure 21: Phase 2 floor plans and elevations

LEVEL 6 Student Accommodation - 354m² GEA - Floor 10 Beds

LEVELS 1-5 Student Accommodation - 545m² GEA - Each Floor 15 Beds



GROUND LEVEL Retail Floorspace - 528m² Gross External Area

ELEVATION TO CAR PARK (NORTH EAST)

ELEVATION TO NEW SQUARE (NORTH WEST)

ELEVATION FACING ACADEMY STREET (SOUTH WEST)

ELEVATION FACING SPECTRUM CENTER (SOUTH EAST)

Phase 3

The phase would see the construction of building B3 and the completion of hard and soft landscaping within the new public space. It would also see the pedestrianisation of Rose Street with associated landscape improvements and a reconfiguration of the vehicular access into the retail park car park. This will comprise 44 student bedspaces and 280 sq m of commercial floorspace. The intention would be to complete this phase in time for the UHI Academic year commencing August 2017. Linkages as in Phases 1 and 2 would be retained and servicing to existing businesses would not be affected. Servicing to building B3 would be from the existing service area to the rear of Deeno's Bar, enlarged to accommodate the needs of the new building B3.

Figure 22: Phase 3 layout

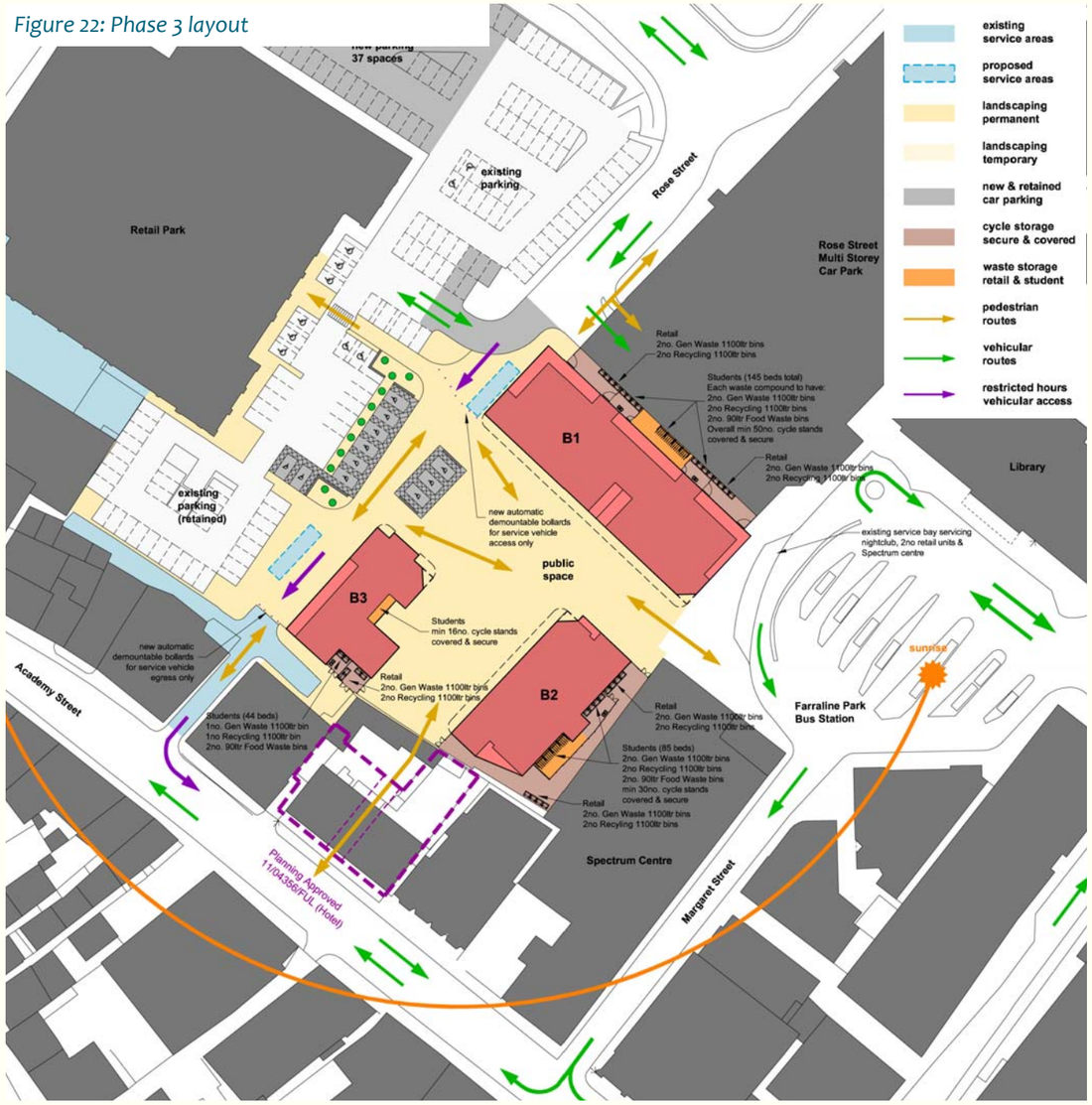
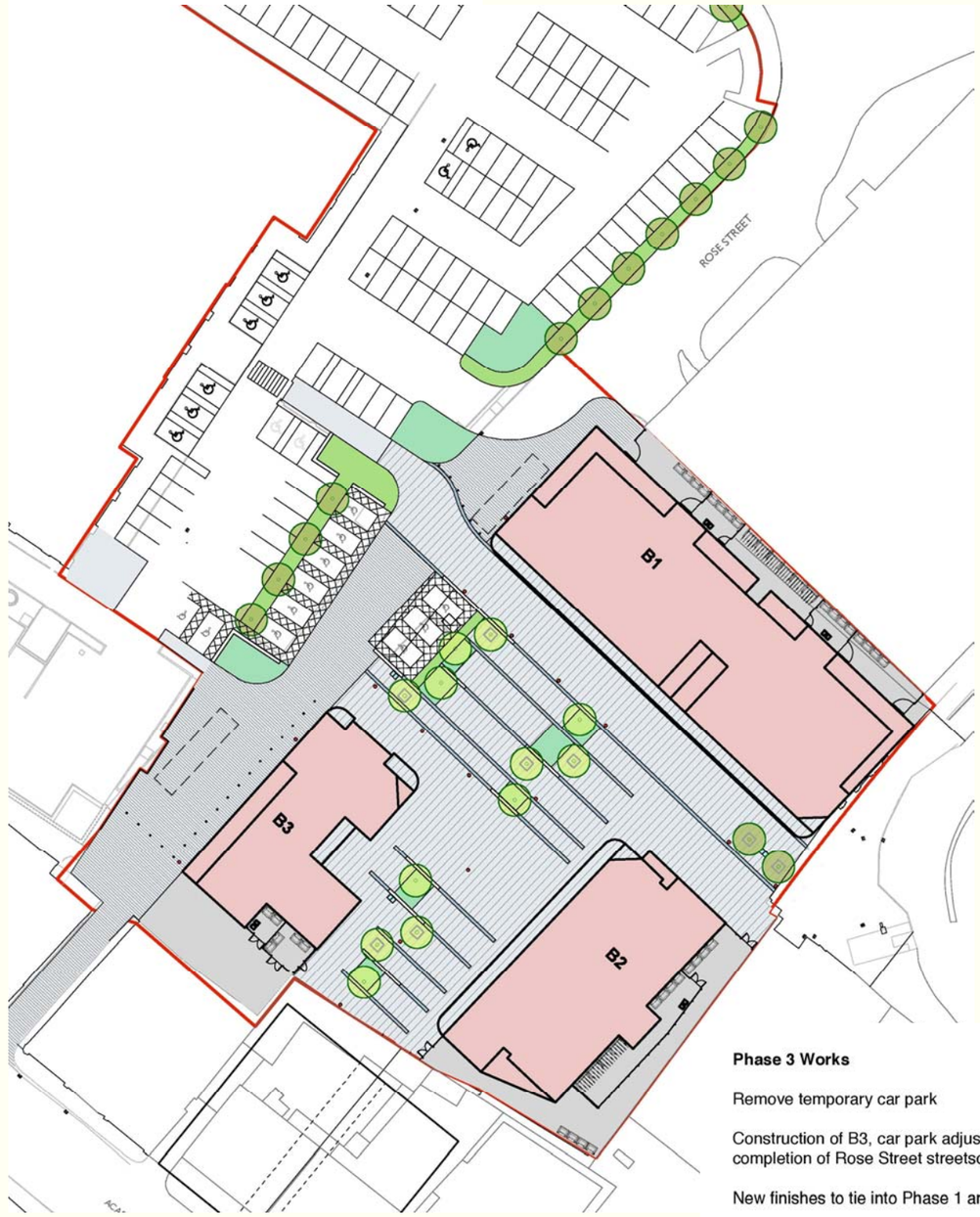


Figure 23: Phase 3 landscaping



Phase 3 Works

Remove temporary car park

Construction of B3, car park adjustments and completion of Rose Street streetscape works.

New finishes to tie into Phase 1 and 2 works

Access control bollards to be installed

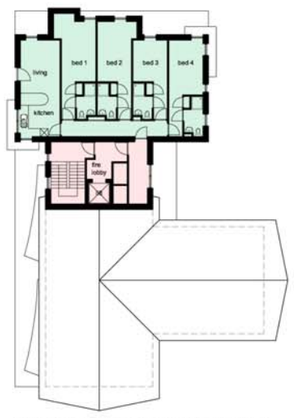
Temporary Tie in to Phase 4 plot

All temporary tie ins to be constructed in asphalt

Figure 24: Phase 3 floor plans and elevations

GROUND LEVEL Retail Floor - 395m² Gross External Area

LEVELS 1-4 Student Accommodation - 370m² GEA - Each Floor 10 Beds



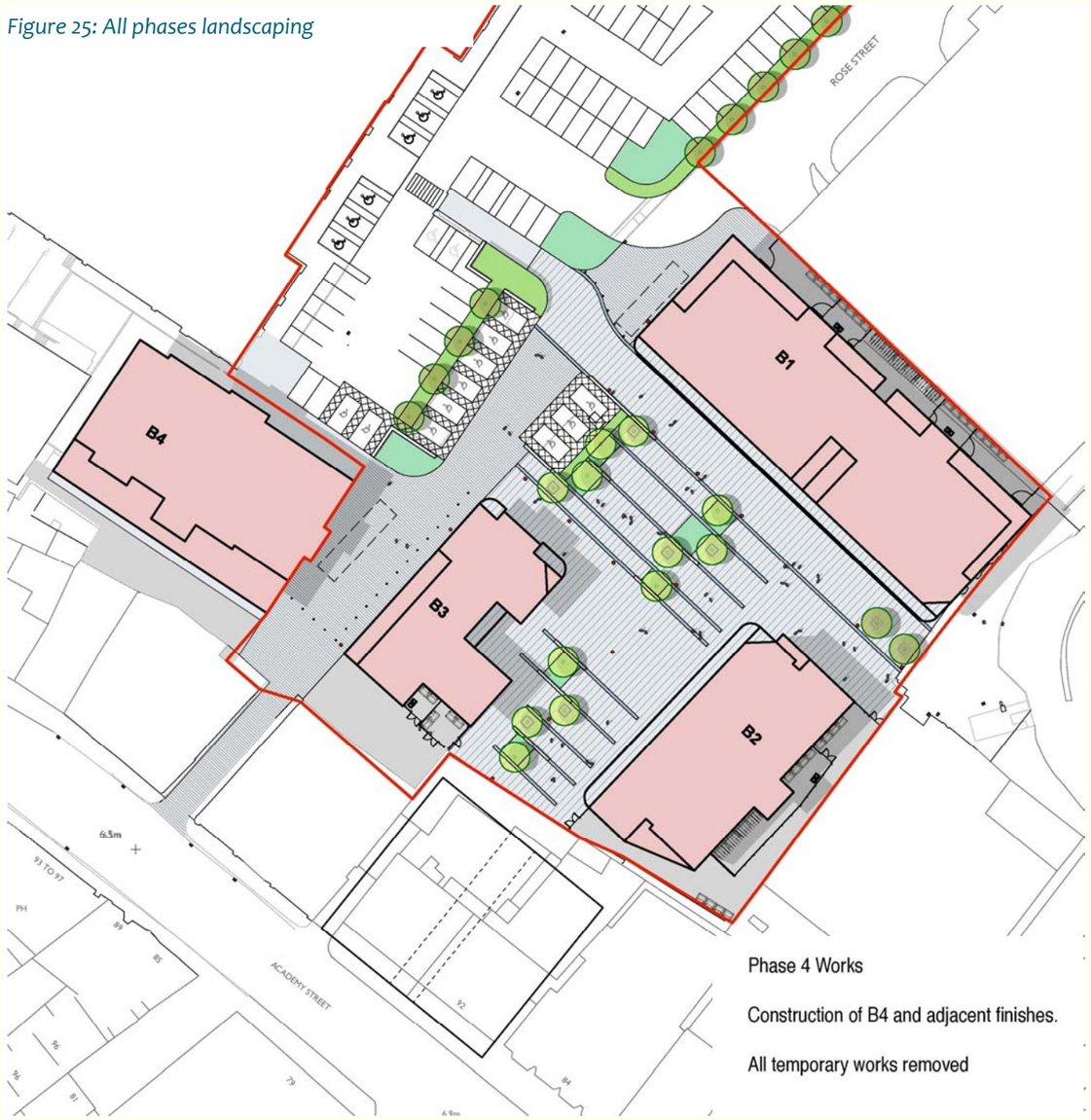
LEVEL 5 Student Accommodation - 170m² GEA - Floor 4 Beds

Phase 4

This final phase would see the construction of the previously consented building under application reference 12/02567/FUL and the tying in of the edges of the Rose Street landscaping up to the new building. Servicing etc for this building will be as approved under that application.

New tree planting and hedging provide tidy new edge to retail park car parking.

Figure 25: All phases landscaping



Summary

The completed development under this application would create a cohesive group of attractive buildings and the creation of a busy Student Quarter with a vibrant public space around it providing a place for students and the wider public to sit, meet, relax and shop behind arcades in a safe and comfortable environment close to the pubs and restaurants in the city centre.

7. Other consultants and supporting documents

CainTech—Topographical survey

Canonbury Estates– Construction Method Statement and Project Management

Waterman Transport and Development - Transport Statement

Ian White Associates Landscape Architects — Landscape Design Statement

TERRATEK— Geo-environmental Study Phase I

Stuart McTaggart Consulting Structural Engineers — Drainage/Services Investigations and Statement

GH Johnston Building Consultants Ltd — Pre-application Consultation Report and Sustainable Design Checklist