

INVERNESS CITY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

Consultation Draft

December 2016

DRAFT

This Development Brief

This Draft Inverness City Centre Development Brief will, once adopted, replace the existing [Inverness City Centre Development Brief](#), adopted March 2013. The purpose of the Development Brief is to promote and guide opportunities for development, regeneration and enhancement of Inverness city centre, while ensuring that the city centre remains open for business.

This Development Brief will be a material planning consideration for development management purposes after its approval by the City of Inverness Area Committee.

Once adopted, the replacement Inverness City Centre Development Brief will become Supplementary Guidance and become part of the Council's statutory Development Plan carrying equal weight to Local Development Plans in the determination of planning applications.

Your Views

The Council is seeking your views on this Draft Development Brief. Your responses will inform the final replacement Development Brief that is due to be considered by the City of Inverness Area Committee in spring 2017, and adopted following clearance by Scottish Ministers.

To share your views on the Draft Development Brief there is an 'Add Comments' tab at the top right hand corner of each section of the document. This is where you can share your thoughts on our approach to particular issues. If you have made an arrangement with the Council to submit a written response, please ensure your comments specifically refer to sections you are sharing your views on.

To help us consider your feedback as quickly as possible, please submit all comments through our consultation portal: consult.highland.gov.uk

Comments by letter or email will not be accepted unless otherwise agreed in advance with the Development Plans Team.

The public consultation runs from **X Month 2017** to 12 noon on **X Month 2017**.

You can contact the Development Plans Team as follows:

Email: devplans@highland.gov.uk

Telephone: 01349 886608

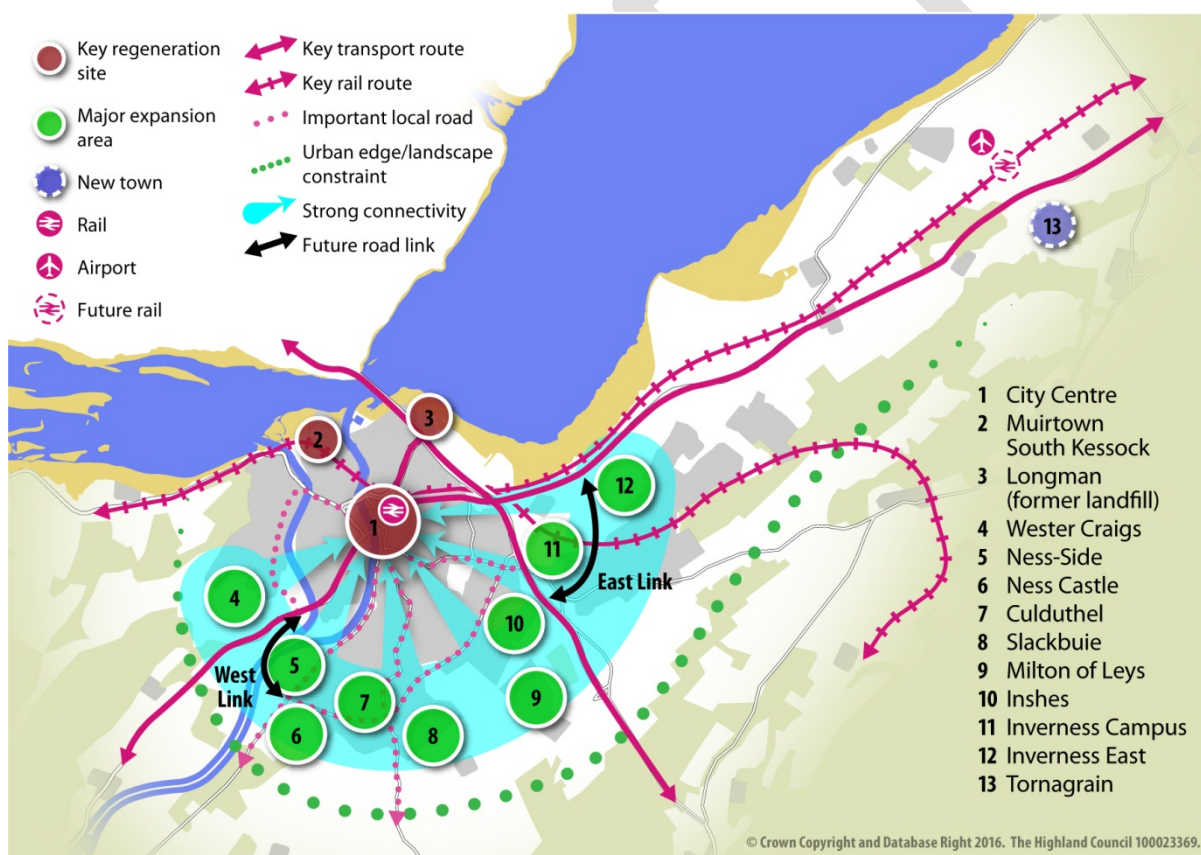
Contents

1. CONTEXT.....	1
2. VISION, OUTCOMES AND APPROACH	5
3. A GREAT PLACE FOR BUSINESS	8
4. A GREAT PLACE TO VISIT	12
5. A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE	16
6. ACCESSIBLE, EASY AND SAFE TO MOVE AROUND	22
7. DISTINCTIVE AND ATTRACTIVE	26
8. DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS AND DELIVERY.....	36
APPENDIX A - SITE-SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES	A1
STATION QUARTER	A1
Site 1: INVERNESS RAIL STATION.....	A2
Site 2: ROYAL MAIL BUILDING, STROTHERS LANE	A5
Site 3: VICTORIAN MARKET	A7
Site 4: 36-40 EASTGATE	A9
CASTLE HILL	A10
Site 5: INVERNESS CASTLE.....	A11
Sites 6: BRIDGE STREET and 7: CASTLE STREET	A12
Site 8: RAINING’S STAIRS	A15
Site 9: 47-53 CASTLE STREET	A17
CROWN	A18
Site 10: HM PRISON PORTERFIELD	A18
Site 11: VIEWHILL	A19
EASTERN GATEWAY LONGMAN ROAD	A20
Site 12: LONGMAN ROAD	A21

1. CONTEXT

The role of Inverness city centre in its wider context

- 1.1 Inverness is a remarkable place with a fabulous setting and amazing assets. It is remote but well connected. It is a place where people want to be and choose to move to. The city acts as the administrative, educational, business and commercial centre of the Highlands and a transport hub for connections to other parts of the country and beyond. It is also a meeting place and public transport hub for the Inner Moray Firth area, the most densely populated part of the Highlands where demand for growth and development is greatest.
- 1.2 Between 1991 and 2011 the population of Inverness grew by almost 18% to over 79,000. The Council's development Plan allocates land for over 9,000 new homes and 190 ha of employment land. The strategy for growth focuses on strengthening the city centre, restricting urban sprawl and increasing the sustainability of existing neighbourhoods including increased opportunities for active travel and use of public transport. Growth will be delivered by directing development to key regeneration sites, including the city centre, and to areas allocated for major expansion on the city's southern and eastern flanks. Expansion is contained to the north by the Moray Firth and to the west and south by higher land and steep slopes.



Map 1.1 Inverness city centre in its wider context

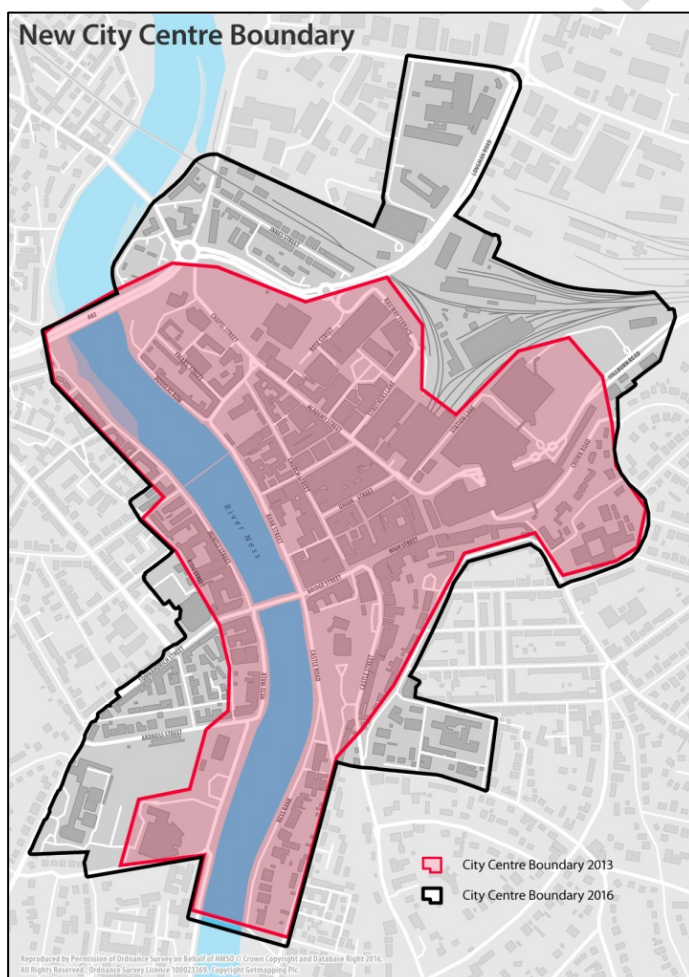
- 1.3 Future growth will be enabled by significant improvements to transport infrastructure already in preparation or underway, including:
- The new West Link road joining the Southern Distributor Road with the A82 trunk road, currently under construction and due for completion in 2020;
 - Dualling of the A96 trunk road between Inverness and Nairn; and

- A significant programme of improvements/upgrading to Inverness Rail Station. Longer term proposals include a new “East Link” connecting the A9 with the A96, a new rail halt at Inverness Airport and upgrading of the Longman Interchange at the junction between the A9 and A82.

1.4 City-Region Deal funding announced in March 2016 provides the Council with significant financial support to deliver regeneration and infrastructure improvements, including the transformation of Inverness Castle into a substantial new city centre visitor/cultural attraction. Initial investigations are underway into the viability of opening up land for development at the former Longman landfill site. City-Region Deal funding will also support the East Link and Longman Interchange improvements.

City centre boundary

1.5 Since the adoption of the existing Development Brief the city centre boundary was extended and defined in the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP) adopted July 2015. The new boundary extends from Harbour Road to the north to Infirmary Bridge to the south, Midmills to the east and Glenurquhart Road to the west – all as shown in MAP 1.2.



Map 1.2
Inverness city centre – revised boundary

Purpose, scope and structure of this Brief

1.6 The purpose of this Development Brief is to assist in attracting investment to Inverness city centre by promoting opportunities and actions to regenerate, develop and enhance the built environment, while ensuring that the city centre remains open for business.

- 1.7 The Development Brief's outcomes, priorities and criteria for development take account of partner and public feedback on city centre regeneration, in particular three key priorities identified in consultation events held in April 2014:
1. Improvements to city centre access and connections.
 2. Physical enhancement of Academy Street and its surroundings.
 3. Redevelopment of key sites to create new visitor and cultural attractions.
- 1.8 Sections 1 and 2 set the context for the current update and the proposed vision, outcomes and approach to development in the city centre.
- 1.9 Sections 3 – 7 explain how the Council will contribute to delivering these outcomes, identifying priorities and actions, appropriate uses and locations for development, and criteria that will be applied in determining planning applications. Section 7 also identifies key placemaking principles to ensure that new development complements and enhances the visual and spatial character of the city centre.
- 1.10 Section 8 sets out typical Developer Contributions to deliver necessary infrastructure such as affordable housing, schools, community facilities, open space, car parking, and active travel and public realm improvements.
- 1.11 Site-specific development guidance for 12 key sites is presented in Appendix A.

Planning policy

- 1.12 This Development Brief will form part of the Development Plan for the Highlands, supplementing key principles and policies set out in the [Highland-wide Local Development Plan](#) (HwLDP), adopted April 2012 and policies and allocations within the [Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan](#) (IMFLDP), adopted July 2015. The city centre boundary incorporates parts of Riverside Conservation Area and Crown Conservation Area.
- 1.13 This Development Brief is underpinned by IMFLDP Policy 1 Promoting and Protecting City and Town Centres which seeks to maximise investment within the city centre. This requires all footfall generating use developments (visits by the general public) to sequentially consider all viable city centre sites ahead of alternative edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations.
- 1.14 The Highland Council offers a pre-application advice service to help applicants submit valid and accurate planning applications. Engaging in pre-application discussion will help avoid delays during the application process and will identify any problems/issues with proposals at an early stage. Further information concerning the Pre-Application Advice Service is available online [[Hyperlink](#)].

[Map to be inserted showing strategy for development in the city centre]

DRAFT

2. VISION, OUTCOMES AND APPROACH

What should Inverness city centre look like in 2030?

- 2.1 Feedback for the public consultation in 2014 produced an overarching vision for Inverness city centre:

Vision for 2030

Inverness has a vibrant and unique city centre on the river, well connected and accessible, and valued as an attractive place to live, work and visit.

Outcomes for 2030

- 2.2 To realise the vision and priorities for the city centre recorded in public feedback, this Development Brief proposes five outcomes for 2030, as set out below. Sections 3-7 describe how this Development Brief will contribute to delivering these outcomes.

- 2.3 In 2030 Inverness city centre will be:



A great place for business

The city centre has a strong and diverse economy based on a vibrant mix of uses that includes prime business accommodation, a retail hub for the Highlands and Islands and an attractive destination for leisure and recreation.



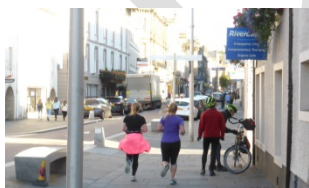
A great place to visit

Our internationally-acclaimed tourist destination is best known for showcasing Highland culture and hospitality with a lively retail core and leisure and recreational activities that attract local, national and international visitors.



A great place to live

The city centre is a thriving, desirable place to live, supporting a diverse, socially-inclusive community that enjoys convenient access to services, public transport, green infrastructure and recreational facilities.



Accessible, easy and safe to move around

A network of safe, attractive routes gives clear priority to walking, cycling and use of public transport while ensuring efficient access for vehicles, including parking.



Distinctive and attractive

Inverness takes pride in being a high quality city centre that celebrates and safeguards its unique combination of natural, cultural and built heritage, in particular its historic river setting.

Our approach to development

- 2.4 Our approach to development is to create and promote a vibrant, high density mix of uses that:
- Enables more people to live and work in the city centre;
 - Showcases and expands the range of visitor, leisure and cultural attractions;
 - Maximises the role of the River Ness as an important civic asset;
 - Brings vacant or underutilised space back to active use;
 - Makes it convenient and attractive to access city centre destinations on foot or by bicycle or public transport; and
 - Delivers high quality development, including an attractive public realm.

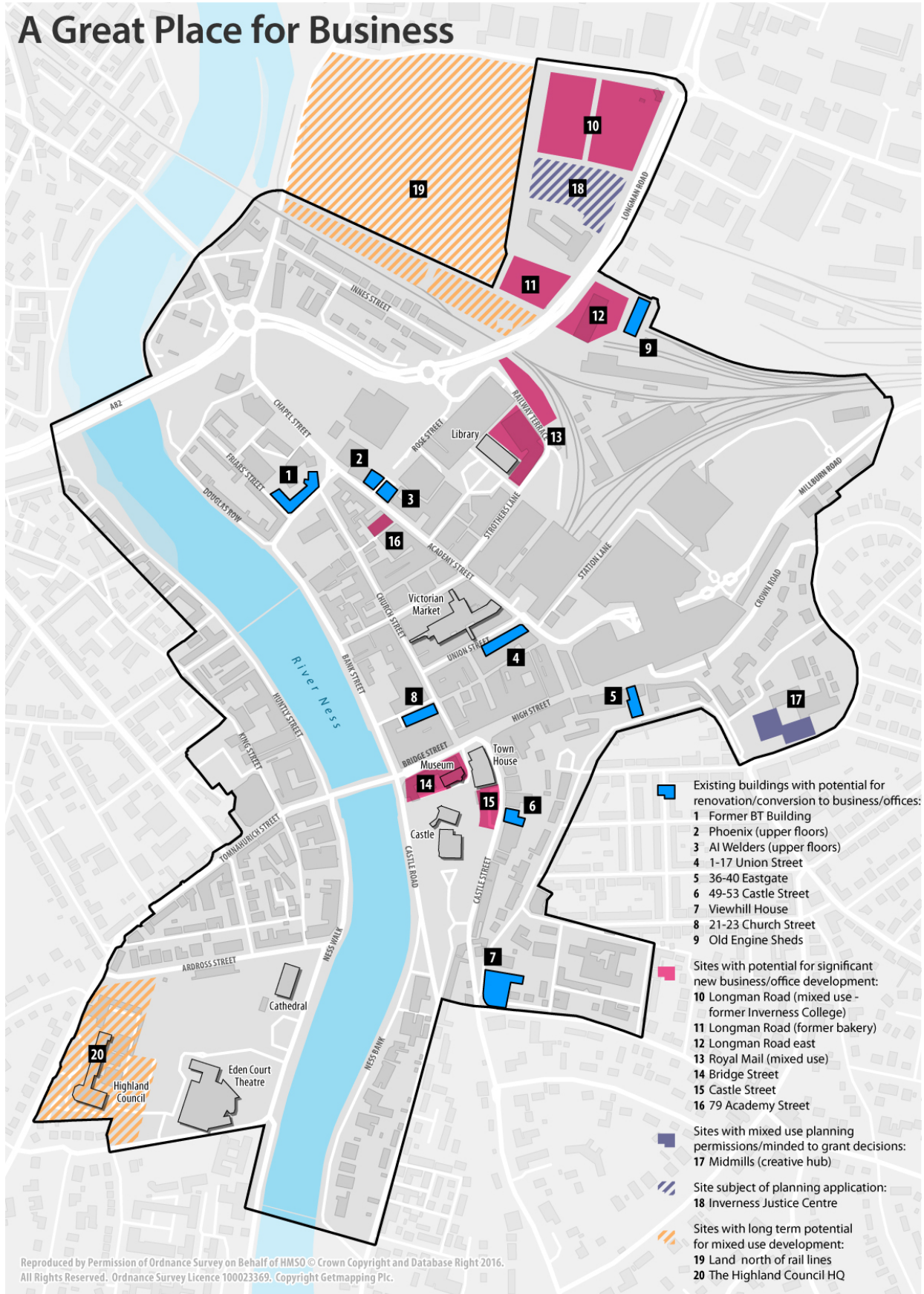
Development already underway

- 2.5 Table 2.1 identifies a number of key projects already underway or in development that will deliver transformational change in the city centre.

Table 2.1

Project	Anticipated Timescale	Lead agency [Funding source]
Conversion of North Tower, Inverness Castle, into a visitor attraction including viewing platform and tourist shop.	2017	The Highland Council (THC) [City Deal, THC]
Transformation of Inverness Castle into a significant new visitor/cultural attraction	2021	The Highland Council [City Deal; tbc]
Regeneration of Academy Street through the Inverness Townscape Heritage Project	2020	The Highland Council [Inverness Townscape Heritage Project partners]
Inverness Rail Station upgrading and improvements	2019	Abellio Scotrail [Abellio Scotrail; THC; Scottish Stations Fund]
The Inverness Justice Centre (Longman Road)	2019	Scottish Courts & Tribunal Service [Scottish Government]
River Ness Flood Alleviation Scheme Public Art Project	2017	The Highland Council [THC]
Creative Hub/ artists' studios at former Inverness College, Midmills	2017	Wasps Studios [tbc]
City centre public WiFi	2017	The Highland Council [City Deal]
Glebe Street re-development for housing	2018	Tulloch Homes [Tulloch Homes]

A Great Place for Business



Map 3.1 A great place for business

3. A GREAT PLACE FOR BUSINESS

In 2030 the city centre has a strong and diverse economy based on a vibrant mix of uses that includes prime business accommodation, a retail hub for the Highlands and Islands and an attractive destination for leisure and recreation.

- 3.1 People are the life blood of the city centre and the ability to generate footfall by enabling people to work and conduct business is vital to its survival and success. Inverness city centre has long been a hub of business and commercial activity. People are attracted to work there by the choice and convenience of high density, mixed use combined with easy access to public transport.
- 3.2 A growing number of city centre properties need renovation and refurbishment to keep pace with the current needs of workers and employers. If renovated to improve building performance, meet regulatory requirements and provide better service arrangements, these properties will also attract higher rental values. Map 3.1 identifies a range of vacant properties well-suited to renovation for commercial/office use. The Council recognises the economic and technical challenges of Building Standards requirements for bringing redundant buildings and space back to active use. The Council welcomes and encourages pre-application discussions with businesses and developers to provide advice on regulatory and site-specific issues. In the first instance, queries should be directed to: building.standards@highland.gov.uk.
- 3.3 There is also scope to expand the range of footfall-generating uses that occupy ground floor space. In common with other city and town centres in Scotland, a growing number of shop units are being taken over by other commercial operations, such as professional services, attracted by the opportunity to showcase their business and the convenience and vibrancy of the city centre location.
- 3.4 Map 3.1 also highlights opportunities for significant new commercial development on sites allocated for mixed use, such as the potential for substantial new office space at the Eastern Gateway adjacent to the proposed new Inverness Justice Centre. This map also indicates, as a long term aspiration, the potential for a new urban quarter on the southern edge of the Longman industrial estate (outwith the current city centre boundary) that could accommodate future employment growth as part of a vibrant, high density mixed use neighbourhood. All sites have the advantage of being within easy walking distance of the bus and rail stations.
- 3.5 Recent investment in business /employment space includes major refurbishment work at 1 Union Street, 1-5 Church Street and Inverness Town House. Planned investment includes a major improvement programme at Inverness Rail Station and the restoration of the redundant A.I. Welder's building on Academy Street with support from the Inverness Townscape Heritage project.

What else needs to happen to achieve this outcome?

The priorities for this Brief are to:

- Attract investment into city centre businesses and properties by enabling renovation of existing buildings and space for office or employment use.
- Widen the range of footfall-generating uses that occupy commercial ground floors, in particular vacant shop units.
- Identify sites for office space to attract public and private sector organisations to locate, remain and expand in the city centre.
- Maximise opportunities for new prime office space to be developed as part of new mixed use development.

CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT

In determining planning applications for development in the city centre, the Council expects the following issues to be reflected and incorporated into development proposals:

Office, commercial and employment space

- B1. All footfall generating developments (visits by the general public) including office, commercial and employment uses must sequentially consider all viable city and town centre sites ahead of alternative edge of centre or out of centre sites in line with IMFLDP Policy 1: Promoting and Protecting City and Town Centres.
- B2. Proposals for new office, commercial and other employment space will be supported in key opportunity sites for mixed use development identified on Map 3.1 and at other locations, including vacant and underutilised ground or upper floors, providing they accord with Criteria for Development set out in Section 7 and relevant site-specific guidance set out in Appendix A.

ACTION

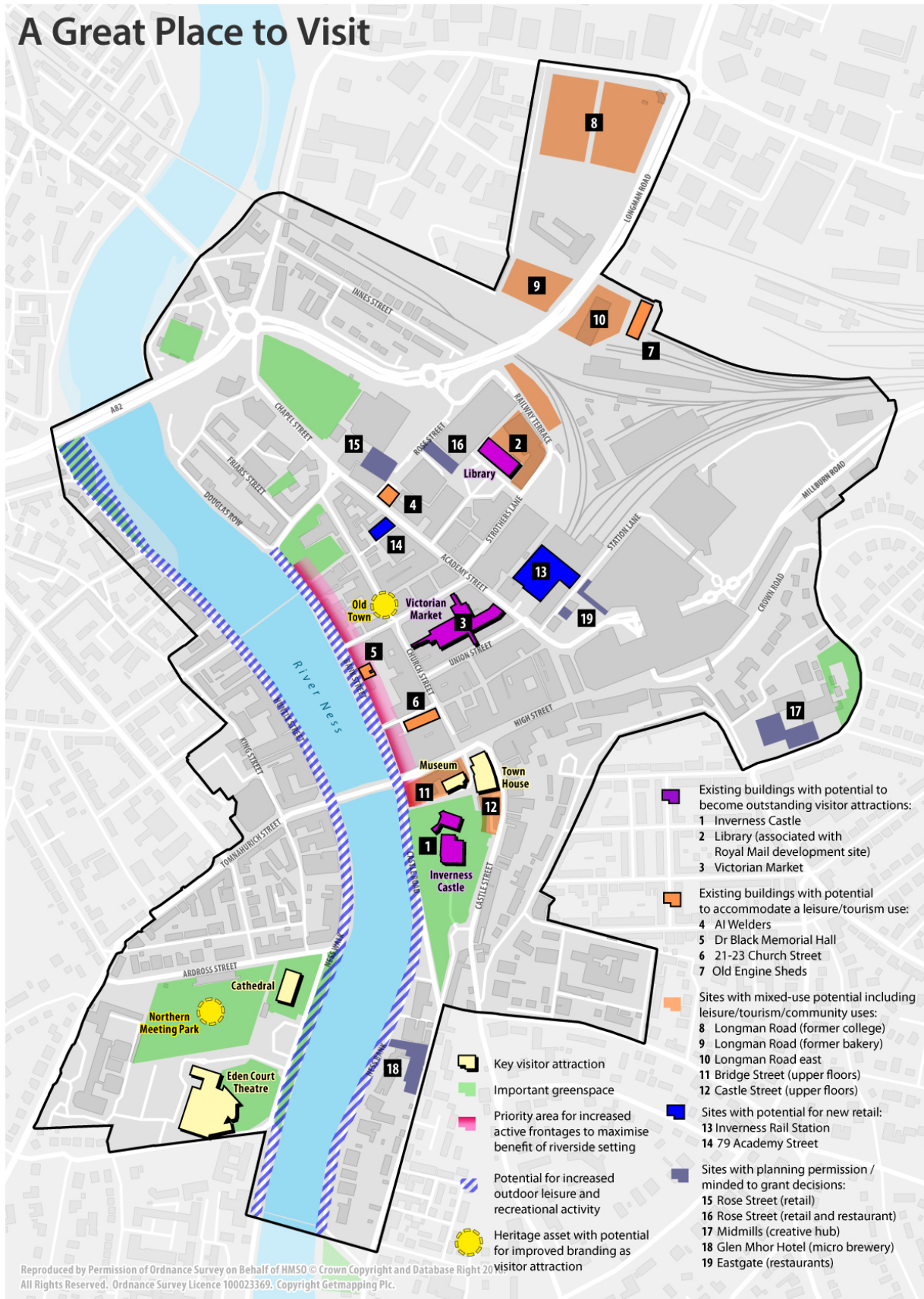
Bringing redundant buildings and space back to active use

1. Businesses, property owners, developers and building professionals to be supported in developing innovative solutions that bring redundant buildings and spaces back to use, with liaison and pre-application advice from the planning and building standards team.

[ILLUSTRATIONS OF BUILDINGS AND SITES TO BE ADDED]

DRAFT

A Great Place to Visit



Map 4.1 A great place to visit

4. A GREAT PLACE TO VISIT

In 2030 our internationally-acclaimed tourist destination is best known for showcasing Highland culture and hospitality with a lively shopping core and leisure and recreational activities that attract local, national and international visitors.

- 4.1 People visit Inverness city centre for a wide variety of reasons. The city centre is a market place and focal point for local commercial and leisure activity, in addition to a regional hub that meets the service, retail and business needs of the Highlands and Islands. It is also a key tourist destination accommodating almost 900,000 visitors per year. While a significant majority of tourists come from other parts of the UK, Inverness is the third most popular city in Scotland for overseas visitors, and 14th in the UK. Between 2012 and 2014 the Highlands experienced a 3% rise in tourist numbers. In summer 2016 Inverness hotels reached their highest ever occupancy rate of 96%. Despite this tourists stay, on average, just 1.8 days in the city centre. Widening the range of attractions is likely to incentivise them to stay longer. There is also significant scope to increase local and visitor awareness of important assets such as the River Ness, the Northern Meeting Park, the Victorian Market, the Old Town, Ness Islands, Inverness Botanic Gardens and Merkinch Nature Reserve.
- 4.2 People's reasons for visiting the city centre are changing. For at least a decade city centre shopping habits have been affected by online retailing and peripheral commercial centres, while leisure demand has increased the number of restaurants and bars. Council monitoring from 2014-2016 shows an increase in shop vacancy rates (from 11.2% at October 2014 to 14.8% at June 2016). Many national retailers, however, have maintained their city centre presence. In common with city and town centres across Scotland, Inverness faces a challenge to diversify its mix and pattern of uses to offer choice and convenience to people of different ages and abilities, at different times of day. The Victorian Market has potential for sensitive renovation and night time uses. A coordinated change to retail opening hours could increase vibrancy, particularly for visitors returning from daytime excursions. Greater diversity of retail outlets could attract footfall particularly in the Old Town, which has significant potential to accommodate niche independent units.
- 4.3 Recent consultations on city centre regeneration highlighted keen public interest in redevelopment of key sites, in particular Inverness Castle, to create new visitor and cultural attractions. Work is nearing completion on a Council-funded project to convert the Castle's North Tower into a visitor attraction and viewpoint, due to be opened in April 2017. In December 2015 the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service confirmed it will vacate the Castle by 2019 and since then, City-Region Deal funding has been secured to support its transformation into a significant new visitor attraction. City-Region Deal funding will also enable free city centre WiFi, supporting businesses and facilitating access, via hand held devices, to information about attractions, events and wayfinding.
- 4.4 Recent and planned investment in retail and leisure attractions include: a £1M refurbishment of the Victorian Market's roof, windows and heating system by the Inverness Common Good Fund; planning permission to develop a creative hub, including artists' studios at the listed Midmills building; and planning permission to develop four new restaurants surrounding Falcon Square. The city centre is also gaining recognition for night time activity such as craft beer bars established or in the pipeline, and music venues.

What else needs to happen to achieve this outcome?

The priorities for this Brief are to:

- Promote redevelopment of key city centre sites to create outstanding visitor and cultural attractions.
- Make the most of existing assets and attractions, such as the Old Town, Inverness Castle, the Victorian Market, Northern Meeting Park, River Ness and Ness Islands to grow the city centre's reputation as a great place to visit.
- Facilitate leisure activities and events that attract local, UK and international visitors.
- Support the development of high quality tourist accommodation.

CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT

In determining planning applications for development in the city centre, the Council expects the following issues to be reflected and incorporated into development proposals:

Attracting footfall

V1. Retail and other uses that generate footfall which attract visiting members of the public remain the preferred ground floor land use for the city centre, with the exception of sites allocated for alternative uses in the IMFLDP.

Increasing 24/7 activity

V2. Proposals that promote 24/7 city centre activity, including extended opening hours, will be supported where neighbouring residential amenity can be respected.

Inverness Castle

V3. Adaptive re-use of Inverness Castle should accord with placemaking principles and site specific guidance set out in Section 7 and Appendix A to create an outstanding new visitor attraction of international calibre.

Other visitor attractions and facilities, leisure, retail and community uses

V4. Proposals for new retail, leisure, community and tourism uses will be supported in key opportunity sites identified on Map 4.1 and at other locations that will enhance visitor experience providing they accord with criteria for adaptive re-use and re-development and placemaking principles set out in Section 7, and site specific guidance set out in Appendix A.

Riverside activity

V5. Proposals that attract footfall to the riverside will be supported provided they respect neighbouring residential amenity and safeguard or increase active frontages or make use of spill-out or event space that promotes outdoor activity.

ACTION

Inverness Castle

1. Progress plans to develop a substantial new international calibre visitor/cultural attraction at Inverness Castle.

Shopping

2. Reinforce the identity of the Old Town as a discrete visitor attraction, building on its historic character and capacity to accommodate independent shops, niche businesses and unique leisure destinations.
3. Diversify the city centre shopping experience, with a particular focus on independent outlets in the Old Town.
4. Establish a city centre awards scheme that enhances overall service standards and improves the customers' experience.

Victorian market

5. Partnership working through the Victorian Market Stakeholder Group to identify ways to sustain and improve the economic viability of the market and attract increased footfall.

City centre WiFi

6. A public Wi-Fi service for Inverness city centre in 2017 will boost its profile as a connected and smart city and promote information about attractions and events.

River trail

7. Map and signpost the river digitally and physically by late 2017, as part of the River Ness Flood Alleviation Scheme Public Art Project.

Northern Meeting Park

8. Enable wider access to Northern Meeting Park for sporting, leisure and recreational activity.

Retail vacancy monitoring

9. Continued annual monitoring of retail vacancy rates to inform decision-making on land use and regeneration.

Events industry

10. Ongoing partner-ship activity to attract visitor, cultural and sporting events that deliver significant economic benefits for the city centre including sporting events (such as Etape Loch Ness; Scottish Open Golf Championship, conferences and seasonal activity (such as the largest free Hogmanay concert in the UK).

A Great Place to Live



Map 5.1 A great place to live

5. A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

In 2030 the city centre is a thriving, desirable place to live, supporting a diverse, socially-inclusive community that enjoys convenient access to services, public transport, greenspace and recreational facilities.

- 5.1 People living in the city centre play a key role in achieving a successful, thriving place. In addition to using shops and services, they also contribute to caring for its environment, safety and security. The population of Inverness city centre has risen by 38% in the last decade and demand for accommodation, particularly social rented accommodation, remains high.
- 5.2 Current growth projections for the city of Inverness indicate a requirement for more than 10,000 new homes over the next 20 years. Some of this demand could be met by new development in the city centre and by bringing vacant upper floors into residential use. Map 5.1 identifies a range of appropriate housing sites. The cost of repairing and renovating a city centre property to current regulatory requirements can be prohibitively expensive. The Council's Housing team is interested in hearing from property owners wishing to access funding to bring property up to a suitable affordable housing standard, or assist the Council or a partner organisation to purchase properties and bring them into affordable housing use.
- 5.3 Measures that could incentivise housing development include:
- exempting the affordable housing Developer Contribution where a redundant property is converted or brought back to residential use (as set out in Section 8); and
 - the potential to relax parking requirements (as set out in Section 6).
- 5.4 There is a need to diversify the mix of city centre housing. In the last decade affordable housing accounted for almost 25% of all homes built in city centre. A number of recent planning permissions could vary the housing mix, including housing for the elderly at the former Inverness College Midmills campus, private housing development at Glebe Street and student housing at Rose Street.
- 5.5 Some parts of the city centre feature a disproportionately high concentration of large Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMO). A HMO exists is where three or more people share a flat who are not all members of the same family, or where six or more people share a house. Small HMOs are an important element of the city centre's rented housing stock, accommodating a wide range of tenants including those on low incomes, young workers and students.
- 5.6 In order to encourage a broader mix of housing tenure, this Development Brief is piloting a scheme to manage the proportion of bed spaces in large HMOs. HMO concentrations in a specified area are currently monitored by assessing the number of HMO licences against the total number of homes. The Council's [HMO Supplementary Guidance](#) (HMO SG) states that the guidance will be reviewed if the concentration of HMOs reaches 10% of all homes.
- 5.7 A recent review of city centre HMOs by bed space found an over-concentration of people living in large HMOs in parts of the city that have relatively few homes. The findings of this review are presented in Table 5.1. The analysis took account of existing and anticipated

HMO licences¹, planning permissions, recent housing completions, Council tax address points and 2011 Census data. The review identified that the proportion of people living within HMOs in the city centre (the blue line boundary in Map 5.2) remains relatively low at 5.7%. Within the HMO SG Monitoring Area (the red line boundary) this percentage is expected to increase to 12.9%, with concentrations peaking at 27.9% in three Census Output Areas in the Old Town.

5.8 To avoid further concentrations of large HMOs in the city centre, the Council will introduce a pilot cap on new planning permissions for HMOs within the red line boundary on Map 5.2. The cap will consist of a percentage threshold (13%) of HMO bed spaces relative to the area population. Exemptions will include:

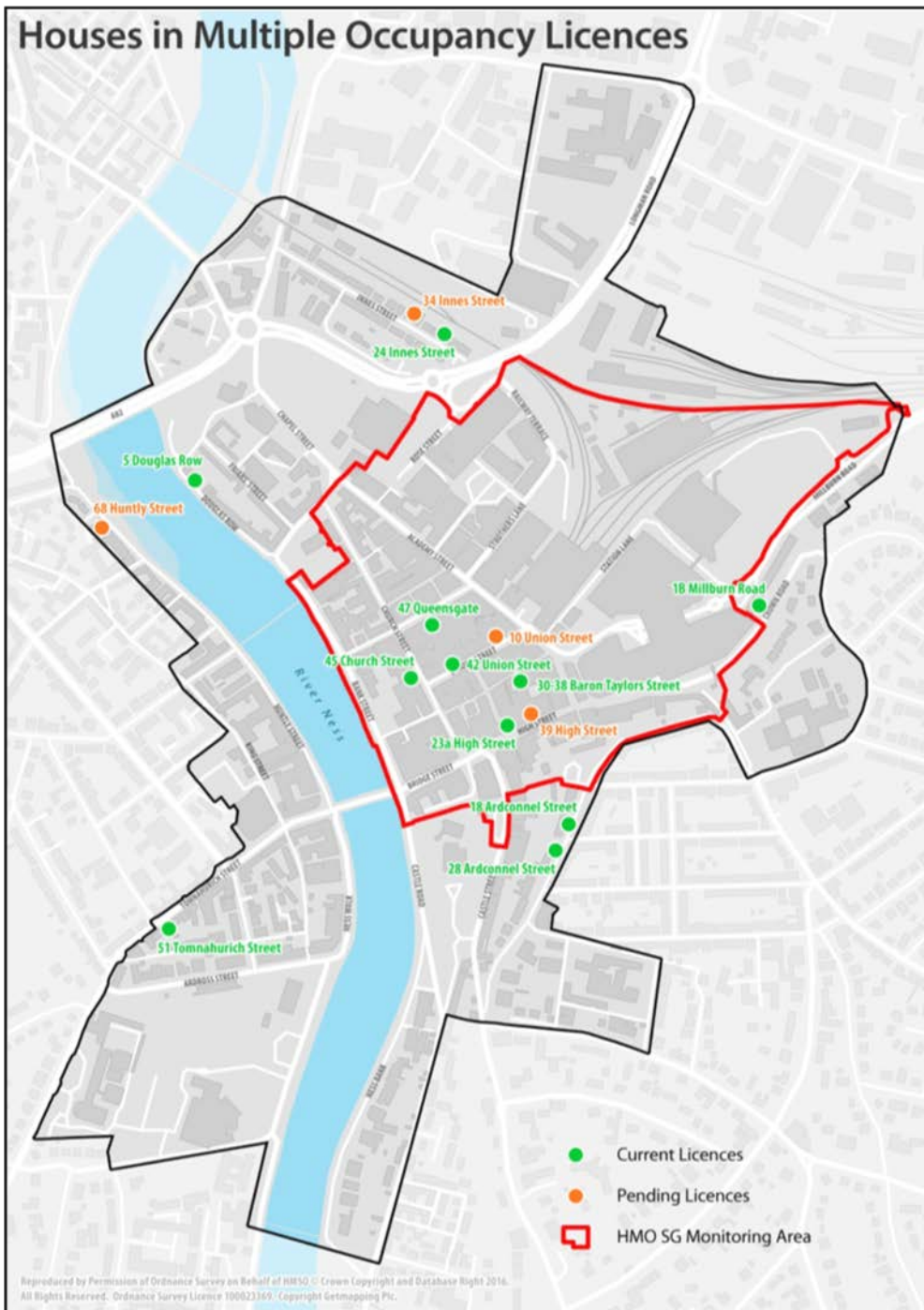
- small scale HMO of five or less people sharing a flat or six people sharing a house; or
- purpose built student accommodation (where occupancy restrictions will apply).

5.9 The findings of this pilot will inform the future update of the HMO Supplementary Guidance.

Area	No. HMO Licences		No. HMO Bed Spaces		Area Population	Proportion of Population Residing in HMO	Forecasted Proportion of Population Residing in HMO ²
	Current	Pending	Current	Pending			
ICCDB Boundary (Blue)(Total)	11	4	103	150	1,796	5.7%	8.1%
HMO SG City Centre Monitoring Area (Red)	5	2	67	99	519	12.9%	18.0%
Central 3 Census Output Areas For Inverness Old Town	5	2	67	99	240	27.9%	36.4%

¹ All figures quoted reflect both HMO licenced premises and those with pending licence applications as of July 2016.

² Based on the assumption that all currently pending HMO licence applications and associated bed spaces are consented.



MAP 5.2: Location of HMOs in the Development Brief area

What else need to happen to achieve this outcome?

The priorities for this Brief are to:

- Enable more people to live in the city centre to support a healthy, diverse and strong community.
- Attract investment in the existing building stock by easing barriers to conversions to alternative uses, including residential.
- Encourage a broader mix of tenure that includes piloting a scheme to manage the proportion of bedspaces in Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMO).

CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT

In determining planning applications for development in the city centre, the Council expects the following issues to be reflected and incorporated into development proposals:

Residential development

L1. Proposals for new residential development will be supported at key opportunity sites identified on Map 5.1 and at other locations suited to residential use, including vacant or underutilised upper floors, providing they accord with criteria for adaptive re-use and re-development and placemaking principles set out in Section 7, and site specific guidance set out in Appendix A.

Affordable Housing - Exemptions for Conversions

- L2. City centre conversions to residential use (for up to 10 homes) are exempt from affordable housing developer contributions.
- L3. Proposals for new build homes (4 or more) and large conversions (10 or more homes) are subject to [HwLDP](#) Policy 32: Affordable Housing, which requires contributions towards affordable housing provision at a rate of no less than 25%. Contributions will be subject to market and site conditions, taking into account the financial viability of the proposal and other planning obligations.

HMO in City Centre

L4. Planning applications for new HMO will not be permitted in the HMO Supplementary Guidance city centre monitoring defined boundary (red boundary on Map 5.2) where the proposal will result in over 13% of the population of this area residing in an HMO.

Exceptions to this include:

- small scale HMO of 5 or less people sharing a flat, or six people sharing a house; or
- purpose built student accommodation, where occupancy restrictions will apply.

ACTION

Residential Development

1. Continue to work with developers to facilitate delivery of residential development in the city centre.

Affordable Housing

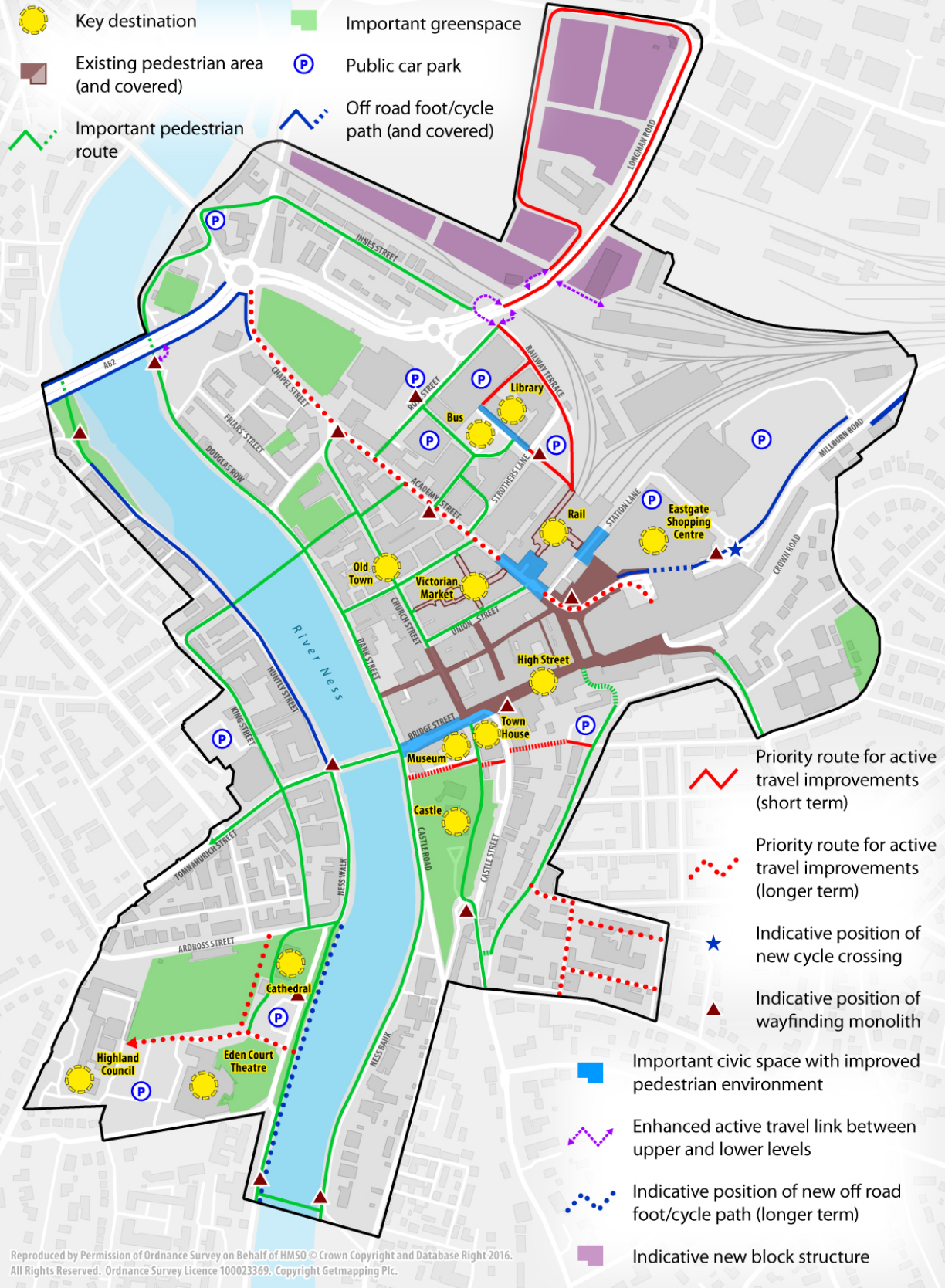
2. Continue to work with affordable housing providers to deliver affordable housing developments in the city centre.

HMO Supplementary Guidance

3. Monitor impact of HMO pilot within the city centre with the intention to review the HMO Supplementary Guidance within the next 2-3 years.

DRAFT

Accessible, Easy and Safe to Move Around



Map 6.1 Accessible, easy and safe to move around

6. ACCESSIBLE, EASY AND SAFE TO MOVE AROUND

In 2030 a network of safe, attractive city centre routes gives clear priority to walking, cycling and use of public transport while ensuring efficient access for vehicles, including parking.

- 6.1 Movement and access play a key role in making Inverness city centre a great place to live, work and visit. For the time being the city's road network provides a limited number of connections for vehicles crossing the city, resulting in significant congestion at peak times in certain locations. When completed in 2020, the city's new West Link is expected to reduce city centre traffic congestion. The Council is also collaborating with Abellio Scotrail and HITRANS to improve the passenger experience at Inverness Rail Station. The annual volume of rail passenger journeys to, from and through Inverness Rail Station exceeds 1.3 million, demonstrating that it is a vital gateway for commuters, employees, residents and visitors. Abellio Scotrail plans to invest up to £2M on station improvements by 2019.
- 6.2 A reduction in traffic combined with an expansion in rail travel will increase opportunities to improve the environment for active travel and public transport and make the city centre 'car light'. Active travel involves walking or cycling as an alternative to motorised transport. Inverness already boasts one of the best track records for commuter cycling in Scotland. Over 5% of commuters in three city wards (Ness-side, Central and Milburn) travel to work by bike, placing these amongst the Top 10 wards in Scotland for cycle commuting. In 2014 a new off-road cycle route was completed connecting Falcon Square with Inverness Campus at a cost of £0.73M.
- 6.3 More work is needed to convert short journeys (less than two miles) by car into walked or cycled trips. Map 6.1 identifies how this Development Brief will expand the network of safe, attractive walking and cycling routes in the city centre and promote use of public transport. The Council recently developed design proposals to create an Inverness City Active Travel Network (ICATN) (Map 6.2) aimed at doubling cycling levels across the city. Work to develop a wayfinding strategy is also underway that, when finalised, will become the template for all new signage systems, maps and other devices conveying information about location and directions to visitors and residents in Inverness city centre.
- 6.4 Recent significant investment in streetscape and public realm improvements has improved the walking environment in the Old Town and along the River Ness. There is still scope, however, to improve walking and cycling routes on Academy Street and Bridge Street and surrounding the rail and bus stations. While opportunities may arise in the longer term to make better use of Farraline Park as a civic space and enhance the setting of the A listed Library, the short-to-medium term objective is to improve the pedestrian route linking Inverness Rail Station to the bus station and Rose Street multi storey carpark.
- 6.5 The availability of well-located, convenient car parking plays a significant role in sustaining the vitality and vibrancy of the city centre. In 2015 a comprehensive assessment of existing parking provision found that, while there is variation in demand and occupancy levels between different areas, there is a sufficient capacity of car park spaces across the city centre.
- 6.6 Good access to public transport can encourage people living or working in the city centre to avoid owning or using a car. There is therefore scope to adjust parking requirements for new development below those recommended in Council guidelines if proposals can demonstrate a high level of good quality, non-car accessibility.



Map 6.2 Inverness City Active Travel Network

[This map will appear larger in final version]

What else need to happen to achieve this outcome?

The priority for this Brief is to widen the range of choices for people travelling to and through the city centre by making it more convenient to walk, cycle and use public transport, particularly for short journeys, than it is to use a car.

CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT

In determining planning applications for development in the city centre, the Council will expect the following issues to be reflected and incorporated into development proposals:

Active Travel

- A1. Development on or adjacent to a priority route for active travel improvement or enhancement, as specified in Map 6.1, should integrate with this route and facilitate its creation.
- A2. Development should take account of opportunities to promote new or enhanced active travel links that create safe, attractive routes and spaces for pedestrians, cyclists and people with reduced mobility. Measures that take advantage of these opportunities should be incorporated into development proposals including provision of a high quality public realm, active frontages with good natural surveillance and cycle parking.
- A3. Where relevant, development should support the implementation of the city centre wayfinding information strategy (in preparation).
- A4. Where appropriate, the Council will secure a contribution towards enhancement or provision of active travel improvements in line with this Development Brief's policy on Developer Contributions (refer to Section 8).

Inverness Rail Station

A5. Alterations and improvements to Inverness Rail Station should accord with site-specific guidance set out in Appendix A, including measures to: improve station entrances; enhance Station Square; refurbish the concourse; expand commercial and retail opportunities; improve walking routes between the Station and the Victorian Market, bus station and Rose Street car park.

Parking

A6. The following issues will be taken into account in identifying the appropriate level of on-site parking provision:

- the specific needs of the development;
- its distance from the Rail Station and main bus hubs;
- wider regeneration benefits that such development will bring to the city centre; and
- whether it is appropriate for the Council to secure a commuted payment towards the enhancement of alternative parking locations.

ACTION

Sustainable Travel

1. Continue to promote new or enhanced active travel links between key destinations and important development sites within the city centre that are pedestrian and cycle friendly and cater for people with reduced mobility.
2. Develop and implement a city centre wayfinding information strategy that maps suitable locations for at least eight monoliths and associated finger signs, including the removal/reuse of existing signage as appropriate.
3. Promote safer crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists by managing vehicular movements appropriately and reconfiguring streets at the following locations:
 - Academy Street at Station Square;
 - Strothers Lane linking Inverness Rail Station to Farraline Park;
 - Millburn Road at junction leading to Inverness Rail Station; and
 - Bridge Street at junction with Church Street and Castle Wynd.
4. Undertake feasibility studies into:
 - The creation of an Active Travel Hub in the city centre and a satellite hub at Inverness Campus; and
 - The introduction of an Electric Vehicle charging network for Inverness capable of supporting buses, taxis and private cars.

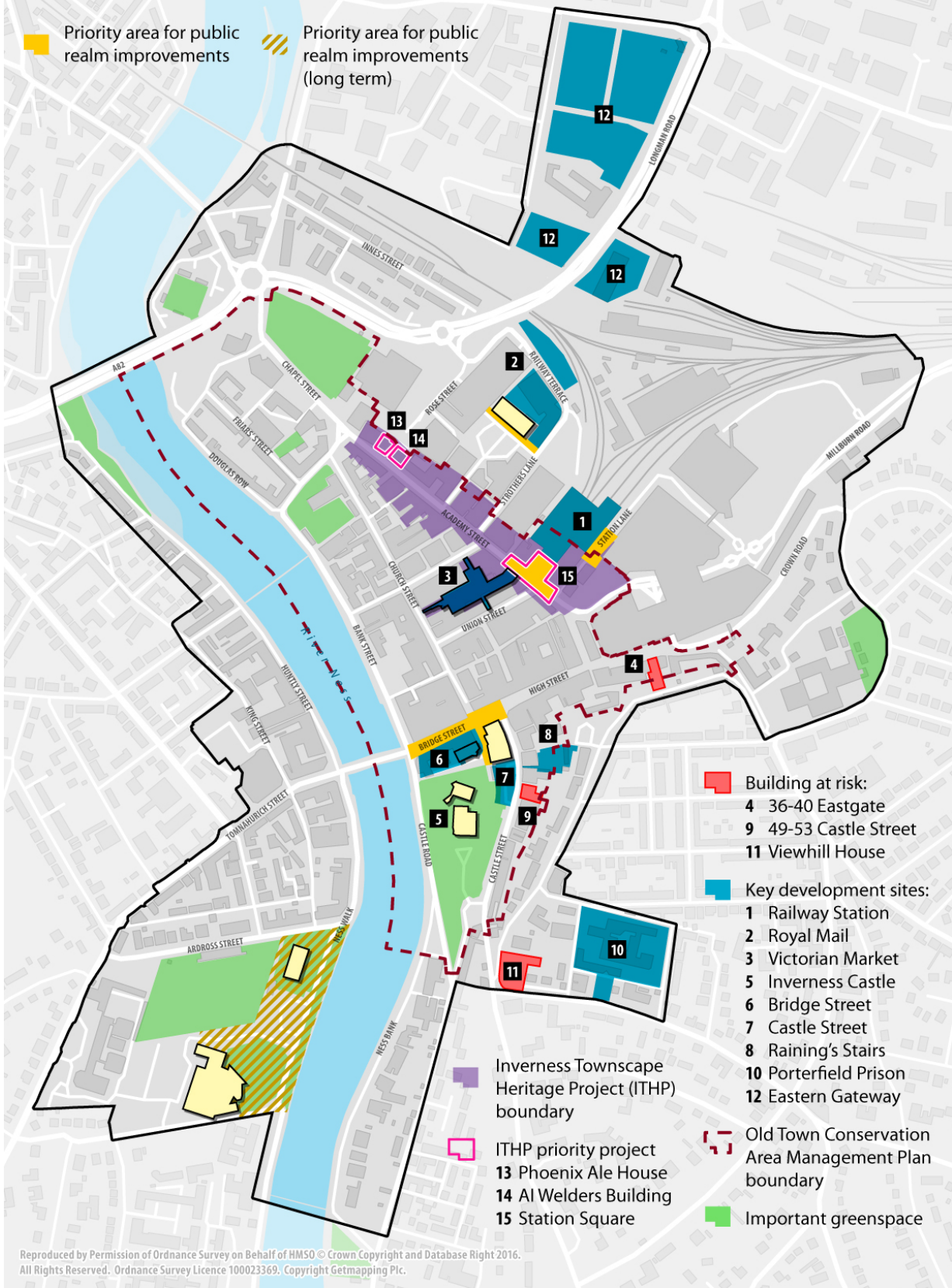
Inverness Rail Station

5. Partnership working between The Highland Council, Abellio Scotrail and HITRANS to identify appropriate mechanisms and funding sources for investment in Rail Station enhancements.
6. Develop comprehensive programme of upgrading and improvement work leading to min £2M investment in Station enhancement.
7. Secure Townscape Heritage funding (£320K) for improvements to the public realm at Station Square.

Parking

8. Promote measures that lower individual parking requirements for major new development, such as the establishment of a city Car Club in association with a national operator.

Distinctive and Attractive



Reproduced by Permission of Ordnance Survey on Behalf of HMSO © Crown Copyright and Database Right 2016. All Rights Reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence 100023369. Copyright Getmapping Plc.

Map: 7.1 Distinctive and attractive

7. DISTINCTIVE AND ATTRACTIVE

In 2030 Inverness takes pride in being a high quality city centre that celebrates and safeguards its unique combination of natural, cultural and built heritage, in particular its historic river setting.

- 7.1 Inverness city centre is distinguished from every other city in Scotland by a unique combination of built heritage and visual and physical links to areas of outstanding natural beauty.
- 7.2 Promoting a distinctive and attractive city centre involves safeguarding and showcasing what already makes Inverness special and ensuring that new development complements the city's most important assets – the river and its relationship with the city, views to and from Castle Hill, and the historic character of shops, streets and spaces. The appearance of buildings, streets and spaces, how they are used, and their role in enhancing the look and feel of the city centre are key to creating a great place to live, work and visit.
- 7.3 In common with city and town centres across Scotland, the physical environment of Inverness city centre faces a range of challenges that inform the priorities for this Development Brief. The character of some streets and spaces is undermined by traffic movement, a poor pedestrian environment or permanent storage of waste bins. A number of prominent properties lie vacant or underutilised and there is a general lack of investment in older buildings. Historic shopfronts have been unsympathetically altered or replaced and some blocks feature post-war buildings whose scale, form and materials have little regard for surrounding historic fabric. In some areas there is a shortage of publicly accessible greenspace, trees and planting.
- 7.4 Recent consultations on city centre priorities highlighted keen public interest in realising the full potential of the River Ness as a scenic, historic and recreational resource that distinguishes Inverness from every other city in Scotland. To do so, the riverside requires more active frontages, more potential to accommodate activity and events, and clear, convenient walking links between here and other key destinations. When completed in 2017, the River Ness Public Art Project will draw attention to the river and enhance its recreational value. This will be backed up, in due course, by improvements to city centre wayfinding, including signs, maps and other devices that give information about location and directions to visitors and residents.
- 7.5 Public feedback also prioritised the development of Academy Street and its surroundings. [The Inverness Townscape Heritage Project](#) was launched in September 2015 to invest £3M over five years in regenerating buildings and shopfronts on Academy Street through a grant scheme for repair and restoration of historic fabric. Map 7.2 identifies the project boundary and priority projects.
- 7.6 Recent Council investment in safeguarding and showcasing the city centre's built and natural heritage includes: £4.2M on repairing and conserving the external fabric of Inverness Town House, due for completion in 2021; conversion of the North Tower of Inverness Castle from office space to visitor attraction for completion by Easter 2017; and £0.75M on the delivery of six public art projects in association with the recently completed River Ness Flood Alleviation Scheme.

7.7 The principles and criteria for new development set out in this section take account of recommendations in two recent reports: [Inverness Old Town Conservation Area Management Plan](#) (adopted March 2015); and [Inverness Academy Street Placemaking Study](#) (2015), which identified issues and options for improving the public realm on Academy Street and surrounding Inverness Rail Station.

What else need to happen to deliver this outcome?

The priorities for this Brief are to:

- Promote:
 - re-use of neglected or under-used heritage buildings and spaces;
 - re-development of other properties where uses are not viable;
 - more diverse use of the riverside, including an increase in active frontages;
 - high quality shopfronts and signage;
 - a vibrant, attractive public realm; and
 - innovative solutions for waste storage and collection.
- Enable innovative, high quality, contemporary design through the application of placemaking principles to all new development.
- Facilitate delivery of the Inverness Townscape Heritage Scheme.



Map 7.2 Inverness Townscape Heritage Project: boundary and projects

Figure: 7.1
Inverness Townscape Heritage Project Priority
Project: 96-104 Academy Street (A.I Welders)



Figure: 7.2
Inverness Townscape Heritage Project Priority
Project: 106-110 Academy Street (The Phoenix)



Figure: 7.3
Inverness Townscape Heritage Project Priority
Project: Station Square



Figure: 7.4
Illustration from Placemaking Study (2015)
exploring options for improving the public realm surrounding Inverness Rail Station



CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT

In determining planning applications for development in the city centre, the Council will expect the following issues to be reflected and incorporated into development proposals:

Adaptive re-use and re-development

- D1. Development of sites with underused or neglected heritage assets that have potential to create new landmarks and provide a focus for activity will be supported provided this demonstrates sensitive conservation and re-modelling of buildings and space.
- D2. Re-development of sites where current uses may not be viable and where the building or the space around it has no heritage value and is of poor design or otherwise inappropriate will be supported provided this will be replaced by a high quality development that makes a positive contribution to the visual and spatial character of the surrounding area.

Placemaking

- D3. All new development should accord with the key place-making principles set out in Table 7.1, which address: impact on key views; appropriate height, scale and massing; building design; block structure and permeability; frontages; elevational treatment; materials and colour; access and servicing; public realm design; open space; and planting.
- D4. Development on the following sites (identified on Map 7.1) should accord with the site specific guidance set out in Appendix A:

Station Quarter

1. Inverness Rail Station
2. Royal Mail
3. Victorian Market
4. 36-40 Eastgate

Castle Hill

5. Inverness Castle
6. Bridge Street
7. Castle Street
8. Raining's Stairs
9. 47-53 Castle Street

Crown

10. HM Prison, Porterfield
11. Viewhill House

Eastern Gateway

12. Longman Road

Public Art

- D5. Significant developments must incorporate public art in line with the Council's Public Art Strategy: Supplementary Guidance, which should not be restricted to statues or sculptures. Instead, consideration should be given to incorporating public art into building features and external works such as external lighting, street furniture, planting, surfaces and boundary treatments.

Shopfronts, signage and advertising

- D6. The alteration, reinstatement or improvement of a shopfront should accord with the Council's Shopfront and Signage Guidance (in preparation).

Waste storage and collection

- D7. Suitable, sufficient waste collection points and off-street bin storage must be provided at ground floor level. Storage areas must have adequate capacity to service the development and meet Council requirements for disposal of refuse and recyclable materials. No refuse or recycling material shall be stored or placed for collection on the pavement or public highway except on day of collection.

Natural heritage

- D8. Development adjacent to, abutting, or within the River Ness must give careful consideration to potential impact on the River Moriston Special Area of Conservation and the proposed Moray Firth Special Protection Area.

ACTION

Inverness Townscape Heritage Project

1. Until 2020 the Council will continue to promote investment in regenerating the built environment of Academy Street through a £3M grant scheme for repair and restoration of historic fabric.

Redundant heritage assets

2. Prioritise re-development of the following heritage assets by collaborating with property owners and heritage groups to encourage investment and facilitate fundraising: Viewhill; 47-53 Castle Street; 36-40 Eastgate.

Innovative design solutions

3. Support businesses, property owners, developers and building professionals by providing pre-application planning and Building Standards advice, and facilitating design advice through the Inverness Design Review Panel.

Public realm improvements

4. Promote public realm enhancement by identifying appropriate funding sources and securing developer contributions, where appropriate for improvements at, but not limited to, the following locations:
 - Station Square;
 - Farraline Park (north side);
 - Bridge Street; and
 - A82 (between Harbour Road and Rose Street roundabouts).

Public art

5. The Council will invest £0.75M in the delivery of six public art projects associated with the River Ness Flood Alleviation Scheme by late 2017.

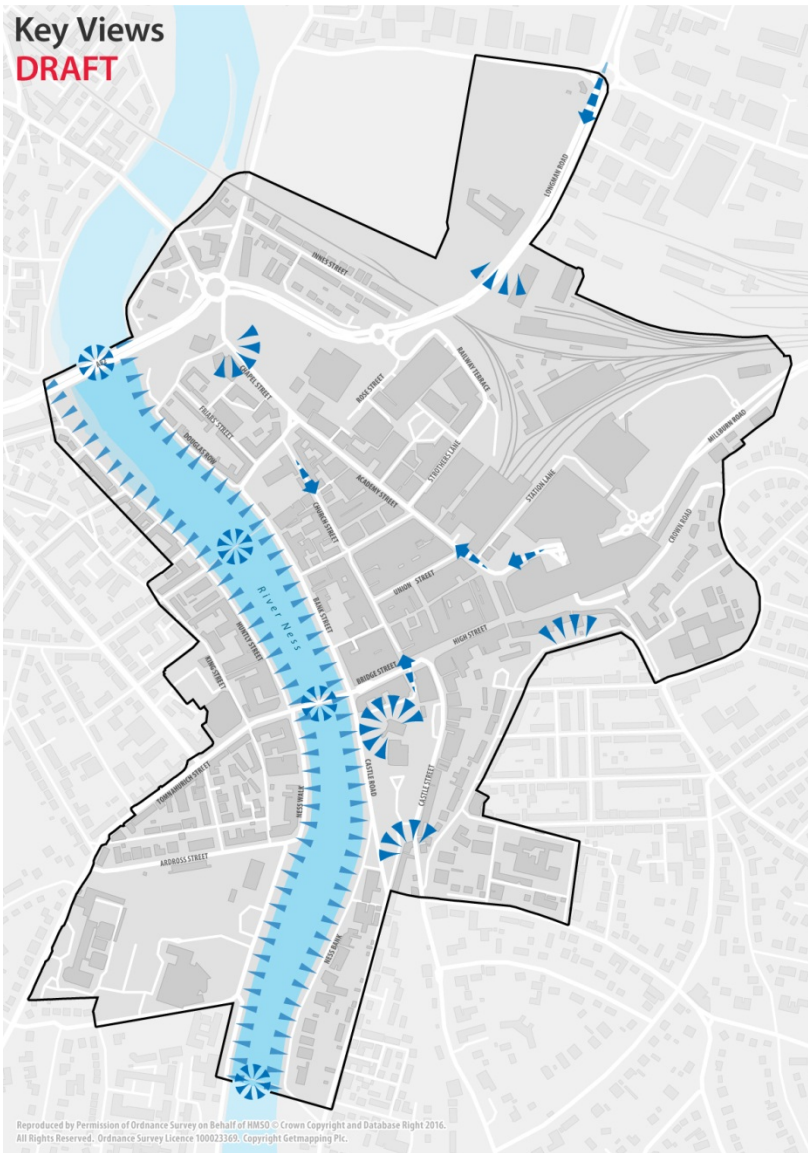
Waste storage and collection

6. Work with businesses, property owners and developers to develop a city centre waste storage and collection strategy that eliminates the need for permanent on-street storage of refuse and recycling bins.

Key placemaking principles

Why placemaking?

- 7.8 Scottish Planning Policy defines placemaking as “*a creative, collaborative process that includes design, development, renewal or regeneration of our urban or rural built environments.*” It encourages the creation of high quality places through a design-led approach that emphasises the importance of the location, layout and design of new development. The planning process contributes to making the city centre a successful place to invest, visit, live, work and enjoy.
- 7.9 Table 7.1 identifies key placemaking principles to shape the visual and spatial character of new development in the city centre. These focus on increasing the vibrancy of streets and spaces, making the most of our built and natural heritage, and improving connections to and through the city centre, particularly for walking and cycling.
- 7.10 Appendix A provides site-specific guidance for 12 key development sites addressing issues such as use, height, massing, elevational treatment, and access.



Map 7.3 Key Views

The following placemaking principles will be used to assess planning applications for all new development in the city centre, except where site-specific guidance for key development sites identify a need for greater flexibility and/or alternative design requirements.

1. Contextual analysis

Development proposals should be backed up by an illustrated analysis of the city centre context and the rationale for design decisions, including:

- thorough analysis of existing visual and spatial character including heights, scale, massing, materials, block pattern, size and structure, permeability, connectivity, and accessibility to key destinations, public transport and active travel routes;
- options explored, in terms of site layout, impact on townscape and key views, scale and massing, materials, parking, articulation of public/private/semi-private space, open space, public access and connections to surrounding movement networks; and
- 3D images, including photomontage, street elevations and street sections, demonstrating how development will impact its setting including townscape, roofscape and streetscape and key views.

2. Key views

When viewed from key locations within and on approach to the city, the scale, height and massing of development must not obscure or have an adverse impact on:

- the city's historic skyline, riverfront, townscape or roofscape;
- sightlines towards Ben Wyvis, the Moray Firth or the Great Glen; or
- the setting of historic buildings and spaces.

3. Historic buildings and spaces

Development impacting on a listed building or structure should highlight its importance and be subservient to it in height and scale.

All works to Listed Buildings must demonstrate high quality design and utilise high quality materials.

Alteration and/or extension of a Listed Building or structure must be justifiable in terms of safeguarding or securing its long-term future and must not harm its special interest.

Alterations to unlisted buildings in a Conservation Area must preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area.

Where development includes or impinges on a listed building, a scheduled monument or other heritage asset, a conservation statement must be submitted for approval by the Council's Historic Environment Team addressing how the importance of the asset will be preserved or enhanced; plans for its future management and maintenance; and how relevant design criteria have been met.

4. Contemporary design

Proposals should demonstrate high standards of contemporary design that is derived from its context and responds appropriately to the site. This does not mean that new build or alterations should mimic historic details or styles. Development should be clearly of its time, avoiding pastiche.

5. Block structure permeability

Development should preserve and reinforce the existing pattern and scale of perimeter blocks that is a key feature of the city's historic urban fabric. It should promote permeability by maintaining or enhancing the network of active travel routes that are safe, easy to navigate, well-

overlooked and well-lit.

Block structure should replicate the existing strong, relatively continuous building lines that define streets and other movement routes. It should ensure that streets and lanes are principally defined by the position of buildings rather than the layout of carriageways for vehicle movement. It should also achieve a clear definition between public, private and semi-private space.

6. Height, scale and massing

Height, scale and massing should be in keeping with and broadly determined by the predominant pattern of adjacent historic urban fabric, in terms of size, volume, proportion and geometry of built form. Roof profile should relate well to the existing roof pitches, ridge heights and patterns of fenestration.

In some circumstances it may be appropriate to achieve additional height using, for example, a recessed top floor, where this can be justified in terms of density and townscape benefit, backed up by contextual analysis.

There will be a presumption against:

- buildings that are out-of-scale with the surrounding townscape or feature one or more large mass of uniform height;
 - extensive areas of flat roof (unless merited in townscape terms or to support high quality contemporary design); and
 - rooftop plant or other ancillary accommodation that adds height or has a negative impact on surrounding roofscape.
-

7. Frontages

Development fronting onto busy streets, open space, and routes where footfall is concentrated should feature continuous active frontages comprised of entrances, high levels of transparency and minimal use of blank walls. Fenestration should create clear views from the interior to the street to maximise surveillance. There should be no blank walls at ground floor level. Shopfront and signage design should comply with Criteria for Development D6-D8 (*Distinctive and Attractive*).

Entrances, including access to upper floor accommodation, should be located so that people come and go directly off the street.

Buildings with long frontages should incorporate entrances at frequent intervals to maximise interaction between street and building.

Activities such as cafes, that spill out into the street are encouraged at sites with appropriate orientation, where pavement or threshold space is sufficiently wide and activity does not interfere with residential amenity.

8. Elevational treatment

Elevational treatment must relate well to the predominant pattern of surrounding historic fabric having regard for existing scale, proportion and geometry, and variations in plot width, architectural rhythm and roof profile.

9. Materials and colour

Building materials should be consistently durable and high quality reflecting the importance of the city centre context and its historic character. They should be in keeping with the historic fabric of the city centre (predominantly sandstone with slate roofs) and sensitive to the surrounding context.

Use of distinctly contrasting materials, such as high quality modern glazing or metal, is appropriate where this is merited in terms of highlighting adjacent historic fabric or supporting high quality contemporary design.

There will be a presumption against:

-
- uPVC (including rainwater goods, windows, doors, eaves boards, bargeboards and fascias); dry dash; reconstituted stone and slate; and concrete tiles; and
 - widespread use of materials that are at odds with the historic fabric of the city centre (such as brick, timber cladding).

Overall colour range should be neutral to complement the predominant colours of city centre sandstone. Intermittent use of accent colour is acceptable. Use of brilliant white render is inappropriate.

10. Access

Development should facilitate easy access to and through the city centre for pedestrians, cyclists and people with reduced mobility. It should also maximise opportunities to promote public transport use, including, where necessary improvements to the active travel environment linking development to public transport routes.

Important active travel routes should be lined with active frontages providing high levels of natural surveillance to maximise perception of public safety. They should also be well-lit.

11. Parking and servicing

Proposals should include appropriate levels of well-designed, secure cycle parking.

Vehicular parking should be accommodated within perimeter blocks. On street parking is acceptable only where it does not dominate the public realm and its visual impact is mitigated, as far as possible, by trees and planting.

Parking should be designed to accommodate all users, including the disabled and, where relevant, special needs such as taxis, minibuses or coaches.

Servicing must be managed to avoid conflicts with required access needs of the public, building occupants, and other street users. Suitable access routes must be identified for service vehicles including loading/unloading points and facilities for vehicle-turning.

As far as possible, bays for loading/unloading and servicing should be accommodated within perimeter blocks.

Waste storage and collection must comply with Criteria for Development D9 (*Distinctive and Attractive*).

12. Public realm

Public realm design should reinforce the identity and distinctiveness of the city centre, making appropriate use of public art to enhance the quality of architectural design, boundary treatments, surfaces, street furniture and lighting.

It should feature:

- hard and soft landscaping that make streets, routes and spaces attractive for pedestrians and promote easy wayfinding and legibility; and
- approved wayfinding components signposting links to city centre destinations.

Materials and components should be consistently high quality and durable, for example:

- Caithness stone slabs, granite setts and granite kerbing to delineate spaces for pedestrians and vehicle access; and
- high quality ranges or bespoke design for street furniture and lighting.

Design should prioritise avoidance of street clutter, including road signs, bollards, railings and finger signs.

13. Open space

Existing public open space, including greenspace, must be safeguarded. Opportunities should be taken to increase open space and ensure it meets acceptable standards for recreation and visual amenity. Where development impacts on open space, public access should be integrated into the proposal.

Open space should be well over-looked to maximise natural surveillance.

14. Trees

As far as possible development should contribute to greening the city centre by introduction of appropriately-sited planting including regularly-spaced, semi-mature trees that reinforce a sense of street enclosure.

Tree-planting should make use of advanced proprietary systems that prevent roots interfering with road construction, underground services and footways. Planting should involve effective ground preparation to ensure that trees survive well and mature.

DRAFT

8. DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS AND DELIVERY

Developer Contributions

- 8.1 The Council is open to flexible methods of infrastructure delivery and phased financial payments to ensure that the city centre remains open for business.
- 8.2 All city centre developments are subject to HwLDP Policy 31: Developer Contributions and the associated [Supplementary Guidance](#), although developer contributions are not sought in all instances. In order to attract investment, maintain development viability and make development a reality, the scope of city centre developer requirements will remain focused to addressing service and infrastructure deficiencies which are barriers to development.
- 8.3 There are a number of development types and scenarios where reduced levels of developer contributions will be considered in the city centre. These will include:
- derelict and contaminated brownfield sites which provide a net environmental improvement; and
 - where the viability of development can be demonstrated to be compromised.
- 8.4 Typical developer requirements are set out at Table 8.1. Further site specific advice can be made available through pre-application enquires and at the planning application stage. The Developer Contributions [Supplementary Guidance](#) is expected to be reviewed within the lifetime of this Development Brief and will provide the most up to date position regarding developer requirements.

Table 8.1 City centre developer requirements

Office, Retail and Other Commercial Uses

Parking	<p>Bicycles: Visitor and staff cycle parking provision with staff changing facilities.</p> <p>Cars: The Council's parking standards³ will apply. Reduced levels of parking maybe acceptable where proposals are accompanied by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Parking Appraisal; and • a financial contribution of £3,099⁴ per equivalent parking space towards active travel provision.
Sustainable and Active travel	Sustainable and active travel network improvements, informed through travel plans, including electric vehicle charging infrastructure, improved connectivity to public transport, traffic flow changes, crossing points or physical realignment works.
Public realm	Public realm improvements, potentially incorporating public art at 1% of the overall build cost, to be delivered either on site or in the immediate vicinity. Any commuted sum for off site resurfacing works will be calculated based on the streetscape works previously carried out for Church Street, equating to £501 per sqm ⁵ .

³ Refer to the [Roads Guidelines for New Developments](#), Pages 148-172.

⁴ Inverness city centre Parking Report and Draft Action Plan, 3 December 2015 PDI Committee, page 23. Subject to indexation with sum reflecting Quarter 3 - 2016 of the BCIS All-in Trade Price Index.

⁵ Subject to indexation with sum reflecting Quarter 3 - 2016 of the BCIS All-in Trade Price Index. Sum based on £440 per sqm quoted in the 21 Jan 2014 South Planning Applications Committee Report for 92-94 Academy Street, planning permission reference 13/03720/FUL.

Table 8.1 City centre developer requirements

Waste	The following standard planning condition will usually apply: <i>“A suitable and sufficient off-street storage area shall be maintained at all times for refuse containers associated with this development. All refuse and recycling materials associated with the development shall be stored within the approved area detailed on the site plan REF X. No refuse or recycling material shall be stored or placed for collection on the public highway or pavement, except on day of collection.”</i>
Service access	To prevent service vehicles obstructing traffic flow, servicing is generally sought from a private rear or side access, rather than via the public road. Building regulation emergency vehicle paths must also be adhered to.
Residential Uses: 4 or more homes including hostels, special needs accommodation and affordable homes	
As above	The above developer requirements apply.
Affordable housing	Conversion of buildings to provide up to 10 homes are exempt from providing affordable housing. <u>New build developments</u> of 4 or more houses require to contribute towards affordable housing provision at a rate of no less than 25%.
Community facilities	Community facilities in the city centre can adequately accommodate an increase in population and no developer contributions will be sought.
Open space (Including sports facilities)	Open space provision will be required in line with the Council’s Open Space in Residential Development Supplementary Guidance . For Inverness, the Council requires 40 sqm of open space per person. The ratio of persons per home in the Supplementary Guidance open space calculator is set for Inverness as a whole at 2.23. Given that the city centre ratio is currently 1.86 ⁶ , this lower ratio will be applied. By way of example, the development of 20 homes, accommodating 1.86 persons per home, would require 1,488 sq m of fit for purpose opens space on site or in the vicinity. Should no open space be available or provided, a maximum financial contribution of up to £3,262 ⁷ per home would be sought for compensatory or enhanced off-site provision.
Education	Education contributions in line with the Developer Contributions Supplementary Guidance informed by the most up to date School Roll Forecasts which are reported annually on the Council’s website .

Contact Us

To share your views on this Development Brief all comments should be submitted through our consultation portal: consult.highland.gov.uk Comments by letter or email will not be accepted unless otherwise agreed in advance with the Development Plans Team.

The public consultation runs from **X Month 2017** to 12 noon on **X Month 2017**.

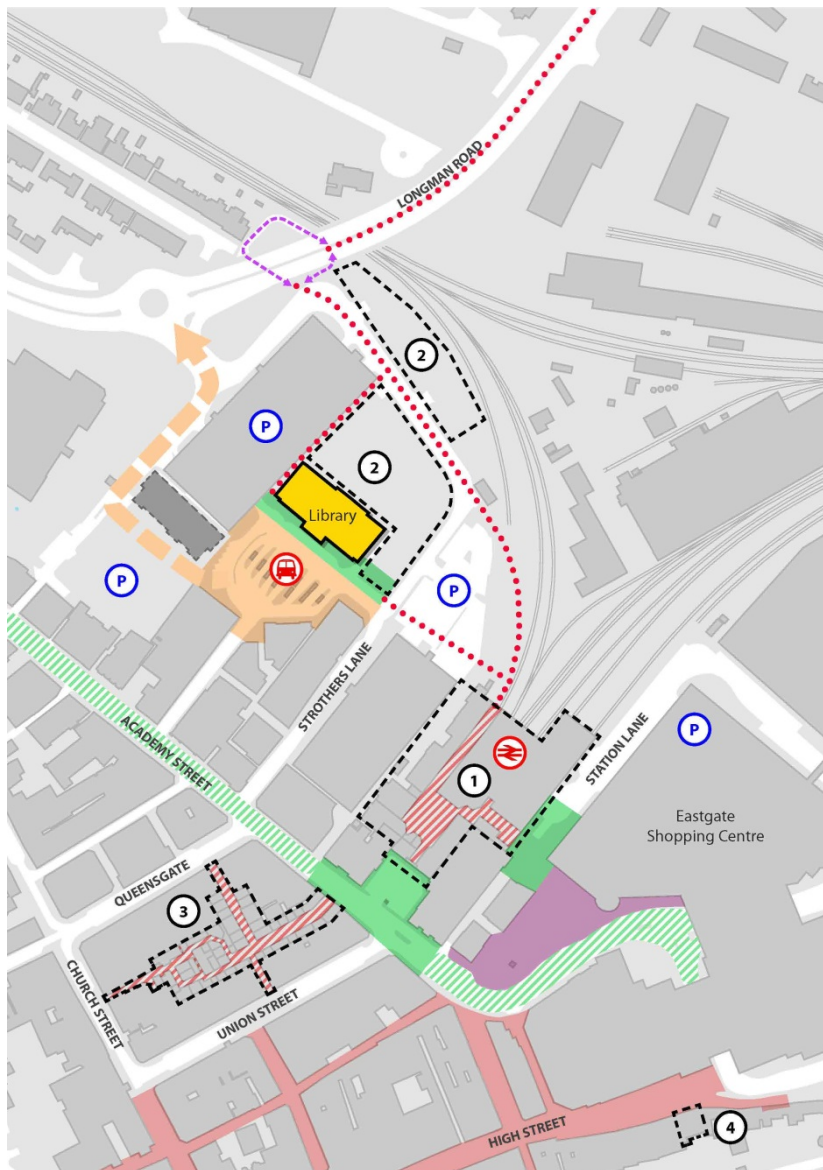
You can contact the Development Plans Team using the details below:

Email: devplans@highland.gov.uk
 Telephone: 01349 886608
 Address: Development Plans Team
 Development & Infrastructure Service
 The Highland Council
 Glenurquhart Road, INVERNESS, IV3 5NX

⁶ Based on there being 966 households and a population of 1,796 within the city centre at July 2016.

⁷Subject to indexation with sum reflecting Quarter 3 - 2016 of the BCIS All-in Trade Price Index. Sum based on open space calculator figure of £3,257 / 2.23 x 1.86 = £2,716.60 X indexation = £3,262.

STATION QUARTER



-  Development site:
 1. Inverness Rail Station
 2. Royal Mail
 3. Victorian Market
 4. Eastgate Hostel
-  Priority route for active travel improvements
-  Priority route for active travel improvements (longer term)
-  Important civic space with improved pedestrian access
-  Enhanced active travel link between upper and lower levels

-  Key existing building
-  Civic Space
-  Bus Station
-  Future bus route
-  Existing pedestrian area
-  Covered pedestrian route
-  Parking

Site 1: INVERNESS RAIL STATION

Background

- The volume of passenger journeys to, from and through Inverness Rail Station exceeds 1.3 million per year, making it a vital gateway for visitors to the city. In addition, it is estimated that annually almost 50,000 people use station facilities but do not travel by train, and over half a million one-way pedestrian journeys are made through the station, most often between Falcon Square and Strothers Lane. The Falcon Square entrance attracts the heaviest footfall.
- Station Square has been a major focal point at the heart of Inverness city centre since the city's first rail link was established in 1855. It is a well-proportioned public open space flanked by prominent listed buildings and the station façade. It also features two important war memorials.
- The station's capacity to promote access and provide a welcoming, attractive gateway to the city centre is currently limited. In particular:
 - The character and vitality of Station Square have been eroded by vehicle movement and parking – all contributing to a poor quality, unsafe pedestrian environment. The Square also lacks direct, safe pedestrian access to the west side of Academy Street.
 - The Station concourse is cluttered and dated in appearance and its facilities lacking by comparison with equivalent stations elsewhere in Scotland.
 - The main entrance façade, dating to the 1960s, is generally regarded to be in need of an upgrade. The Falcon Square entrance is dark, narrow and un-welcoming. Both this and the Strothers Lane entrance are dominated by unattractive heavy metal fencing.
 - The station lacks a convenient, legible pedestrian link to the bus station and Rose Street carpark. Facilities for cyclists are also poor, including secure, weatherproof cycle parking.
 - The southern end of the lane behind the Royal Highland Hotel is cluttered with bins and illegal parking, creating problems for service deliveries to hotel, retail and restaurant units and an unpleasant walking and cycling environment.
- The Council is collaborating with HITRANS and Abellio Scotrail on proposals to upgrade and improve the station, including relevant fundraising activity. Grant funding is available from the Inverness Townscape Heritage (TH) Project towards repair and conservation of the public realm at Station Square aimed at improving the gateway experience, in particular the pedestrian environment, and reinstating the Square as an important civic space.
- Enhancing the environment and facilities at Inverness Rail Station will address two key priorities for city centre regeneration: (1) improvements to city centre access and connections; (2) development of Academy Street and its surroundings.

Placemaking priorities

- A. Enhance all three station entrances to make them more welcoming and attractive, improving the quality of facades, signage, lighting, surface finishes and boundary treatments.
- B. Improve the visual and spatial character of Station Square, reinstating it as a significant civic space and a welcoming environment for people using the station.
- C. Improve the setting of the Square's listed buildings and structures and demonstrate exemplary standards of building conservation in their repair and maintenance.
- D. Enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by making best use of the built heritage within and surrounding the station, reversing unsympathetic alterations to highlight its distinct sense of place.
- E. Prioritise quality of place for pedestrians and cyclists.
- F. Increase the vitality of the station concourse by improving its appearance and reconfiguring its layout. Enhance all three station entrances to make them more welcoming and attractive, improving the quality of facades, signage, lighting, surface finishes and boundary treatments.

- G. Improve the visual and spatial character of Station Square, reinstating it as a significant civic space and a welcoming environment for people using the station.
- H. Improve the setting of the Square's listed buildings and structures and demonstrate exemplary standards of building conservation in their repair and maintenance.
- I. Enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area by making best use of the built heritage within and surrounding the station, reversing unsympathetic alterations to highlight its distinct sense of place.
- J. Prioritise quality of place for pedestrians and cyclists.
- K. Increase the vitality of the station concourse by improving its appearance and reconfiguring its layout.



INVERNESS RAIL STATION: Site-specific development guidelines

Use(s)

Station Square (A)

Retail/commercial associated with enhanced Station entrance, entered off Square; potential spill-out space for restaurant/café use.

Concourse (B)

Retail, commercial, passenger facilities.

Station Lane (C)

Retail associated with enhanced station entrance; restaurant; hotel.

Heritage Assets

- A Conservation Management Plan must be submitted alongside any proposal for alterations or improvements to Station Square or its surrounding buildings, for approval by the Council's Historic Environment Team.
- Ensure all necessary repair and maintenance of Listed Buildings and structures arising from alterations or improvements are integrated into development proposals. These must demonstrate exemplary standards of building conservation.
- Proposals should protect and enhance the setting of both war memorials, undertaking all necessary conservation and repair.

Frontages and elevational treatment

- The preferred option is for removal and replacement of the Station's 1960s main entrance façade. A new station frontage should be subservient in height and scale to the adjacent listed buildings and feature high levels of transparency, including the absence of blank walling at ground floor level.
- Frontages on Station Square and Station Lane should respect existing building lines to maintain the existing strong sense of spatial enclosure.
- Entrances at Falcon Square and Strothers Lane should be reconfigured to improve their visual and spatial character, enhance their prominence and legibility, and replace existing surface treatments (e.g. metal fencing/enclosures) with high quality materials.
- It would be appropriate for new entrances to make use of high quality modern glazing to optimise transparency and, where relevant, highlight the importance of adjacent built heritage.

Access, movement and parking

- Proposals must improve the pedestrian environment at all three Station entrances.
- The preferred option is for Station Square to be fully pedestrianised, avoiding all necessity for vehicle access. If this is not viable, vehicle access must be justified in terms of commercial or public interest and should be restricted to taxi drop-off, disabled vehicle drop-off and significantly reduced car parking provision. Appropriate controls should be put in place to prevent vehicles accessing the Square for unauthorised passenger pick-up and drop-off.
- Proposals should incorporate:
 - safe new pedestrian crossing points linking Station Square to the Victorian Market and Union Street;
 - a safe, direct, attractive pedestrian route linking the station (D) to Inverness Bus Station, Library, and Rose Street car park that is clearly distinguished from vehicle movement routes and parking;
 - expanded, improved cycle parking that is convenient, weatherproof and secure.
- Alterations to vehicle access must prioritise:
 - Provision of convenient pick-up/drop off points for rail replacement buses and coaches carrying hotel visitors;
 - Provision of safe, convenient short-stop pick-up/drop off points for vehicles carrying passengers to the rail station;
 - Improved access to Station Lane for service vehicles;
 - Measures to eradicate illegal parking.
- All alterations to vehicle, cycle and pedestrian access must avoid causing or exacerbating traffic congestion on surrounding streets.

Public realm

- Improvements should include removal of existing surfacing materials and their replacement with Caithness stone slabs and granite setts to delineate spaces for pedestrians, cyclists and, where necessary, vehicle access, and promote easy wayfinding and legibility.
- Proposals should incorporate:
 - measures to discourage illegal parking and on-street bin storage;

- wayfinding components signposting links to city centre destinations;
- public art.
- Station entrances should be illuminated with feature lighting to promote safety and enhance their role as night-time landmarks. Station Square lighting should also highlight heritage assets.

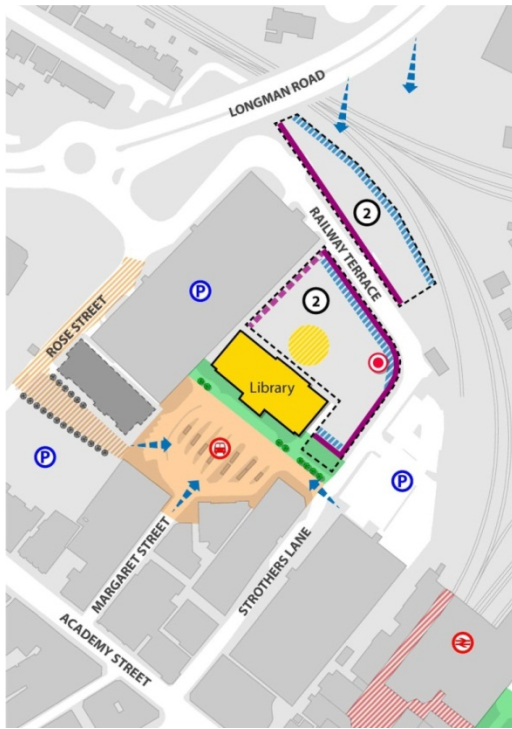
Site 2: ROYAL MAIL BUILDING, STROTHERS LANE

Background

- Re-development of the Royal Mail site presents a valuable opportunity to improve the setting of Inverness Library, which is currently compromised by proximity Royal Mail's Sorting Office and Yard, Inverness Bus Station and Rose Street multi-storey carpark. Designed as a school in the first half of the nineteenth century, the A-Listed library building is one of the most important architectural landmarks in the city centre.
- Farraline Park is an important civic space and city centre gateway for bus travellers and drivers using Rose Street multi-storey car park. Improving the visual character of this space, particularly the area in front of the Library, would make a significant contribution to enhancing the city centre environment.
- Re-development of the Royal Mail site also presents an opportunity to enhance pedestrian and cycling routes linking Farraline Park to both the A82 and Inverness Rail Station. Recent public feedback on city centre regeneration prioritised improvements to city centre connections, including the provision of better walking and cycling routes.
- Railway Terrace is an important vehicular, cycling and pedestrian approach to the city centre from the A82 trunk road. The street is currently flanked by predominantly blank facades and lacks character and legibility as a walking route.
- An area of open space has been reserved for the future provision of a bus lane linking Rose Street to the bus station that, in due course, will create a one-way system for buses entering and leaving Farraline Park.

Placemaking priorities

- A. Enhance the setting of Inverness Library and re-define it as an important city centre destination and landmark.
- B. Create safe, more attractive pedestrian routes between Farraline Park and Strothers Lane, Railway Terrace, Inverness Rail Station, and the A82.
- C. Improve the visual and spatial character of Farraline Park, in particular the quality and distinctiveness of the public realm.
- D. Create a more welcoming environment for people using Inverness Bus Station and Rose Street multi-storey carpark.
- E. Establish welcoming frontages along Railway Terrace, building on the strong street enclosure of Strothers Lane to form a continuous attractive street from Academy Street to the Innes Street underpass.
- F. Ensure development is context-sensitive and contemporary in style, clearly of its time while avoiding pastiche.



- Development site
- Key existing building
- Development proposal (planning permission granted)
- Key view into site
- Important civic space with improved pedestrian access
- Open space retained
- Visually important elevation
- Landmark feature
- Primary active frontage
- Secondary active frontage
- Trees
- Bus Station
- Future bus route
- Parking

ROYAL MAIL: Site-specific development guidelines

Use(s)

Preferred option: Civic use/cultural attraction, associated with Inverness Library building.
 Alternative mixed use: Commercial/Retail (ground floor), Business, Community, Residential?

Height & scale

- Eaves line at the corner of Farraline Park and Strothers Lane should not exceed top of Library parapet. No part of the building should extend above the library parapet when viewed from the Margaret Street entrance to Farraline Park.
- Railway Terrace frontage should increase incrementally from the block flanking Farraline Park to maximum 4 storeys adjacent to Rose Street carpark.
- Contextual analysis, including 3-D modelling is required to demonstrate that height will not impact negatively on views towards, or the setting of the listed building.

Layout and frontage

- Site layout must enhance the setting of the listed building, in particular:
 - The building line at entrance to Farraline Park should be set back to accommodate a wider pavement and improved sightlines to Library facade.
 - Open space must be retained at the centre of the block, abutting the boundary with rear wall of listed building.
- Articulate the bend in the Railway Terrace frontage with landmark feature such as variation in roof profile, curved frontage or marginal change in height.

Public realm

- Introduce trees and wider pavements along eastern edge of Farraline Park, using natural stone surfaces, to improve the pedestrian environment and create an attractive spill-out space for Library activities.
- Introduce wayfinding components for bus travellers, carpark and Library users, signposting links to city centre destinations.
- Improve the quality and legibility of the active travel route along Railway Terrace, using natural stone surfacing, lighting and signage. Widen pavements where possible.

Site 3: VICTORIAN MARKET

Key Issues

- The Victorian Market (VM) is widely regarded as a major heritage asset within the Old Town of Inverness, attracting footfall and a wide range of visitors to its unique range of small, independent or traditional shops. Safeguarding the Market's future is a city centre priority.
- The VM contains the best assembly of small shops in the city centre, the best historic shopfronts, and is itself a very attractive space of architectural and social significance. Much of its original structure is intact and in good order including fine original, or near original shopfronts. The Market also provides popular, sheltered pedestrian shortcuts between key destinations such as Station Square, the Post Office and the Old Town, making an important contribution to city centre permeability.
- The VM's visual and spatial character has been partially undermined by a range of unsympathetic alterations to entrances, interior spaces, shopfronts and finishes. The main market hall has been infilled with additional shop units that detract from the volume of the space and create relatively narrow walkways. The entry points off Union Street and Queensgate are uninviting and there is a shortage of attractive seating and social space.
- The Market's role as an important civic space and catalyst for city centre regeneration could be enhanced by sensitive restoration and re-modelling of interior spaces and the introduction of night time uses such as restaurants, cafes, and live entertainment to create a distinctive all-day, all-weather destination.
- The Inverness Old Town Conservation Area Management Plan recommends that a detailed documentary and physical analysis be carried out to identify how much original built fabric has survived, where alterations were made and how changes and upgrading could be best carried out.

Placemaking priorities

Ensure that future changes:

- A. Highlight the architectural value of the Market and reinforce its historic character.
- B. Make entrances and their passageways more welcoming and attractive.
- C. Prioritise sensitive alteration, remodelling and restoration of original built fabric, all based on analysis and understanding of what has survived.



VICTORIAN MARKET: Site-specific development guidelines

Street entrances

- De-clutter entrances by removal of unsympathetic decorative fixtures, aluminium components, fascias and signage.
- Repair and restore finishes to walls, floors and ceilings.
- Create welcoming new frontages, prioritising height and transparency to create clear views from the street to the Market interior.
- Avoid recessing frontages flanking Market entrances to ensure that entrance ways are clearly defined.
- Make appropriate use of feature lighting to promote safety and enhance the Market's role as a night-time landmark.
- Relocate the stone bench blocking the entrance from Union Street.
- Improve the pedestrian crossing facilities on Academy Street to create a safer, more attractive walking link between the market entrance and Station Square.

Interior

- Restore visual and spatial character by sensitive remodelling of interior space, in particular the main market hall, and repair/reinstatement of original finishes, including shopfronts.
- Declutter walkways and remove unsympathetic signage, advertising and fixtures.
- Rationalise signage, fascias and lighting to restore the uniform rhythm and proportions of the original arcades.
- Develop a suitable range of contrasting paint colours for internal decoration that is in keeping with the Market's Victorian character.
- Rationalise CCTV provision and remove obsolete fixtures.
- Remove and replace inappropriate litter bins.

Site 4: 36-40 EASTGATE

Background

This former backpackers' hostel at 36-40 Eastgate is one of the most important surviving historic assets at the east end of Inverness High Street. The building was extensively damaged by fire in April 2013 and has since lain vacant. Its street façade is propped up by scaffolding that is surrounded by hoarding, which detracts from the visual and spatial character of the city centre's most important pedestrianised street. The Council served a dangerous a building enforcement notice on the owners in February 2015.

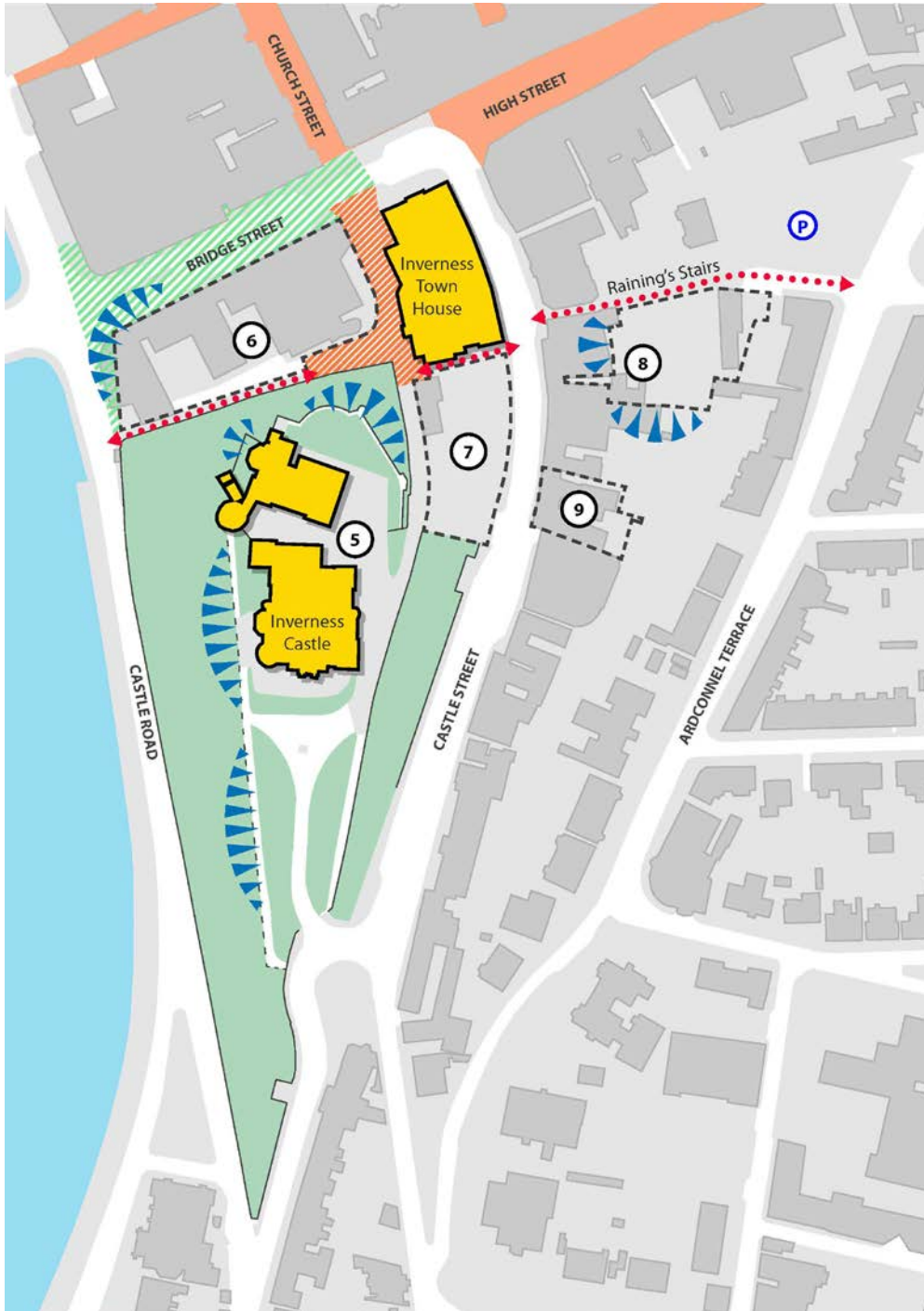
Placemaking priorities

- A. Remedial works are needed as a matter of urgency to eliminate the need for scaffolding and hoarding on the High Street, and to make safe what remains of the building fabric and ensure it is wind and water tight.
- B. There is a presumption in favour of retaining the building's historic façade and roof profile. The Council will not support demolition and replacement with a new building in the style of nearby modern properties.
- C. Restoring this property to active use is a key city centre priority.
- D. Restoration work should improve the appearance of both shopfronts, making use of high quality materials and appropriate design to enhance the character of the historic street frontage.

Use(s)

- Ground floor: retail/commercial
- Upper floors: residential; tourism; business.

CASTLE HILL



- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | Development site:
5. Inverness Castle
6. Bridge Street
7. Castle Street
8. Raining's Stairs
9. 47-53 Castle Street |  | Priority route for active travel improvements |
|  | Key existing building |  | Priority route for improvements to pedestrian environment |
|  | Key views out of site |  | Existing pedestrian area |
| | |  | Existing shared pedestrian vehicle surface |
| | |  | Landscaped open space |
| | |  | Parking |







Site 5: INVERNESS CASTLE

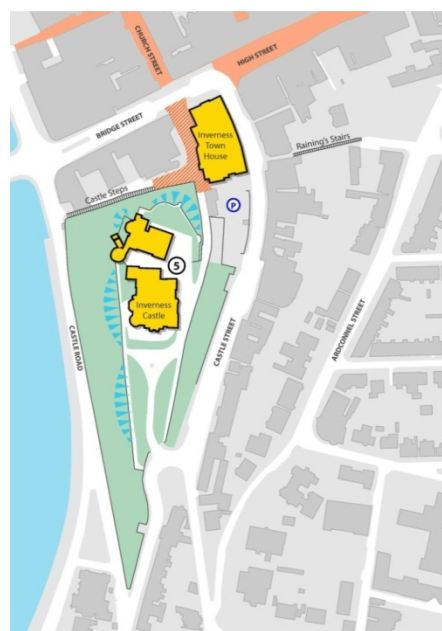
Background

- Inverness Castle is an important A-Listed building that plays a significant part in defining the character of Inverness due to its prominent position overlooking the river. The current Castle complex comprises two adjoining 19th century buildings that accommodate court services and Council offices. The site is likely to contain significant archaeological remains from a previous castle that was blown up by Jacobites in 1746.
- The silhouette of the Castle complex, particularly when viewed from river, contributes strongly to the city's unique sense of place. Castle Hill's outstanding views and exceptional setting at the top of the Great Glen make it one of the most popular vantage points for tourists visiting the Highlands.
- Recent public consultations highlighted keen interest in adapting the Castle to a more appropriate use that would facilitate wider public access and enjoyment.
- Work to convert the North Tower into a tourist attraction, including a viewing platform, will be completed at the end of 2016.
- In December 2015 the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service confirmed its intention to vacate the Castle to set up a new justice centre in the city by 2019.
- City-Region Deal funding announced in March 2016 provides the Council with significant financial support to transform the Castle into a significant new international calibre visitor/cultural attraction, addressing a key priority for city centre regeneration.

Placemaking priorities

- A. Demonstrate sensitive adaptation and re-use of buildings and spaces that expands access to the Castle for local residents and visitors while respecting and enhancing the outstanding quality of its built heritage.
- B. Create a new high quality visitor/cultural attraction.
- C. Safeguard the distinct character of Castle Hill, including the important silhouette of the Castle environment.
- D. Put in place a Conservation Management Plan for Castle Hill's historic buildings, archaeology and landscape.

-  Key existing building
-  Key views out of site
-  Landscaped open space
-  Parking
-  Existing pedestrian area
-  Existing shared pedestrian vehicle surface



INVERNESS CASTLE: Site-specific development guidelines

Use(s)

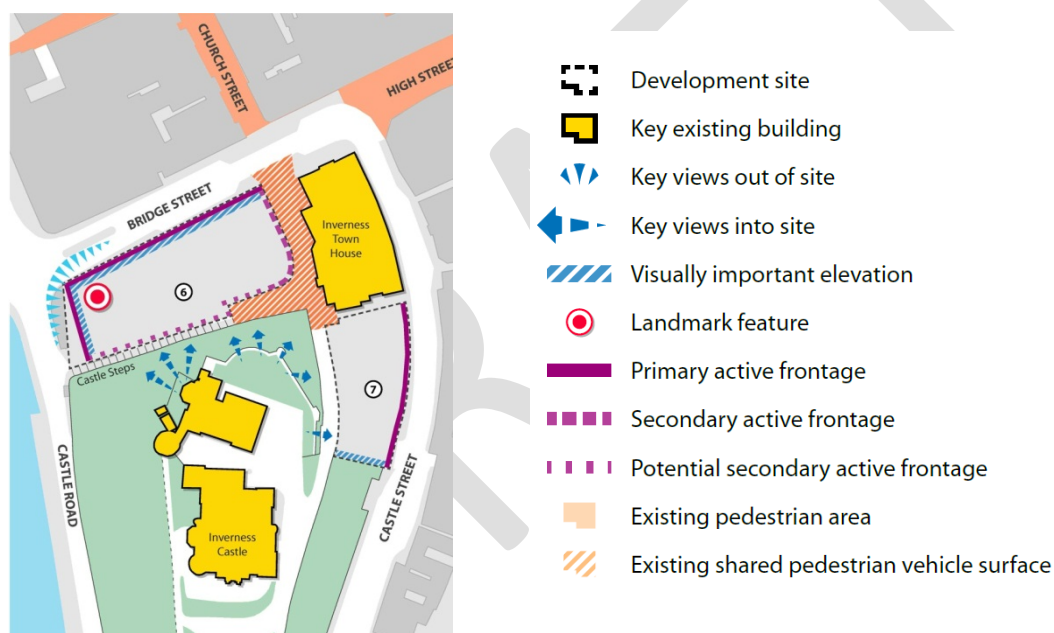
- Mixed use including visitor and cultural attraction(s) with associated retail /café /tourist facilities.

Historic buildings, structures and spaces

- Proposals to alter the Castle or its surroundings must be accompanied by a Conservation Management Plan that analyses historic and architectural value and establishes guidance for dealing with Castle Hill's A-listed structures. This should incorporate landscape conservation management guidance to ensure the Castle's unique setting is maintained and enhanced.

Access, movement and parking

- Existing active travel routes linking Castle Hill with Bridge Street, Culduthel Road, the Raining's Stairs and Castle Road must be retained and enhanced, including appropriate improvements to surfacing, lighting and signage. Proposals should prioritise and promote access to Castle Hill on foot, cycle or public transport, including associated infrastructure such as cycle parking and wayfinding components. Proposals for vehicle access should be consistent with protection of the Hill's built and cultural heritage. Parking must have minimal visual impact.



Sites 6: BRIDGE STREET and 7: CASTLE STREET

Background

Bridge Street

- This site is located at a prominent gateway to the city centre that dominates views to Inverness Castle from the River Ness. Its Bridge Street frontage attracts heavy footfall and high traffic volumes from pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles crossing Ness Bridge.
- The massing, scale and materials of the existing property, which dates to the 1960s, are at odds with the city's historic urban grain. They detract from the visual and spatial character of the surrounding area and have a negative impact on the historic setting of the Castle, Inverness Town House and the riverfront.
- The Council's preferred option is for re-development of the entire site to enhance the character of Castle Hill and this important approach to the city centre.

- Proposals to upgrade the appearance of existing buildings may be acceptable as a short term measure providing these can be demonstrated to have a positive visual impact on the historic setting.

Castle Street

- This Council-owned site is currently a carpark serving Inverness Town House. There are currently no plans to re-develop it. Site-specific guidelines are identified in case circumstances change and re-development is appropriate in association, for example, with the adaptation of the Castle to a visitor attraction.
- Until the mid-20th century buildings lined the west side of Castle Street (where this site is located) all the way from Inverness Town House to the Castle entrance at View Place.

Placemaking priorities

- A. Improve the overall visual and spatial character of Castle Hill, Bridge Street and the riverfront.
- B. Ensure that development does not rise above or adversely impact on sightlines to the historic silhouette of Castle Hill and the Townhouse, or views from the Castle Esplanade.
- C. Ensure scale, massing and elevational treatment blend well with the historic urban grain of this part of the city centre. Avoid the appearance of one large building through careful articulation of massing, heights, roof profiles and materials.

BRIDGE STREET and CASTLE STREET: Site-specific development guidelines

Use(s)

- Mixed use: active ground floor retail/business accommodation
- Residential (indicative capacity 35 homes), community, business and/or tourism use on upper floors.

Scale, massing and building lines

- Scale and massing should achieve a variation in built form that is consistent with the surrounding urban grain. They should respect the rhythm, plot size, geometry and proportions of the city centre's traditional buildings and avoid the appearance of a single large building.
- Roof form/treatment, including roof level plant or equipment, must not have an adverse impact on the view from the Castle esplanade. Appropriate use of a green roof system would be supported.

Bridge Street

- Take full advantage of the site's unique aspect, including views to the river, Castle, Town House and Ben Wyvis, making use of terraces, roof gardens and balconies as appropriate.
- The building line on Castle Road should be set back to accommodate a wider footway with potential for use as spill-out space for café/bar/restaurant activity.

Heights

Bridge Street

- Maximum height of Bridge Street and Castle Road frontages to be 3.5 storeys, with reduction in the number of storeys as block ascends Castle Wynd. It may be appropriate to achieve additional height using a recessed top floor (see Key Placemaking Principle 7).
- As a general guide, ground floor and eaves heights should be consistent with existing traditional frontages at 4-8 Bridge Street.

Castle Street

- Maximum height to be 2.5 storeys adjacent to Town House, dropping to 2 storeys as the building ascends Castle Street.

Materials and elevational treatment

- Materials must be consistently high quality and durable, reflecting the sites' location and visual prominence. Appropriate materials include natural stone cladding (e.g. sandstone) and high quality proprietary glazing.
- Elevations should demonstrate variation in composition using, for example, articulation of materials, fenestration and rooflines. Fenestration should make best use of surrounding views.

Bridge Street

- The corner of Bridge Street and Castle Road should be designed as a high quality landmark, in keeping with its status as a gateway to the city centre.
- It would be appropriate to replicate the “base, middle and top” articulation of surrounding historic frontages to break down the scale of elevational treatment.

Public realm

- Integrate public art into public realm improvements.

Bridge Street

- Widen existing pavements at Bridge Street and Castle Road using natural stone surfaces to delineate spaces for different uses, such as café spill-out space.
- Repair and upgrade Castle Steps to create a safe, attractive pedestrian route that is well-overlooked and well-lit. Consider accessing parts of the development from the steps to increase footfall and promote pedestrian safety.
- Introduce wayfinding components signposting links to city centre destinations.
- Provide enhanced pedestrian crossing point at Castle Road using surfacing materials that calm traffic and facilitate pavement activity.

Castle Street

- Replace the existing pedestrian steps descending from Castle Wynd to Castle Street, re-configuring the route as necessary to create an attractive pedestrian link that is well-lit and well-overlooked.
- Deliver streetscape improvements on Castle Street.

Masterplan approach

Development on either site should be accompanied by a masterplan setting out:

- a. How the proposal will address the placemaking requirements and site-specific guidelines set out in this Development Brief; and where relevant,
- b. Proposed phasing of development.

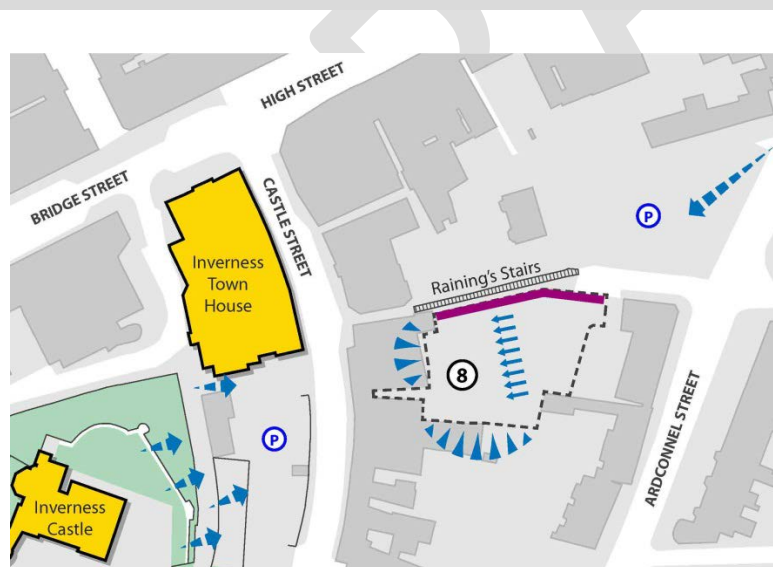
Site 8: RAINING'S STAIRS







Background

- Small, derelict, steeply sloping site that features prominently in views from Inverness Castle esplanade, a key destination for tourists exploring the city on foot. Topographical and access constraints have contributed to the site lying vacant for decades.
- Re-development presents an opportunity to bring the city centre's most prominent vacant site back to active use.
- The location is suited to high density residential development.
- The Raining's Stairs take their name from John Raining, an 18C benefactor of Highland schools. Although for centuries an important walking link, the Stairs' condition has deteriorated over time. Remedial action is needed to create a safe, attractive pedestrian environment.

Placemaking priorities

- Safeguard and enhance views from Inverness Castle esplanade.
- Restore Raining's Stairs to a safe, attractive pedestrian environment that is and well-maintained and well-overlooked.
- Ensure heights and massing of new development respond well to the Stairs and the site's topography, mirroring the existing pattern of buildings stepping down the hill;
- Ensure scale, massing and elevational treatment blend well with the historic urban grain of this part of the city centre, characterised by relatively small buildings in close proximity to each other. Avoid the appearance of one large building through variations in massing, height, roof profiles and materials.
- Take full advantage of the site's unique aspect, including views to the river, Castle, Town House and Ben Wyvis, making use of terraces, roof gardens and balconies, as appropriate.
- Ensure the privacy and amenity of residents living in adjacent Castle Street properties are not adversely affected by overlooking and overshadowing.



-  Development site
-  Key existing building
-  Key views out of site
-  Key views into site
-  Elevation(s) facing Castle to be treated as visually important
-  Primary active frontage

RAINING'S STAIRS: Site-specific development guidelines

Use(s)

- Residential; commercial.

Scale, massing and building line

- Scale and massing must not adversely impact on the wider setting, in particular views from the Castle esplanade, Market Brae, or Castle Street.
- Massing must be broken down to achieve variation in built form that is consistent with the surrounding urban grain. This should be guided by the site's topography and should respect the plot size, geometry and proportions of historic buildings in this part of the city.
- To reduce visual dominance, massing should read as a series of linked but discrete forms, avoiding the appearance of one large building.
- Contextual analysis should include scaled cross-sections/elevations spanning from Ardconnel Street to Castle Street that demonstrate how proposed heights and massing relate to existing buildings to the north, east and west.

Heights

- Eaves heights should be consistent with heights of nearby buildings, and should drop incrementally from east to west, echoing the topography.

Materials and elevational treatment

- Materials must be consistently high quality and durable, reflecting the site's location and visual prominence.
- The quality of elevation(s) facing Castle Hill is of particular significance because of their visual prominence.
- Elevations should demonstrate variation in materials and composition using, for example, projections, recesses, and articulation of fenestration and rooflines. There will be a presumption against flat monotonous facades.
- Fenestration should make best use of surrounding views.

External works

- Proposals must feature:
 - repair and upgrading of the Raining's Stairs to create a safe, attractive pedestrian route that is well-overlooked and well-lit;
 - high quality planting and fit-for purpose private out door amenity space that makes best use of orientation and views;
 - streetscape improvements on Castle Street.
- Proposals should:
 - Integrate public art into the Raining's Stairs work.
 - Use landscaping and planting to minimise visual impact on views from Castle Hill.

Access

- There may be scope to relax current parking standards to take account of the site's unusual location and topography.
- Secure cycle storage facilities must be provided.

Site 9: 47-53 CASTLE STREET

Background

- This important Category-B Listed, late 18th century building retains a significant proportion of original fabric, including original glazing at first floor and attic levels. It is also in serious disrepair having lain vacant and unused for decades. The Council recently served its owners with a dangerous building notice and thereafter undertook emergency remedial work to make the building safe. Preparations are underway to propose that it be included in Scotland's Buildings At Risk register, a database of buildings, mostly listed, considered to be under threat of neglect or demolition.
- The property features prominently in views from Inverness Castle esplanade, a key destination for tourists exploring the city on foot. Despite its poor condition and redundant state, the building's fine proportions, massing and materials contribute positively to the surrounding townscape. Its upper floors are likely to be well-suited to residential accommodation.

Placemaking priorities

- A. Urgent works are needed to repair the structure and fabric of the building.
- B. Restoring this property to active use is a key city centre priority. Safeguard and enhance views from Inverness Castle esplanade.

Use(s)

- The Council will adopt a flexible approach to proposed alternative uses.

CROWN

Site 10: HM PRISON PORTERFIELD

Background

- An important opportunity for new residential or tourism development in the city centre within comfortable walking distance to city centre shops, services and public transport.
- Significantly large site within the most extensive, intact Victorian urban neighbourhood in the Highlands.
- Although no part of the prison complex is currently listed, the site features a number of heritage assets that offer significant potential for adaptive re-use, including the perimeter stone wall and the Edwardian Chapel and cellblock.
- The IMFLDP requires preparation of masterplan / development brief to be agreed with the Council, who may adopt this as Supplementary Guidance.
- There is a need for satisfactory transition from enclosed nature of prison campus to welcoming, residential streets that connect with and form an integral part of the surrounding urban fabric.

Placemaking priorities

- Ensure layout complements and integrates well with the distinct character of surrounding residential streets and lanes, which are configured around perimeter blocks and characterised by strong spatial enclosure and high levels of natural surveillance.
- Demonstrate high quality, contemporary design that is context sensitive, in keeping with the quality and character of the Conservation Area.
- Prioritise sensitive re-modelling of heritage assets to conserve the visual and spatial character of adjacent streets and promote distinctiveness, including the creation of new landmarks.
- Improve permeability and connectivity across the wider neighbourhood, in particular enhanced walking and cycling links to services, facilities, public transport and existing active travel routes.
- Ensure streets and lanes are designed as attractive social spaces, where social interaction, walking and cycling take priority over vehicle access.
- Use durable materials, appropriate planting and public art to achieve a high quality, distinctive public realm.



- Development site
- Key existing building or structure
 - A. Chapel
 - B. Cell Block
 - C. Perimeter wall
- Priority route for active travel improvements
- Indicative position of new active travel route overlooked by active frontages
- Active frontage
- Trees
- Landscaped open space

HM PRISON PORTERFIELD: Site-specific development guidelines

Use(s)

- Housing: indicative capacity 30 homes, including provision of a proportion of accommodation suitable for the elderly.
- Tourism
- Other appropriate uses for the Chapel and Cell Block will be considered.

Heritage assets

- The preferred option is for:
 - retention and adaptation of perimeter stone wall to form the rear garden wall of properties within the enclosure and a continuous 2M high boundary fronting onto Porterfield Bank and Argyll Terrace, and partially onto Mitchell's Lane and Duffy Drive – all as shown on plan.
 - Adaptive re-use of the Chapel building and the prison's oldest Cell Block.

Heights

- Ridge heights should not rise above the ridge of the existing prison chapel unless additional height can be justified in terms of architectural design and townscape benefit, backed up by contextual analysis.

Materials and elevational treatment

- Layout should be in keeping with the urban grain of the Conservation Area, including:
 - strong building lines and active frontages;
 - clear articulation between public, private and semi-private space;
 - streets and lanes that are principally defined by the position of buildings rather than the layout of carriageways for vehicle movement or parking;
 - use of planting to reduce visual impact of car parking;
 - integration of well-over looked public open space whose design and layout prioritises social interaction;
 - use of public art to enhance distinctiveness.

Connectivity

- Neighbourhood permeability and connectivity should be improved through the creation of welcoming, publically accessible walking and cycling links to surrounding active travel routes. New routes should be legible, well-overlooked and well-lit.

Site 11: VIEWHILL

Background

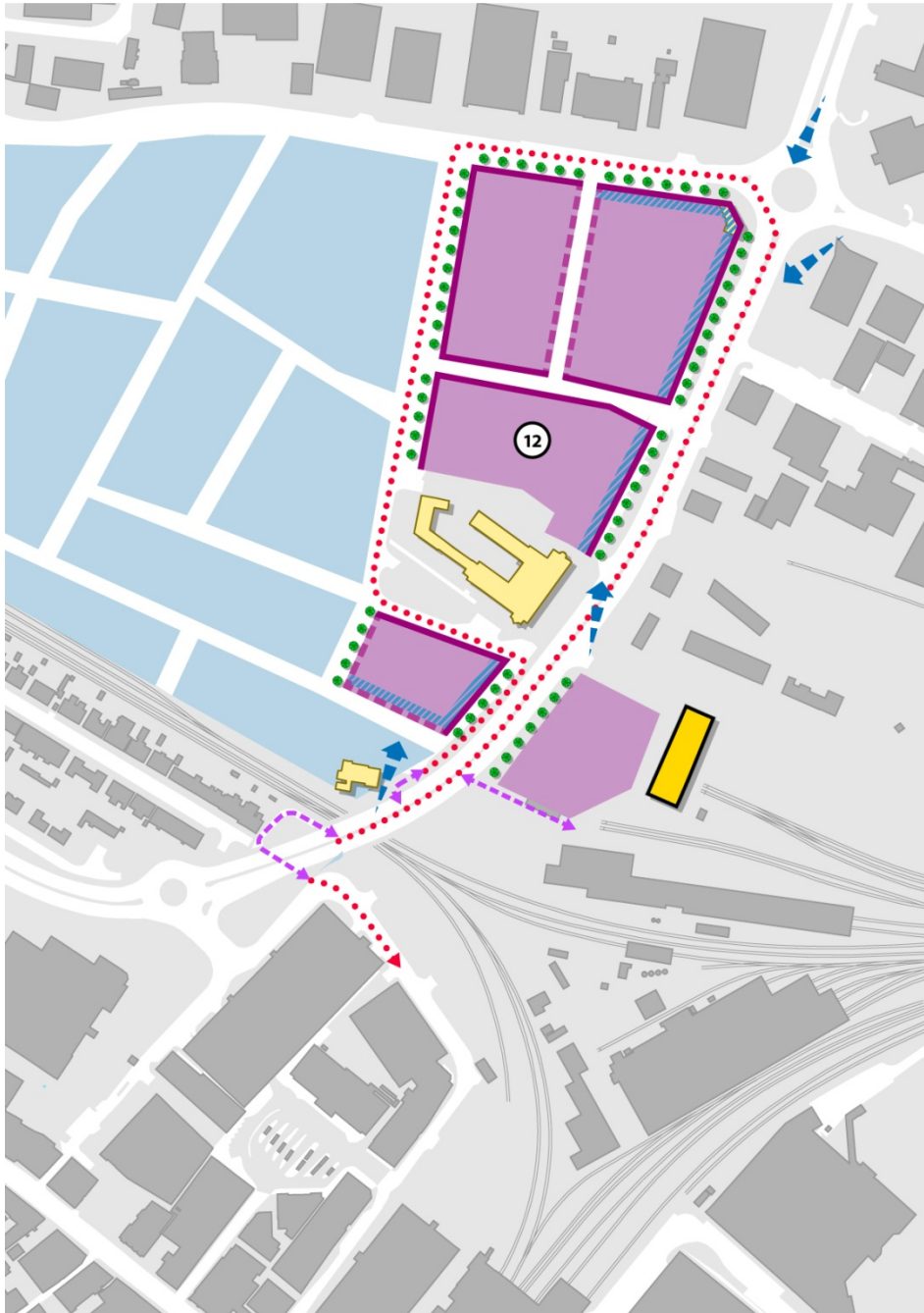
- Viewhill is an important C Listed early 19th century house, whose elevated position makes it a prominent landmark on the city skyline. The house was designed, built and first occupied by Joseph Mitchell, a distinguished engineer who worked with Thomas Telford on the Caledonian Canal. Last used as a youth hostel, it was sold and vacated in the 1990s. The building lay vacant until a serious fire in 2007 rendered it virtually derelict.
- Viewhill features in Scotland's Buildings At Risk register, a database of buildings considered to be under threat of neglect or demolition. Its fire-damaged condition has a negative impact on city views and detracts from the character the Conservation Area. The Highland Historic Buildings Trust has undertaken options studies to bring the building back to active, viable use.












Placemaking priorities

- A. The preferred option is for retention, repair and adaptive re-use of Viewhill.
- B. The Council will support sensitive, feasible and appropriate proposals that secure a long term future for the building, do not adversely impact its special architectural and historic interest and do not detract from the character and appearance of the wider conservation area.

Use(s): The Council will adopt a flexible approach to proposed alternative uses.

EASTERN GATEWAY LONGMAN ROAD



-  Indicative block structure
-  Indicative block structure (longer term)
-  Existing building
-  Heritage asset
-  Priority route for active travel improvements
-  Enhanced active travel link between upper and lower levels
-  Visually important elevation
-  Primary active frontage
-  Secondary active frontage
-  Trees
-  Key views into site

Site 12: LONGMAN ROAD

Background

- This area occupies a key position at the eastern gateway to Inverness city centre, within easy walking distance of the city's rail and bus stations.
- Development in this area presents an important opportunity to:
 - expand the mix and scale of city centre development;
 - create strong, well-defined urban character, with a gateway feature, a on key approach route to city centre;
 - develop prominent, high quality landmarks to enhance the character and identity of this part of the city;
 - make significant improvements to active travel links to city centre and centres of employment.
- The Council's preferred option is for demolition of existing buildings that will allow sites to be developed in a considered manner.
- Prospective developers / purchasers are encouraged to assess opportunities for wider land assembly in this area. Various sites are understood to be surplus or underutilised and if also acquired, could optimise coherent, intensive development.
- Development will contribute to the longterm objective, expressed in this Development Brief, of diversifying the western edge of Longman Estate to form a significant new mixed use urban quarter with strong links to the riverfront.

Placemaking priorities

- A. Improve visual and spatial character on the A82;
- B. Support the creation of a gateway to Inverness city centre using landmark features;
- C. Improve active travel links between Longman Estate and city centre;
- D. Adapt the character of Burnett Road to create a safe, attractive walking and cycling route.
- E. Create distinct character and identity through improvements to the quality of public realm.
- F. Ensure streets have relatively continuous building frontages, a good sense of enclosure and high levels of natural surveillance.
- G. Provide active frontages at ground floor level to develop lively, well-overlooked public realm.
- H. Create new public open space and meeting places serving employment uses in suitable locations.

LONGMAN ROAD: Site-specific development guidelines

Use(s)

- Mixed use: Business, Industrial, Community, Leisure.

Heights

- The preferred option is for buildings of 4-5 storeys to improve sense of street enclosure
- Minimum building height should be 2 storeys and maximum height 5 storeys.
- Roof level plant and equipment should not exceed 3M in height and should be set well back from the building eaves and effectively screened to avoid negative visual impact.

Block structure and permeability

- Development should adopt a perimeter block form to increase permeability of the urban fabric, creating new active travel routes between Longman Road, Harbour Road and the city centre and, in the longer term, the riverside.
- Block structure should:
 - feature strong continuous building lines that give clear definition to new and existing

streets, providing new streets with a strong sense enclosure and high levels of natural surveillance;

- clearly define public, private and semi-private space;
- create attractive public outdoor space that supports and provides a setting for the surrounding uses.

Massing and elevational treatment

- Massing and elevational treatment should demonstrate high quality, contemporary design that enhances the visual prominence and legibility of this city centre gateway.
- There should be variations in elevational treatment by, for example, projections, recesses and articulation of entrances, fenestration and rooflines.
- There will be a presumption against development of large building masses of uniform height.

Frontage(s)

- Frontages facing Longman Road and Harbour Road must be high quality and distinctive, enhancing the sense of arrival to the city centre.
- Provide continuous active frontages at ground floor level with high levels of transparency.
- There should be no blank walls at ground floor level or on any elevation facing Harbour Road, Burnett Road or Longman Road.
- Fenestration should create clear views from the interior to the street to maximise surveillance.
- The main public entrance to each building should face directly onto Longman Road or Harbour Road.
- Frontages to Burnett Road should support uses that attract street life such small retail units and cafés.

Materials & colour

- Materials should be consistently high quality reflecting the importance and prominence of sites flanking this city centre gateway.

Active travel and public transport

- Development must make a significant contribution to strengthening and improving active travel and public transport links between the Longman estate and retail, commercial, and transport hubs in other parts of the city. This should include but not be limited to:
 - a. New/improved active travel routes that are attractive and well-lit:
 - along the A82 between the railway bridge and the Harbour Road roundabout;
 - along Burnett Road linking Harbour Road with the A82; and
 - connecting other parts of this Development Brief area to both Harbour Road and Shore Street.
 - b. Measures to prevent the A82 forming a barrier to pedestrian and cycle connectivity including:
 - improving the pedestrian environment at the underpass linking Innes Street to the city centre;
 - replacing or improving existing steps and ramps to the A82 from Innes Street, Railway Terrace and Burnett Road;
 - enhanced crossing facilities of the A82. This will require engagement with Trunk Road operators Transport Scotland; and
 - wayfinding components signposting links to key facilities and city centre destinations.
 - c. Improvements to bus facilities including siting and design of bus stops to ensure they are within easy walking distance of new development and have good waiting environments.
- Proposals must demonstrate that active travel improvements make sufficient provision for disabled users.

Vehicle Access

- Proposals must identify a clearly defined hierarchy of connected vehicle routes into and through the site. They must demonstrate that all new or enhanced junctions:
 - accommodate anticipated vehicle types and volumes;
 - provide safe levels of visibility; and
 - do not impede non-motorised or disabled accessibility.
- Transport Scotland must be consulted about access arrangements from the A82 (Longman Road). Proposals for additional accesses and new junctions off the A82 are unlikely to be supported.

Public realm

- Existing boundary walls flanking pavements should be removed.
- Development should make a significant contribution to greening this edge of the city centre by introduction of appropriately sited, attractive landscaping including regularly-spaced trees that reinforce a sense of street enclosure. Appropriate species include Lime, Norway Maple and Hornbeam.
- Existing trees on frontages facing Longman Road and Harbour Road to be retained and supplemented by new tree planting that is aligned with existing in a regular pattern.

Parking / Servicing

- Provide well-designed, secure cycle parking that is located within easy access of surrounding active travel routes.
- No vehicular parking, drop-off or loading will be permitted on Longman Road or Harbour Road, or between these roads and buildings fronting onto them.
- A majority of vehicular parking spaces, including bays for loading/unloading and servicing should be accommodated within perimeter blocks.