

## Workshop Note

25 July 2019

09:00-14:00 Hours

European Room, City Chambers

<p><b>Attendees</b></p>	<p><b>Project Team:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ CEC: Anna Herriman (AH), Jamie Robertson (JR)</li> <li>➤ WYG: Mark Rinkus (MR), Jordan Dunn (JD),</li> <li>➤ LDA: Marta Guerini (MG)</li> <li>➤ AM: Dorothy McEwan (DMcE)</li> </ul> <p><b>Organisations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Spokes: Richard Grant (RG), Ewan Jeffery (EJ)</li> <li>➤ Living Streets: David Spaven (DS) {Edinburgh}, Robert Weetman {Scotland}</li> <li>➤ Historic Environment Scotland: Chloe Porter (CP)</li> <li>➤ Edinburgh Worst Heritage Trust: Fiona Rankin (FR)</li> <li>➤ The Cockburn Association: James Garry (JG)</li> <li>➤ CEC: Andrew Smith (AS) {Representing Planning and CCT Project}, Jenny Bruce (JB) {World Heritage}</li> <li>➤ New Town &amp; Broughton Community Council: Carol Nimmo (CN), Richard Price (RP), Simon Holledge (SH)</li> <li>➤ Essential Edinburgh: Roddy Smith (RS), Grant Stewart (GS)</li> <li>➤ Edinburgh Archaeological Association:</li> <li>➤ Heriot Watt University: Alex McLaren (AS)</li> <li>➤ Police Scotland: Samantha Campbell (SC)</li> <li>➤ Royal Society of Edinburgh: Gordon Adam (GA)</li> <li>➤ George Street Association: William Duncan (WD)</li> <li>➤ Landscape Institute Scotland: Emily Yates (EY)</li> <li>➤ RTPi Scotland:</li> </ul>
<p><b>Invited but absent</b></p>	<p>ESALA Sustrans</p>

Item No		
1	<b>Introductions &amp; Welcomes</b>	
1.1	AH gave introductions, welcomes and a summary of the project to date, its context within CCT, the project's objectives and set out a timeline of next steps.	
1.2	AH presented the workshop agenda (attached) and format (based on attached PPP).	
1.3	DMcE gave a brief summary of George Street from a heritage perspective.	
2	<b>James Clerk Maxwell (JCM)</b>	<b>Action</b>
2.1	<p>JD presented JCM topic and ran through a range of potential design ideas.</p> <p>The design ideas were based around two core principles;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ retention of statue in current position, or</li> <li>○ relocation to an alternative nearby site.</li> </ul> <p>It was also noted that there was an opportunity to change the statue's orientation to match the 3 other statues; facing the Old Town, however, on presentation of this idea strong cases were made to retain the statue's existing orientation of looking along George Street (both plains of orientation can be achieved within the design).</p>	
2.2	<p>An open floor discussion and Q&amp;A session followed, highlights included:</p> <p>FR commented on the opportunity to enhance the views of statue. Raise the statue's height similar to 3 other statues (through plinth) could strengthen view, particularly from N/S (Old Town and Forth backdrops). However, WD noted raising the height of statue could potentially impede views of Dundas statue from certain perspectives (particularly views from George Street).</p> <p>WD confirmed that the current location of the statue was a product of traffic network drivers, however its current site provides a punctuation mark to end of George Street. Stressed the need to be careful about any relocation of statue. Furthermore, WD perceived that moving the statue towards St Andrew Square could impede the expected increased flows from new ESJ.</p>	

FR & JB preferred Option 1A; subsequently Option 1A was generally the most supported option.

AH confirmed, once the long list of ideas is whittled down to preferred options, visualisations will be prepared by the project team. Furthermore and to note, visualisations where appropriate will be prepared not just for the JCM, but for other topics such as preferred greenery options as required.

GA stated that improvements to the pedestrian experience around the statue and a more safe and accessible statue is good, however, convincing stakeholders (include Sandy Stoddart) that the relocation of JCM to a new position, to help achieve this, will be challenging.

EY preferred Option 4 (pedestrianisation of block), but was concerned about this options impact on bus service provision.

CN preferred Option 1A but concerned about potential visual obscuring impact on the Dundas statue. Any 3D visualisation produced should show the relationship with St Andrews Square and Dundas statue siting; utilising appropriate skyline planning tools.

EY concerned that CCWEL slices the pedestrian's connection and dominates the area between George Street and St Andrews Square; the two areas which we are trying to strengthen connections between.

DS agreed and cited experiences of Leith Walk with regard to cyclist infrastructure and the observed negative impact on pedestrians. DS, supported in principle Option 4, however, as this option does not facilitate bus access, option 1 or 1A is therefore preferred in practice. The importance of George Street as a bus link were also discussed.

RW,CCWEL connection with York Place will influence JCM options for routing to George Street.

RS claimed that the £40m investment is comprised by JCM positioning, therefore wondered whether there was an option to completely remove the statue from site, potentially relocating it off street , e.g. in St Andrews Square garden which would make it more safely & visually accessible.

AH responded and clarified that the remit of the project is to identify what is we like about the street (i.e key historical values, i.e statues) and bring them forward with us (not removed them).

GA confirmed that Sandy Stoddart had intended to place statue where it currently is, and sculpted it accordingly to fit the placement.

	<p>JB stated that any change within the street (such as statue relocation) must be considered in the context of the OUV.</p> <p>RW believed that Option 2 is unacceptable; Option 1A is preferred.</p> <p>AS, Statue needs to be accessible, thinking practically people will take photos and "selfies" of it; unsafe for people to stand in the carriageway to do so, needs a pedestrian space secured around it.</p> <p>AH asked for the workshop attendees help to progress towards a feasible option. From the feedback so far I am hearing that there is stronger support for 1A in principle, but the project needs to think carefully about details, such as; alignment, sightlines, cycle route severance, pedestrian movement</p> <p>EY added that the refinement of options should include evaluation of eye level visuals.</p> <p>EY noted that Option 2 still had three lanes of traffic on South St andrews Street, gains to be made if pulled down to two lanes of traffic (shorter crossings) but the statue would still be in an island of traffic. Secondly, suggested that symmetry could potentially be maintained with careful use materials; even if functionally areas are asymmetric.</p> <p>AS believed there was merit in Option 3 (one way traffic only), including that it maintains bus access, but the large amount of extra space created (closure of westbound traffic lane) is unlikely to be used, therefore outcomes are really no different than other options with lanes in two directions.</p> <p>AH, proposed that Option 1B, 2 and 3 be discounted, this received broad agreement from the group. Concluding that the remaining options will therefore be refined by the design team for further evaluation.</p>	<p>CEC – refine reaming options for further evaluation and discussion.</p>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Cycleway Segregation</b></p>	<p><b>Action</b></p>
<p>3.1</p>	<p>JD introduced the cycling segregation topic and ran through a range of potential design treatments.</p>	
<p>3.2</p>	<p>An open floor discussion and Q&amp;A session followed, highlights included;</p> <p>EY, raised concerns over the standard use of tactile paving flags; referenced the corduroy style flags being used on the Royal Mile as best practice and an alternative.</p>	

FR agreed with EY's corduroy preference statement. Furthermore, FR stated the importance of height differentiation for the visually impaired. Kerbs that aren't quite high enough to be considered as a step, can serve as a trip hazard.

RW, Doesn't like the proposal to use tactiles to segregate cycling from pedestrians; not even through the plaza areas; and wasn't sure if the tactile proposals adhere to ESDG.

FR not happy with Option 3 and queried whether the cycle lanes are to be designed aesthetically as carriageway or pavement? As part of the pavement more appealing from heritage perspective.

FR, from an EWH perspective, cycle infrastructure within the City Centre has required our biggest change; "it's on par with the climate emergency" and should be heavily considered. It's important that cycling design detail is consistent across the city centre. Glasgow Avenues project provides some good examples of cycling infrastructure.

DS, if the traffic levels are to be drastically reduced why the need for cycling segregation? RW segregation to make pedestrian to feel safer in their own dedicated space

JD explained that buses will be retained on two blocks, hence segregation requirements.

AH highlighted that a previous accessibility workshop concluded that informal crossing points (such as the plazas) should be accessible to all users. Furthermore with flush surfaces, north/south loading (across cycle etc) an additional consideration.

RW its key that clearly defined areas for where bikes belong are easily understood; referenced a 5 year old legibility test. Noted the Glasgow Avenues and hates some of the shared area elements; claimed that this view has been support disability groups. Additionally, if the plaza areas were very lightly trafficked then they could work, but current bus proposals mean that they that won't function as plaza spaces.

AH noted that the CCT TM plan (which is a City Centre wide traffic management piece) enables traffic volumes to be drastically reduced in key areas (such as on George Street).

JB should CCT deliver massively reduced volumes of traffic could cycling infrastructure remain on the carriageway.

JD responded, only if bus movements where vastly reduced, which isn't being proposed. Retaining local bus service is a core design objective for the project, cycle segregation is required to mitigate against any potential bus and children on bikes conflicts.

RG, CCWEL drivers include the climate emergency and reducing reliance on motor vehicles through attracting people who don't currently cycle onto bikes. The cycling infrastructure on George Street is not "a nice to have" bolt-on, but must be considered in a wider strategic context. Furthermore, full pedestrianisation is a misnomer, as there is always some level of vehicular requirement; loading, taxi, bus, blue badge holder access etc.

CP highlighted that Princes Street is dangerous for cycling so expects a high demand for cycling on George Street.

JD confirmed that the grand propositions of George Street provides ample room for cycle segregation.

SC raised concerns over Plaza area, no "buffer" area being proposed, can see conflicts and escalation as a result, conditions might actually be worse than existing.

JD responded, a pedestrian "buffer" space between the cycle lane and carriageway would be provided.

FR questioned why the buffer area is wider than elsewhere in the city centre, e.g. on Melville Street.

JD responded that the wider buffer is to maintain the aesthetic symmetry.

WD businesses have requested that north/south ease of permeability is achieved. At the moment, north side proposal is better (non-cycle infrastructure side) and the south side loses out. Additionally, cycle demand varies throughout the time of day and year, and when lots of cycle in the street it is easier for pedestrians to spot them, when they are less frequently, pedestrian awareness might be reduced, consequently there may be an increased risk of more conflicts occurring.

EY noted that the results of the removal of general traffic from Princes Street only served to create more vehicle dominance through an increase in buses (5200 movements per day). This risk will need to be managed carefully on George Street.

AH summarised the session on cycle segregation and explained that certain elements of the project are still at a high level concept stage, and as the project develops, the project team will continue to consult with the relevant stakeholders on specifics, such as restrictions, loading windows, traffic volumes, surface materials height delineation choices, cycle segregation detail, etc, at the most appropriate time (i.e. as soon as the project team are in a position to do so).

4	Plazas	Action
4.1	JD introduced the plaza concept and described their function.	
4.2	<p>An open floor discussion and Q&amp;A session followed, highlights included;</p> <p>EY noted that Plaza areas would open up views of key buildings on a N/S plain.</p> <p>GS queried if the plaza areas would require a closure to traffic during events and what the function of the cycle lane be maintained.</p> <p>JD responded, it would be largely the same as current, if the scale of event requires a full block closure, then no traffic would remain the block but the concept is that cycle infrastructure would still provide an interrupted route.</p> <p>SC stated that a Plaza, in the traditional sense, is not a space for buses; and also had concerns over ped/cycle conflicts during busy festivals/event periods. People will have to cross a very busy cycleway and hopefully a less busy street, so we see scope for accidents: maybe only during the first 6 months while people get used to it, but there are always tourist in the city.</p> <p>RW believes that “you cant have your cake and eat it” (plaza’s will only work as places without traffic, not with, as proposed). Either make plazas fully pedestrianised with no buses, or soften as pedestrian spaces by not levelling them all out.</p> <p>RS stated that in his opinion the plazas, as proposed, don’t work for events in any shape or form.</p> <p>WD can accept that the plazas bring an aesthetic structure to the street and offers informal crossing but they don’t work as plaza spaces.</p> <p>AH responded that n/s pedestrian permeability has strong support, and although unintentional, the “Plaza” title is perhaps misleading and therefore should be rebranded as mid-block informal crossing points.</p> <p>RG agreed that these are not plazas in the traditional sense, but supported that there was merit in their concept as crossing points. In addition, believes that these plaza spaces could be a free for all, informal drop offs, taxis use, unregulated loading etc.</p>	

	<p>WD stressed how events dominate the street and trade within it. Plaza will need facilities, such as power water etc. Events have long mobilisation and decant times either side of the actual main event period. This leads to elongated and lengthy periods of disruption. This disruption is frequent and results in intermittent block closures, and the associated diversions drive confusion. Ultimately this affects travel patterns for commuters and can put off shoppers visiting George Street. Events need a space that works for them and the proposed plazas don't work as they are now. Plazas have a merit in their own right, but they shouldn't try to accommodate events.</p> <p>FR suggested that in principle events shouldn't influence the design of George Street. The city welcomes events, but they should not be catered for on George Street or by the design, other areas of the city are suitable for events, George Street is not one.</p> <p>MR a wider discussion (non-project based) required to determine what events scale/type are appropriate for the street.</p> <p>AH, summarised feedback of the plaza discussion.</p>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Greenery</b>	<b>Action</b>
5.1	<p>AH introduced the greenery topic.</p> <p>MR noted that there are 150 pieces of uncoordinated street greenery that currently exist within George Street; vast majority of which are not appropriate and add very little value to the character of the street.</p> <p>MR continued, as part of the project, should these pieces of greenery be replaced with coordinated greenery? OR Should greenery be removed in perpetuity?</p> <p>A series of thought generation ideas were presented, this included visualisations of a broad range of ideas, starting from; images of no street greening through to images showing gradual increasing levels of greenery. These images were used as prompts to generate discussion on the principles of a street without any greening or a street with greening; and if greening was to be introduced, what height, type, placement, density, appropriate placement and type, maintenance considerations would be evaluated?</p>	
5.2	<p>JB, greenery is should be contained within garden and park areas, adding greenery to George Street would be contrary to the OUV and its character. Reinforced that George Street is the primary street in the new town and of huge historic value.</p>	



AH queried if there was a difference between trees in planters or in the ground?

JB responded that trees in planters or the ground are aesthetically pretty much the same and that from a visual point of view its largely semantics.

FR supported the JB view. George Street is the finest example of a particular type of town planning anywhere in the world. EWH are therefore set on not introducing trees. However, open to discussion on modern intervention with dwell zones e.g. if idea 6 was more bush like, then it could be potentially more acceptable.

JG provided an alternative view introducing the “stark argument”; that greenery in a sensible way was needed in the New Town.

JB responded that this design will be ultimately appraised against the UNESCO nomination document, of which starks argument does not feature. JB confirmed that she will write to UNESCO in due course reporting on the changes to the street.

AH acknowledges the heritage constraints, and that the right things (within parameters), in the right way must be brought forward and considered. For example, a tree lined avenue is clearly unacceptable but is merit in the introduction of some greenery, particularly in dwell zone areas. This group will help inform what the exact levels (and type/form) of greenery would be acceptable.

JG stated that the Cockburn Association would resist trees. George Street is a gift, and importantly George Street is a treeless gift! However, planters done well would be welcome. Small shrubs would be resisted. Appropriate hedges welcome; their benefits (micro climate, drainage etc) are on par with trees.

EY does not support the introduction of trees at all, but some sort of low level greening would be acceptable.

WD also supported that the introduction of trees would not be appropriate. Idea 7 completely changes George Street and comprises the vistas. Questioned whether the new seating areas would be well used and what/how they would be used. Seating areas need to be welcoming and comfortable. Good maintenance vital, un-kept areas, magnet for litter would deter people using them. Idea 1 would look bleak in February. Ideas which introduce “protectors from the elements” good, and Pocket Parks (dwell zones) have merit but to be effective in practice they will need to look smart throughout all seasons and at all times.

AS, height of planting can be visually disruptive and therefore should be human in scale, lower than eye level in height. With increasingly warmer climate, ability to sit in shade provided by greening welcome, likely to be well used during busy summer periods such as in the festival.

FR reaffirmed that shoulder height greenery might be more suited and suggested that SUDS could be maximised through longer pocket parks.

MK confirmed that the design with consider both a blue and green (SUDS) drainage strategy.

AS noted that once the design process layers in bus stops, bins, other street furniture this alone might provide an enclosed feeling without the need for any greenery "protection". Further evaluation of greenery and refinement should be considered in this context and not in isolation.

RG noted that Princes Street benches provide an unpleasant experience. However, George Street needs seating and preferably some of this seating should be in the shade, i.e. suitable locations on the south side (as well as the north, noting that shade, provided by buildings, moves with each seasons).

JG suggested that integrated planters and seating should be considered.

RG recommend that Haymarket provides good granite examples of integrated cycle parking and seating.

EY asked whether traders could be approached wrt maintenance of spaces.

AH confirmed that this has not been considered yet.

GS noted that businesses already provide a lot of existing street greening.

FR sees existing greening that is already provided by businesses, should to be consider alongside but not part of this project. Queried if business greening was/could be regulated. If so, is there a desire for greenery variety or a more consistent approach to business greening? Need to consider the form of planting at the rear of any seating planter/hedge.

AS suggested that seasonal planting would be a solution but has a higher maintenance burden. Concerned that road salt cause plants to typically die off in the winter. Therefore, more robust shrubs etc, would be required and consequently this might limit pallet and feared that this pallet would not lend itself to heritage planting.

AH, the project team will come up with some type of planting for future discussion.

	<p>RG suggested that hard landscaping considerations (Idea 1) could potentially include the introduction of architect designed walls.</p> <p>AH confirmed that the project team will develop ideas further to include elements such as of size of dwell zones, number of, positioning, refinement of detail (e.g. plant types, scales, etc).</p> <p>EY suggested that further design work should consider interaction between Dwell Zones and frontages, basements access etc, as it is important that ideas are not developed in isolation.</p> <p>AS agreed with EY and added that signage should also be incorporated in the next round of consideration.</p> <p>FB proposed that lighting should remain on building in an effort to declutter, but subtle (recessed) ground lighting would be accepted. All components of the design should be integrated.</p> <p>RG referred to the Haymarket example of integrated benches that was earlier noted, careful attention should be paid to its orientation within the street. Good practice to have cycle parking facing the carriageway.</p> <p>AS noted that seating position is important for social dynamic i.e. do not place seating outside bars, find calmer settings.</p> <p>WD wondered if seating areas near bus stops, given the high numbers of bus movements, will be calming. As such, couldn't see a demand for people wanting to relax in these areas, compared to people in parks/gardens. Therefore, the design must reflect the function. People will be seating in the traffic , not very calm spot, it's more pleasant to walk down the road and sit in Princes Street Gardens and too many seating areas could end up being clutter.</p> <p>EY agreed that these areas might not be on par with parks in terms of relaxation, however, the seating areas proposed would provide nice spaces for people waiting on a bus etc.</p>	<p>AH, the project team will develop idea further and include elements such as of size of parks, etc</p>
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Junctions</b></p>	<p><b>Action</b></p>
<p>6.1</p>	<p>JD introduced the concept junction proposals.</p> <p>WD noted that each junction on George Street should be considered and optimised independently, with specific attention required at the Hanover Street / George Street junction. Pedestrian and cycle crossings being the most important consideration. N/S flows at Hanover Street compared to Castle Street also provide a different set of challenges and opportunities.</p>	

RG enquired about the integration of CWELL and M2GS.

JD responded that the design will fully integrate both routes.

AH added that collaborative development of design is being progressed in partnership with CCWEL and M2GS teams.

RW underlined that details really matter. Cyclists will do maneuvers that will not be designed for, this must be considered, and therefore, the integration of the two cycle routes must work really well to try and reduce this.

RG questioned if the treatment for cyclists around Castle Street changed?

JD responded that Castle Street remains as a roundabout with Zebras. Frederick is now proposed to be more like Hanover Street (signalised junction).

DS asked whether the design creates Wider Pavements or Pinch-points at junctions?

JD responded that wider pavements have been achieved, but the design has been amended recently to accommodate longer buses recently purchased by LB.

FR in regard to the overrun areas asked whether the bus overrun area is within carriageway or footway; she notes that the kerb arrangement make the junctions look like roundabouts. These are historically alien to the First New Town. Design of side streets could be adapted to avoid this.

JD responded that it is the carriageway and will be constructed subtly with careful use of materials

FR concerned that the new junction layouts introduce a lot of curved kerb lines and road markings. DS observed that experienced cyclists will likely cross and perform manoeuvres which they shouldn't. The success in the use of the cycleway depends on the interactions between cyclists and other road users.

AH responded that the project looks to strengthen linear sight lines, not the contrary.

RW queried if a continuous footway could be considered Castle Street (as it has low volumes of traffic).

JD responded; yes, this can be achieved.

	FR added if raised continuous footways are to be implemented then they are acceptable if the use of material aesthetically reflects the carriageway (not the footway).	
<b>7</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
7.1	<p>AH gave workshop closing remarks and thanked everyone for their much valued input.</p> <p>RS asked about the Operational, Serving and Loading Plan for the street.</p> <p>MR confirmed that business survey work and the associated workshops are now complete. First draft of Operational Plan will be available soon and appropriate levels engagement will be undertaken in due course.</p>	
7.2	<p>CEC ACTIONS:</p> <p>Project team to update/refine design proposals in response to the workshop feedback.</p> <p>Project team to produce a series of visualisation to help progress specific design elements (i.e. greening, JCM, etc) taking cognisance of feedback gathered at the workshop.</p> <p>Draft Operational Plan to be completed and progressed through appropriate levels of engagement.</p> <p>CEC to circulate an early “Draft” of the Heritage Statement (noting that the statement is a works in progress and currently incomplete).</p>	