

Planning Committee

2.00pm, Wednesday, 12 November 2025

Non-Statutory Planning Guidance – Finalised Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy

**Decision/scrutiny
Wards**

**Decision
All**

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 Note the findings of the consultation on the draft Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy set out in Appendix 1 and a summary of the changes proposed following the public consultation at Appendix 2;
 - 1.1.2 Approve the Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy at Appendix 3 as non-statutory planning guidance under City Plan 2030; and
 - 1.1.3 Delegate authority to the Interim Corporate Director of Place to action minor editorial changes to the finalised Strategy, as needed and if approved, prior to publicising on the Council's website.

Gareth Barwell

Corporate Director of Place

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Report

Non-Statutory Planning Guidance – Finalised Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy

2. Executive Summary

- 2.0 This report seeks approval for the finalised Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy – the ‘finalised Strategy’. If approved the Strategy will form non-statutory planning guidance and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. It will also guide public realm improvements, the Princes Street Gardens Improvement Plan and the Waverley Station Place Brief.

3. Background

- 3.1 City Plan 2030 is supported by a suite of non-statutory planning guidance, which interprets the policies. Policy Place 1 Edinburgh City Centre requires the preparation of a strategy for Princes Street and Waverley Valley to:
- 3.1.1 Guide regeneration through new place briefs for Princes Street;
 - 3.1.2 Establish a placemaking vision and design code for Princes Street’s public realm - complementing the renewal of George Street and Rose Street; and
 - 3.1.3 Manage change and improve access within the outstanding urban landscape of the Waverley Valley, including the protection and enhancement of the city centre’s green heart of Princes Street Gardens.
- 3.2 The Draft Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy – the ‘Draft Strategy’, was approved for consultation by Committee on 11 September 2024. Consultation ran for just over 13 weeks from 19 November 2024 until 21 February 2025.
- 3.3 The Draft Strategy was also presented to the Council’s Transport and Environment Committee on [12 September 2024](#) and Culture and Communities Committee on [3 October 2024](#) prior to consultation. To support a more streamlined decision pathway reflective of its origin in City Plan 2030, the finalised Strategy is presented to Planning Committee only for approval, supported by a pre-Committee briefing for representatives from all three committees.

4. Main report

- 4.1 The finalised Strategy sets out the guidance and proposals to help conserve and revitalise Princes Street as well as the Waverley Valley, focusing on Princes Street Gardens and Waverley Station. If approved, it will help the Council take a clear and consistent approach to improving the area to:
 - 4.1.1 Further guide the revitalisation of Princes Street's buildings with a mix of retail and leisure uses;
 - 4.1.2 Improve pavements and public spaces;
 - 4.1.3 Manage change to Princes Street Gardens and the Ross Bandstand; and
 - 4.1.4 Shape the future of Waverley Station and the area around it.
- 4.2 The finalised Strategy responds to requirements in City Plan 2030 Policy Place 1. It also aligns with and builds upon other key plans including the Council's [City Mobility Plan](#), [Future Streets Framework](#), [Thriving Greenspaces 2050](#), the [World Heritage Site Management Plan](#), the [City Centre Transformation Plan](#) and [non-statutory planning guidance on City Centre Shopping and Leisure](#).

Consultation

- 4.3 Views on the draft Strategy were gathered through a mixture of in-person events including meetings, public drop-ins and site walkovers, as well as online meetings, written feedback, and an online survey. The online survey was split into sections, allowing respondents to choose the topics most relevant to them or complete the full survey. The Report of Consultation (Appendix 1) summarises all activities undertaken, how the consultation was publicised, who engaged with the consultation and feedback provided.
- 4.4 When asked about the area, most survey respondents were satisfied with the efficiency of/access to public transport, the quality of Princes Street Gardens, signs and information and felt safe using the street. Many also confirmed dissatisfactions with Princes Street, including the condition of the pavements, the selection of shops and services, litter and waste management, and the availability of cycle parking and taxi ranks.
- 4.5 Most feedback on the proposals via the online survey and stakeholder discussions was positive. 693 people and/or organisations completed the online survey with 95% of the proposals supported overall.
- 4.6 The vision for Princes Street, as maintained in the finalised Strategy, seeks to enhance the aspects most valued by residents, businesses and visitors, including:
 - 4.6.1 Accessibility to public transport including the convergence of bus, tram, rail and taxi;
 - 4.6.2 Access to shops and services;
 - 4.6.3 Access to food and drink; and
 - 4.6.4 Visiting Princes Street Gardens.

- 4.7 Most of the proposals in the draft Strategy were considered a positive response to current challenges, including:
- 4.7.1 Supporting a mix of uses across all building levels and creating high quality active frontages/entrances to upper floors, including making use of temporary pop-up uses;
 - 4.7.2 Enhancing Princes Street's unique built frontage within the First New Town's established spatial form;
 - 4.7.3 Renewing pavements with high quality natural stone and associated heritage finishes;
 - 4.7.4 Improving pedestrian comfort and rest points including, where feasible, widened pavements on the south-side of Princes Street;
 - 4.7.5 Improving access to West Princes Street Gardens;
 - 4.7.6 Revitalising Waverley Station and its associated public realm to provide a world-class arrival experience;
 - 4.7.7 Developing a Princes Street Gardens Improvement Plan which will include expanding accessible facilities and play space and adapting planting to support climate resilience and biodiversity;
 - 4.7.8 Activating Rose Street lanes;
 - 4.7.9 Providing more cycle parking along the street, enhanced cycle facilities at Waverley Station and improving cycle safety at the west end at the junction with Princes Street/Lothian Road, and where feasible, at the east end of Princes Street;
 - 4.7.10 Reducing congestion and supporting bus priority at the east end by extending the bus gate to the North Bridge junction;
 - 4.7.11 Improving event-based facilities in West Princes Street Gardens associated with the Ross Bandstand; and
 - 4.7.12 Retaining designated taxi/private hire vehicle pick-up/drop-off points at Waverley Station.
- 4.8 The finalised Strategy builds on the ambition set out in key policies and plans including City Plan 2030, City Mobility Plan, City Centre Transformation, Our Future Streets, and Thriving Greenspaces 2050. Some criticism was received that the draft Strategy lacked sufficient ambition. The tensions between the needs of a high-quality public transport system and the transformation of the street's public realm are recognised. These tensions can be resolved through sensitive public realm design, drawn from the ambitions of this Strategy, with continued strong stakeholder engagement. Such future street transformation would build on the proposals described in chapter 5 of the Strategy which will further enhance the street's place value and improve conditions for walking, wheeling and public transport interchange, and the street's ongoing economic regeneration.

- 4.9 Engagement with the business sector confirmed a desire to progress with a market-led approach supporting a mix of uses focused on retail, hospitality and commercial, including pop-up uses during redevelopment periods. This view was not shared by a minority of stakeholders who felt a more prescriptive vision was required. Recent development activity along the street and development proposals coming forward demonstrate the investment confidence in Princes Street as a prime city centre location. Coupled with the delivery of streetscape and Garden improvements and the revitalisation of Waverley Station, alongside wider city centre transformation, this will support further high-quality investment. The finalised Strategy vision and guidance therefore remain supportive of this business sector feedback.

Changes made to the Draft Strategy

- 4.10 The main changes made to the draft Strategy following the consultation are summarised in Appendix 2 alongside matters that have not been taken forward.
- 4.11 Appendix B of the finalised Strategy sets out an updated Indicative Delivery Framework which provides expanded detail on key proposals to be delivered, who needs to be involved, and potential funding sources/indicative costs. This will require further development if the Strategy is approved.
- 4.12 Engagement with Network Rail continues to be positive regarding the renewal of Waverley Station and associated public realm improvements and redevelopment opportunities at the car park to the east. The Station Place Brief has been updated to take account of discussions with Network Rail and consultation feedback, including recognition of the unique sense of arrival to the city by rail, opportunities for a cycle hub, archaeology interpretation and inclusive play, and in exploring the station's potential to contribute to local energy networks.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Once approved the Strategy will form non-statutory planning guidance and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 5.2 It will also guide public realm improvements (including those that do not require planning permission), priorities for the improvement of Princes Street Gardens and the Ross Bandstand, and set the Place Brief for Waverley Station, as required by City Plan 2030 Policy Place 1 Edinburgh City Centre
- 5.3 The Strategy, if approved, will replace the [City Centre Princes Street Development Framework](#) (2007) and the [Princes Street Development Briefs](#).
- 5.4 Responsibility for delivering and updating on progress of actions within the Strategy's Delivery Framework will be provided by relevant service areas as appropriate. Any requirements to review the Strategy in the future will be determined as part of the Annual Review of Guidance process.
- 5.5 A Statement of Heritage Significance for Princes Street and the Waverley Valley is currently being finalised in partnership with Edinburgh World Heritage. Once complete this will inform detailed design proposals.

- 5.6 Discussions are ongoing with Network Rail regarding the Waverley Station masterplan and it is expected that stakeholder engagement will progress in 2026.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 There are no direct financial impacts arising from this report.
- 6.2 The implementation of projects detailed in the Delivery Framework at Appendix B of the Strategy will be delivered as funds are secured. Reporting to relevant Committees will be undertaken as appropriate to progress the various packages of work.
- 6.3 The Delivery Framework reflects potential sources of funding including external grants, Visitor Levy, Park Events Levy and developer contributions targeted towards city centre public realm as informed by the Council's recently approved non-statutory guidance on [Developer Contributions and Infrastructure Delivery](#). It also provides some indicative costs.

7. Key Policies

Equality and Poverty

- 7.1 Benefits of the Strategy include proposals to improve footways, rest places and equality of access to greenspace to meet the needs of diverse user groups. The street's ongoing renewal will contribute to construction and service sector jobs.
- 7.2 The Strategy has been informed by the Integrated Impact Assessment process including considering those with protected characteristics.

Climate and Nature Emergencies

- 7.3 The finalised Strategy will contribute positively to the Climate and Nature Emergencies in line with National Planning Framework 4 and City Plan 2030. Key elements are summarised below under 'Environmental Impacts'.

Environmental Impacts

- 7.4 The Council determined that the Draft Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy is not likely to give rise to significant environmental effects in relation to the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 Act and that Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required. Notwithstanding this determination, the proposals deliver local benefits in terms of the Council's statutory duties relating to climate emissions and biodiversity, including:
- 7.4.1 Maintaining the city centre as focus for shopping, leisure and culture, accessible from across Southeast Scotland by sustainable transport;
- 7.4.2 Retrofitting existing Listed Buildings to improve energy efficiency and where justified redevelopment of unlisted properties to achieve net zero;
- 7.4.3 Strengthening the Garden's role in Edinburgh's green blue network, including to manage stormwater and introduce more pollinator-friendly planting;

- 7.4.4 Valuing Waverley Station's historic assets and supporting its modernisation to provide future sustainable travel needs and new public spaces; and
- 7.4.5 Footway upgrades involve embodied carbon; however, natural stone provides a durable fit with the city's historic environment. Access improvements to the Gardens will avoid tree removal and seek to re-use historic materials. The central set of ramps will be restored as a historic example.

Housing Emergency

- 7.5 Whilst there are no significant matters associated with the housing emergency arising from this report, the Strategy encourages the use of upper floors along Princes Street for housing although it acknowledges that converting former commercial buildings for this use could be challenging.

8. Risk, compliance, governance and community impact

- 8.1 A public engagement exercise was undertaken in line with the Council's [Consultation Policy](#) Appendix A contains the Report of Consultation and Appendix 2 summarises key changes made as a result of feedback.
- 8.2 The Strategy aligns with relevant Council policy/Business Plan objectives.
- 8.3 An Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed and can be viewed [here](#).
- 8.4 There are no risks to the Council associated with approving this Strategy.

9. Background reading/external references

- 9.1 Draft Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy, Planning Committee, [September 2024](#).
- 9.2 Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy – Project Scope, Planning Committee, [October 2020](#).
- 9.3 Supplementary Guidance: City Centre Shopping and Leisure, Planning Committee, [January 2025](#).
- 9.4 Business Bulletin, Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy: Review of Existing Guidance, Planning Committee – [February 2021](#).
- 9.5 Concept Masterplan for Waverley Station, Policy and Sustainability Committee, [August 2020](#).
- 9.6 City Mobility Plan, Transport and Environment Committee – [February 2021](#) and [first review February 2024](#).
- 9.7 Our Future Streets – A Circulation Plan for Edinburgh, Transport and Environment Committee, [February 2024](#).
- 9.8 City Centre Transformation, Transport and Environment Committee, [September 2019](#).

- 9.9 Thriving Greenspaces 2050 Vision and Strategy, Culture and Communities Committee, [March 2023](#).

10. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Report of Consultation for the Draft Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy.

Appendix 2 – Summary of changes to the finalised Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy following consultation.

Appendix 3 – Finalised Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy (for approval).

Report of Consultation for the Draft Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy



The City of Edinburgh Council
August 2025

Contents

1. Executive Summary

2. Online Survey Responses

- 2.1 Your connection to the area
- 2.2 Princes Street's Uses, Blocks and Buildings
- 2.3 Princes Street's Public Realm and Mobility
- 2.4 Princes Street Gardens and Ross Bandstand
- 2.5 Waverley Station Place Brief

3. Workshops, drop-ins and written feedback

- 3.1 Stakeholder Workshops
- 3.2 Public Drop-in Events
- 3.2 Written Feedback
- 3.3 Children and Young People
- 3.4 Related Consultations

Appendices

- 1. Proposals by level of support
- 2. Communications evaluation
- 3. Demographic information
- 4. Feedback on the consultation activity

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

This report sets out the findings of the public consultation on the [Draft Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy](#), which took place in late 2024 and early 2025.

The Draft Strategy provides non-statutory, place-based guidance under [City Plan 2030](#) and supports delivery of [City Centre Transformation](#) to:

- Renew Princes Street's buildings with a mix of retail and leisure uses.
- Improve pavements and public spaces.
- Manage change to Princes Street Gardens and its facilities.
- Shape the future of Waverley Station and the area around it.

Due to its cross-service remit, the Draft Strategy was approved for public consultation by the following committees: Planning Committee – 11 September 2024; Transport and Environment Committee – 12 September 2024; and Culture and Communities Committee - 3 October 2024.

Following consultation and finalisation, the Strategy will represent a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and guide place management and investment decisions.

The finalised Strategy, informed by these consultation findings, will be reported for committee approval in late 2025.

1.2 Mandate

The consultation was necessary to gather insights from stakeholders and members of the public on:

- Planning guidance to support regeneration of the street, including the mix of land uses and the design approach to buildings and urban blocks within the New Town.
- Improvements to the street's footways, the creation of seating spaces and accessible links to West Princes Street Gardens, building on approved City Centre Transformation proposals.
- The street's role in relation to the strategic cycle network as set out in the agreed Future Streets framework.
- The key priorities for a new Improvement Plan for Princes Street Gardens to deliver the Thriving Greenspaces 2050 vision; and
- The Draft Waverley Station Place Brief, including Waverley Market roof terrace and the future of land at East Market Street – to guide proposals by Network Rail and other parties.

Alongside these proposals, several questions sought to understand respondents' perceptions of the street and user habits relating to the city centre.



Public Drop-in Event, Waverley Station concourse

1.3 Approach

The consultation period ran from 19th November 2024 to 21 February 2025 (13 weeks in total to allow for public holidays over the festive period).

The online survey on the Council's Consultation Hub was the main approach for people and organisations to share their views on the Draft Strategy. The survey was split into sections, allowing for responses to selected topics or the full survey.

This was supported by:

- Three stakeholder workshops with local organisations, community groups, amenity bodies and ward councillors on: 5 November (in-person), 8 November 2024 (in-person) and 27 January 2025 (online). Around 60 people attended to gain an overview of the Strategy and take part in discussions.
- In-person, public drop-in sessions on: Wednesday 29 January 2025 at Waverley Station and Monday 3 February 2025 at the City Art Centre. Around 130 people attended, this allowed members of the public to ask questions about the proposals and for promotion of the online survey.
- Workshops and walkabouts of the gardens and street sought the views of over 100 primary and secondary school children and young people.
- Engagement with Council services involved in delivering projects, managing and maintaining the city centre, including parks staff.

1.4 Key Findings

Overall, 95% of the measures proposed in the Strategy were supported. 83% of respondents considered the consultation allowed them to have their say.

In terms of how people use Princes Street, most respondents said their reason for going to this part of the city centre was to travel by public transport, followed by using shops and services, visiting the gardens, for work, and finally for other leisure activities such as events.

Respondents were most satisfied with the efficiency of public transport and the quality of the gardens but least satisfied with the selection of shops and services, and the condition of streets and paved spaces.

Blocks, Buildings and Uses – A revitalised Princes Street

- Most respondents feel food and drink use is adding to the street's appeal.
- A range of design principles for development were supported, alongside retaining existing links through buildings and activating rear lanes.
- Bringing upper floors into active use is supported but may affect undisturbed features of heritage value.
- 74% of respondents support use of decorative hoardings and scaffold wraps during construction.
- Pop-up uses are welcomed with 68% of respondents supportive but stakeholders advise leases and business rates can be a barrier to this approach.
- Overall, 65% of respondents considered the Strategy will help to revitalise the street.
- Drop-in visitors and Children and Young people called for a need to retain shops and services that support liveability.
- Drop-in visitors wished to see design standards raised and more use made of the Edinburgh Urban Design Panel.
- Several stakeholders feel the street's outlook is positive, with few vacant units and several major developments underway.
- Three central community councils¹ consider that a clearer vision is needed, to define the street's purpose within the City Centre and to enhance its heritage.

Public Realm and Mobility – A More Accessible and Welcoming Place

- All of the proposal public realm improvements were supported, with resurfaced footways being the top priority. Improved pedestrian crossings and wider pavements at the east end are also strongly supported.
- New public seating areas (also referred to as 'placemaking projects') and the West Garden links were ranked as second and third priorities respectively. Central community councils wished to see garden access plans expedited.
- Stakeholders expect measures to be high quality, with consistent street furniture across the New Town and proper maintenance of improvements.

¹ New Town & Broughton, Old Town and West End community councils.

- Most respondents didn't support segregated cycle lanes along the full length of Princes Street (60% against and 22 % for).
- There was an even split (39% for and 39% against) in terms of improving provision for cycle lane connections at the street's east and west ends.
- Some members of the public and stakeholders felt provision for cycling should be viewed in the context of planned cycle network on George Street and Queen Street, without trying to fit everything onto Princes Street.
- Living Streets Edinburgh Group are concerned that footways are narrow, and cycle segregation and floating bus stops would further impact on available space.
- Spokes consider that junction improvements and end-to-end cycle segregation on Princes Street are essential.
- Lothian Buses support measures to improve footways and public transport efficiency but full cycle segregation would impact services.
- Young People in particular were concerned about over-crowded areas.
- There's a need to continue to communicate the big picture of all City Centre Transformation projects.

Princes Street Gardens – Enhanced Green Spaces

- People value the Gardens as a place to walk or wheel, take a route across the city centre, get fresh air and for tranquillity and relaxation.
- Improvements to / provision of public toilets, cafes and furniture, and planting for nature and climate change would encourage people to visit the Gardens, alongside organised activities on environmental matters, culture and history.
- 12% of respondents would join a Friends Group and 14% volunteering activities, with stakeholders wishing to see local businesses represented.
- Over 50% of respondents supported keeping and improving the Ross Bandstand, compared to 33% who preferred its replacement. 70% support redesign of the bandstand's amphitheatre to improve access and its usability.
- Children and Young People called for more age-appropriate spaces for play, for teenagers to socialise and for wellbeing.
- Stakeholders and member of the public valued the Gardens diverse features and care they receive from the gardeners.
- Improvements, such as those to access and facilities, must be carefully balanced to preserve the Garden's unique character.
- Some wished to see the improvement plans for the Gardens set out in detail as part of the Strategy, instead of as a subsequent phase its delivery.

Waverley Station Place Brief

- The Place Brief was highly supported, in particular the need to respect the station's heritage and city views, provision for public toilets, and improvements to accessibility and interchange.
- Stakeholders and members of the public wished to see the public realm around the station improved, including wayfinding and pick up and drop-off/interchange.

- Enforcement of on-street parking and vehicle idling violations near the station and reducing short-stay parking provision, would discourage travel to the station by car.
- The improvement of the Waverley Market rooftop space received over 70% support and was viewed as a priority by several stakeholders.
- The Waverley Bridge placemaking project is welcomed as a key arrival space. It should allow for loading to the station and Waverley Market.
- Some stakeholders wish to see Waverley Bridge returned to providing public transport interchange, however some stakeholders welcomed improvement of its public realm as a key arrival space, alongside 68% of survey respondents.
- Redevelopment of land at East Market Street was supported by over 50% of respondents, with 71% wishing to see views across the valley maintained as part of this.
- The Access Panel wish to see clear segregation as part of any north-south walking, wheeling and cycling link bridge.
- Spokes wish to see increased cycle parking and quality bike access into the station, supported by a cycle hub.

1.5 Respondents

There were 693 responses to the online survey, of which 97% were received from private individuals and 3% from organisations. A further 8 written responses from organisations were received by email. Feedback on this consultation survey is set out in [Appendix 4](#).

96% of respondents were from an Edinburgh postcode district. A small number of responses were returned from Falkirk, Kirkcaldy, Perth, Glasgow, Paisley, Inverness, and Borders post code districts, and the rest of the UK. 45% of respondents stated that they were male, 37% female and 18% preferred not to say or did not answer. The average age of a respondent was 52 years old, with all age groups represented. Around 18% stated they had a physical or mental health condition lasting for more than 12 months. [Appendix 3](#) provides further demographic information.

1.6 Publicity

Publicity to raise awareness and encourage participation in the consultation, included use of Council social media, print/online media news releases, leafleting of local businesses and residents, email notifications and information sharing via community organisations including the Edinburgh Partnership, business and disability groups. Full details are set out in [Appendix 2](#).

2. Online Survey Responses

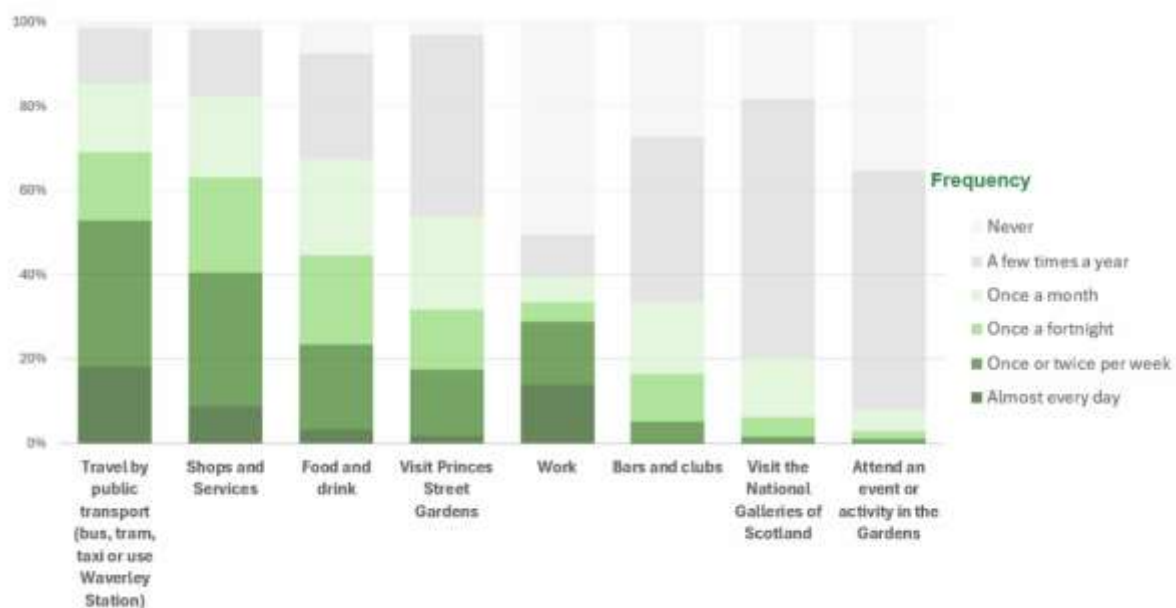
This section breaks down the survey findings for each question. ‘Open box’ comments are referred to where questions show a diverse mix of opinions. The survey featured 80 proposals for the area, of which 76 (95%) received more support than opposition. [Appendix 1](#) provides a full list of proposals ranked by level of support.

2.1 Your connection to the area

This section of the survey sought to understand people’s attitudes to the study area and how frequently they visit it and for what purposes.

How often do you visit Princes Street and the nearby area for these activities?

Figure 1: Frequency of visit

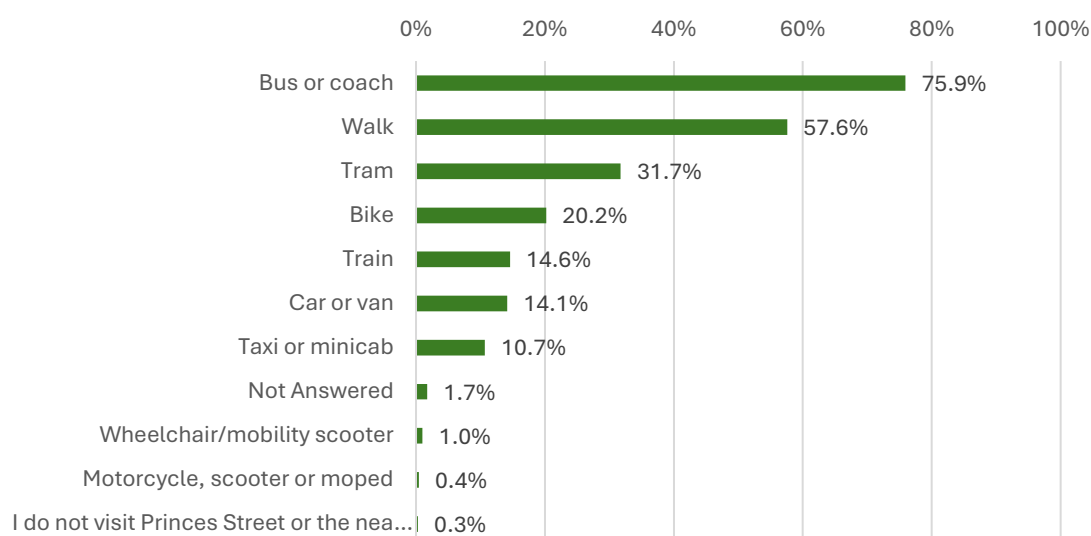


The most frequent reason to visit Princes Street on a daily or weekly basis was to travel by public transport, highlighting the street’s primary role in the transport network, followed by shops and services, for work, food and drink, to visit the gardens, and other leisure activities such as for event.

Fifty-nine comments were given as reasons not to visit the area, of which 47% related to the quality of shops and services, 25% overcrowding, 10% accessibility issues, 8% inconvenient access by car, 5% feeling unsafe and 3% inconvenient access by public transport.

What transport do you usually use to get to Princes Street and the nearby areas?

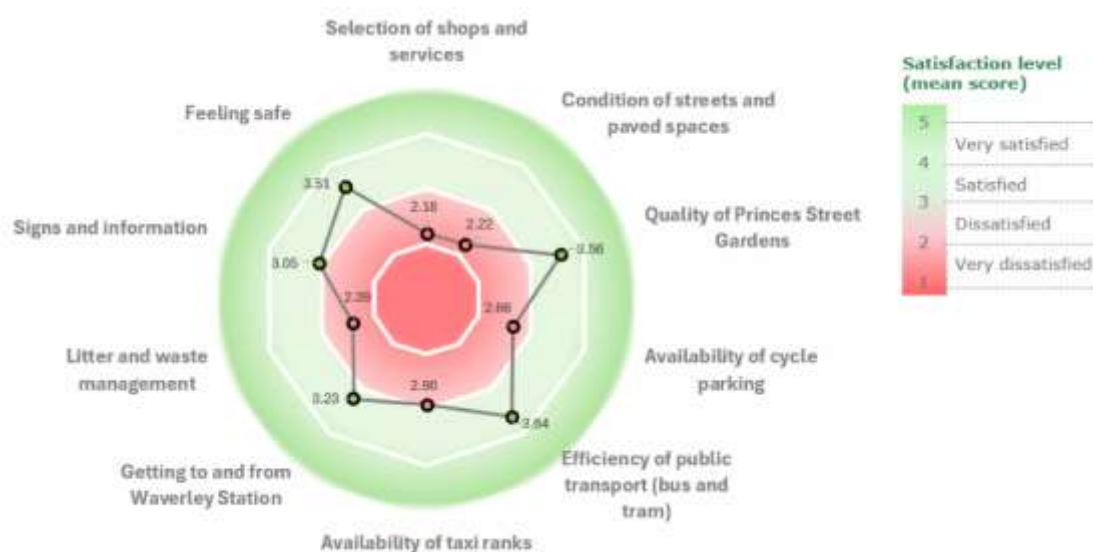
Figure 2: Percentage of respondents' transport used to get to Princes Street



Bus or coach is the most frequent mode of travel used to access the street, selected by more than 75% of respondents, followed by around 58% of respondents who walk, 32 % take the tram and around 20% go by bike. Respondents were able to select multiple options.

Thinking about your last visit to Princes Street and the nearby area, overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the following:

Figure 3: Satisfaction score for different aspects of the street



Respondents were most satisfied with the efficiency of public transport and the quality of Princes Street Gardens. Respondents were least satisfied with the selection of shops and services, and the condition of streets and paved spaces.

If you visit Princes Street Gardens, what are your main reasons for going there?

Figure 4: Main reasons for visiting the Gardens (by number of responses)



People most commonly visit the Gardens to walk or wheel, take a route across the city centre, get fresh air and for tranquillity and relaxation.

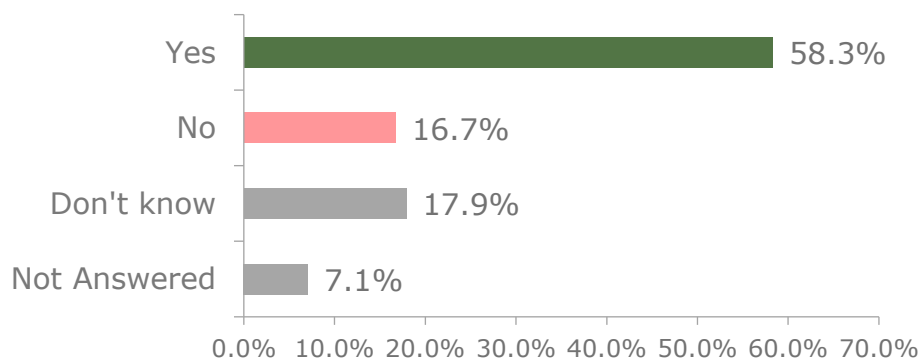
2.3 Princes Street's Uses, Blocks and Buildings

The section of the survey sought people's views on the Council's draft Planning guidance to support regeneration of the street.

Fitting development in the historic New Town

Respondents were asked if the Draft Strategy's principles for 'fitting development in the historic New Town' covered the key issues, with 58% of respondents in agreement, and 17% disagreeing, and 25% were undecided or did not answer.

Figure 5: Do you think the Strategy covers the key ways in which development can be expected to fit with the New Town's historic design?

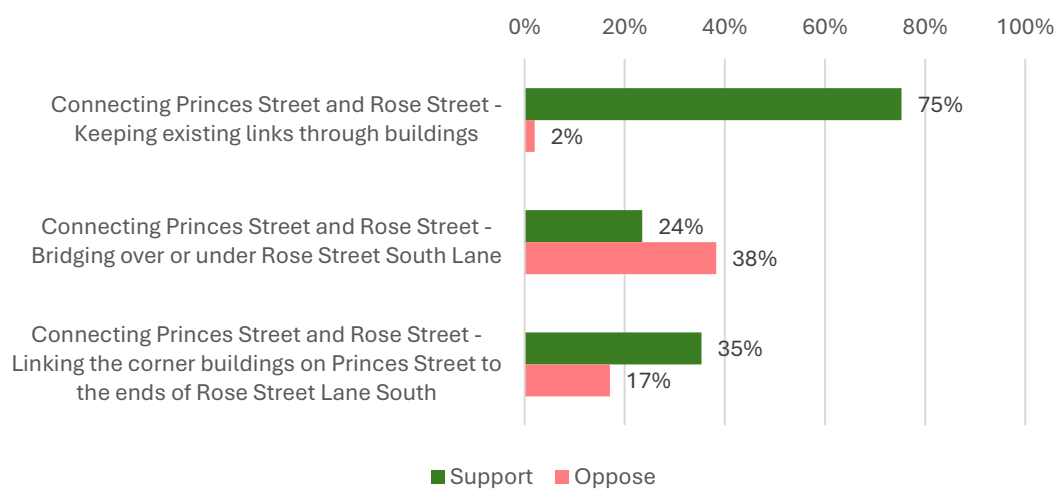


*Note percentages shown in the following section are limited to those that state strong support, support, oppose or strong opposition to the proposals, and exclude 'don't know' or 'neither/nor' responses. Average scores are shown in appendix 1.

Connecting Princes Street and Rose Street

Respondents were most supportive of keeping existing links through buildings and least supportive of bridging over or under Rose Street Lane South.

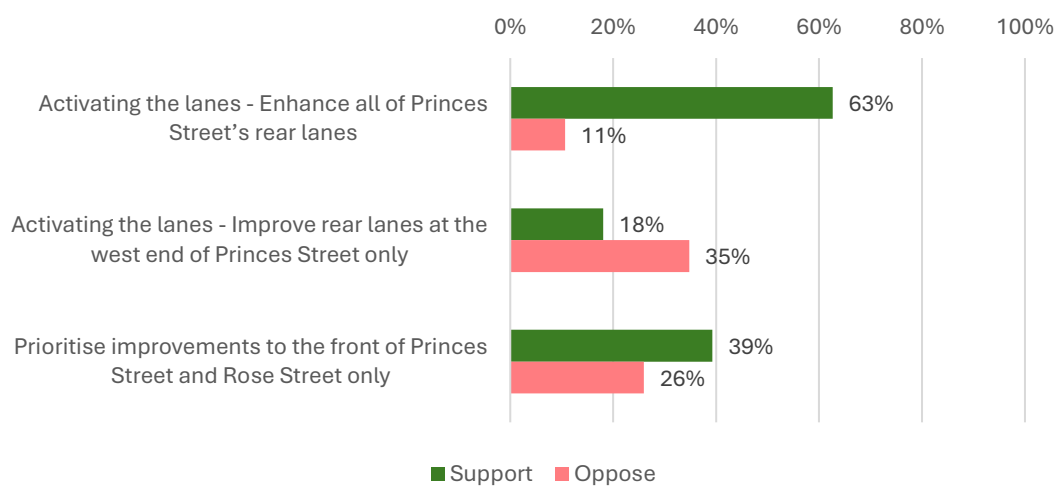
Figure 6: Connecting Princes Street and Rose Street



Activating the lanes

Respondents supported enhancing all of Princes Street's rear lanes and there were several comments relating to the need to improve Rose Street throughout.

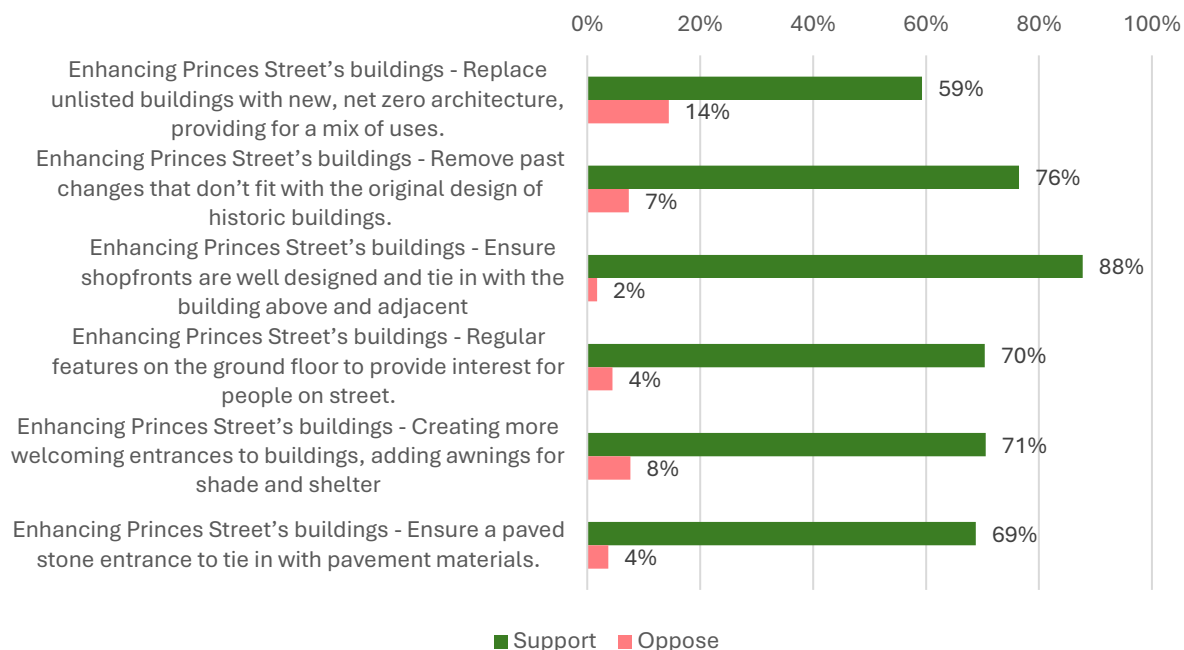
Figure 7: Activating the lanes



Enhancing Princes Street's buildings

Respondents were supportive of all the proposals to enhance buildings on Princes Street, in particular to ensure that shopfronts are well designed and tie in with the building above and adjacent.

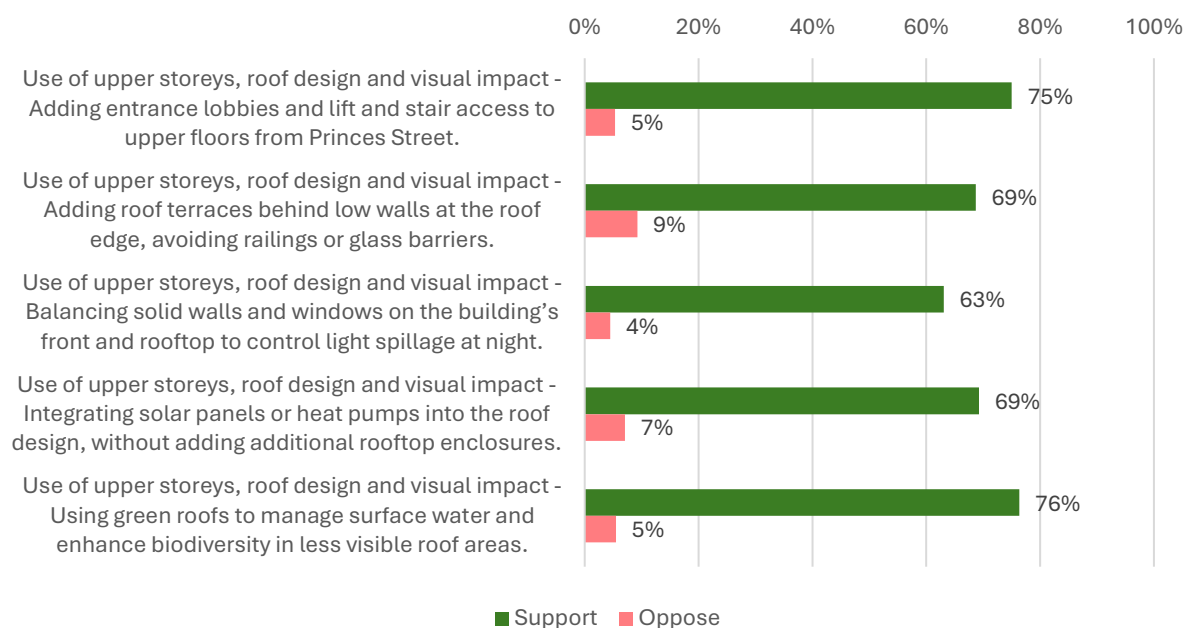
Figure 8: Enhancing Princes Street's buildings



Use of upper storeys, roof design and visual impact

All measures suggested to make better use of the upper storeys of buildings had more than 60% support and less than 10% opposition.

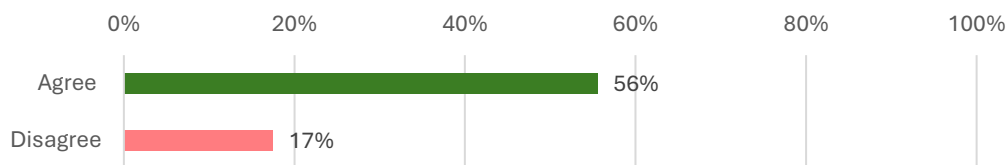
Figure 9: Use of upper storeys, roof design and visual impact



A vibrant mix of uses

More than 55% of respondents agreed that ground floor food and drink use is improving the experience of visiting Princes Street and less than 20% disagreed.

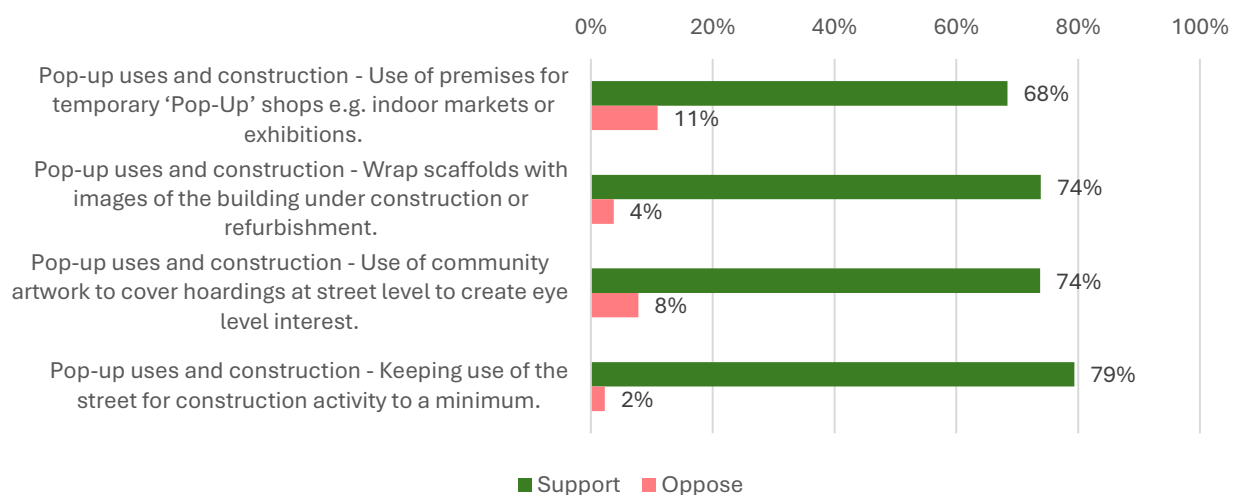
Figure 10: A vibrant mix of uses - Ground floor food and drink use is improving the experience of visiting Princes Street?



Pop-up uses and construction

Enabling 'Pop-Up' uses was supported by 68% respondents and almost 80% of respondents wished to see occupation of the street during redevelopment kept to a minimum. Almost three quarters of respondents support use of decorative scaffold wraps and hoardings.

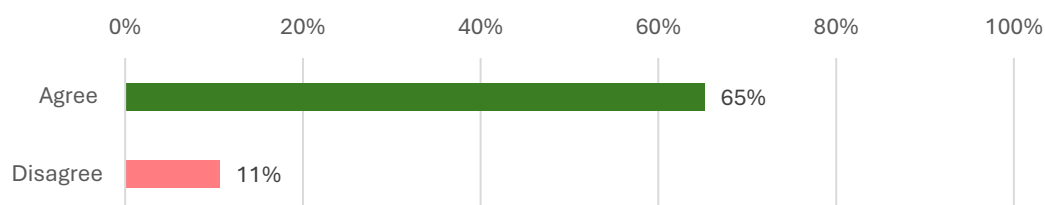
Figure 11: Pop-up uses and construction



A revitalised Princes Street

Sixty-five percent of respondents expect that the Strategy will help to deliver a revitalised Princes Street, with 11% disagreeing.

Figure 12: A revitalised Princes Street - The Draft Strategy will help to deliver a revitalised Princes Street.

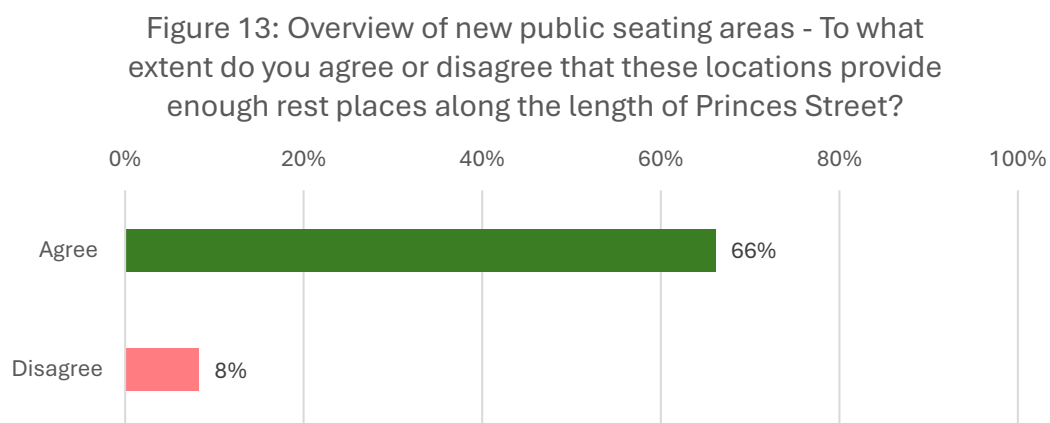


2.4 Princes Street's public realm and mobility

The section of the survey sought people's views on proposals to improve the street's public realm and sustainable mobility.

Overview of new public seating areas

Sixty-six percent of respondents agreed that the installation of seating at the five proposed placemaking locations would provide sufficient rest places along Princes Street.

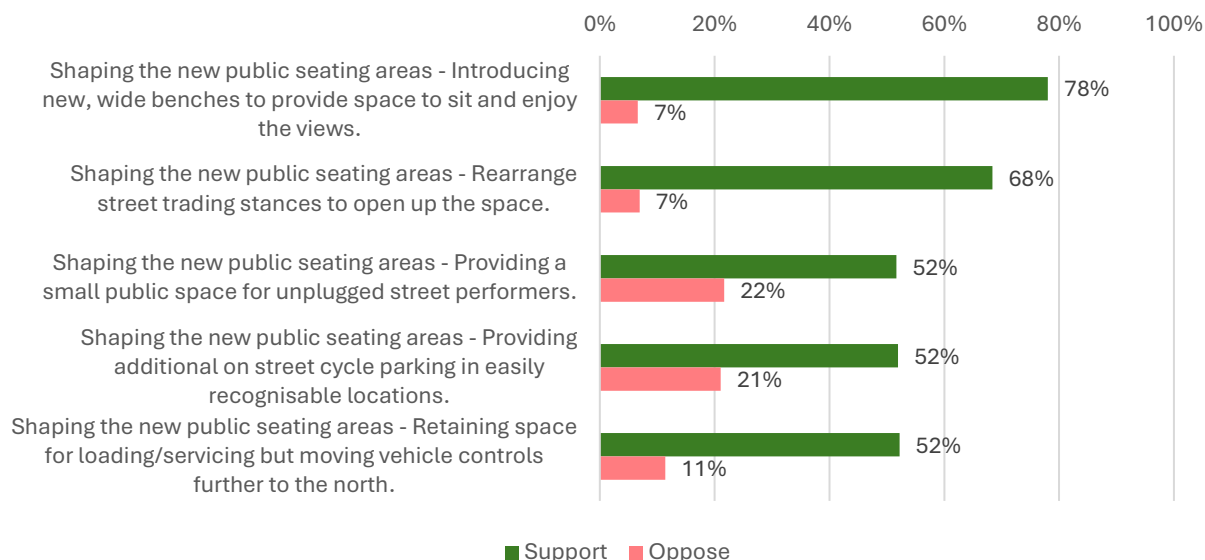


Responses to the individual placemaking proposals at Castle Street, The Mound precinct, Waverley Bridge and outside General Register House are set out below. The seating area at the west end is within the scope of the Lothian Road project and was not subject to a question.

New public seating areas – Castle Street

Respondents were supportive of all suggested interventions, with a higher level of support for new wide benches and rearranging street trading stances.

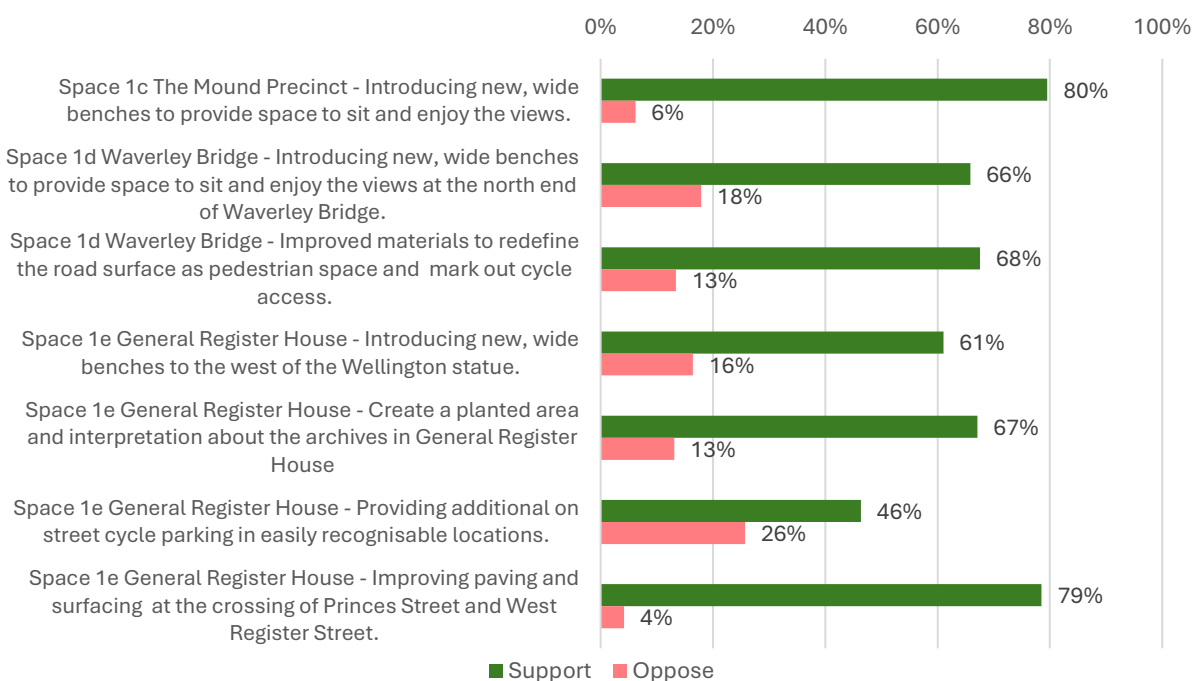
Figure 14: New public seating areas - Castle Street



New public seating areas - 1c The Mound Precinct, 1d Waverley Bridge and 1e General Register House

Proposals for seating at The Mound received the highest level of support, followed by Castle Street, Waverley Bridge and the footway at General Register House - where paving improvements were also highly supported.

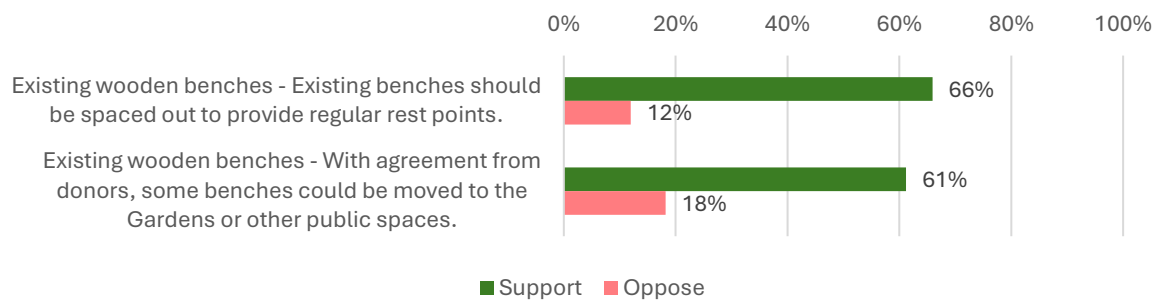
Figure 15: The Mound Precinct, Waverley Bridge and General Register House



Existing wooden benches

More than 60% of respondents supported and less than 20% opposed spacing out and moving benches with agreement from donors.

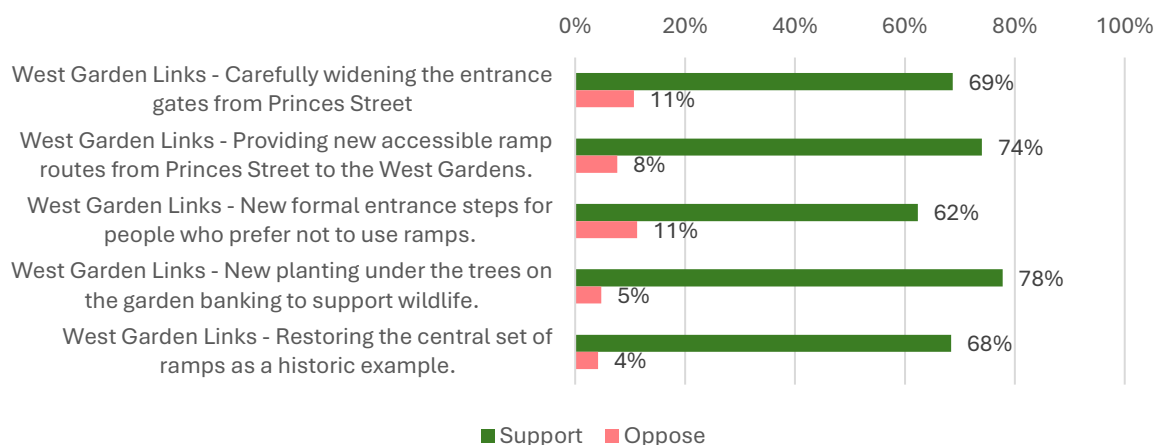
Figure 16: Existing wooden benches



West Garden Links

All proposals in the West Gardens are supported with more than 60% support in each instance.

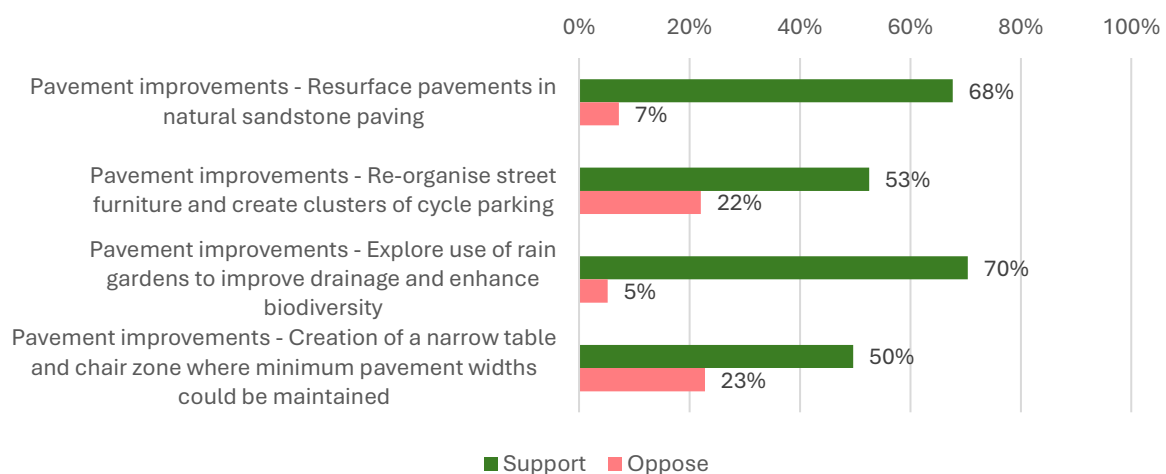
Figure 17: West Garden Links



Pavement improvements

Respondents were most supportive of exploring the use of rain gardens and resurfacing pavements in natural sandstone paving.

Figure 18: Pavement improvements

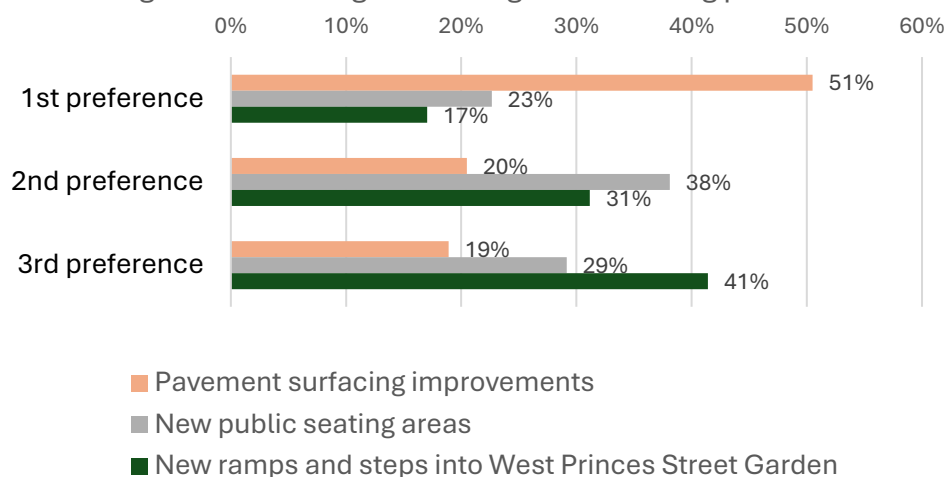


Around 50% of respondents also supported the reorganisation of street furniture, creating clusters of cycle parking and a narrow table and chair zone, compared to 20% in opposition.

Walking and wheeling priorities

Pavement surfacing improvements received the most first preference votes (51%), new public seating had the most second preference votes, and new ramps and steps into the West Gardens was ranked as the third priority.

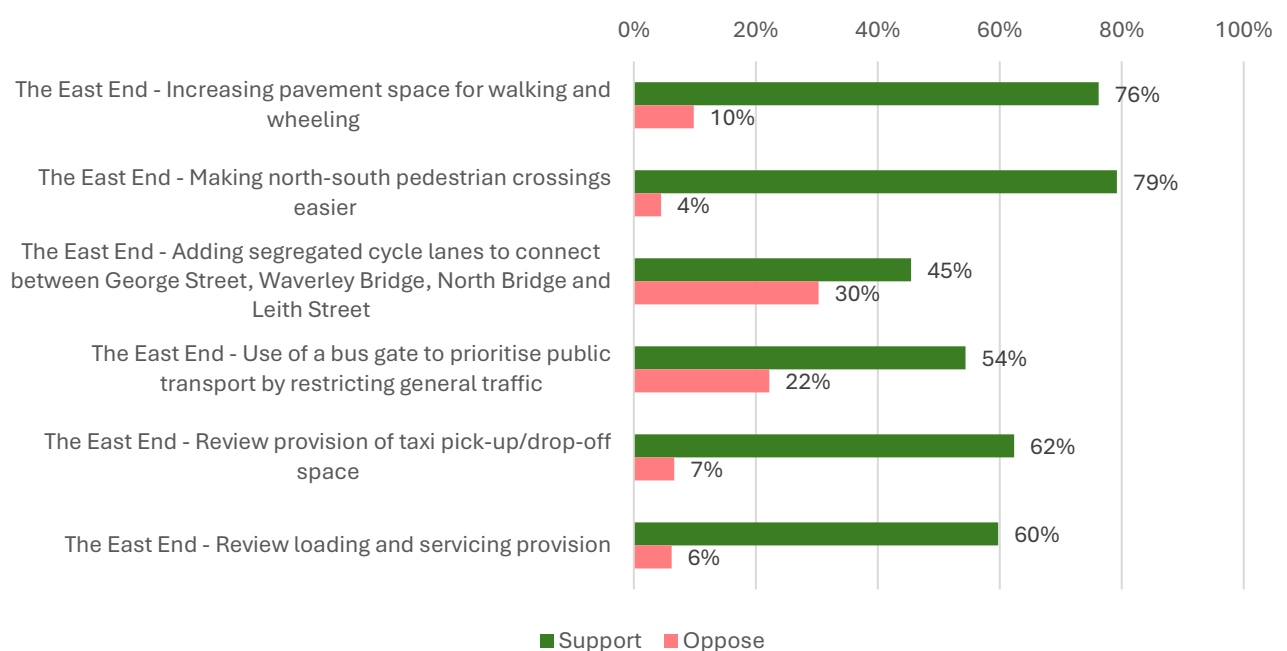
Figure 19: Ranking of 'Walking and Wheeling priorities'



The East End

Clear priorities for the east end of Princes Street were making north-south pedestrian crossings easier (79%) and increasing pavement space (76%). Around 60% supported review of provision for taxis, loading and servicing. Use of a bus gate received 54% support and 22% opposition. Cycle lane connections to and from George Street received 45% support and 30% opposition. Around 60% supported review of provision for taxis, loading and servicing. Use of a bus gate received 54% support and 22% opposition. Cycle lane connections to and from George Street received 45% support and 30% opposition.

Figure 20: The East End



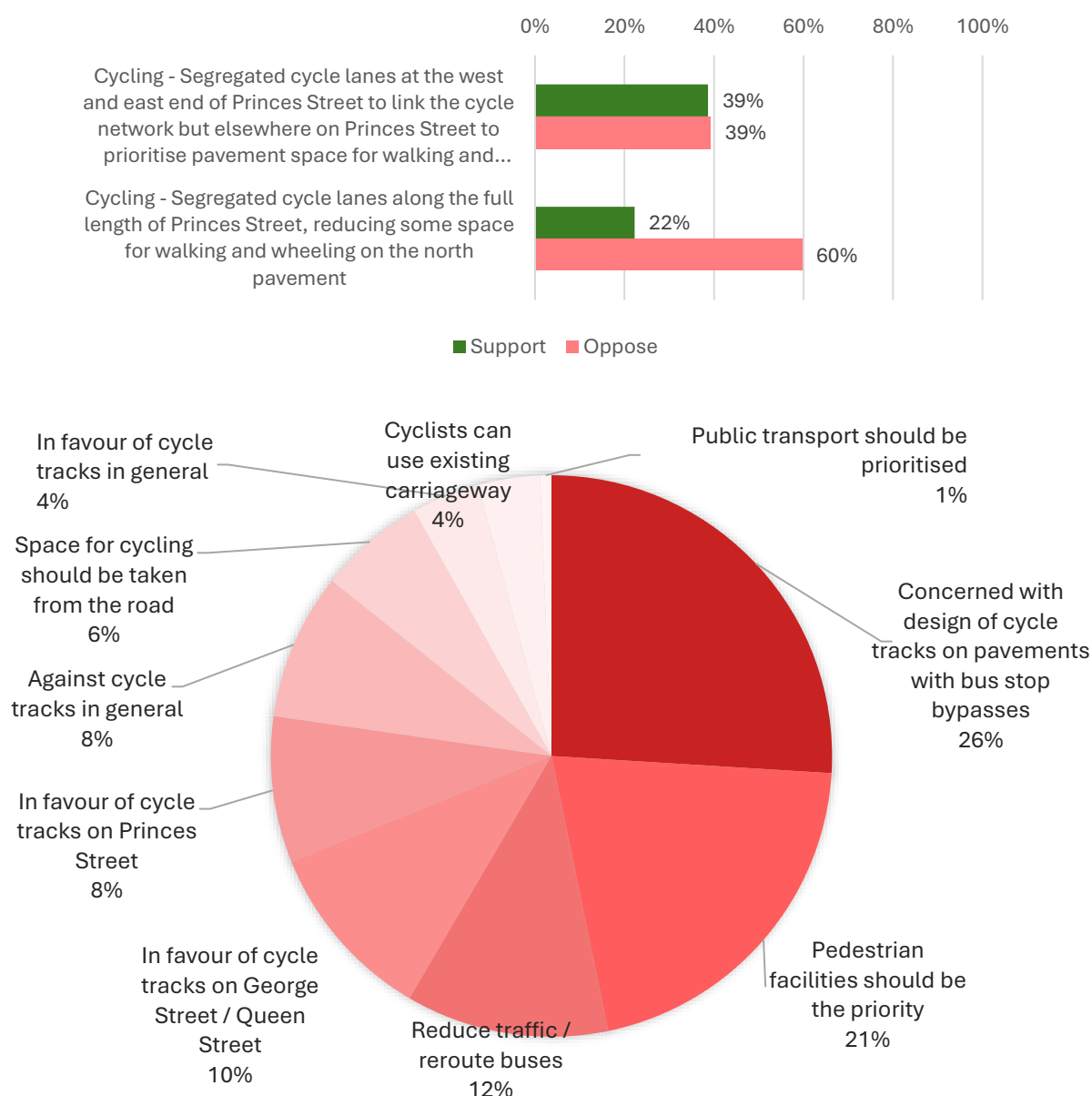
Cycling

Two strategic options were put forward in the consultation to better connect the city centre cycle network via Princes Street.

Providing cycle connections at the east and west ends of Princes Street (as set out by [Future Streets](#) in 2024) while prioritising pavement space for walking and wheeling elsewhere, had an even split of 39% of respondents showing support and 39% of respondents showing opposition.

Providing segregated cycle lanes along the full length of Princes Street received 22% support and was opposed by 60% of respondents.

Figure 21: Cycling



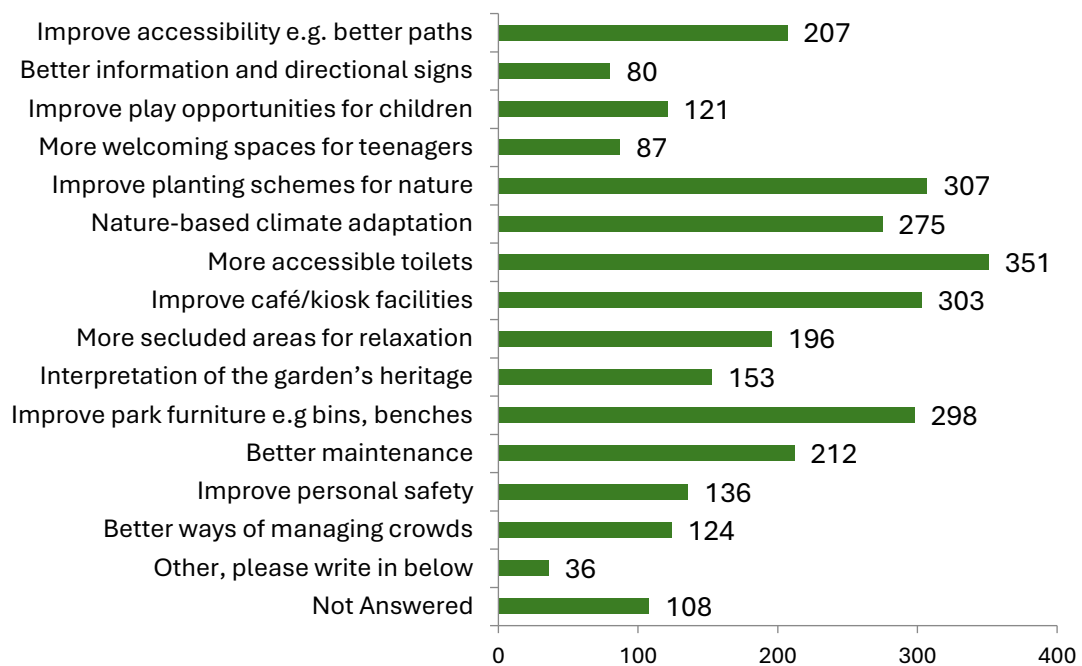
Analysis of 308 'open-box' comments revealed that 26% of respondents were concerned about the design of cycle lanes on pavements and floating bus-stops and 21% felt that pedestrian facilities should be prioritised.

2.5 Princes Street Gardens and Ross Bandstand

What would add to your enjoyment of the Gardens and encourage you to visit them more often?

The top five most supported interventions that would add to people's enjoyment of the Gardens were: more accessible toilets, improving planting schemes for nature, improving café / kiosk facilities, improving park furniture and more nature-based solutions to adapt to climate change.

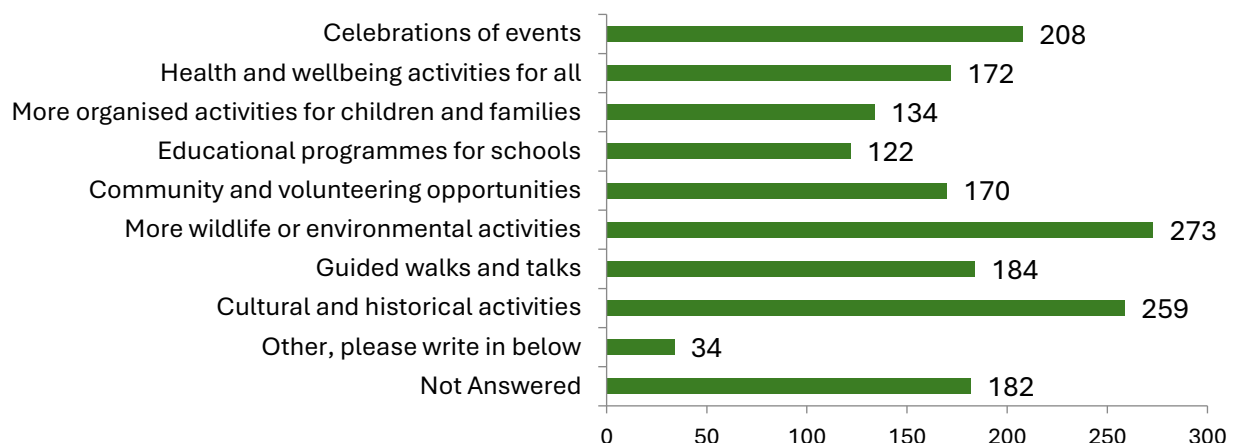
Figure 22: What facilities would encourage you to visit the Gardens more often?



What activities would add to your enjoyment of the Gardens more and encourage you to visit them more often?

More wildlife / environmental activities, cultural and historical activities were the top things that would encourage respondents to visit the Gardens more often.

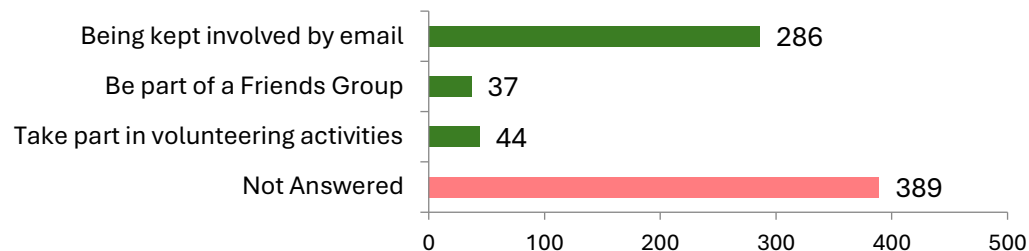
Figure 23: What activities would encourage you to visit the Gardens more often?



Keeping you informed

People were asked in relation to Princes Street Gardens, whether they would like to be kept involved by email, be part of a Friends Group or take part in volunteering activities. There were 304 responses to this question.

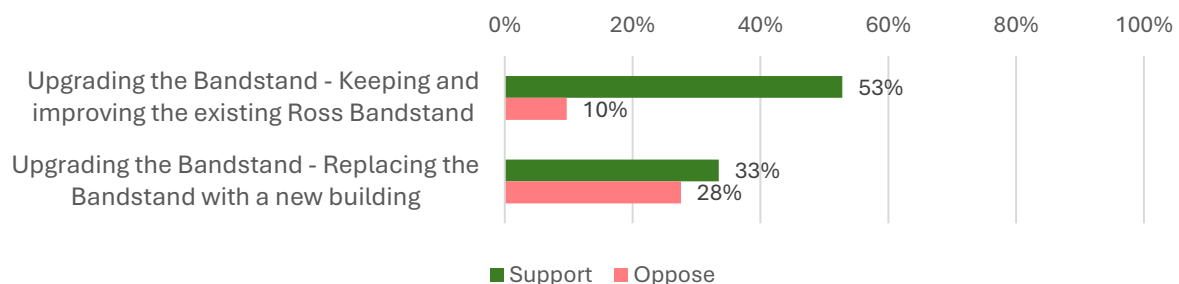
Figure 24: Being involved in Princes Street Gardens



Upgrading the Bandstand

More than 50% of respondents were supportive of keeping and improving the bandstand, compared to 33% of respondents that were supportive of replacing the bandstand entirely.

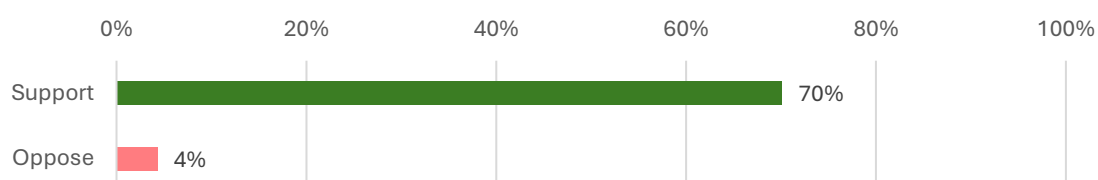
Figure 25: Upgrading the Bandstand



Rethinking the Amphitheatre

70% of respondents were supportive of reconfiguring the amphitheatre to improve access and make the space usable outside of events.

Figure 26: Rethinking the Amphitheatre - Reconfiguring the amphitheatre to improve access and make the space usable outside of events.



2.6 Waverley Station, Waverley Market and East Market Street

Waverley Station place brief

All of the Waverley Station proposals received varying degrees of support. The five most supported measures included: respecting the station's historic setting and heritage features, public toilet provision, improving accessibility and interchange, and conserving city views.

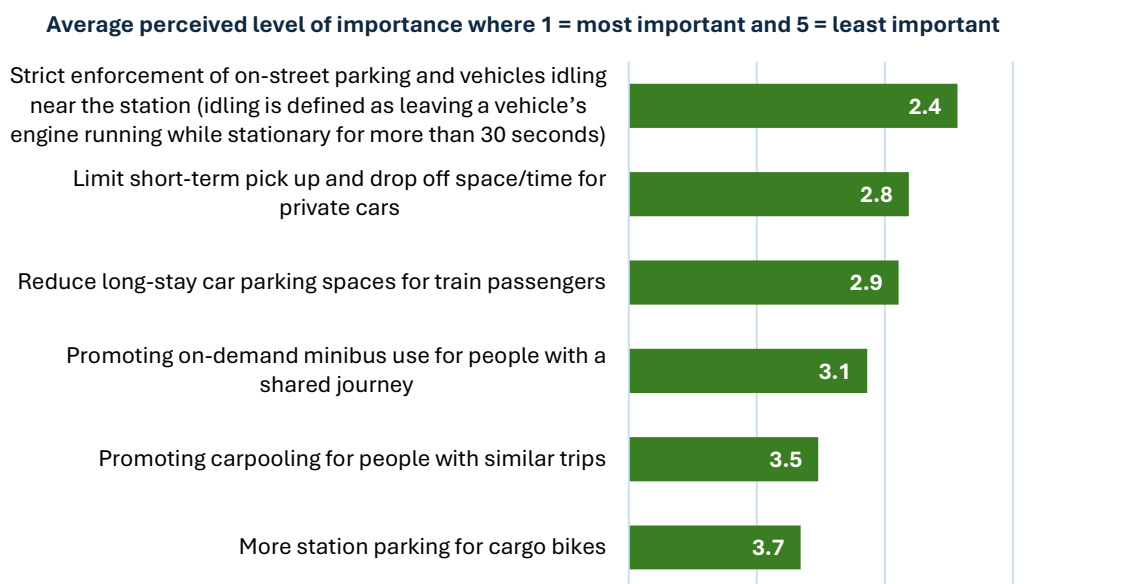
Figure 27: Waverley Station Place Brief



Making it easier to get to the Station without a car

Respondents were asked to rank the importance of measures to support sustainable travel to the station without a car. The enforcement of on-street parking and vehicles idling near the station was rated as the most important measure, followed by limiting short-term pick up and drop space / time for private cars.

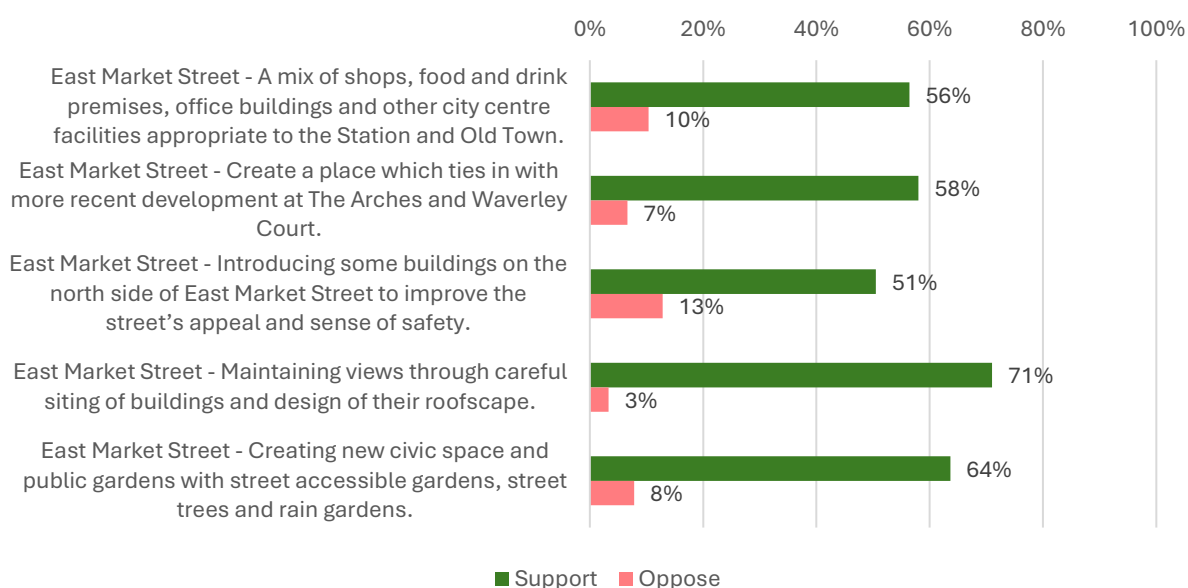
Figure 28: Level of importance for station access without a car proposals



East Market Street

Proposals for East Market Street received high levels of support, particularly maintaining views through careful siting of buildings and roofscape design. 51% of respondents supported the introduction of some buildings to the north of the street.

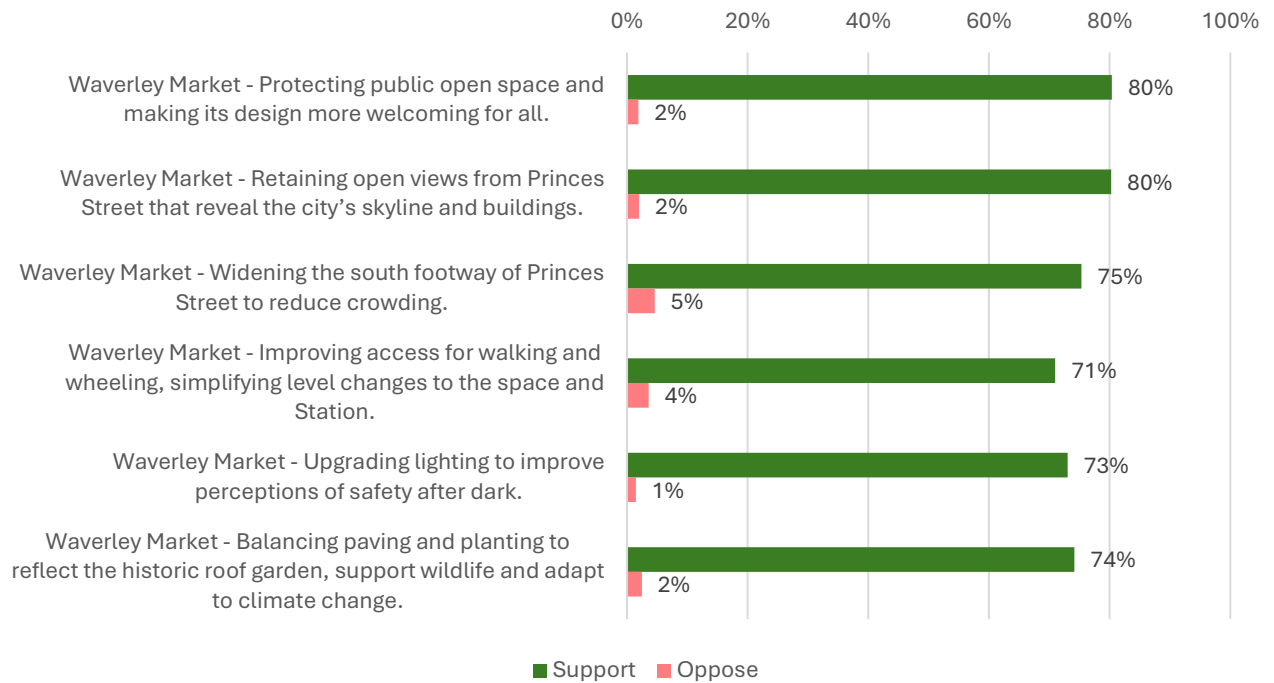
Figure 29: East Market Street



Waverley Market

There were high levels support for all proposals (more than 70% support) to influence change around Waverley Market including its rooftop, footway widening, lighting improvements and planting while retaining open views.

Figure 30: Waverley Market



3. Workshops, drop-ins and written feedback



Stakeholder Workshop, Edinburgh City Chambers

3.1. Stakeholder Workshops

Stakeholder workshops were held on the 5th and 8th of November 2024 at City Chambers and included a presentation on the key sections of the Draft Strategy and facilitated group discussion. Participants were able to join round table discussions themed around ‘Uses, Blocks and Buildings – A revitalised Princes Street, Public Realm and Mobility – a more accessible and welcoming place, and The Gardens and Bandstand – enhanced greenspaces.’ There was no workshop table for Waverley Station, however, a representative of Network Rail attended to support mobility discussions and answer queries about the station’s masterplan.

The workshop agenda was repeated as an online meeting on 25 January 2025 to capture the views of those unable to attend the in-person sessions. A summary of the key points of stakeholder feedback recorded is set out below.

Blocks, Buildings and Uses – A revitalised Princes Street

Feedback on the street’s blocks, buildings and uses focussed on the changing nature of the street and the need to ensure change respects the character of the First New Town and the street’s historic architecture, and meeting the needs of residents and visitors, making efficient use of the upper storeys, improving night-time activity and supporting the function of the city centre. To unlock the potential of rear lanes, a strategic approach to servicing is required.

- Stakeholders recognised that the use of the street is changing but from a strong position relative to other cities, with few empty units. Anchor retail remains but the street's west end appears to struggle.
- Some felt the modern role of the street and how it will look in future lacks clarity, the outcome of change is uncertain, and market led. The street is complex in terms of its tenure and the ability to sustainably adapt large buildings for new uses.
- Stakeholders generally felt it was important not to look at Princes Street in isolation and consider its relationship to the wider city centre.
- There should be a greater understanding of the historic importance of existing buildings, many first-generation Georgian buildings remain but their condition isn't well understood.
- Hotels may impact the availability of commercial space. Upper floors should be surveyed and more use made of these for their outward views but access to upper levels needs to be resolved. There could be potential for housing to address the housing crisis. Cafés appeal but anchor developments and key destinations are still needed in each block.
- Overall, there is a sense of too many tourist stores and not enough useful shops for residents and the reason for visiting the street is unclear. Scope exists for more start-up/innovation space with Waverley Market providing more opportunities for small/independent businesses.
- There continues to be a lack nighttime activity, but hotels and cafes could help change this, however, some felt hotel foyers can create dead frontage. The street's economy benefits from its public transport role.
- Servicing needs a strategic approach, and the back lanes are a wasted opportunity which could be better used by controlling delivery windows and vehicle sizes through traffic orders.
- The more domestic scale of Rose Street is important. The lanes behind Princes Street are smaller in scale and more suited to a café culture and covered areas/shelter from the elements.
- There is a need to elevate the quality of the street's buildings and uses. Some stakeholders considered there are too many chrome and glass buildings, and that there should be more pastiche architecture that blends in.

Public Realm & Mobility - A more accessible and welcoming place

Feedback on Public Realm and Mobility focussed on the need to prioritise improvements to the walking and wheeling experience. This should be achieved through a high-quality public realm, supported by seating and rest points, accessible routes to the garden, whilst enabling safer cycling, adequate cycle parking and public transport efficiency and interchange.

Delivery should link up public realm upgrades and maintain these to a high standard going forward. Cycle provision should be viewed in the context of planned provision on George Street and Queen Street but the West End junction remains a priority. The East End improvements and bus gate were supported.

- Stakeholders felt that maintenance and cleansing is poor for a World Heritage Site and that improved standards would enhance the city centre experience.

- The existing concrete paving looks terrible and is in poor condition, inadequate drainage impacts on pedestrian flows and is dirty. Utility companies need to make good excavations and litter is a problem.
- Seating is welcomed and should be well oriented. The Mound precinct is an important location for seating, however, locate benches outwith market/event spaces or make them moveable, and avoid conflicts with loading.
- Seating should also be integrated around the station, bus stops and proposed tram stop, include cycle parking. Avoid creating clutter and learn lessons from Spaces for People.
- The design of seating in a heritage location is important and should not be concrete blocks.
- The Waverley Bridge placemaking project is welcomed as a key arrival space. It should allow for loading to the station and Waverley Market.
- Some stakeholders wish to see Waverley Bridge returned to providing public transport interchange with concern around displaced airport, tour buses, and coaches for visiting school groups etc.
- Links from Princes Street to West Princes Street Gardens are welcomed and accessibility needs to be improved. The current ramps are steep and uneven. Entrances lack recognition from street level.
- Learn lessons from the Scottish Gallery Project and consider the space needed to form ramps to avoid an engineered look. Ensure Wayfinding explains the different access points. Better links would take pressure off the street.
- The priority amongst stakeholders is to fix or upgrade the footways to benefit safety and user experience, then add seating, whilst avoiding conflicts with other construction. The Garden links should also follow footway upgrades.
- The wider streetscape needs to be treated with a uniform design language. Once implemented, newly improved surfaces must be properly maintained.
- Some wished to see wider city centre improvements e.g. the condition of Rose and George Street and other areas that don't work well for pedestrians e.g. South Charlotte Street, top of Leith Street, foot of The Mound/Hanover Street, Market Street.
- Stakeholders considered pedestrians and public transport need to be prioritised. Pedestrian movement is impeded by long-wait times at junctions e.g. South St David St and safety is an issue at pinch points e.g. Waverley Steps and bus stops on south footway. Signal times should be re-examined.
- Introducing table and chairs for cafes on Princes Street would cause movement conflicts. The Gardens are often used as a route by people to avoid Princes Street.
- Many felt it was disappointing that alongside improved surfacing, footways are generally not able to be widened. Space needs to be prioritised for high footfall. The Waverley Market roof terrace is poor quality and could be used to improve circulation space and user experience. Loosing footway space to create cycle lanes was not supported.
- The volume of busses impacts on street's character and connectivity between the north footway and the Gardens, but busses are part of the street's economy and network interchange, services need to be reliable, less

congested and stop/start. Free bus travel makes the city centre accessible to young people.

- Congestion outside Waverley Steps is not a good experience for anyone and bus routes via The Mound are quicker. The east end has become more congested, and people are less dispersed.
- It would be good to understand how transit times have improved through measures already taken and what could be further improved by means of a bus-gate at the east end, which is supported. Would the network look differently if planned from scratch?
- The role of north-south tram should be understood and whether any busses will be displaced from Princes Street. Tram has made an enormous difference to travel and is easy for visitors to follow and not get lost. Waverley Bridge and West Princes Street are key interchanges that need to be improved. Railings could be used to separate people from the tram.
- If restricting through-centre bus travel, consider displacement impacts on surrounding residential areas or greenspaces. North-south movement across the city centre is just as important.
- Relationship of the transport network to public toilets is important.
- People want to cycle on Princes Street, but it is difficult, and safety remains a concern. Even if the street is not a preferred cycle route, its surfacing should be improved, and the West End junction need urgent attention.
- Edinburgh is a city of students, where cycling and public transport are important and there is a need for more cycle parking.
- The George Street and Queen Street cycle infrastructure need to be in place to provide a safer alternative to Princes Street. It's unclear why a cycle network would be on all three parallel streets?
- Deliver improvements in one cohesive roll out. Look to other cities like Barcelona or London for delivery. Make use of developer contributions and the visitor levy. Current improvements are not joined up e.g. Castle Street and one block of Rose Street.

The Gardens & Bandstand – Enhanced Green Spaces

Feedback on Princes Gardens reflected their value to the city as a peaceful and well-maintained central greenspace for residents, visitors and workers. There is a need to improve accessibility and future-proof links, upgrade facilities – including toilets and the refreshment offer, ensure community representation, address climate and nature emergencies and better celebrate their heritage, including views.

- The gardens are cherished by a range of users, including office workers, tourists and locals, catering for relaxation and events.
- Their diversity is valued, including the formal gardens, trees, play, wild areas, memorials, fountain and floral clock.
- The new playground is a highlight for families and the gardens provide an 'oasis' and uplifting walk in the otherwise busy city centre.
- The gardens offer unique views to the Castle, form part of views across the valley and from Princes Street's buildings, as well as from the trains arriving in Edinburgh.

- The natural topography protects the gardens and maintains an expansive green space between the Old and New Towns, partly formal and informal, offering a sense of enclosure from within.
- Improvements and new infrastructure need to be carefully balanced to preserve the garden's character. Creating more accessible ramps could affect existing lawn areas.
- The railway bridge and views of trains has been a popular attraction for children, with the tracks dividing the formal garden and informal Castle Banks.
- The gardeners put in exceptional work which is highly valued by the community and should be consulted on the proposed changes. The location of the depot should be considered to manage conflicts with vehicles.
- Rethink how the gardens connect to other spaces and improve access to and within the garden due to steep slopes. Improve walking flow between East and West Gardens, East Gardens and Waverley Station, and consider a linkage below The Mound. The West Gardens provide a useful link between the city centre and Lothian Road and the East Gardens, provide east-west walkways away from heavy footfall on Princes Street and around the Station.
- Wayfinding could be improved at entrances, to guide navigation around the paths, locate toilets and connect back to Princes Street but should not be excessive. The St Cuthbert's churchyard route is less well known.
- Some wondered whether cycling was permitted in the gardens and whether there was space for it in the future? Cycle parking close to entrances is needed e.g. for families to cycle to the play park.
- Recent changes in the East Gardens as part of the Scottish Gallery Project have altered their character due to tree removal and the ramp layout. The lower lawn is a bit lost and less well used.
- Access and connections to the south of the railway line, including The Mound, Castle Esplanade and King's Stables Road need to be reopened and rockfall risk addressed.
- Provide greater historic interpretation of the Gardens place in history to enhance visitor experience, including the Nor' Loch and its connection to witch trials. Apart from floral clock, public information is limited.
- There could be more biodiversity and green initiatives with information for visitors, including plants for pollinators, herbaceous plants and raingardens. This could be linked to greenspaces across the city or green roofs e.g. on bus stops. There could be wider public space improvements and greening of top level of Castle Terrace car park.
- The underused shelters could become food and drink kiosks to benefit visitor experience with better refreshment opportunities also by the playground. Waverley West signal box could become a feature or café. Prices should be affordable.
- Toilets are well maintained but need improving for families and the visitor levy could be used to improve these. More seating is needed throughout the gardens, particularly in summer.
- The Gardens close at dusk, which is supported to protect them from anti-social behaviour. Any access after dark would need to be managed safely but some support extending evening use in summer.

- Involve local business representation in any Friends of Park Group e.g. in New York this has provided sponsorship for improvements.
- The Christmas market is poor and similar to the offer in many cities. The winter festival causes disruption to access and the landscaped grounds and should be dispersed to reduce pressure on the gardens and benefit other parts of the city centre.
- There could be more activities such as pop-up markets in the red blaes area and scope for an informal performance space in the lower part of the East Gardens.
- The improvement plan for the Gardens should be published before the Strategy is finalised.

Feedback on the Ross Bandstand reflected the need to balance major and community events and activities, provide clear communications and address barriers to community use. Most stakeholders wished to see the bandstand retained, improving its appearance, function and access, including redesign of the amphitheatre seating.

- The vintage character of the existing bandstand is appreciated; it offers a spectacular venue with an iconic backdrop. Build on its features to provide upgraded and improved facilities, including toilets.
- A balance is needed between major events and smaller to medium, free, community events during summer to animate the space with minimal impact on the Gardens. The intensification of commercial events should be resisted.
- Provide a clear usage policy and calendar of events to manage expectations around access and noise e.g. nearby hotels. Screening of events with fencing on Princes Street is not considered acceptable.
- The amphitheatre creates a concrete scar and east-west barrier. It could be opened up to allow recreational use outwith events and resolve accessibility of the steep paths.
- Restricted access for events causes logistical challenges with setup and take-down for event's organisers. A power supply would reduce the need for diesel generators. A lack of equipment and hire costs deters community use.

Waverley Station

Feedback on Waverley station reflected the need to enhance the public realm around the Station incl. Waverley Market, and improve interchange, wayfinding and pick up and drop off.

- Waverley Market is not just an important public space and viewpoint but an accessible route between Princes Street and the station. Tackle congested spaces, particularly Waverley Steps, to improve the arrival experience.
- Some concern at loss of Waverley Bridge for interchange but also support for carefully design seating/public realm. The temporary closure has been successful but needs to offer something.
- Improve conditions for pick up/drop-off, incl. land at East Market Street and access for private hire vehicles should be clearly understood.
- Prevent misuse of loading bays at east end of Princes Street.
- Improve wayfinding to and through the station.

3.2 Public Drop-In Events



Public Drop-In Event, City Arts Centre

Blocks, Buildings and Uses – A revitalised Princes Street

Comments on the street's blocks, buildings and uses received at the public drop-in events at Waverley Station and the City Arts Centre focussed on the need for the Strategy's vision and outcome to be more clearly set out, to improve building design and ensure needs of city centre residents are supported.

- Consider resilience for residents of Rose Street and First New Town in terms of the facilities needed for local living – groceries, health centres, alongside the impact of new developments on servicing and infrastructure incl. drainage.
- Defined role of the street is vague – what is the reason to go there? How does the street fit in with the wider visitor offer?
- There is more scope for creative industries and workshops.
- Better quality architecture and design detailing to reflect First New Town. Heritage should be the starting point, including internal features. Rooflines are not following guidance.
- All proposals for Princes Street go before the Edinburgh Urban Design Panel to raise quality of design. The Johnnie Walker Experience is a good example of high-quality design.
- Emergence of cafes a good thing e.g. by station.
- The LDP preparation process has a long timeframe, the strategy needs to be more agile and responsive to change on ground.

Public Realm & Mobility - A More Accessible and Welcoming Place

Comments received at the drop-in events with regard to public realm and mobility reflected the need to better communicate the overall City Centre Transformation (CCT) approach, prioritise the walking and wheeling experience, supported by rest points and to improve public transport efficiency. Views were mixed on the need for full cycle segregation, with some supporting this measure and others seeking better connections at the east and west ends of the street. The design quality of all measures proposed was considered to be important given the city centre's historic context.

- There is a need to improve communications around wider CCT projects and how they come together.
- A need to improve public realm and the specific locations identified were supported, in particular east end.
- Improve efficiency of bus network and relieve footway congestion, seating welcomed and cleanliness to be addressed.
- Temporary infrastructure e.g. cycle bollards affect the look of street.
- There was a mix of views on the need for cycle segregation along the full length of Princes Street, the need to connect the cycle network at the east and west ends and simply improving the existing situation.

The Gardens & Bandstand – Enhanced Green Spaces

Comments received at the drop-in events with regard to Princes Street Gardens focussed on the need to improve accessibility, retain historic character and views, keep the Gardens tranquil, well maintained and avoid commercialisation. Restoration of the Ross Bandstand was favoured, balancing major and community events and activities and improving accessibility.

- Improve all access points, incl. King's Stables Road
- Ramps welcomed and retaining historic example/re-use materials.
- Address cleanliness and avoid commercialisation.
- The focus of the West Gardens should be on tranquillity.
- The gardens have become heavily treed and lost some open lawn and views.
- Improve shelters.
- Restore Ross Bandstand and scale back large events.
- The amphitheatre should be opened up for seating use/picnics at other times.

Waverley Station

Comments on Waverley Station received at the public drop-in events focused on the need to improve public spaces around the Station, including Waverley Market roof terrace, the need to reduce footway congestion and improve interchange. Pick up and drop off need improvement – in particular for those with caring responsibilities, with scope for some redevelopment of the car park but retaining some parking.

- Enhance public realm around Station incl. Waverley Market Waverley Market – a missed opportunity for a European style outdoor market.

- Resolve footway congestion at entrances, improve interchange and pick-up/drop off, including realistic arrangements for people with caring responsibilities.
- Provide greater clarity on East Market Street proposals, the new bridge, and loss of parking if developed? Some buildings would improve safety/overlooking.

3.3 Written Feedback

Written feedback was received from the organisations listed below:

Edinburgh World Heritage	Living Streets (via survey)
Historic Environment Scotland	Spokes
Essential Edinburgh	InfraSisters (via survey)
Federation of Small Businesses	Sustrans
Chamber of Commerce (via survey)	Cockburn Association
Edinburgh Urban Design Panel	New Town and Broughton Community
Edinburgh Access Panel	Council (on behalf of Old Town and
Lothian Buses	West End CCs)
	National Galleries of Scotland (via
	survey)

Edinburgh World Heritage

Edinburgh World Heritage support the Council's ambition to revitalise and improve accessibility of the historic city centre. A summary of comments is set out below.

Blocks, Buildings and Uses:

- Ensure a balance of uses for a sustainable future for the First New Town, managing market forces. The street's destination role for citizens is vital to preserve. Ground floor leisure activities are supported.
- Use of upper floors for residential and affordable housing, with retail and leisure below will support the World Heritage Site's authenticity and residential community.
- Upgrading facades as part of development could be achieved by restoring original plot widths, architectural rhythms and fenestration patterns.
- Investment and renewal of the public realm to an agreed palette of high-quality natural materials within the World Heritage Site is welcomed.
- Placemaking proposals could appear ad hoc if not embedded in the shared vision for the New Town.
- A Statement of Heritage Significance should be used to guide the regeneration of the Street, manage the landscape of the Waverley Valley, establish a vision for its public realm, inform the design process and improve the heritage outcomes.
- The Council are encouraged to hold a wider debate and discussion on the development of a vision with city partners and residents. An architectural competition could attract ideas from world class designers.
- New development should make a positive contribution to the World Heritage Site through high-quality design and materials. Roofscape is an important character of OUV, and additional storeys should be resisted, maintaining protected views. Sky bars shouldn't become a standard feature.
- Agree with the need to manage light pollution from buildings and additionally recommend that a lighting strategy for the built heritage and parks is commissioned by the WHS Management Partners.
- Increased permeability with Rose Street is likely to harm OUV and present a risk to listed buildings and heritage fabric.

- Support repair and improvement of the lanes as part of the New Town street hierarchy, including vehicle controls, presentation of trade waste, restoring footways and setted carriageways, graffiti removal, cleansing, heritage lanterns for safety, alongside appearance of rear access doors etc.
- The lane strategy should focus on improving Rose Street's character. The intended character of service lanes should be preserved (retail frontage would be inappropriate) maintaining front/back relationships.
- Strongly support the Council's proposals to review the operational requirements of businesses in this area.
- Refurbishment and regeneration of existing buildings should be promoted, avoiding unsustainable demolition and the detrimental effect of gap sites.
- Reversal of undesirable alterations or restoration of lost features such as original shopfronts may be desirable for heritage value, assessed against a Heritage Statement.
- EWH supports the restoration of traditional shopfronts in the World Heritage Site, where evidence of the original design exists to support an authentic approach.
- New or redeveloped building façades should be of high architectural merit and high-quality materials, relating to their context, and the remaining historic facades, and reading as a cohesive building with an integral shopfront.
- Use of awnings, consistent with the historic design, would be supported and contributes to combating climate change but visible branding should be avoided.
- Historic thresholds should be retained but it is not clear whether a standard approach to every threshold is desirable or authentic.
- Removing redundant roof plant is supported. Solar panels and air source heat pumps are unlikely to be suitable for the roofscape due to visual prominence.
- Green roofs would not be appropriate, even where not visible. Materials should reflect the historic roofscape and blend in.
- To provide access to upper stories, any new entrances from Princes Street will require sensitive design, internal lobbies should also be considered.
- Pop-up uses should reflect the quality of the World Heritage Site e.g. use by cultural, educational and similar organisations for engagement is suggested.
- Support 1:1 advert free scaffold wraps. Hoardings with community artwork though suitable elsewhere may cause visual clutter or congestion on narrowed footways.
- Empty shops could display historic photos and heritage interpretation about Princes Street/New Town as successfully used elsewhere.
- Hoardings should be painted a prescribed colour e.g. sandstone, dark green, or traffic grey for a uniform and easily maintained appearance.

Public Realm:

- Renewal of the public realm to a high standard is welcomed. To avoid harm and enhance the OUV, a minimalist approach is essential based on a cohesive design for the whole area.

- Continuity of design and technical detailing across City Centre Transformation projects is essential incl. materials, street furniture, stone benching, surfaces, barriers, signage, planters, road-markings, lighting, and other elements.
- Inclusion of seating areas in proposed locations is generally supported, with designs consistent across the New Town, and incorporating HVM reinforcements to reduce the need for bollards.
- Low-cost or movable seating units would not be suitable and bicycle racks should be sensitively sited to a consistent design across the WHS.
- Planting within seating units should be consistent with those to be used elsewhere in the WHS. Trees are generally only suitable for use in the gardens.
- As the setting of two architectural masterpieces, a permanent design would be preferred at The Mound precinct.
- Materials, street furniture and loading/servicing should tie in with the George Street project. Castle Street should be resurfaced to match George Street. Not an appropriate location for street entertainers.
- Waverley Bridge is a very wide street and benches will need to be of sufficient scale to create a welcoming seating space. Consider views from Cockburn Street and the Old Town and terminating the street with public art.
- General Register House – simple seating without planting is supported but must avoid impact on the setting of the Listed Building. Support a raised table in traditional setts to West Register Street rather than a continuous footway.
- Rationalisation and relocation of timber benches is supported, which should be retained and reused for their cultural heritage value.
- Support the West Garden Links proposal including new planting, alongside the retention of the original central ramps, retaining and reusing paving and with sensitive alteration of railings.
- Strongly support use of Scoutmoor (or approved equivalent) sandstone paving throughout Princes Street/First New Town, laid to consistent pattern and dimensions.
- Additional planting or raingardens on street is not appropriate and the Gardens should be used to improve drainage and biodiversity.
- Certain locations could benefit from a limited table and chair zone but is generally not appropriate along the length of the street.
- Prioritise improvement of pavement surfacing, followed by access ramps to the Gardens.
- The protection of public space and views at Waverley Market is supported, particularly referencing the historic Waverley Market rooftop. The space should be free of kiosks and commercial activity, with lighting tied to the overall concept for the valley. Widening the footway into the carriageway could affect historic street proportions, whereas widening level access on the roof terrace would not.
- The pavement width on the north side of the street should be maximised. Proposals for segregated cycling should reflect the historic character of the street and keep a uniform kerb line as a key characteristic of this street.

Princes Street Gardens:

- Any changes should be informed by the Conservation Management Plan and Heritage Statement. Keep signage to a minimum to avoid clutter. Interpretation should be considered across the WHS by the management partners.
- Opening of the Gardens after dusk with lighting would change the appearance of the WHS and should only be considered as part of a wider lighting strategy.
- Support formation of Friends Groups for historic green spaces. Organised activities should be kept to a minimum to respect the value of the gardens as a tranquil space.
- Support conservation and refurbishment of the historic bandstand.
- Development proposals affecting nationally important Gardens and Designed Landscapes should protect, preserve or enhance their cultural significance, character and integrity.
- Support rethinking the amphitheatre, informed by a heritage statement and the Conservation Management Plan for the Gardens. Visual barriers during events are not supported.

Waverley Station:

- Support simplifying access and interchange at Waverley Station, which must include access for large numbers of taxis without clogging adjacent streets.
- The arrival experience has significant cultural value and should be retained or maximized in any redesign.
- Waverley Bridge should be pedestrian focussed and clutter free, readable as a bridge. Planters may be appropriate as well as seating for a rest point or meeting place.
- Support the retention of the internal high-level walkway across the station from East Market Street to Princes Street.
- Do not support a new north-south bridge for walking and cycling, New Street provides a similar route. Consider restoring the historic bridge.
- Secure cycle parking should be maximised to avoid street clutter.
- Support provision of new public toilets with 24 hour access.
- Rather than providing additional shops, food and drink facilities in the Station, recommend incorporating Waverley Market into the Station.
- It is crucial to respect and restore the Station's unique historical elements and features including the Booking Hall, columns and glazed roof, to retain the character and experience of this unique building, whilst also removing inauthentic elements.
- Historic sandstone boundary walls require vegetation removal, repair with natural stone and repointed in lime mortar to a high conservation standard.
- Servicing should be carried out from Calton Road and restricted to specified hours to avoid congestion in adjacent streets.
- Development of land at East Market Street to be informed by a Heritage Statement, station expansion may be supported but a continuous street front altering views may not be appropriate. The area could feature a flat roof at

street level to provide public realm and a station entrance or low-level buildings for cultural uses.

Historic Environment Scotland

- Use of upper floors is welcomed; however Building Regulations require stair access for fire escape, which can be complex due to the internal layout or the mix of uses.
- In terms of the redevelopment opportunities identified, emphasis should be placed on re-use rather than demolition.
- The Abbey Business Centre is unlisted but linked to the category A Listed New Club, tying in with its horizontal design emphasis and walkway.
- More information could be added on the Princes Street Panel and remaining buildings, of which two are Listed.
- In achieving interest at shop front level, ensure the shopfronts reference the building above and not simply the historic feu pattern.
- Welcome emphasis on improving shopfronts, including re-instating traditional forms.
- The condition of existing structures may require propping, which is not permitted due to trams and bus stops on Princes Street, thereby adding to construction complexities and pressure on Rose Street.
- Maintain and enhance the placemaking potential of mews streets with high quality streetscape, particularly towards the west end where historic building forms remain.
- Where the historic building form and scale survives, this should be protected. The canyon-effect which already exists at the east end should be avoided.
- The Strategy focusses on the south edge of the New Town, however, Rose Street North Lanes are outwith the study area but would benefit from similar treatment.
- Welcome heritage focus to public realm improvements in terms of materials and re-use of historic paving.
- Placemaking furniture should be bespoke and from a limited palette tied in with the wider New Town.
- Welcome retention and re-use of honoured paving as an edge trim.
- Extent of placemaking project at West End unclear. Consider access to Rose Street when developing layout for Castle Street.
- Welcome preparation of a Heritage Statement.
- Welcome the principle to reuse and retain the 1935 Ross Bandstand and to increase access to it.
- Welcome climate resilience measures in the gardens, to reduce ponding and flooding.
- In the Waverley Station Place Brief, provide a link to the listed building record and ensure the carriageway ramps are referred to.
- Welcome development principles for 'Land at East Market Street', including the response to the valley landform and views across it. Additionally, development here should be sensitively designed and subordinate in scale and form to nearby Listed Buildings.
- Expand on the description of 95 Princes Street in Appendix A.

Edinburgh Urban Design Panel - 31 October 2024

- Set out Strategy's position in hierarchy of plans.
- Clarifications should be made with regard to the spatial structure and feu pattern to highlight the mews lanes and changing urban grain over time.
- Be clear what policy and guidance can control in terms of the mix of uses and what this means in practice. There could be an over dominance of hotels.
- Adaptation of historic buildings for a mix of uses may present challenges in terms of complying with Building Standards for escape and fire prevention.
- Some of the upper floors, abandoned in the past, retain some of the greatest heritage value, therefore there is a tension with re-use of this space.
- Consider community space or small business space to encourage residents to visit/interact with the street.
- A lighting strategy should be encouraged to consider the appearance and qualities of the street and entire valley during hours of darkness.
- Note the importance of well-designed, high quality and maintained public realm, with a delivery sequence to avoid construction damage from redevelopment.
- Street clutter should be reduced, and new seating must avoid adding to this problem. It should follow a bespoke design consistent with other furniture in the New Town.
- Segregated cycle lanes along the length of Princes Street were not supported due to the loss of pedestrian space and duplication with the planned network on George and Queen St.
- Support accessibility improvements to the gardens but will need to be carefully balanced and designed to avoid an over engineered appearance.
- The Gardens are an important designed landscape of national importance which needs to be improved, alongside important issues of access, climate and nature emergency.
- The retention of a pair of ramps and horonised paving as a historic feature is welcomed.
- There should be a horticultural review of planting to bring coherence to the different eras of planting and management.
- The amount of information on the history of Waverley Station needs to be increased and should include or refer to the statement of special interest.
- If the carriageway ramps are removed as part of the Waverley station masterplan, the new design should embrace the idea of a processional arrival space to the city.

Edinburgh Access Panel - 7 November 2024

- Street not looking its best, but the strategy will improve the situation, even if shop operators can't be influenced.
- Issues with goods being presented on street.
- Existing wooden benches and footway very narrow. Footway widening should be considered. Especially narrow by East Princes Street Gardens.
- Blue badge parking at the galleries on The Mound is very important to maintain.

- Suggest looking at crossing opportunities to the railway. The existing accessible route from The Mound to the Bandstand is a long route. Additionally existing temporary closures at The Mound and King's Stables Road means the approach to Castle Banks needs thought.
- Bandstand – issue of accessibility to the stage for performers with disabilities needs to be addressed.
- Panel previously commented on Network Rail proposals, in particular the need for segregation between walking, wheeling and cycling on the new north-south bridge.
- Concern also with regard to taxi and public transport access on Market Street surrounding the Meadows to George Street scheme bus-gate.
- Clarify that new ramps will be of suitable gradient and include rest points/landings as 1:12 still quite steep. Quaich proposed a lift but issue of ongoing maintenance/access if fault develops.
- Cycle option on Princes Street could be dangerous in an already congested space, could people access Princes Street by dropping down from George Street?

Essential Edinburgh (email / meeting comments)

- Positive outlook with major redevelopments underway, future being high quality mixed use.
- Keen for paving to be improved but deliver upgrades after major redevelopments are complete.
- Planning changes have greatly helped regenerate Princes Street. Lowest vacancy rate for shops in the city centre for many years. Hotels will foster high quality retail.
- Don't forget Rose Street; the street's public realm needs replaced with deliverable traffic measures in place.
- The masterplan for Waverley Station is considered a priority.
- Urgent need for the entrances/exits from Waverley Station to be addressed at pressure points e.g. top of Waverley Steps and car/taxi access elsewhere.
- Very supportive of a major refurbishment of the Ross Bandstand for both larger and community events. Improved access to the Gardens very important.
- Improved seating and dwelling space would be welcome – Castle Street would need thought as currently an event space.
- Not supportive of branding Princes Street, it will become a market-led high-quality mixed-use street.

Federation of Small Businesses (email comments)

- Consultation pretty well pitched. Future of town/city centres lies in diversification beyond retail to create places where people want to spend time.
- The street is headed in the right direction with the next steps crucial to its prosperity and its public transport connections expand its potential to markets outside the city.

- The street does not seem to have reached its commercial potential, and its views could be made more of.
- The Council should promote its regeneration but it must also be guided by the market.
- Princes Street will become more of a hospitality and leisure destination, anchored at either end by St James and Johnnie Walker, a gateway to Edinburgh, rather than the flagship retail destination of years gone by.

Chamber of Commerce (survey response)

- Overall, support the strategy, vision, and ambition to revitalise what could be one of the best and most iconic city centres in the world.
- Work collaboratively with businesses and residents to improve and sustain the mix of use, upgrade public realm, and support the economy.
- Support the design principles but consider the New Town holistically to align plans for George Street, Princes Street and Rose Street.
- Rose Street is a destination and place of business for residents and visitors. There is scope for greater focus on Rose Street and the upgrades that it needs.
- Appreciate the benefit of enhancing the rear lanes in collaboration with local businesses but emphasise their importance for servicing premises.
- Strongly support use of upper floors for housing, hotels, and/or serviced apartments to make best use of space and activate Princes Street in the evening.
- Alongside the issue of light spillage, consider noise impacts from rooftop bars for nearby residents and hotels.
- The 2020 changes to planning guidance seem to be working well, with a better mix of use currently on Princes Street, and more planned.
- Scope for greater hospitality and leisure to create a resilient and vibrant destination, including tables and chairs where space permits.
- Coordinate proposals to reduce disruption to businesses, visitors and residents, and protect public realm throughout any development works.
- Strengthen content on net zero and climate adaptation infrastructure – e.g. heat networks, measures to tackle flooding, overheating, and strong winds etc.
- Prioritise a safe and welcoming environment and address increasing criminal and anti-social behaviour, shoplifting, graffiti, and behaviour at bus stops.
- The East End requires priority action to resolve anti-social behaviour, poor quality public realm and congestion.
- Alongside the East End, outside General Register House is a priority for placemaking, given its prominence, historic value and congested footways.
- Improve provision for taxis and private hire (PHC) across the city centre, not only at the east end. Loading and servicing needs to be protected.
- Strongly support improved access to the Gardens. Better, permanent infrastructure will make events more resilient and sustainable e.g. avoiding the need for generators.

- Events are vital to the city's vibrancy and our cultural offering but don't have to be all larger scale and can include community and smaller scale events.
- Upgrading Waverley Station should be a priority and to improve the experience of arriving in the city and first impressions of Princes Street and East Market Street.
- Work with Waverley Market to find a sustainable and long-term solution for the roof terrace, to create a place to spend time during the day and into the evening.
- Overall, this is a strong strategy. Princes Street is definitely moving in the right direction with a lot of development to come that will improve the area's offering.

Lothian Buses

- Pleased to see strategy for the area. Relationship with other active travel/public realm projects to be indicated.
- Welcome footway improvements to remove clutter and benefit all public transport users at start and end of journeys.
- East End needs a co-ordinated design in conjunction with north/south tram.
- Quick wins at east end include a sustainable transport gate (bus, taxi, cycle and tram) to filter unnecessary traffic. Taxi drop-off/pick-up and loading and servicing need review.
- Support additional footway space at east end but challenging to meet the needs of all modes.
- Adding a cycle link in advance of tram will be complex. Proposals for the Street to Waverley Bridge cycle link will affect the public transport network.
- Cycle parking should be located away from footways, where space is at a premium to avoid people stepping onto the carriageway.
- Segregated cycling on Princes Street would impact conditions for walking, wheeling and efficiency of public transport. George Street will provide a less congested alternative.
- Adding infrastructure to Waverley Bridge will limit network resilience.

Living Streets Edinburgh Group

- Need effective enforcement of acoustic street performers. Amplified music should be banned.
- Do not understand "a city centre hopper bus, to improve operational efficiency and create a more balanced pedestrian environment" and would oppose such proposals.
- Addressing narrow pavements should be a top priority, especially on the south side.
- Signals at Waverley Bridge need to be reconfigured to not unnecessarily delay public transport.
- Cycle parking and tables and chairs must not impede pedestrian movement.
- Segregated cycleways and floating bus stops should not be installed as they will impact negatively on pedestrians and bus passengers.

- Use more safety cameras, especially at key junctions, to deter dangerous vehicle movements and improve safety cyclists and pedestrians.

Spokes

- Support public realm proposals throughout. Include additional cycle parking.
- Investigate informal cycle access from Princes Street to Castle Street.
- Safety improvements must be made at junctions (including the West End per the Major Junctions Review and at The Mound) to avoid conflicts with tram. Early release lights, advisory signage and Tram safety guidance are of limited success due to compliance issues.
- Support pedestrianisation of Waverley Bridge and additional public realm. Recommend clear priority for the Waverley Bridge cycle link to avoid obstructions.
- Support cycle segregation at East End to resolve unpleasant and dangerous gap in the network and welcome re-introduction of a properly enforced bus gate. Support footway widening next to Waverley Market.
- Strongly support provision of segregated cycle lanes along full street, welcome opportunities to discuss options, such as the removal of some public service vehicles.
- Waverley Station Place Brief must increase cycle parking and quality bike access right into station. Include a 'Bike Hub' with secure parking, servicing, retail, information and bike hire etc.

InfraSisters

- Follow Transport Scotland's updated Cycling by Design guidance and prioritise safe and comfortable on-road cycle infrastructure, which provides night-time cycling that's safe and comfortable for women and girls.
- For any changes to public space, the perspective of women and girls should be considered, as well as of other marginalised groups who experience public spaces differently.

Sustrans

- Strategy generally looks pretty good. Would not support reduction in footway space to fit in cycle infrastructure. Happy with the plans overall and that it aligns to wider transport strategies and plans.

The Cockburn Association

The Cockburn Association supports the Strategy for its coherent vision but urges decisive action to address the key challenges and ensure Edinburgh's historic core thrives.

Key concerns are retail decline – especially at the west end, a lack of unity to the New Town's architectural coherence, over-use of Princes Street Gardens for events and the need to align Council policies and departments whilst recognising the role of market forces.

The Association – recommend a range of short, medium and long-term actions.
Short-term actions could include:

- Western End Pilot (0-2 Years): Incentivise diverse retail/cultural uses by mid-2026 to reverse decline, countering hotel dominance with rates relief/grants.
- Station Plaza (2-5 Years): Transform Princes Mall into a civic-commercial hub by 2030, enhancing Waverley Station's gateway role.
- PSG Limits (0-2 Years): Cap major events at four annually by late 2025, prioritising ecological integrity.
- Heritage Focus (5-10 Years): Pilot recladding of a 1960s/70s infill site (e.g., former BHS) by 2035, with a PSWVS policy presumption for retaining Georgian upper-floor features.
- First New Town Strategy: Develop a destination framework to adapt to market shifts, balancing profit with public good via regulations and partnerships.
- Short-term actions would be followed by medium and long-term actions to implement climate resilience, deliver a pedestrian focussed streetscape with public transport only, and drive upper floor occupancy, alongside a First New Town destination strategy. This would be informed by an accessibility audit and additional analysis of upper floor uses and existing heritage features.
- Propose a Q3 2025 workshop to refine the vision.
- International examples are cited including Bruges (retail evolution), Amsterdam (pedestrian enhancement), Salzburg (civic space management) and Ljubljana (heritage restoration).
- Inclusion of the Waverley Station Masterplan would have enriched the consultation dialogue.
- Focus streetscape planning on the pedestrian experience, using uniform surfacing, and designs that reflect the New Town's neoclassical proportions, street furniture could disrupt pedestrian flow without tackling underlying issues.
- Cycling provision is welcome, however, its necessity is questioned given the CCWEL, a heritage compatibility assessment is advised.
- Prioritise Princes Street Garden's greenspace role, cap major events at four annually based on ecological capacity assessments. Support Ross Bandstand refurbishment but oppose increased event scale. Issue guidelines to protect its tranquillity.
- Integrate native planting and sustainable drainage into PSG and streetscapes, aligning with the 2030 Climate Strategy while respecting historical authenticity.
- Advocate additional research, existing Heritage Framework is a useful tool but lacks analysis of upper floors. Many retain Georgian features from the first-generation buildings which should be retained and restored.

New Town and Broughton Community Council (on behalf of Old Town and West End CCs)

- Princes Street is urgently in need of a plan for regeneration and restoration and has become an embarrassment for residents and visitors.
- Priority should be regeneration and protection of Princes Street, better anticipating its likely commercial future while providing a clearer vision of what it should look like in the future.
- The Draft Strategy contains no vision and hence fails to qualify as a strategy. A strategy should lay out a developed and coherent idea of what Princes Street could look like in the future, grounded by its purpose in the City Centre.
- There needs to be consideration of what different involved parties want to see in the future — detailed analysis of what may inhibit, and what may facilitate change. Change will not be under exclusive control of the city council, so look at the other factors shaping the street's future.
- There is a need to consider what is happening in comparable cities to inform the vision and for a better grasp on the street's likely commercial future.
- The Draft Strategy lacks ambition and contains generic urban planning measures and should be more specific to Princes Street and its requirements.
- There is no prioritisation between the demands of retail and hotels, heritage and development, vibrancy and the natural environment, transport and tourism, pedestrian and cycling space, through traffic and destination traffic, buses and trams.
- The vision should be informed by a competition to reclaim the street's place as one of the world's great thoroughfares.
- The Draft Strategy lacks priorities and timescales. A new version is needed that gives priority to preserving, protecting and enhancing the built heritage.
- The Strategy needs re-thought, starting with a coherent vision for Princes Street, then adding the gardens, Waverley Station and city centre transport system to create a coherent city centre.
- Simple operational changes, such as the entrances to West Princes Street Gardens, should go forward as soon as possible.

National Galleries of Scotland

- The outlined principles effectively support the historic integrity of the New Town. However, development must ensure continued access for essential cultural operations, including artwork transportation and deliveries.

3.4 Children and Young People



Illustrations and mapping from engagement activities with children and young people

Background

Engagement with Children and Young People involved a mix of approaches including games, quizzes and drawings for Primary pupils and group walkabouts and workshops for Secondary pupils. A specific session to consider the view of teenage girls was included to embed equity in place design and management. The following schools and year groups participated in these activities.

School	Year Group	Number of pupils
St Mary's RC Primary School	P2/P3	22
	P6/P7	23
Tollcross Primary School	P3	19
	P6/P7	21
Drummond High School	S1/S2	9
Leith Academy	S1/S2/S3	9
St Thomas of Aquins RC High School	S1/S2/S3	5
	S4/S5	7
Trinity Academy	S2/S3	4
Total Number of Students:		119

Summary findings

There were many creative suggestions and interesting observations made by the children and young people. A summary of the key findings includes:

- **Buildings & Shops:** All groups wanted fewer tourist shops and more useful and diverse shops, directed to the local population. Empty buildings were a concern.
- **Public Spaces:** Supported public realm interventions, such as seating, greenery, and pedestrian-friendly design.
- **Mobility & Accessibility:** All groups agreed pavements need fixing, ramps should be improved, and pedestrian movement should be easier.
- **Gardens & Nature:** Valued Princes Street Gardens as a green space but wanted more amenities and activities for different age groups.
- **Safety & Comfort:** Secondary students were particularly concerned about safety linked to crowded areas.
- **Events & Attractions:** All groups suggested new attractions, including a hub for teenagers to socialise, community activities, cultural events, and recreational spaces.

3.5 Related Consultations

The following consultations are highlighted due to their relevance to the study area.

Ross Bandstand – events and activities (5 Nov 2024 – 20 Dec 2024)

Public consultation was carried out in November and December 2024 seeking feedback on future proposals for the operational use of the Ross Bandstand. Nearly 700 responses were received with the recommendation that the Council adopts a revised schedule for major events from 2026 onwards and continues to support a programme of ‘low-impact events’ taking place within the Ross Bandstand as part of the Summer Festivals in July and August.

<https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/sfc/ross-bandstand/>

Waverley Bridge – Travelling Safely – City Centre Area ETRO/21/26A

The results of the advertisement of the ETRO for the Travelling Safely City Centre schemes (including Waverley Bridge) were considered by the [Traffic Regulation Orders Sub-Committee on 12 May 2025](#). The measures on Waverley Bridge are proposed to be made into a permanent order for the purpose of reason (f) “for preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs”.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Proposals ranked by level of support

An average score for each proposal was assigned for each response from 1 to 5; from strongly opposed to strongly supported. This gives an indication of which proposals overall have the highest level of support. 76/80 proposals were supported more than opposed. The table below shows the ranking and mean score for each of the proposed measures.

Rank	Proposal	Mean score
1	Waverley Station place brief - Respecting the station's historic building and its distinctive features such as the central Booking Hall, decorative ironwork and glazed roof.	4.58
2	Waverley Market - Retaining open views from Princes Street that reveal the city's skyline and buildings.	4.49
3	Enhancing Princes Street's buildings - Ensure shopfronts are well designed and tie in with the building above and adjacent	4.48
4	Waverley Station place brief - Retaining and improving publicly accessible toilets, outwith revenue protection barriers.	4.48
5	Waverley Market - Protecting public open space and making its design more welcoming for all.	4.47
6	Waverley Station place brief - Increasing the ease of access to the Station for people with disabilities, buggies or heavy luggage, simplifying level changes.	4.46
7	Waverley Station place brief - Making it easier to change between different types of public transport (rail/ bus/tram/taxi/cycle hire).	4.44
8	Waverley Market - Widening the south footway of Princes Street to reduce crowding.	4.39
9	Pop-up uses and construction - Keeping use of the street for construction activity to a minimum.	4.30
10	The East End - Making north-south pedestrian crossings easier	4.29
11	West Garden Links - New planting under the trees on the garden banking to support wildlife.	4.27
12	Space 1e General Register House - Improving paving and surfacing at the crossing of Princes Street and West Register Street.	4.26
13	Waverley Station place brief - Conserving and enhancing views from the city centre across the station's roofscape	4.32
14	Waverley Market - Balancing paving and planting to reflect the historic roof garden, support wildlife and adapt to climate change.	4.33
15	Waverley Market - Upgrading lighting to improve perceptions of safety after dark.	4.28
16	Space 1c The Mound Precinct - Introducing new, wide benches to provide space to sit and enjoy the views.	4.25
17	Waverley Market - Improving access for walking and wheeling, simplifying level changes to the space and Station.	4.24
18	Connecting Princes Street and Rose Street - Keeping existing links through buildings	4.23

19	East Market Street - Maintaining views through careful siting of buildings and design of their roofscape.	4.23
20	Use of upper storeys, roof design and visual impact - Using green roofs to manage surface water and enhance biodiversity in less visible roof areas.	4.22
21	Shaping the new public seating areas - Introducing new, wide benches to provide space to sit and enjoy the views.	4.19
22	Rethinking the Amphitheatre - Reconfiguring the amphitheatre to improve access and make the space usable outside of events.	4.18
23	The East End - Increasing pavement space for walking and wheeling	4.17
24	Waverley Station place brief - Retaining an internal civic walking and wheeling link between East Market Street and Princes Street, outwith revenue protection barriers	4.16
25	Enhancing Princes Street's buildings - Remove past changes that don't fit with the original design of historic buildings.	4.15
26	Pavement improvements - Explore use of rain gardens to improve drainage and enhance biodiversity	4.14
27	Waverley Station place brief - Providing more public space around the station to arrive/depart and sit, with a mix of paved and nature rich planting.	4.13
28	Use of upper storeys, roof design and visual impact - Adding entrance lobbies and lift and stair access to upper floors from Princes Street.	4.11
29	Waverley Station place brief - Minimising the impact of servicing the station on surrounding streets.	4.08
30	Enhancing Princes Street's buildings - Regular features on the ground floor to provide interest for people on street.	4.08
31	Pavement improvements - Resurface pavements in natural sandstone paving	4.08
32	Pop-up uses and construction - Wrap scaffolds with images of the building under construction or refurbishment.	4.08
33	Enhancing Princes Street's buildings - Ensure a paved stone entrance to tie in with pavement materials.	4.06
34	Pop-up uses and construction - Use of community artwork to cover hoardings at street level to create eye level interest.	4.06
35	West Garden Links - Providing new accessible ramp routes from Princes Street to the West Gardens.	4.05
36	West Garden Links - Restoring the central set of ramps as a historic example.	4.04
37	Enhancing Princes Street's buildings - Creating more welcoming entrances to buildings, adding awnings for shade and shelter	4.03
38	East Market Street - Creating new civic space and public gardens with street accessible gardens, street trees and rain gardens.	4.02
39	Use of upper storeys, roof design and visual impact - Integrating solar panels or heat pumps into the roof design, without adding additional rooftop enclosures.	4.02
40	Shaping the new public seating areas - rearrange street trading stances to open up the space.	3.98

41	Waverley Station place brief - Improving passenger facilities and the food and drink and retail offer for station users.	3.97
42	Waverley Station place brief - Providing a north-south walking, wheeling and cycling link across the east end of the valley, outwith revenue protection barriers.	3.96
43	Space 1d Waverley Bridge - Improved materials to redefine the road surface as pedestrian space and mark out cycle access.	3.96
44	Use of upper storeys, roof design and visual impact - Adding roof terraces behind low walls at the roof edge, avoiding railings or glass barriers.	3.94
45	The East End - Review provision of taxi pick-up/drop-off space	3.92
46	Use of upper storeys, roof design and visual impact - Balancing solid walls and windows on the building's front and rooftop to control light spillage at night.	3.90
47	West Garden Links - Carefully widening the entrance gates from Princes Street	3.90
48	Space 1e General Register House - Create a planted area and interpretation about the archives in General Register House	3.89
49	The East End - Review loading and servicing provision	3.88
50	Pop-up uses and construction - Use of premises for temporary 'Pop-Up' shops e.g. indoor markets or exhibitions.	3.88
51	Overview of new public seating areas - To what extent do you agree or disagree that these locations provide enough rest places along the length of Princes Street?	3.87
52	Upgrading the Bandstand - Keeping and improving the existing Ross Bandstand	3.84
53	East Market Street - Create a place which ties in with more recent development at The Arches and Waverley Court.	3.84
54	Activating the lanes - Enhance all of Princes Street's rear lanes	3.84
55	Space 1d Waverley Bridge - Introducing new, wide benches to provide space to sit and enjoy the views at the north end of Waverley Bridge.	3.82
56	West Garden Links - New formal entrance steps for people who prefer not to use ramps.	3.78
57	Existing wooden benches - Existing benches should be spaced out to provide regular rest points.	3.77
58	East Market Street - A mix of shops, food and drink premises, office buildings and other city centre facilities appropriate to the Station and Old Town.	3.75
59	Space 1e General Register House - Introducing new, wide benches to the west of the Wellington statue.	3.74
60	A revitalised Princes Street - The Draft Strategy will help to deliver a revitalised Princes Street.	3.72
61	Enhancing Princes Street's buildings - Replace unlisted buildings with new, net zero architecture, providing for a mix of uses.	3.71
62	Existing wooden benches - With agreement from donors, some benches could be moved to the Gardens or other public spaces.	3.66
63	A vibrant mix of uses - Ground floor food and drink use is improving the experience of visiting Princes Street?	3.64
64	The East End - Use of a bus gate to prioritise public transport by restricting general traffic	3.61

65	East Market Street - Introducing some buildings on the north side of East Market Street to improve the street's appeal and sense of safety.	3.61
66	Shaping the new public seating areas - Retaining space for loading/servicing but moving vehicle controls further to the north.	3.60
67	Waverley Station place brief - Providing additional secure cycle parking spaces in accessible locations.	3.56
68	Pavement improvements - re-organise street furniture and create clusters of cycle parking	3.51
69	Shaping the new public seating areas - Providing additional on street cycle parking in easily recognisable locations.	3.48
70	Shaping the new public seating areas - Providing a small public space for unplugged street performers.	3.43
71	Pavement improvements - Creation of a narrow table and chair zone where minimum pavement widths could be maintained	3.43
72	Space 1e General Register House - Providing additional on street cycle parking in easily recognisable locations.	3.34
73	The East End - Adding segregated cycle lanes to connect between George Street, Waverley Bridge, North Bridge and Leith Street	3.29
74	Prioritise improvements to the front of Princes Street and Rose Street only	3.26
75	Connecting Princes Street and Rose Street - Linking the corner buildings on Princes Street to the ends of Rose Street Lane South	3.25
76	Upgrading the Bandstand - Replacing the Bandstand with a new building	3.16
77	Cycling - Segregated cycle lanes at the west and east end of Princes Street to link the cycle network but elsewhere on Princes Street to prioritise pavement space for walking and wheeling	2.90
78	Activating the lanes - Improve rear lanes at the west end of Princes Street only	2.75
79	Connecting Princes Street and Rose Street - Bridging over or under Rose Street South Lane	2.70
80	Cycling - Segregated cycle lanes along the full length of Princes Street, reducing some space for walking and wheeling on the north pavement	2.26

Appendix 2: Communications evaluation

Social media

The table below lists the responses to social media posts undertaken as part of the promotion of the consultation activity and provides links to these.

FB 21 November

11.3k views
7.2k reach
67 link clicks
52 comments
12 positive reactions
12 negative reactions
5 shares (which extend the reach)

FB 18 February

20.3k views
14.6k reach
181 link clicks
66 comments
27 positive reactions
10 negative reactions
7 shares (which extend the reach)

X 13 January

70,800 views
110 comments
59 shares (which extend the reach)
50 likes

FB 12 January

13.1k views
8.3k views
90 link clicks
38 comments
9 positive reactions
17 negative reactions
10 shares (which extend the reach)

X 21 November

10k views
22 comments
10 shares (which extend the reach)
9 likes

X 18 February

2.2k views
6 comments
2 shares (which extend the reach)
6 likes

Facebook adverts

Paid for post promoting the online consultation (this gets beyond our followers on Facebook so takes it to a wider audience). Running from 22 Jan to 20 Feb this received:

- 77k reach
- 118k impressions
- 368 link clicks
- 55 reactions
- 41 comments

Nextdoor community app

Several posts were made via this app to promote drop in events and the online consultation with approx. 11k impressions.

News Media releases

Print and online media news releases can be viewed by the following links:

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/news/article/14060/a-bold-new-vision-for-princes-street-and-waverley-valley>

<https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/news/article/14110/have-your-say-on-ambitious-vision-for-edinburgh-s-city-centre>

[Deadline News on X](#)

[Deadline news](#) – 18 February, [Deadline News](#) – 13 December

[Evening News](#) – 3 September

[Scottish Construction Now](#) – 22 November

[Edinburgh Live](#) – 18 February

Print

An A5 flier was distributed to around 2,400 businesses and residents within and around the project area to raise awareness of the online survey and drop-in events.

Key Partner / Stakeholder Organisations - Communications

Further information sharing and promotion of the survey was carried out via Edinburgh Tourism Action Group, the Federation of Small Businesses Scotland and Edinburgh Partnership e.g.

Email to ETAG members - <https://www.etag.org.uk/about-us/etag-full-group/>.

X post - https://x.com/ETAG_UK/status/1890354952641429794

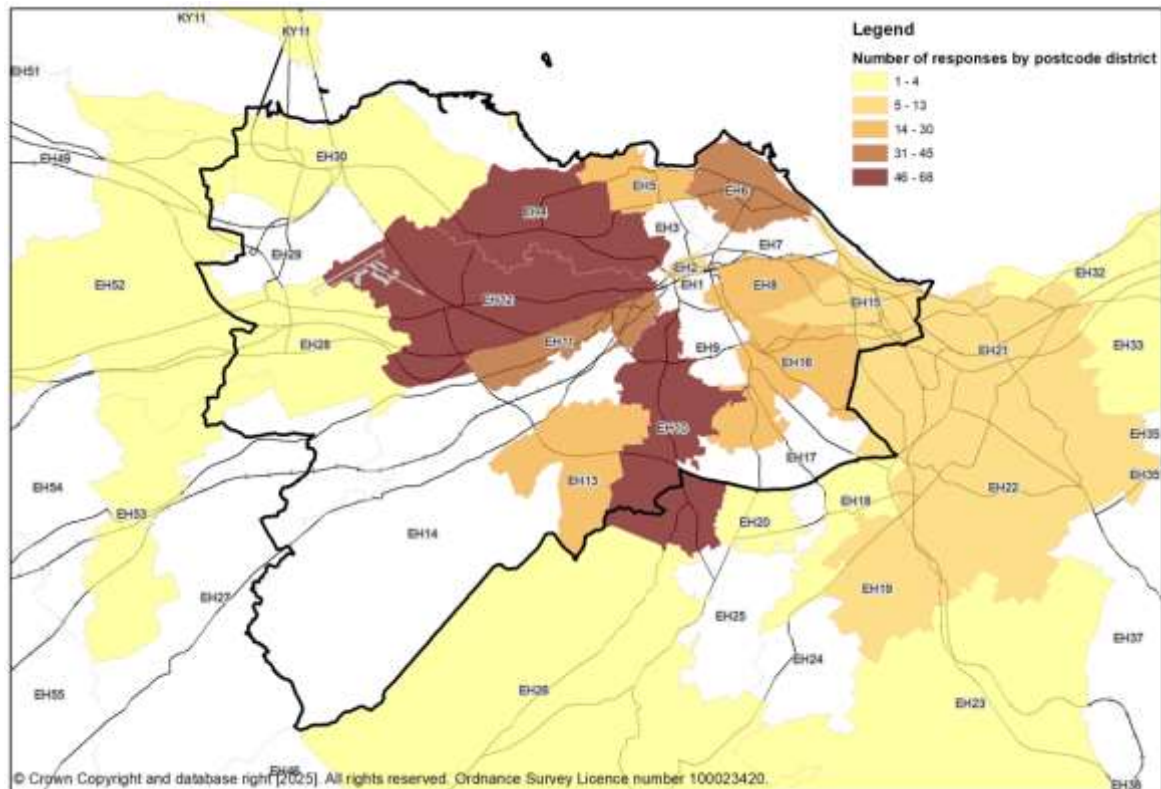
LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7296122834915852289>

Website 'hero panel': <https://www.etag.org.uk/>.

Appendix 3: Demographic information

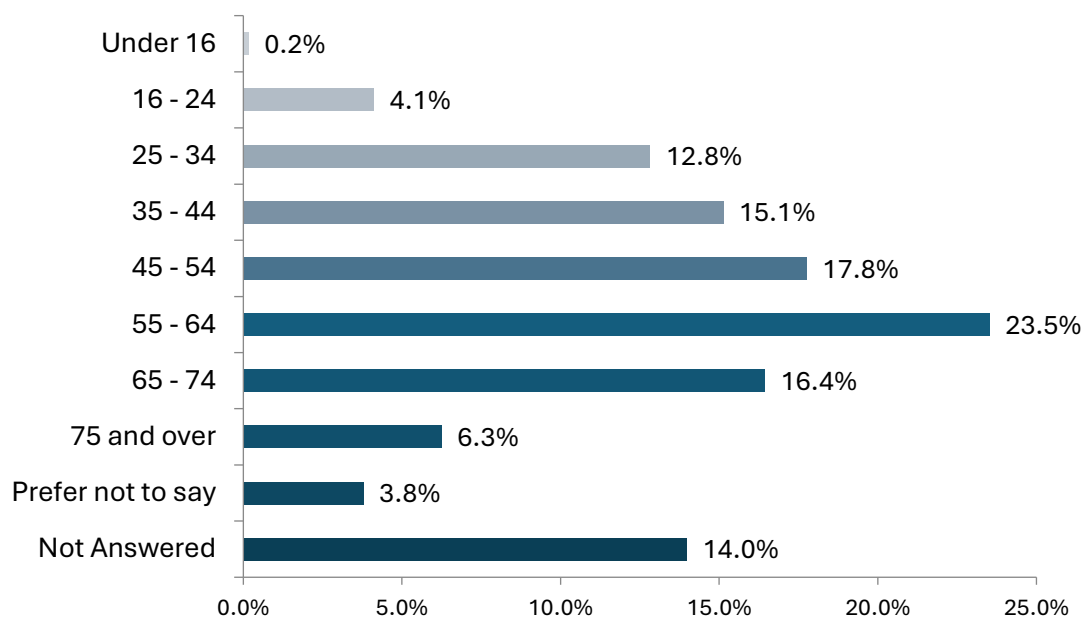
Number of Responses by EH Postcode District

This map below illustrates the number of responses received by Edinburgh postcode district. Most responses came from the Council Area and surrounding towns. A small number of responses were received from the Falkirk, Kirkcaldy, Perth and Kinross, Glasgow, Paisley, Tweeddale, and Glasgow postcode districts as well as the rest of the UK.



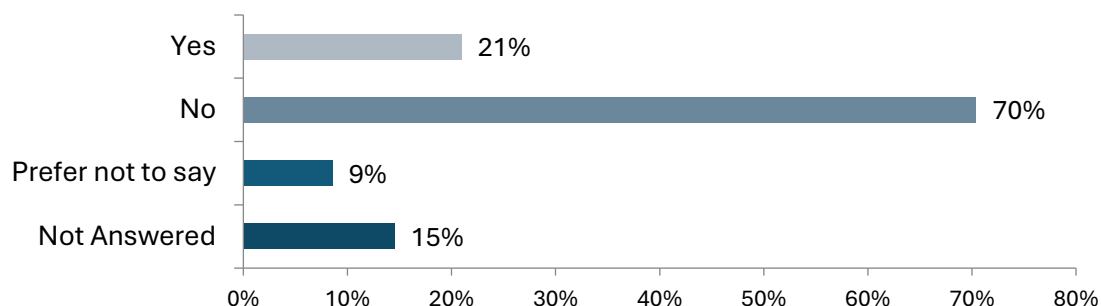
What is your age?

There were 608 responses to this part of the question.



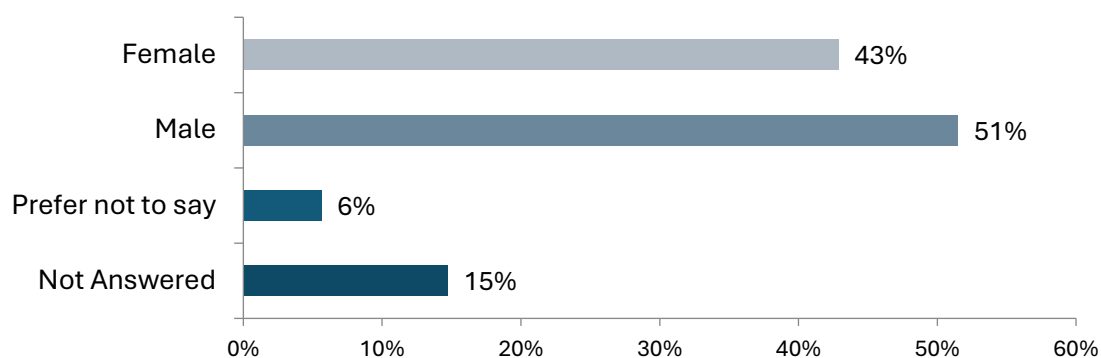
Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?

There were 605 responses to this part of the question.



What is your sex?

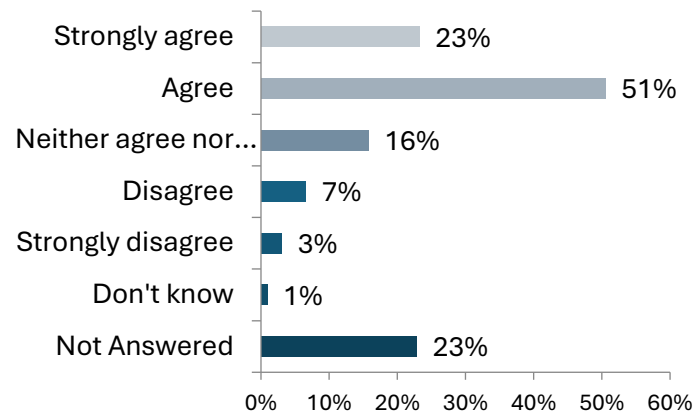
There were 604 responses to this part of the question.



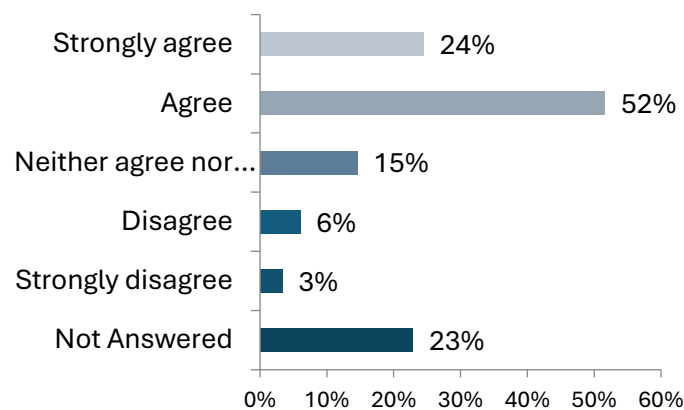
Appendix 4: Feedback on the consultation activity

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about this consultation activity?

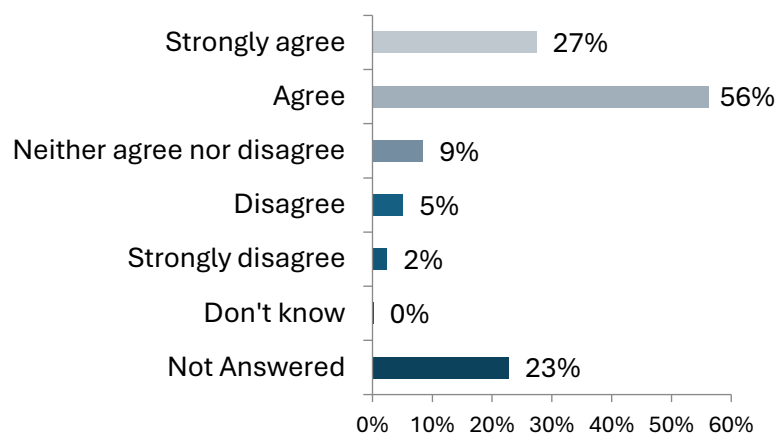
I was given all the information that I needed to have my say. There were 564 responses.



Consultation activity was clear and easy to understand.



I was given the opportunity to have my say.



APPENDIX 2 - Summary of changes to the finalised Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy following consultation

1 Introduction	The introduction has been updated to reflect the adoption of City Plan 2030 as the new local development plan for Edinburgh. Refinements have also been made to clarify the Strategy's role and relationship to other projects, including as follows: - the Strategy supports delivery of City Plan 2030's policy for the City Centre and aligns with the approach to placemaking and mobility set out by Edinburgh City Centre Transformation and Our Future Streets. In the context of these higher-level plans, which included international benchmarking, a wider vision, pilot initiative or design competition, as requested by some stakeholders, is not supported. - the Council's City Centre Transformation webpages have been updated to provide details on the status of projects across the city centre, which was a frequently asked question during the consultation. - in response to comments on the need to give heritage greater consideration in the Strategy, the introduction highlights the Council's partnership working with Edinburgh World Heritage to prepare a new Statement of Heritage Significance to guide future change within Princes Street and the Waverley Valley.
2 Vision and Objectives	No change.
3 Policy Context	The policy context has been updated to: - link to the Council's approved Guidance on Developer Contributions and Infrastructure Delivery. - highlight that National Planning Framework 4, Policy 31, supports the temporary use of vacant premises for cultural use. - clarify the role of the local planning authority in managing land use change but that it cannot influence the choice of retailer or operator. - refer to the agreed position set out by Future Streets in relation to the city centre cycle network. - refer to the 2030 Climate Strategy, Climate Ready Edinburgh Plan 2024-30 and the Nature Emergency.
4 Uses Blocks and Buildings	This chapter has been updated to:

	• provide further clarity on Use Class 1A, Shops and financial, professional and other services with regard to permitted changes of use. • clarify, consistent with local development plan policy and the Edinburgh Design Guidance, the Council's position on the adaptation of building stock versus replacement. • confirm that significant development proposals on Princes Street will be expected to present to the Edinburgh Urban Design Panel, to promote high quality development. • recommend early consideration of Building Standards in the conversion of historic buildings, through pre-application advice. • highlight that whilst making better use of the upper floors of buildings is supported, that these may include valued heritage features. • signpost the opportunity to restore lost shopfront features and clarify that unauthorised shopfront alterations will be subject to enforcement action. • align shopfront design considerations with advice to support women's safety. • refer the importance of the mews lanes in the First New Town street layout. • clarify, consistent with local development plan policy and the Edinburgh Design Guidance, the Council's position on heat networks. • indicate the potential for temporary shopfront hoardings to engage with the city's arts and cultural sector. • link with the Council's Code of Conduct for Responsible Construction. • the ongoing needs of central Edinburgh's office, retail, leisure and visitor accommodation sectors will form part of the Evidence Report for City Plan 2040. • the strategy follows the approach set by the Sustainable Lighting Strategy for Edinburgh (2012) and does not propose new recommendations.
5 Public Realm and Mobility	This chapter has been fully revised and re-ordered to reflect the priorities expressed through the consultation, as follows: • upgrading of the street's footways has been brought to the start alongside the design code, this is followed by placemaking improvements and public seating, and redesign of the garden access ramps. • the section acknowledges delivery sequencing will be affected by funding, and the timing of city centre construction works. • the street's strategic functions approved in Future Streets with priority given to place, walking/wheeling, and public transport. The limits on street space re-allocation are outlined.

	• it is clarified that the Strategy will seek to optimise the existing allocation of street space but widen footways where practicable. • responding to stakeholder comments, the Strategy highlights that enforcement of goods for sale on the street will be undertaken. • for heritage reasons new street furniture will be tied into the style proposed across the New Town. • for accessibility reasons, it is confirmed that some existing benches will be retained on street at intervals and that ramps to the gardens will include rest points. • a new section on cycling has been included to set out what can be achieved across the First New Town to improve conditions for cycling and cycle parking, as well as the potential for a cycle hub at Waverley Station. • the introduction of segregated cycle infrastructure along the length of Princes Street was not supported by the majority of those responding to the consultation and was the least popular proposal in the online survey feedback. Full cycle segregation on Princes Street is not currently being taken forward because it would cause unacceptable delays to public transport and a lack of resilience during breakdowns which would result from bus and tram sharing carriageway space. This position aligns with and builds on the direction given in the Council's approved City Centre Transformation Plan and Future Streets, which prioritises Princes Street's role in movement terms for walking/wheeling and public transport, with improvements to cycling where possible particularly at the east and west where connections can be made to the wider primary cycle network. The middle of Princes Street will also perform an important north-south primary cycle network connection as part of the Meadows to George Street project. • provision of cycle access between Princes Street and Castle Street will not be progressed due to the potential for pedestrian/cycle conflict across the footway. • some criticism was received that the draft Strategy lacked sufficient ambition. The tensions between the needs of a high-quality public transport system and the transformation of the street's public realm are recognised. These tensions can be resolved through sensitive public realm design, drawn from the ambitions of this Strategy, with continued strong stakeholder engagement. • the Strategy sits in the context of City Centre Transformation and Our Future Streets, and as such continues to promote Waverley Bridge's permanent closure to vehicular through traffic as part of a public realm arrival plaza for Waverley Station.
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6 The Waverley Valley	This chapter has been updated to: • acknowledge the renewed play park in West Princes Street Gardens and progress on the re-opening the King's Stables Road access. • refine the priorities for the Princes Street Gardens Improvement Plan to reflect consultation feedback on their recreational value and special qualities. • reference has been made to the new gardens to be created adjacent the Waverley Valley at the National Centre for Music (former Royal High School). • reflect changes to the operational schedule of the Ross Bandstand and need for accessibility improvements to this venue and the amphitheatre. • the Waverley Station Place Brief has been amended to link to the Statements of Special Interest for Listed Buildings, reflect importance of the Station's arrival experience, address comments on wayfinding, cycle provision, built heritage, sustainable travel to the station, inclusive and accessible public realm and sustainable energy. • emphasise the need for co-ordinated development of the masterplan area and acknowledge the constraint of the existing signalling centre at Market Street. • the importance of retaining and enhancing in future accessible routes between Princes Street and Waverley Station via Waverley Market. • refer to the remaining historic ironwork railings associated with the former 19th century Waverley Market. The chapter retains the ambition to providing spaces and facilities for all ages
Appendix A Brief History and Case for Change	This chapter has been updated to: • reflect the findings of the Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Legacy Review. • address heritage-based comments regarding providing greater clarity on the First New Town street hierarchy and Princes Street Panel. • explain the Strategy's Statement of Heritage Significance, alongside other sources of information.
Appendix B Indicative Delivery Framework	An updated Delivery Framework sets out how each part of the Strategy could be taken forward, the parties involved, indicative costs (where available), and potential funding streams including the Visitor Levy, Parks Events Levy and developer contributions for public realm.

Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy

Planning Guidance and Public Realm Framework

November 2025



Contents

The document is split into six chapters as follows:

1.	<u>Introduction</u>	Pages 2 - 3
2.	<u>Vision and Objectives</u>	Page 4
3.	<u>Policy Context</u>	Pages 5 - 8
4.	<u>Princes Street's Uses, Blocks and Buildings - A revitalised Princes Street</u>	Pages 9 – 15
5.	<u>Princes Street's Public Realm and Mobility - A more welcoming and accessible place</u>	Pages 16 – 31
6.	<u>The Waverley Valley - Enhanced green spaces and a station fit for the city's future</u>	Pages 32 - 42

Appendices

Additional information is set out in the appendices:

- A. [A Brief History and Case for Change](#)
- B. [Indicative Delivery Framework](#)

Front cover: Aerial photograph looking east over buildings in the First New Town and green space of Princes Street Gardens to the backdrop of Edinburgh Castle.

1. Introduction

1.1 What is the Strategy?

This Strategy establishes an overarching Vision for the revitalisation of Princes Street and the Waverley Valley.

It recognises the value of Princes Street as an iconic city centre destination where retail, office and leisure development benefits from the unrivalled views to the Castle and Old Town, the natural asset of Princes Street Gardens and excellent access to the public transport network.

The Strategy brings together the remits of multiple Council service areas to ensure a coordinated approach to the city centre's evolution and management.

To support the delivery of the Vision and supporting objectives, the Strategy comprises:

- Planning Guidance to promote and shape new development on Princes Street, including a Place Brief to inform Waverley Station's renewal (Chapters 4 and 6).

- A Public Realm framework and design code setting out improvements to be delivered to Princes Street, including enhanced access to West Princes Street Gardens (Chapter 5).
- Guidance to inform a new improvement plan for Princes Street Gardens to help deliver the Council's [Thriving Greenspaces 2050 Vision](#) (Chapter 6) and to set out the way forward for the Ross Bandstand.

The Strategy supports the delivery of agreed placemaking policies and principles for the city centre and Princes Street including those set out in the Council's Local Development Plan [City Plan 2030](#), the [City Mobility Plan \(CMP\) 2021](#), [Edinburgh City Centre Transformation \(ECCT\) 2019](#), and [Our Future Streets \(FS\) 2024](#).

The Strategy also supports a core aim of the [Edinburgh's Economic Strategy](#) in maintaining a vibrant and sustainable city centre economy.

It also complements [other city centre public realm and sustainable travel projects](#) to ensure a coordinated approach to enhancement of the First New Town



Image above: The Johnnie Walker Experience opened in 2021, re-imagining the category B Listed inter-war department store originally built for Binns in 1935 at 144-147 Princes Street. The premises were previously occupied by House of Fraser.

1.2 What is the Strategy's Status?

The Strategy will:

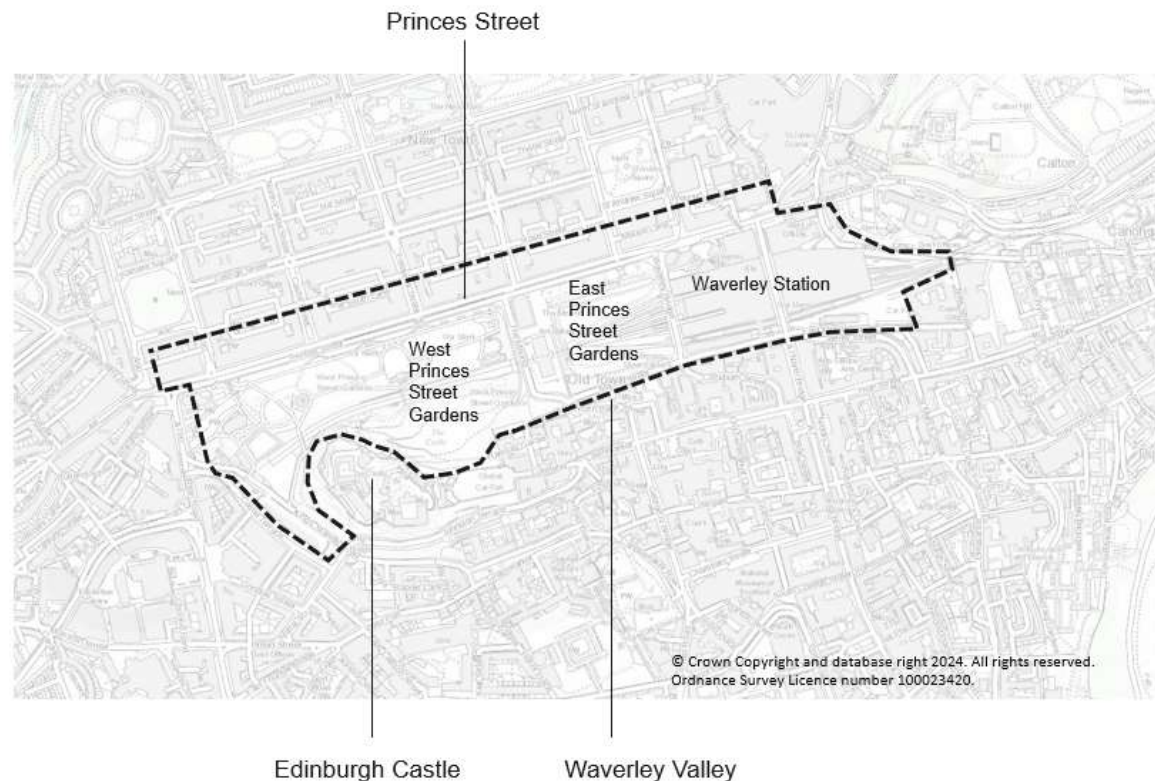
- represent non-statutory planning guidance, supporting interpretation and delivery of City Plan 2030 Policy – Place 1 – Edinburgh City Centre by setting principles to guide and co-ordinate development on Princes Street and an approved Place Brief for the renewal of Waverley Station. It will form a material consideration for the Council, as Planning Authority, that will be considered in the determination of planning applications.
- inform investment in the street's public realm and the future management of the Waverley Valley, including a new improvement plan for Princes St Gardens.
- support funding bids to deliver Council-led public realm and Waverley Valley enhancements and define the public realm actions which qualify for developer contributions.

The Strategy will be supported by a Statement of Heritage Significance to further inform decisions with regard to the importance of the area's heritage assets and their contribution to the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site.

1.3 What area of the city is the Strategy focussed on?

The Strategy focusses on buildings forming the south edge of the New Town, between Princes Street and Rose Street; the footways and carriageway of Princes Street and adjacent spaces; and the wider landscape divide between the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh, which includes Waverley Station and Princes Street Gardens.

Image below: a map of the Strategy's study area



2. Vision and Objectives

The Vision for Princes Street and the Waverley Valley

“By 2040 Princes Street and the Waverley Valley will be a more welcoming place designed for people and nature with sustainable mobility, liveability, and biodiversity at its heart. It will support a thriving economy with a quality shopping, leisure and cultural experience and enable inclusive access to enhanced Gardens. As part of a rejuvenated First New Town public realm, the status of one of Scotland’s most iconic streets will be restored to offer a fitting and climate resilient setting for our World-renowned heritage.”

The Vision is supported by the following Objectives:

Placemaking

Ensure Princes Street and the Waverley Valley is a safe, attractive and welcoming place for residents, workers and visitors to experience as a destination for leisure, shopping, culture and wellbeing.

Heritage

Protect, promote and enhance the street and Valley’s unique heritage and archaeology, including its Outstanding Universal Value as part of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS).

Economy

Through a high-quality public realm, continue to attract investment in the city centre, providing employment and supporting local services.

Mobility

Enhance conditions for walking and wheeling and optimise the efficiency of the public transport network. Continue to enable safer cycling linked to the strategic cycle network.

Climate

Adapt buildings, streetscape and greenspaces to our changing climate, and strengthen the appeal of the city centre to meet a range of needs by sustainable travel.

Nature

Strengthen the role of the Princes Street, the First New Town and Princes Street gardens as part of Edinburgh’s nature network and promote nature-based solutions where possible.

Safe and Inclusive

Provide an environment which is as safe, accessible and inclusive as possible for everyone at all times of day.

Operations and Logistics

Ensure effective service access is maintained to support the city centre economy, whilst securing a high-quality public realm.

3. Policy Context

3.1 The Development Plan

The Development Plan, against which planning applications for new development within Princes Street and the Waverley Valley will be assessed, comprises the [National Planning Framework 4](#) (NPF4) and the Local Development Plan, [City Plan 2030](#).

City Plan 2030 Policy Place 1 – Edinburgh City Centre, sets out the requirement for this Strategy to:

- guide regeneration of the street and its buildings.
- establish a place-making vision for its public realm; and
- manage the outstanding urban landscape of the Waverley Valley.

City Plan 2030's retail and economy policies set out the acceptable uses and criteria for city centre development, whilst NPF4 Policy 31 supports temporary use of vacant premises for cultural use.

The WHS receives planning policy protection through the Development Plan, including for its skyline and requires

certain proposals to be assessed for their heritage and/or environmental impacts.

Statutory consents apply in terms of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. The study area largely falls within the New Town Conservation Area, with the Old Town Conservation Area embracing the southern part of the Waverley Valley, including Waverley Station. The character and appearance of these areas must be preserved and enhanced through planning decisions. The majority of Princes Street's buildings are statutorily listed due to their special architectural and historic interest.

Princes Street and the Waverley Valley hold significant archaeological importance, which City Plan seeks to protect and enhance.

Princes Street Gardens form part of the nationally important New Town Gardens designed landscape. Edinburgh Castle is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and Castle Rock forms part of the Arthur's Seat Volcano Site of Special Scientific Interest and many local planning policies serve to protect the area's open space, trees, biodiversity, landscape qualities and

to ensure the sustainability and design quality of new developments.

3.1.1 Planning Guidance

Key guidance for Princes Street and the Waverley Valley includes:

- [Edinburgh Design Guidance and related Street Design Guidance](#);
- [Guidance for Businesses](#);
- [Guidance on Listed Building and Conservation Areas](#);
- [City Centre Shopping and Leisure Guidance](#); and
- [Guidance on Developer Contributions and Infrastructure Delivery](#).

Princes Street is located within the City Centre Retail Core, which protects Edinburgh's role as a regional focus for retail and leisure. However, the Local Planning Authority cannot influence the choice of retailer or operator.

Other protections include [legal restrictions](#) on the type of building which may be erected in Princes Street Gardens and height restrictions upon Waverley Market.

3.2 Related Strategies

Other strategies which are key to this area include:

3.2.1 City Mobility Plan

The [City Mobility Plan](#) (CMP), approved in 2021 and updated in 2024, sets the Council's strategic approach to sustainable, safe and effective movement of people and goods around Edinburgh. Actions relevant to Princes Street include.

- strategically reviewing the bus network in partnership with bus operators to reduce service gaps in the context of the city-region and continue to ease city centre congestion, particularly on Princes Street, building on work already undertaken by Lothian Buses to rationalise bus volumes as part of the delivery of the tram extension;
- improving public transport interchange, including fully integrated ticketing and securing the future of the bus station;
- review opportunities to reduce bus stop dwell times and stacking;

- expanding the tram network, including a new Tram from Granton to Bioquater.

3.2.2 Edinburgh City Centre Transformation

[Edinburgh's City Centre Transformation Strategy](#) (ECCT) approved in 2019, and embedded as part of the CMP, promotes a vibrant and people focused capital city centre which seeks to improve community, economic and cultural life.

As part of a renewed city centre, ECCT identifies a series of Catalyst Areas including for Princes Street and the environment around Waverley Station.

Key actions include to:

- enhance the pedestrian experience, to improve crossings and seating, and to create a people focussed place.
- strengthen links between George Street, Princes Street and Princes Street Gardens.
- optimise bus routes through the city centre, including a potential city centre hopper bus, to improve operational efficiency and create a

more balanced pedestrian environment.

- create a pedestrian plaza at Waverley Bridge, supporting a transformed entrance to Waverley Station.

3.2.3 Future Streets

[Future Streets](#) (FS) 2024 is a citywide framework against which the Council will deliver streetspace reallocation to support sustainable travel and placemaking. It includes a City Centre Circulation Plan (CCCP).

The CCCP defines Princes Street's functions as a priority for place, for walking/wheeling and public transport, with access for cycles and operational considerations.

Access by public transport and high-quality spaces are key to the street's economy and vibrancy. The Strategy supports the street's public transport role, whilst enhancing its public realm at key locations.

Princes Street includes strategic cycle connections at its east and west ends to link to the wider Primary Cycle Network, as well as the north-south crossing of

Meadows to George Street at The Mound and Hannover Street.

In the CCCP, the majority of Princes Street's carriageway is identified as Local Cycle Network.



Above: A view of Princes Street's east end from the top of the Scott Monument.

At the west end, junction improvements and cycle connections to the Primary Cycle Network on George Street and Queen Street, will be achieved through the Lothian Road project and via Charlotte Square.

In addition to enhanced cycle parking on street and within the public realm, FS identifies that the east end of Princes Street will require a localised design solution to be developed.

The eastern end of the street is subject to heavy footfall, provides critical interchange between bus passengers, the rail network and tram at St Andrew Square, and forms part of the safeguarded tram route to the southeast of the city.

Providing for all these uses whilst also delivering a safe cycling connection between George Street, Leith Street, Waterloo Place and North Bridge, and interchange with Waverley Station whilst enhancing the street as a public space, presents a major challenge that will require very careful design.

Additionally, major developments in this part of the city centre and the Waverley Station Masterplan will place additional demands on this section of street.

FS includes a commitment to develop an Operations Plan for the city centre which will include strategies to coordinate deliveries, servicing, cargo bikes and coaches.

3.2.4 Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Plan

The Plan interprets the Site's important qualities and sets actions to protect and

manage it through the work of partners Historic Environment Scotland (HES), the City of Edinburgh Council and Edinburgh World Heritage (EWH).

The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Plan 2025 – 2035 places additional emphasis on climate adaptation, public realm and the need for management of the Site to be informed by ongoing research.

3.2.5 2030 Climate Strategy and the Climate Ready Edinburgh Plan 2024-2030

The Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and through its [Climate Strategy](#) set a commitment to be net zero by 2030.

The [Climate Ready Edinburgh Plan](#) sets out actions to prepare the city for the impacts of climate change, such as extreme flooding, heat waves and other weather events.

The PSWV Strategy includes measures to adapt the built environment, improve

water management, promote sustainable transport, and to enhance our natural environment and support quality of life for residents, in support of net zero and climate resilience.

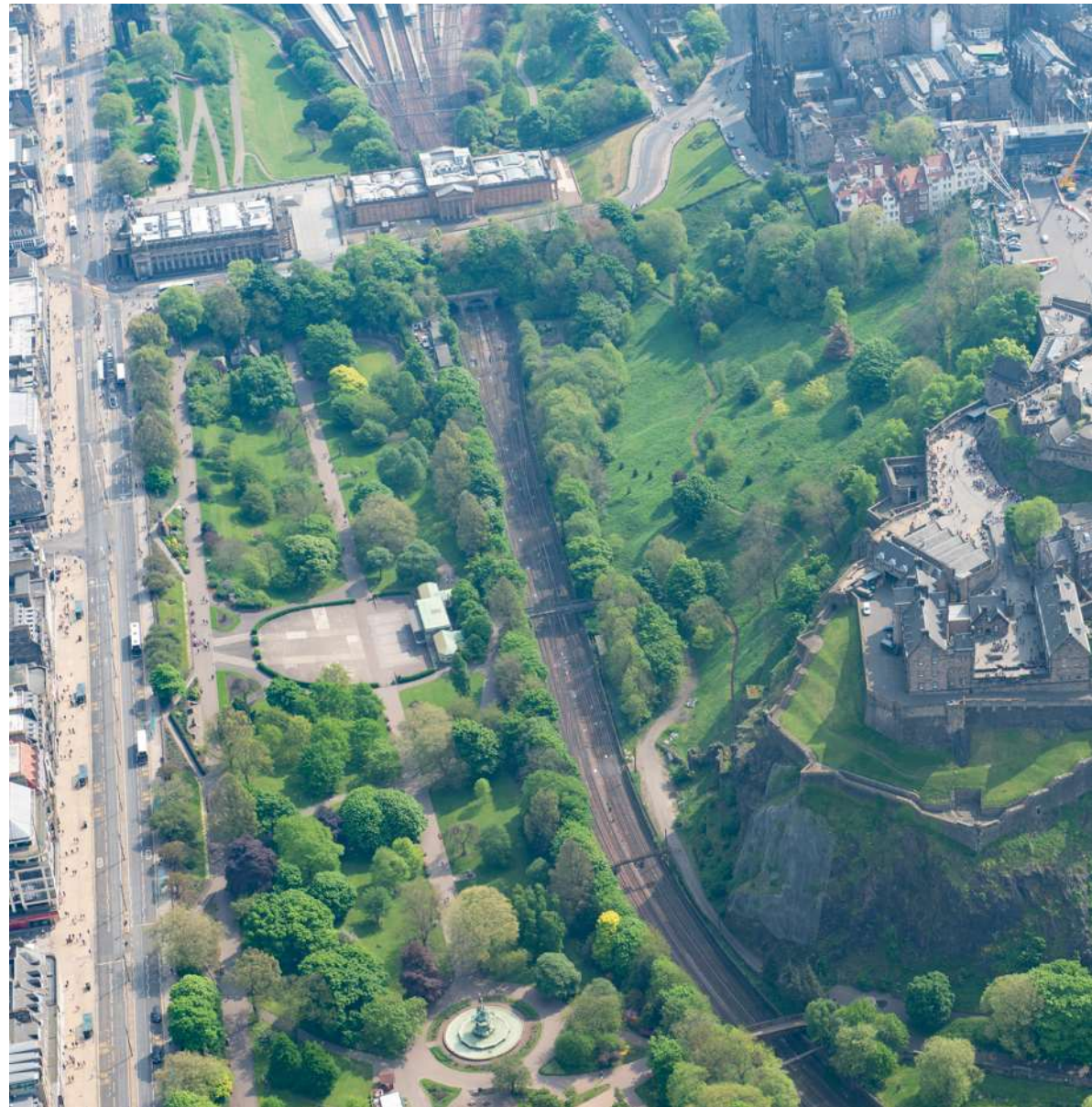
3.2.6 Green Blue Network, Open Space Strategy, Water Vision, and Biodiversity Action Plan

The Council is committed to enhancing open spaces and connections to them, managing flood risk, and protecting and expanding biodiversity.

Princes Street Gardens and the Waverley Valley more generally are of key importance including for recreation, nature, and supporting flood management.

Reflecting the Council's 2023 declaration of a Nature Emergency whilst recognising constraints on blue green infrastructure posed by the tram and built heritage, the PSWV Strategy will seek to provide planting for pollinating insects, benefitting in turn the city's bird and bat populations.

Image right: Aerial view of the Waverley Valley as viewed from the west, showing Princes Street, West Princes Street Gardens, The Royal Scottish Academy and National Gallery of Scotland on The Mound, the railway and Edinburgh Castle. Image courtesy Historic Environment Scotland.



4. Princes Street's Uses, Blocks and Buildings – A revitalised Princes Street

4.1 Background

This section provides place specific planning guidance to inform proposals for new development, focussing on:

- creation of a vibrant place on street through a mix of uses.
- Princes Street's urban blocks and the First New Town plan.
- opportunities to enhance and restore the street's building stock.

4.2 A Vibrant Mix of Uses

Princes Street is part of the City Centre Retail Core, which guides the balance of shops and other uses in the New Town.

Edinburgh is a vibrant destination and Princes Street has a prime south-facing aspect to the Castle and Princes Street Gardens.

Despite the growth in online retail, the city region's population still needs shops but as part of mix with leisure and culture, adding to the street's appeal throughout the day and evening.

In 2020, [Council planning guidance](#) introduced greater flexibility for food and drink (class 3), and leisure and assembly use (class 11) on Princes Street, where a change of use requires planning permission. Up to one third of the total number of units on each block can be in non-shop use at ground floor.

In 2023, The Scottish Government introduced legislation to support city, town and local centres, including to:

- Merge shops and financial, professional and other services into one use class (1A)
- Allow change of use without planning permission from Class 1A to food and drink (Class 3) except for premises below or within 1m of a dwelling, and from Class 1A to Class 4 (business).
- Enable furniture outside food and drink premises subject to Roads Authority permission.

Five years on, food and drink uses are emerging and scope exists for more whilst retaining sufficient retail space to support the city centre's shopping needs.

At upper levels, planning policy continues to support office, commercial leisure and hotel accommodation. Hotels and bars have begun to bring upper floors into active use, in place of stock storage, back office or staff rooms. Residential use of upper storeys is supported but can be challenging to achieve when converting former commercial buildings.

The Council continues to [monitor occupancy](#) (including for upper floors) and commercial needs to inform City Plan 2040.



Image above: Ground floor food and drink below hotel use, formerly the New Look clothing store



4.3 Princes Street's Blocks

Princes Street has evolved over the past 260 years but the underlying principles of the First New Town plan remain remarkably intact, including:

- the distinction between the Old and New Towns;
- the hierarchical structure;
- the symmetrical grid layout;
- its planned vistas and views; and
- single-sided Princes Street and Queen St

Above: Princes Street between Castle Street and Frederick Street as viewed from the Castle ramparts, showing the landform of the Waverley Valley, layered roofscape and cross-streets rising to George Street.

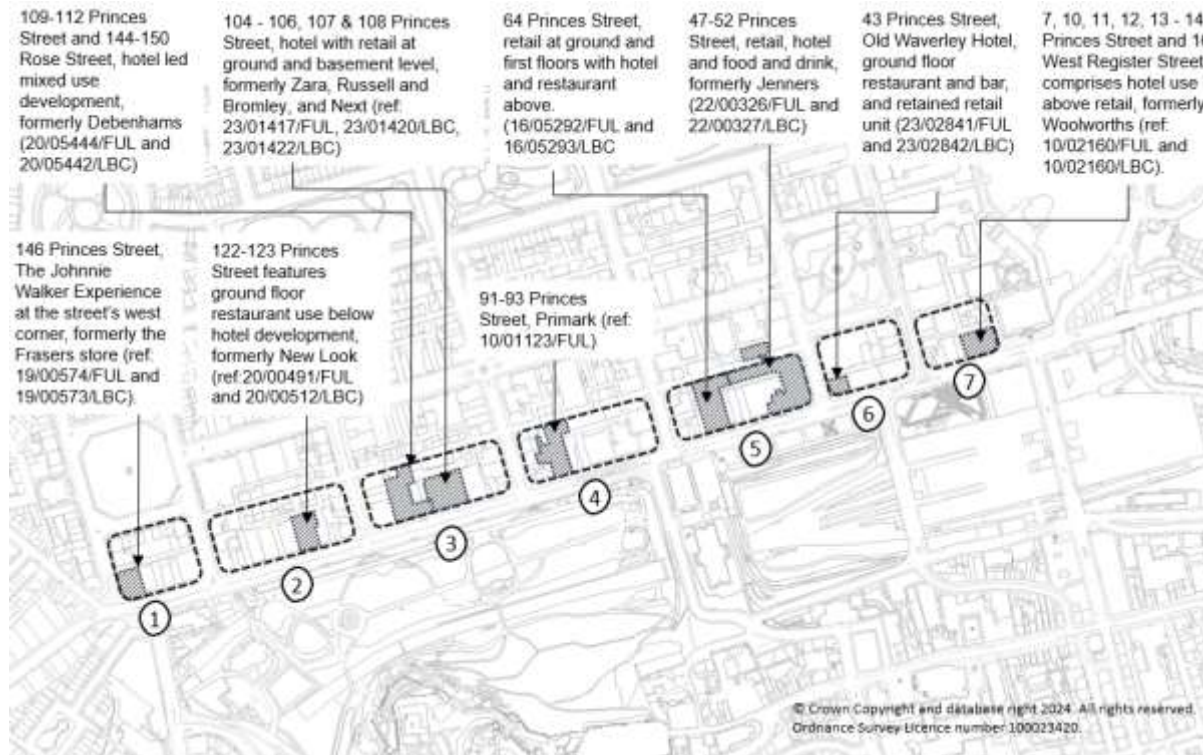
To conserve and enhance the form and spatial pattern of the First New Town and its underlying landform, the following urban block considerations apply:

- Buildings on Princes Street should sit below those of George Street as the prime, central street in the First New Town, with buildings of lesser scale again on Rose Street and the mews lanes.

- Princes Street's role in defining the south edge of the First New Town and its symmetrical grid is paramount and should be reflected in the treatment of elevations, roofscape, frontage widths and materiality.
- Roofscape, in particular, forms a fifth elevation and important element of its character in protected skyline views and locally important views.
- Corner buildings are of particular importance in framing views between the Old and New Towns, including early 19th century buildings, hotels and former department stores.
- Surviving elements of each block's historic structure and layout should be retained, including former boundary walls, garden ground and setted lanes.
- The unique role of each block should be understood to inform development proposals, which must contribute to the regeneration of the block overall without compromising adjacent premises.

[Appendix A](#) and related sources further describe the historic evolution of the street and its urban blocks.

PRINCES STREET AND WAVERLEY VALLEY STRATEGY



Above: Plan of Princes Street's Blocks and selected development activity

Forming part of the First New Town grid, seven blocks of buildings front Princes Street, with Rose Street and its mews lanes to the rear, divided by the cross-streets of Castle, Frederick and Hanover streets and Charlotte and St Andrew squares.

The City Centre Princes Street Development Framework (2007) introduced block references, which are continued in this Strategy. The diagram and accompanying text outline some of the key characteristics of each block, alongside a selection of developments from the last 15 years.

Image right: the completed redevelopment at 64 Princes Street, a category B Listed building and home to Edinburgh's Uniqlo store.

Block 1 is a gateway to the city from the west, addresses Lothian Road and encloses Charlotte Square.

Blocks 2, 3 and 4 directly overlook West Princes Street Gardens and the Castle and comprise a mix of large commercial buildings and more modest scaled properties.

Blocks 4 and 5 feature larger commercial buildings, whilst late 18th century classical corner tenements with later additions frame The Mound and Royal Scottish Academy at Hanover Street.

Blocks 6 and 7 form a gateway to the city from the east and Waverley Station. Block 6 addresses Waverley Bridge and encloses St Andrew Square.



4.4 Building Design

Development should enhance the street's economy and the contribution of its buildings to the World Heritage Site.

Most of Princes Street's buildings are Listed - protected by law due to their special architectural or historic interest, with their refurbishment and adaptation a constant feature of city life.

Over the last 15 years, many unlisted properties have been redeveloped, including several former Princes Street Panel buildings (refer to [Appendix A](#)).

To enhance Princes Street's frontage and provide a mix of new uses, redevelopment of unlisted buildings of little townscape value includes the following opportunities:

- 101- 103, Princes Street (Boots)
- 80-83, Princes Street (The Abbey Business Centre).

Redevelopment could include refurbishment, or where re-use is not viable, replacement with new high-quality buildings, subject to a whole life carbon assessment.

All significant development proposals will be expected to present to the [Edinburgh Urban Design Panel](#).

In addition to these redevelopment opportunities, heritage-led regeneration of individual buildings or groups of buildings will be supported.

Georgian scale buildings can provide for independent and boutique retail or food and drink use seeking a unique and characterful setting.

The townscape value of some larger 19th century buildings could be enhanced, replacing unsympathetic alterations or shopfronts.

Parking garages in some 20th century plots add little to the character of the rear lanes and are out of place today with a city centre served by sustainable transport.



Above: An example of the original Georgian scale Princes Street buildings at 94-98 Princes Street.

The following detailed guidance for Princes Street's buildings supplements the Edinburgh Design Guidance.

4.4.1 Overall Design Approach

- new development will be of the highest design quality, informed by contextual analysis of the street, and the character of the wider block in terms of scale, proportions and materiality.
- where possible, a whole building approach should be taken, opening under-used lower ground floors and upper storeys to manage building stock sustainably.
- to achieve access to upper floors with a mix of uses, proposals will be required to integrate lift and stair access from Princes Street with entrance lobbies which interface positively with the street. Major conversions of historic structures should refer to Buildings Standard's [pre-application advice service](#).
- to enhance inclusive access across the New Town, the creation of accessible routes between Princes

Street and Rose Street internal to the buildings, will continue to be supported.

- proposals should be based on detailed understanding of external and internal features, especially original elements which remain intact or contribute positively to the Listed Building and Conservation Area. Sections of roof may comprise original structures, materials, authentic plasterwork and interior fittings.
- as appropriate, proposals should be assessed to understand their potential effect on the setting of Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, the Conservation Area(s), Gardens and Designed Landscapes, Protected Views and other locally important viewpoints.
- a Heritage Impact Assessment may be required to understand the effect of a proposal on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site.

4.4.2 Shopfront and Commercial Frontage

- improve the design of [shopfronts](#) replacing low quality materials, and ensure these tie in with adjacent premises and the full elevational treatment of the building.
- archival research or careful site investigation may allow for re-instatement of lost shopfront or building features.
- on longer facades or plot widths, seek to create regular interest at street level and a human scale.
- design clear lines of sight from interior to exterior and avoid creating hidden recesses to support [women's safety](#).
- projecting signs and banners will not be supported. Shopfront illumination must be white and static.
- awnings and porticos were a historic feature of the street and can provide shade, shelter and a welcoming entrance at street level.
- a high quality paved entrance and threshold within the building's

curtilage will be required in Scoutmoor Yorkstone.

To maintain Princes Street's quality and character, enforcement action will be taken where there are unauthorised shop front alterations.

4.4.3 Heights and Roofscape

- building heights should respond to the existing building(s) on site and the prevailing character of the wider block and street frontage.
- changes to heights and roofscape may be justified where benefits include removal of unsympathetic extensions, outdated rooftop equipment or which enables restoration of the building fabric.
- building heights which rise above the prevailing roofline will require careful justification, supported by contextual analysis, street elevations and photomontage visualisation from appropriate viewpoints.
- where justified, roof terraces should be inset within the form of the roofscape or parapet walls. In general, projecting glazed barriers

or railings will not be supported. Such proposals should avoid introducing unacceptable noise and late-night disturbance.

4.4.4 Climate and Nature Emergencies

- [retro-fitting of traditional buildings](#) should be undertaken as appropriate to support net zero carbon targets as part of a holistic approach to repair and adaptation.
- establish or future proof connections with local heat networks in the New Town.
- proposals involving photovoltaic panels or air source heat pumps should seek to sensitively integrate these within the overall form of the building, rather than in additional rooftop enclosures.
- the use of living roofs to provide green blue infrastructure solutions to manage surface water and further biodiversity within inconspicuous areas of roofscape will be supported.

4.4.5 Lighting

- external lighting in the city centre is specifically used to celebrate focal



Above: redevelopment at West Register Street highlights the potential to activate rear lanes with ground floor uses and to renew the public realm.

buildings and monuments with dark skies maintained around the Castle and Princes Street Gardens.

- façade and rooftop design, through the balance of solid exterior materials to voids and windows should be used to manage excessive light spillage from Princes Street's buildings.
- in addition to listed building records, further references on

Princes Street's buildings are set out in [Appendix A](#).

4.5 Servicing and the Lanes

Links through Princes Street's blocks can provide accessible routes across the city centre and support a greater density of shops and services.

The lanes behind Princes Street (Hope Street Lane, Rose Street South Lane, Meuse Lane, West Register Street) provide servicing access for businesses.

This vital role reduces the impact of servicing on surrounding streets and public realm but affects the quality of the lanes and perceptions of safety.

Large buildings in blocks 5 and 6 enclose the lanes and create a canyon-like effect, limiting their placemaking potential.

To the west, blocks 2 and 3 have more potential to activate their lanes due to lower building heights and remnant back court spaces.

The Council's Operational Plan once developed (refer to chapter 3) will improve the future management of city centre loading and servicing. In addition, developments should:

- retain links through blocks where these exist or bridge over/under Rose Street South Lane.
- activate the east and west flanks of Rose Street Lanes and rear of the cross-streets in the First New Town, which are visible from Rose Street.
- address the lanes with active uses in the west blocks, to complement the existing character of Rose Street and its lanes in this location.

4.6 Pop-up Uses and Hoarding

In bringing forward development proposals, applicants are encouraged to activate vacant premises through:

- Pop-up uses;
- Building wraps; and/or
- Creative use of street hoardings.

‘Pop-up’ uses can avoid the negative perception of empty units on the street and provide some income for building owners. Temporary uses could include exhibitions, creative workspace or business start ups. The Council’s Business Growth and Inclusion Team can help match interested parties. Planning, lease, licensing and insurance requirements need careful consideration.

Temporary use of vacant premises supports NPF4 Policy 31 Culture and Creativity.

To minimise construction impacts, applicants are encouraged to [net scaffolding with one to one scale images](#) of the buildings under construction or refurbishment. Proposals will require advertisement consent and listed building consent, as appropriate. The use of creative and non-commercial artwork, historic images or observation windows on street level hoardings is equally encouraged. Opportunities exist to engage with the city’s arts and cultural sector.

4.7 Construction Considerations

Early dialogue with Council services is recommended to consider how design proposals will be constructed in the city centre. For Princes Street, limited options exist for temporary allocation of street space to provide construction access. Hoardings must minimise disruption to footways and restrictions apply in terms of construction or building maintenance in proximity to the tramway. Applicants should refer to the Council’s [Code of Conduct for Responsible Construction](#).



Above: mural on the construction hoardings during the North Bridge refurbishment project by artists Christopher Rutterford and Craig Robertson. Image courtesy C Rutterford.

5. Princes Street's Public Realm and Mobility – a more welcoming and accessible place

5.1 Background

This section sets out a series of public realm improvements for Princes Street and a related design code, building on principles agreed by ECCT and Future Streets.

5.2 Public Realm – Vision and Priorities

A revitalisation of Princes Street's public realm is proposed to deliver placemaking and economic benefits whilst recognising the street's crucial role in the public transport network. The proposed priority measures reflect consultation feedback and include:

- Improved Footways;
- Placemaking projects – new public seating areas; and
- The West Garden Links.

The Council will seek funding through various sources to promote a coordinated programme of public realm enhancement with delivery sequenced to reflect public priorities and align with other city centre construction projects.

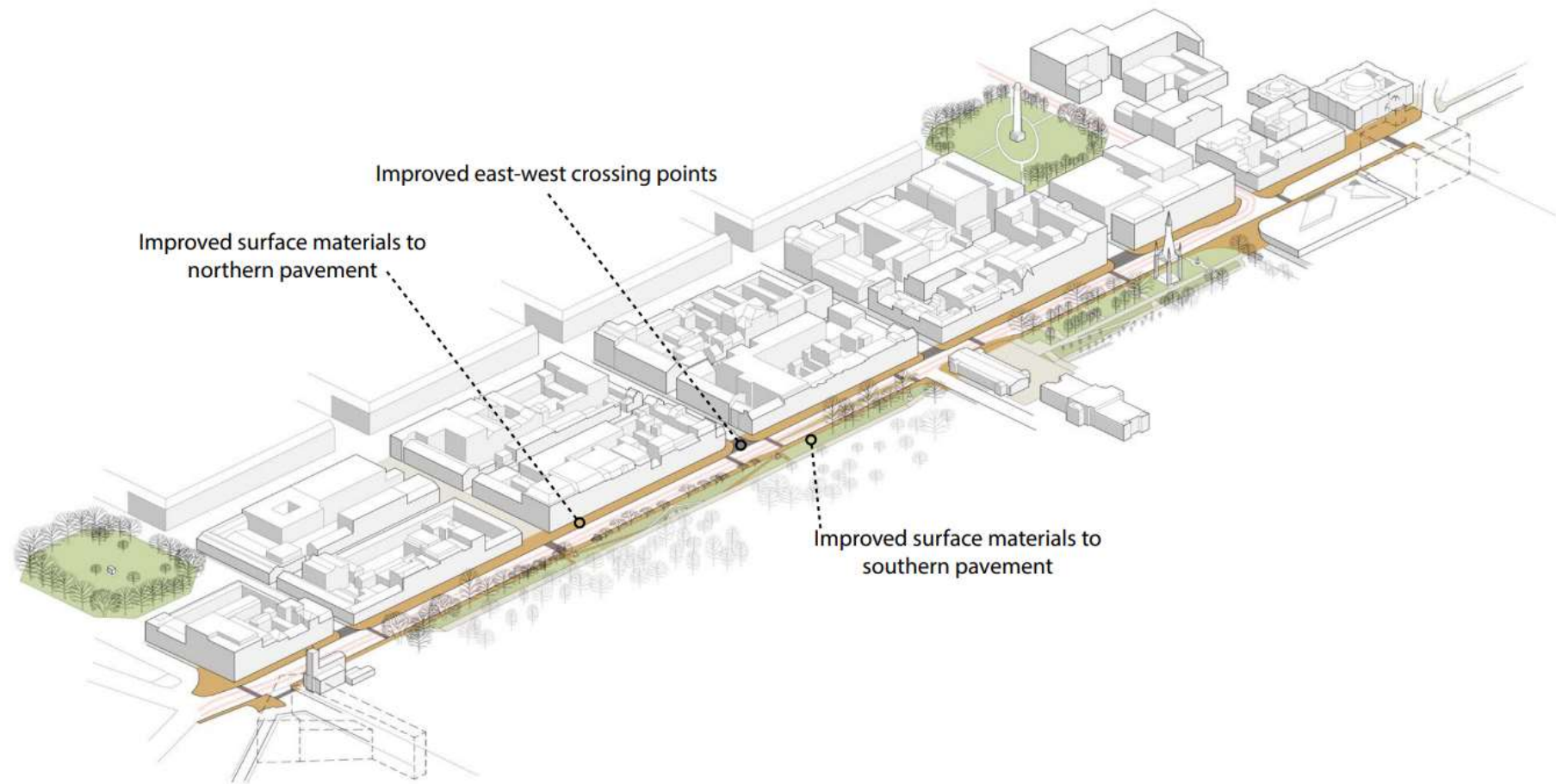


Above: Aerial view of Princes Street, The First New Town and Gardens. Public realm measures will improve the quality of footways, complement urban renewal and strengthen links with West Princes Street Gardens © Getty Images.

Together with projects such as [George Street and the First New Town](#) and [Meadows to George Street](#) - where traffic restrictions will be in place, the Princes Street measures will contribute to a connected and high-quality network of city centre public realm.

5.3 Improved Footways

To realise the street's economic and placemaking potential, provide the best experience for people walking and wheeling and reflect the city's heritage, renewal of the street's footways and crossing points is proposed.



Above: Diagram of the proposed extent of footway improvements to Princes Street.



Image above: elevated view of Princes Street looking east from the roof terrace of the Johnnie Walker Experience

In line with Our Future Streets, the proposals seek to improve the street's place quality, whilst recognising its role in the primary public transport network, and in providing interchange for bus, tram and rail. This means working with the existing

allocation of street space between modes of transport and optimising place quality and movement functions.

A desire for wider footways was raised during consultation but scope to achieve this is limited. However, where gains in footway space can be achieved without significant impacts on bus, tram, cycle provision and historic character, this will be explored as technical designs are developed.

Existing footways are failing, represent low quality materials in the World Heritage Site, and suffer from drainage and gradient issues resulting from previous widening to the north footway.

Footway upgrades will be complemented by placemaking projects and improved access to West Princes Street Gardens, reducing pinch-points at garden entrances on the south footway.

The street's public realm plays an important role in providing a stage for civic life, a place to rest, meet up, socialise,

take refreshments or simply take in the surroundings.

Better streets and public spaces benefit the wellbeing for residents and commuters, improve trade for local businesses and experience of the city for Edinburgh's international visitors.

The Strategy proposes a design code to ensure a consistent, high quality, treatment is achieved, tying in with the materials palette of the First New Town.

By improving level changes, drainage, rationalising street furniture and setting out a smooth sandstone surface, that is easy to keep clean, the pedestrian comfort of footways will be maximised.

Additionally, proactive enforcement of goods for sale presented on the street will be undertaken; this reduces the street's accessibility and poses hazards for people walking and wheeling.

5.4 Design Code

Detailed design will require a conservation-led approach, using traditional materials and methods, following the design code below:

- replace pre-cast concrete paving with durable, high quality, sandstone flagstones and whin kerbs.
- lay flagstones in transverse stretcher bond, in courses of varying width, with level changes carefully detailed.
- use consistent sandstone units to define the building line and entrance thresholds to allow redevelopment to tie in with the main footway.
- bring forward bespoke seating for Princes Street to reinforce its own identity but as part of a suite of co-ordinated New Town.
- reorganise street furniture and rationalise signs/signal poles where possible.
- Cycle parking should be increased and grouped in mid-block locations and at cross streets.
- retain and re-use historic features within the street, e.g. horonised paving and kerbs.
- replace slot drainage, exploring sustainable solutions to tackle more intense downpours.
- where new kerbs to manage surface water are required, use Whin or dark grey granite.
- blue green infrastructure must consider historic basements, cellars and chambers.
- where links to Rose Street and its lanes are proposed through blocks, these should be subtly announced e.g. tooled finishes.
- historic setted surfaces should be retained and relaid as per the Council's [Strategy for Setted Streets](#).
- introduce flat top setts to improve materiality of east-west crossings, subject to load bearing.
- proposals must respect the First New Town grid, its symmetry and hierarchy of streets, street proportions and kerb lines.
- lighting is integrated with tram columns and historic railings. Elsewhere, wall-mounted lighting is preferred to reduce street clutter.

- new public art should be appropriate to context and reflect the city's [Public Art Policy](#)



Above: use of wide Whinstone or dark granite kerbs with Sandstone flagstones. Below: a building trim, formed by small paving units, should form a consistent threshold treatment.



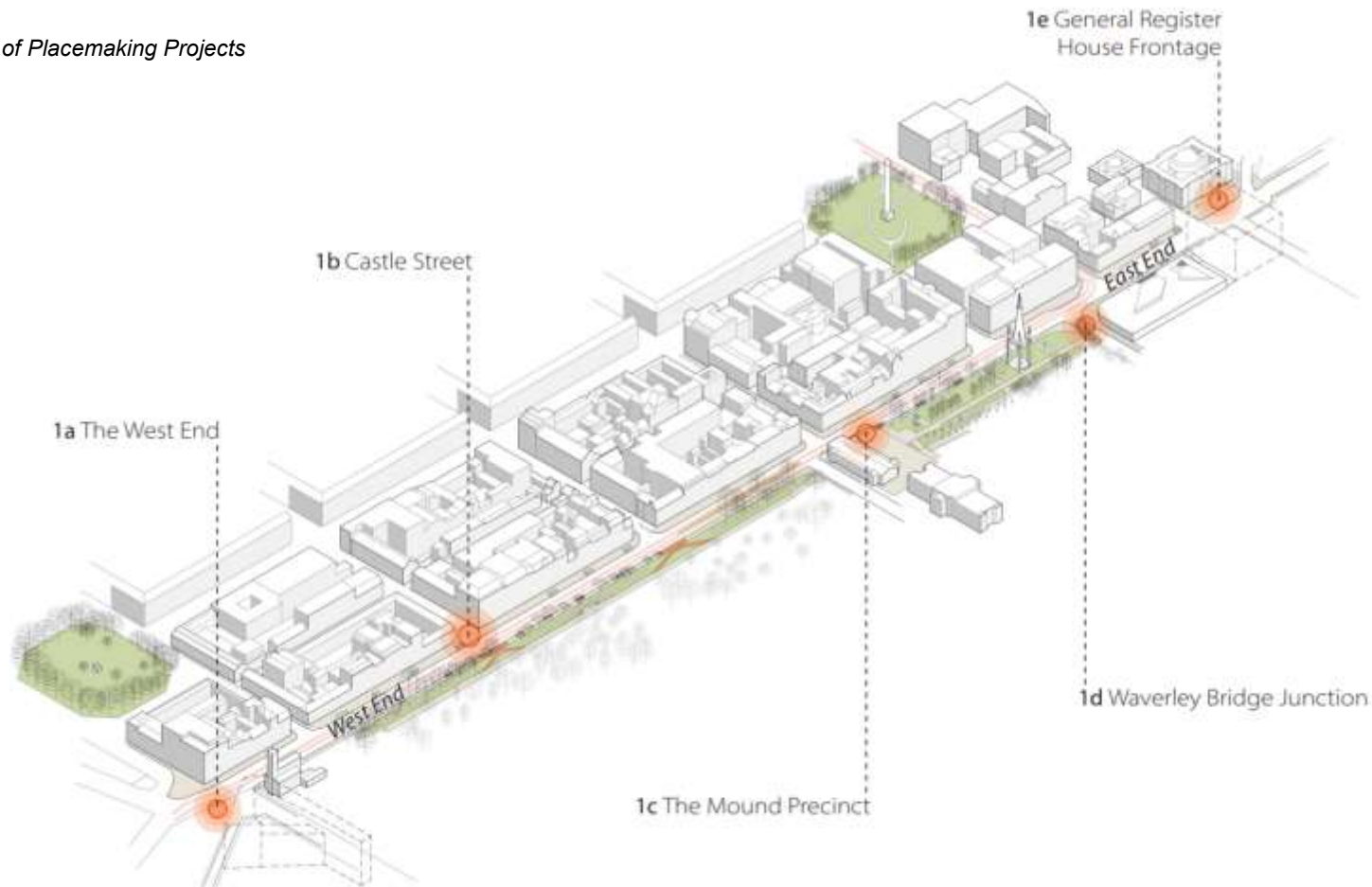
5.5 Placemaking Projects

To complement the improved conditions for walking and wheeling, a series of placemaking projects is proposed to address the need for accessible and high-quality public space and rest points along the street, at the following locations:

- 1a) The West End
- 1b) Castle Street
- 1c) The Mound Precinct
- The East End, including:
- 1d) Waverley Bridge
- 1e) General Register House

The changes focus on making existing spaces more welcoming, inclusive and respectful of the historic environment. Bespoke New Town street furniture would provide places to rest and strengthen the street's identity, whilst managing vehicle controls.

Image: Location of Placemaking Projects



5.5.1 1a The West End

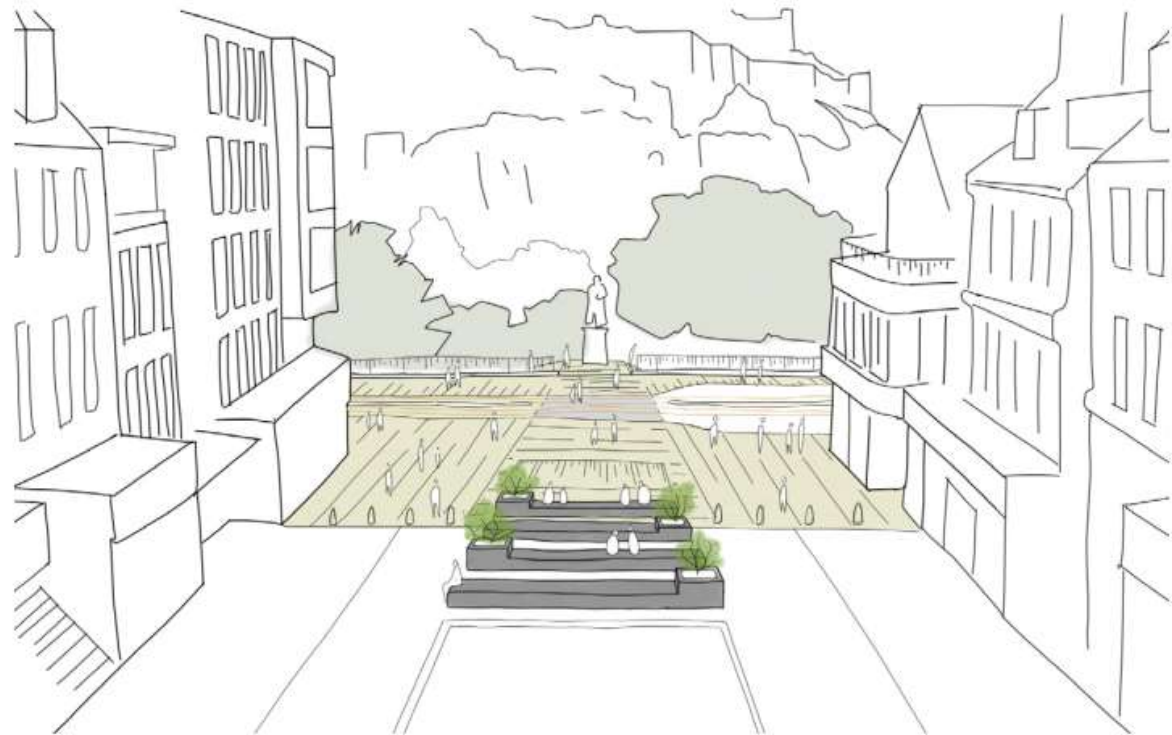
This visually prominent space sits at the busy junction of Princes Street, Lothian Road, Shandwick Place, Queensferry Street and Hope Street.

The existing public realm is cluttered and simplification would ease walking and wheeling. The design of this space falls within the [Lothian Road](#) project, which will see the junction redesigned.

In the interim, there is an opportunity for high quality, re-usable seating to be installed.



Above: A view of Castle Street looking south towards Edinburgh Castle. Above right: sketch view of Placemaking Project 1b at Castle Street, looking south towards the Castle.



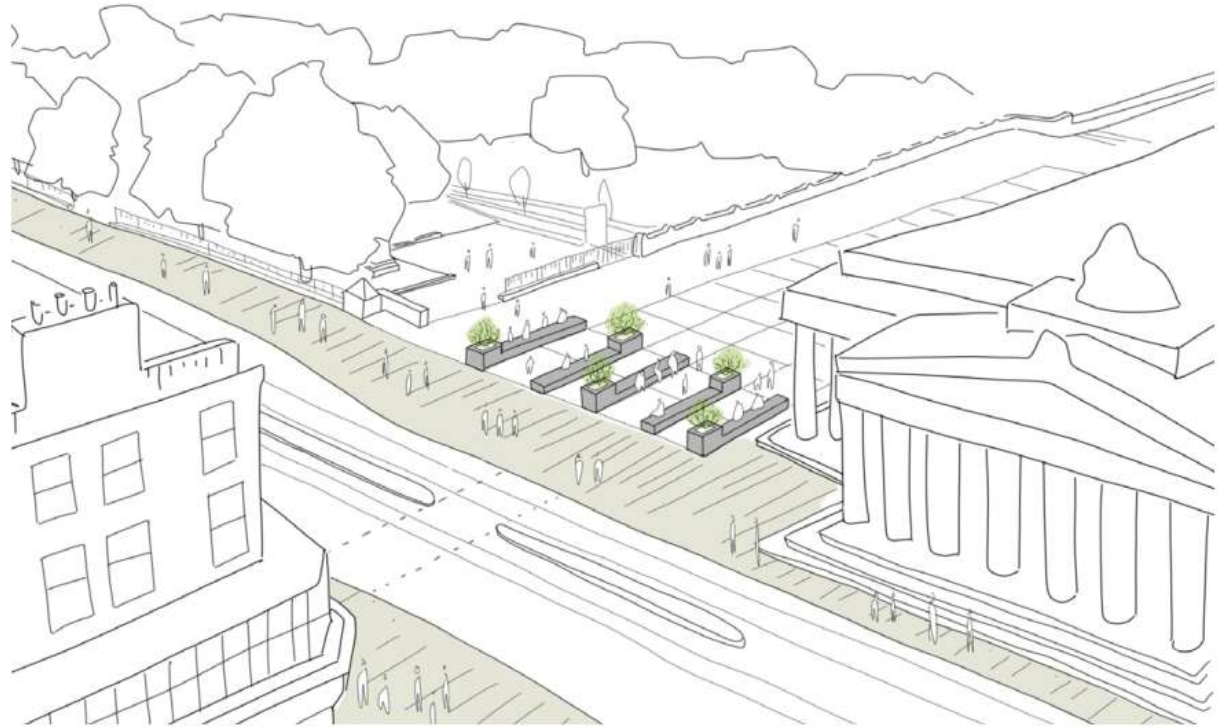
5.5.2 1b Castle Street

Castle Street was redesigned in 2007, introducing a pedestrian zone to capitalise on its unique view to Edinburgh Castle. The space is used periodically for markets, events and

provides for street traders at its north end. The proposal would extend the pedestrian zone at its junction with Princes Street, creating a more open space to provide for:

- new, generous benches, for sitting, socialising, picnic lunches and admiring the views to the Castle.
- existing street trading stances would be arranged to flank Castle Street, opening up the space.
- a small, managed performance space could be included for solo, unplugged performers.
- additional cycle parking capacity would be created for people coming to Princes Street from the City Centre West East Link (CCWEL) / National Cycle Route 1 (NCR1).
- existing barriers for delivery vehicles/servicing would be moved northwards.

Coupled with access improvements to West Princes Street Gardens, the proposals will enhance the experience for walking and wheeling between Castle Street and the Waverley Valley.



*Above: sketch view of Placemaking Project at 1c
The Mound Precinct*

5.5.3 1c Mound Precinct

The Mound Precinct forms the setting to the two Playfair galleries of the Royal Scottish Academy and National Gallery of Scotland.

It forms part of a key north-south pedestrian link to the Old Town

connected by the Playfair Steps, and provides open views across the Waverley Valley to Edinburgh Castle and the East Gardens.

The space is used frequently for festival activity and events but outwith these periods seating is limited to the Gardens and tiered steps around the Weston Link's circular rooflight. The

space sits parallel to the Meadows to George Street project, which will see Hanover Street upgraded.

To improve this space, new high quality benches would be introduced to provide a dwell space outwith events and festivals.

Furniture would be moveable and fit in with recent upgrades, including the Transport for Edinburgh wayfinding totems and the widened access to East Princes Street Gardens, delivered as part of the Scottish Gallery Project.



Above: Pavement congestion outside Waverley Steps and Waverley Market at the East End of Princes St

5.5.4 The East End

The east end of Princes Street faces several significant challenges which require a holistic approach, in partnership with key stakeholders.

This area provides critical interchange between bus passengers, the rail network, and connections to tram at St Andrew Square.

Pavement overcrowding, especially on the south side of the street between Waverley Steps and Waverley Bridge is a significant challenge.

Waverley Market roof terrace has a geometric layout which steps down from the street, creating an awkward series of spaces.

Taxi servicing for the Balmoral Hotel and the inefficient use of streetspace that this involves exacerbates footway crowding, bus delays and danger to people cycling.

The area between South St Andrew Street and North Bridge forms part of the safeguarded tram route.

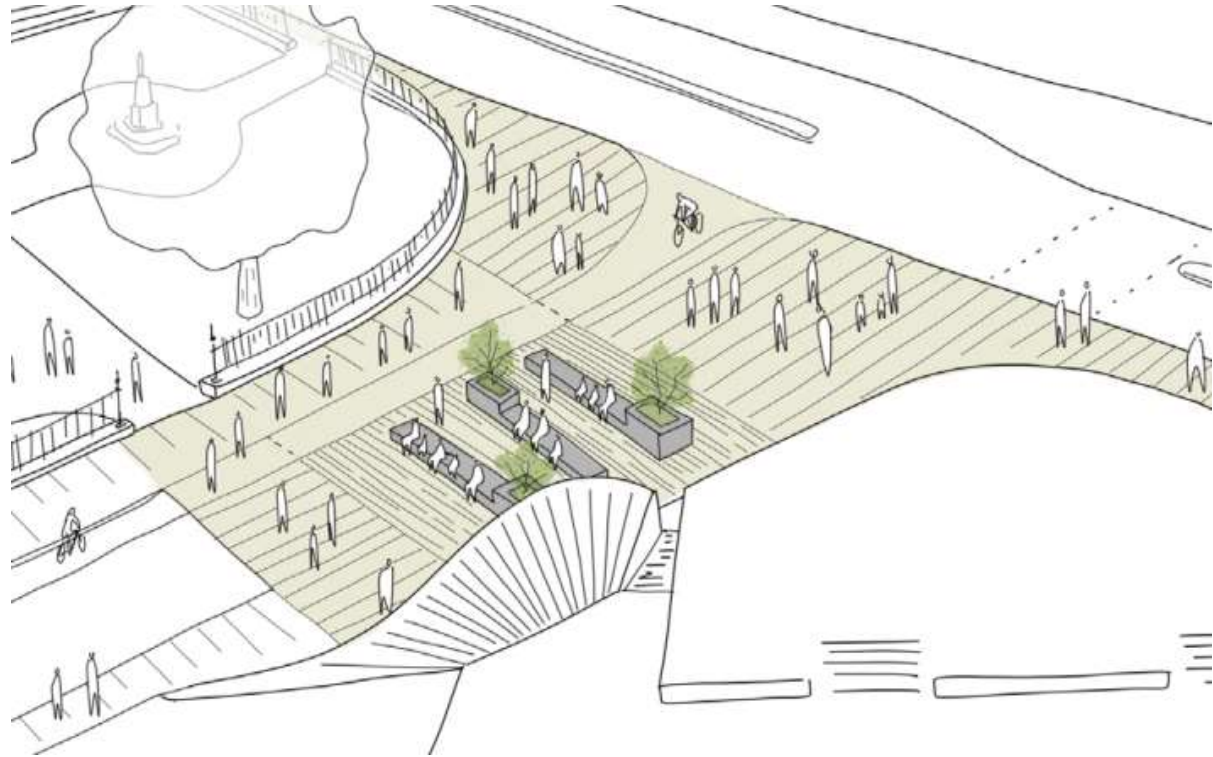
It also represents a gap in the strategic cycle network between George Street, Waverley Station, Leith Street, Regent Road and North Bridge.

There is a level of uncertainty around what can be achieved to address these competing mobility needs until further feasibility and design work is undertaken. Despite this uncertainty, key public realm principles include:

- Take a holistic approach to form a connected network of high-quality, public space.
- A street-level set-back should be a guiding principle for any future redevelopment of the Waverley Market roof terrace to create a more comfortable shopping experience and accommodate the essential functions of the street.
- Consider a consistent materiality across footways and spaces bordering and potentially extending into the carriageway, to

unify and de-clutter the space and respect the setting of landmark buildings.

- Use of Waverley Market roof terrace for events and activities can animate the street, however as part of any redesign this would need to be carefully managed to avoid adding to crowded conditions on street.
- Increase specimen tree planting and greening on the roof terrace, aligned with the East Gardens.
- Consider the re-introduction of a bus gate to give more priority to public transport, walking and cycling, by restricting general traffic and limiting servicing times when levels of pedestrian activity are lower.
- Consider other short/medium term measures to address the acute issues at the east end of Princes St including amended taxi/loading arrangements, footway widening and measures to improve cycle safety.



- Improve space for a north-south pedestrian crossing linking to Leith Street and West Register Street in front of The Balmoral Hotel.

Two placemaking projects have been set out in greater detail for Waverley Bridge and outside General Register House.

Above right: sketch view of Placemaking Project 1d at the junction of Waverley Bridge and Princes Street as viewed from above Waverley Market

5.5.5 1d Waverley Bridge

Waverley Bridge's closure to general traffic was agreed by the City Centre Transformation Strategy, in order to:

- increase the efficiency of public transport services on Princes

Street by removing traffic exiting the Bridge; and

- create an arrival plaza outside Waverley Station to support Network Rail's masterplan, as set out in Chapter 6.

The south end of the bridge continues to provide taxi and cycle access, alongside servicing access for the Station, The Balmoral and Waverley Market. A full closure has been temporarily paused to allow bus access to Waverley Bridge while the Jenners building is undergoing construction works.

In the medium-term, to improve the Bridge's interface with Princes Street, the elevated northern end of Waverley Bridge would be upgraded.

The area between Princes Street and the entrances to East Princes Street Gardens and Waverley Market would be pedestrianised, with cycle access.

This placemaking project would include new, generous benches, for sitting, socialising, picnic lunches and

admiring the views to the Old Town and simple interpretation.

Temporary surfacing could be used to define crossing priorities, and to set out a public realm zone aligned with East Princes St Gardens, whilst providing through access for cycling.

The space will be further transformed by the full design for the Bridge and Waverley Station at a later stage.

5.5.6 1e General Register House

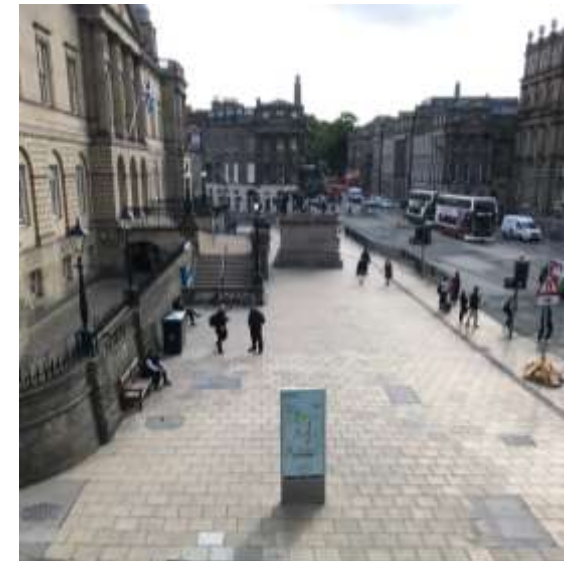
A wide footway space exists in front of this key civic building, divided by the Duke of Wellington statue which faces the busy North Bridge junction.

Opportunities to improve this space include:

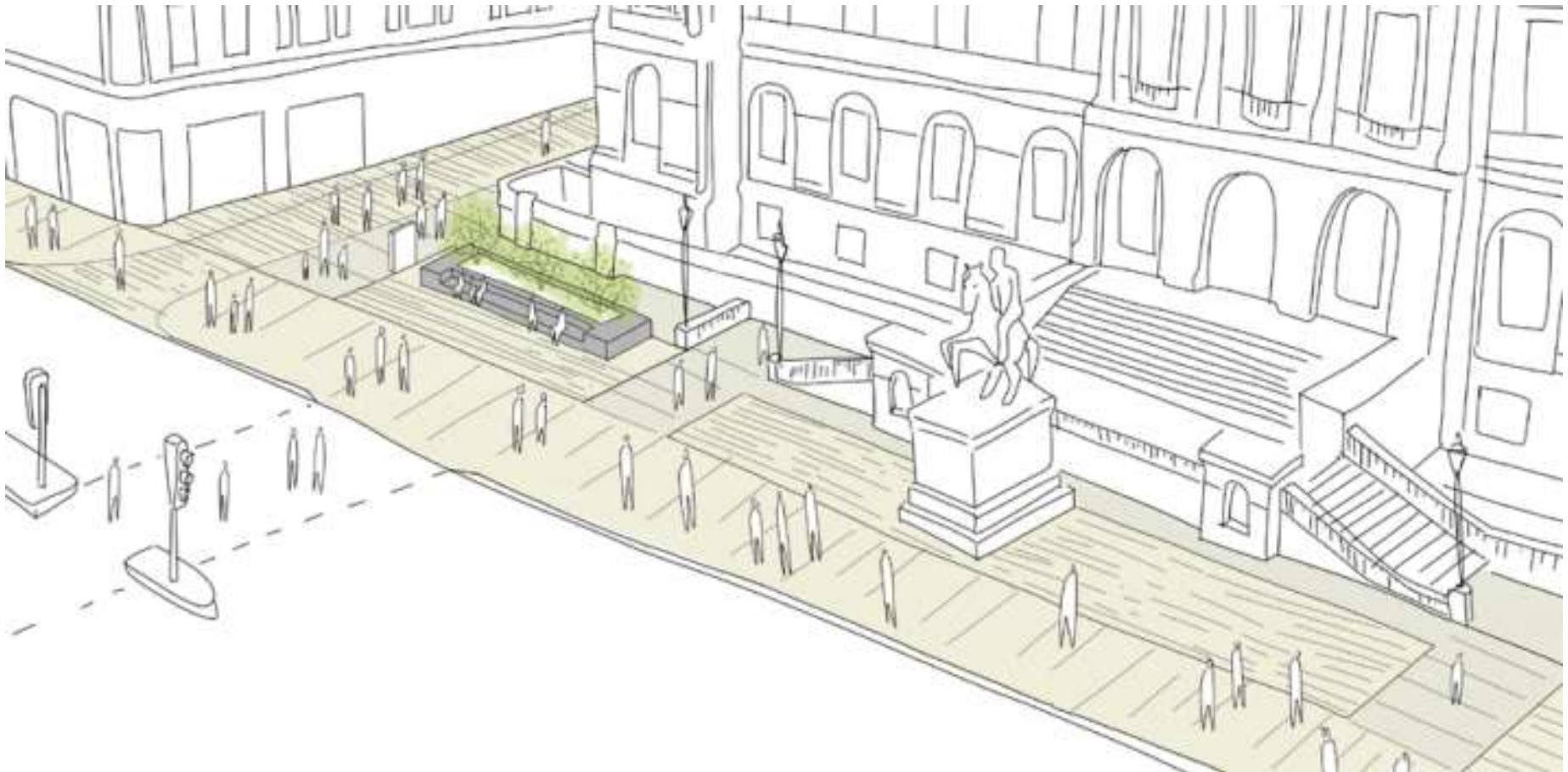
- new, generous bench seats to create a rest point to the west of the Wellington statue, adjacent the wayfinding totem and sensitive to the setting of the Category A Listed Building.
- a planter and interpretation to celebrate the archives and family history within General

Register House and link to the Archivist's Garden, revealing the building's history and purpose to people on street.

- decluttering of existing street furniture and inclusion of ample cycle parking.
- installation of a continuous footway at the junction of Princes Street and West Register Street.



View east to Waterloo Place and the southern face of General Register House.



*Above: sketch view of Placemaking Project 1e
General Register House*

5.6 Street Furniture

Placemaking projects would introduce a simple, high-quality, movable seating unit, designed with stakeholders and tied in with the wider First New Town furniture palette. Repeated along the street to reinforce its character and sense of welcome, benches could be contemporary and contrast with the historic street fabric, potentially including elements such as planting, cycle parking and inscriptions.



Above: traditional hardwood benches with commemorative plaques are a characteristic feature of Princes Street Gardens and the First New Town.

In dialogue with donors and to reduce footway congestion, some of the many traditional wooden benches on Princes Street's south side will be relocated to the Gardens or other attractive central locations, keeping some benches on street as rest points at 50m intervals.

Image left: Bespoke planters, Rose Street celebrating the Rose Street Poets.

Table and chairs permits will generally be restricted by the street's high footfall and pedestrian comfort needs.

However, where the building line steps back into the curtilage of the premises and outwith bus stops or other street furniture zones, a narrow seating zone could be considered alongside improvements to surfacing.

Developments featuring ground floor food and drink could also blur internal and external space design to activate the street.



Image above: pavement café seating has become a feature of the renewal of St Andrew Square.

5.7 The West Garden Links



Existing access points to West Princes Street Gardens formed by steep ramps present accessibility challenges

Creating more accessible routes into West Princes Street Gardens has been a longstanding action of the Princes Street Gardens Conservation

Management Plan and Edinburgh City Centre Transformation.

The proposals strengthen the Street's relationship with the Gardens. They align with north-south crossings from Castle and Frederick Street, promoting

links between George Street, Princes Street and the Gardens.

Existing access points to West Princes Street Gardens formed by steep ramps present accessibility challenges. The proposals include:

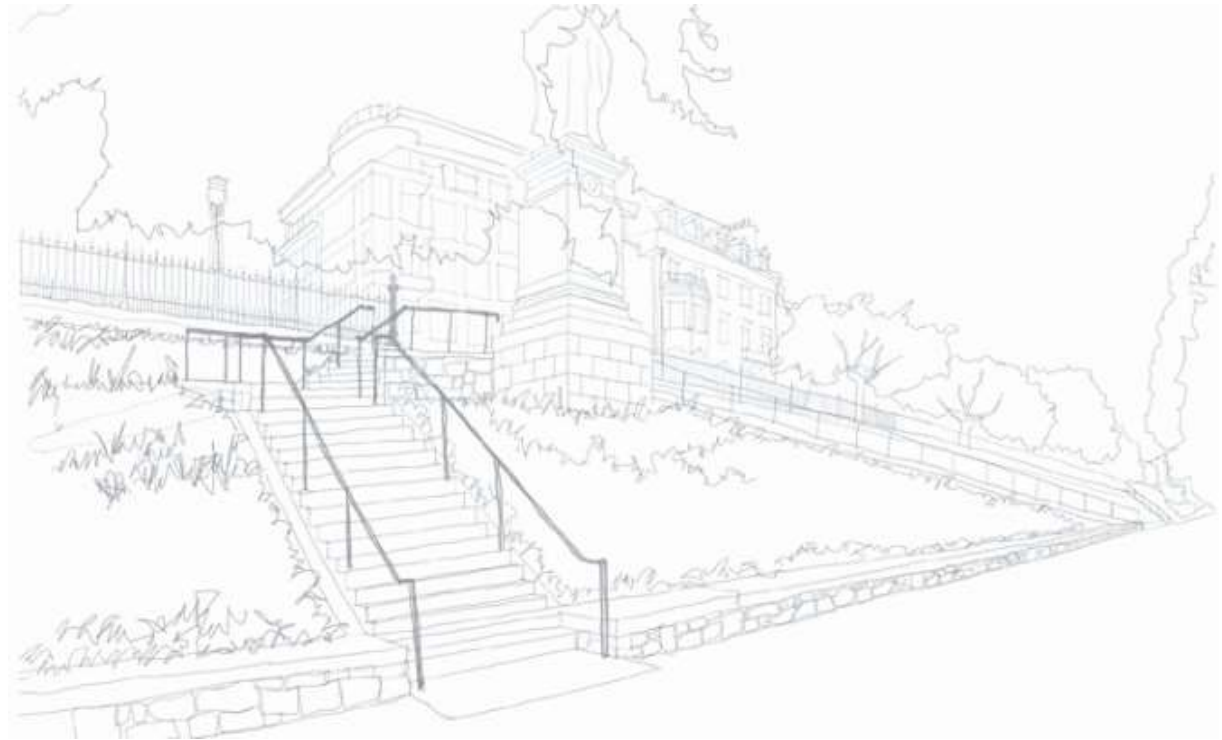
- replacement of two existing steep ramped paths with reduced gradient ramps at both entrance points (maximum 1 in 12 slope with rest points and landings).
- provision of new wide stepped access to provide an alternative to the ramps at both entrance points.
- the entrances to the Gardens would be locally widened in natural stone paving, with the railings and gates reconfigured.
- the central gate and ramps, a background to the Scottish American Memorial, would be kept and restored.
- enhanced planting along the length of the Garden's banking

with species linking to the George Street proposals, bringing climate adaptation and biodiversity benefits.

- retention of existing trees and, where possible, enhancement of below ground rooting space and soil health.
- reuse of the traditional horonised paving, a feature of the New Town, as an edge trim to the new ramps.

Further opportunities to be explored include:

- seating and simple interpretation as part of reinstated walling to the ramps and steps;
- management of surface water flow paths from Princes Street to reduce flood damage; and
- renewal of power supplies, historic railings and their lamp standards.

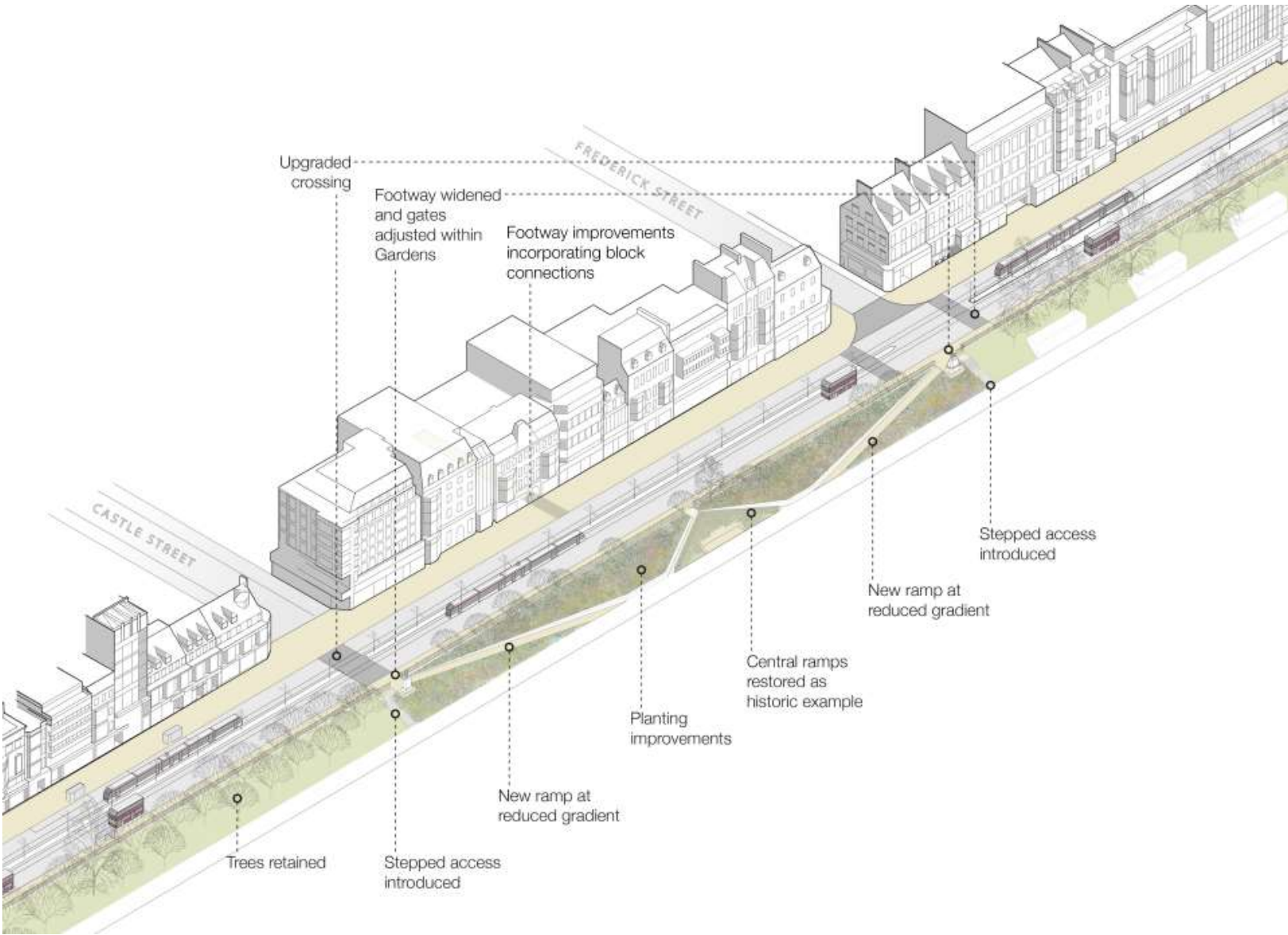


Improved accessibility into West Princes Street Gardens would be achieved through a combination of new ramps with reduced gradients and new formal steps. The widening of gateway entrances will alleviate footway congestion and provide people with a choice of a direct stair or more accessible ramps.

The proposals maintain the Waverley Valley's dramatic landform and avoid extending onto the Upper Terrace Walk. The design maintains the symmetry and decorative pattern of the

Garden's banking in views from the Castle. Detailed design will require a conservation-led approach, recording historic features and using traditional materials and methods.

The West Garden Links



5.8 Cycling

As set out by Future Streets, George Street and Queen Street will form the primary cycle network, with improved city centre linkages at the east and west ends of Princes Street.

On Princes Street, additional cycle parking alongside measures to ease congestion will enhance conditions for on street cycling and will be delivered as part of the delivery of the footway upgrades and placemaking projects.

Due to the street's role in the primary public transport network, there is insufficient space to safely introduce cycle segregation along the entire street without causing unacceptable delays to bus and tram.

Enhanced cycle facilities to Princes Street will be available through the delivery of improvements, including at George Street and The Mound/Hanover Street.

The Waverley Station Masterplan (in the following Chapter) could provide the opportunity to expand cycle infrastructure in the city centre, through measures such as a Cycle Hub,

supporting sustainable travel to the station.



Dundee Cycle Hub, sited next to the V&A on the waterfront provides for servicing, retail, bike hire and a café, complementing the adjacent public realm.

5.9 Further Street Transformation Opportunities

Some criticism was received that the draft Strategy lacked sufficient ambition. The tensions between the needs of a high-quality public transport system and the transformation of the

street's public realm are recognised. These tensions can be resolved through sensitive public realm design, drawn from the ambitions of this Strategy, with continued strong stakeholder engagement.

Such future street transformation would build on the proposals described earlier in this chapter, further enhancing the street's place value and improving conditions for walking, wheeling and public transport interchange, as well as the street's ongoing economic regeneration.

6. The Waverley Valley – Enhanced greenspaces and a station fit for the city’s future

6.1 Background

The Waverley Valley sits between the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh and includes Princes Street Gardens, Waverley Station and extends eastwards toward Holyrood Park.

The Valley that we value today is an integral part of the World Heritage Site (WHS) and provides contrast between the Old and New Towns through its landscape.

Evolving over millennia, including being the site of the former medieval Nor Loch, the valley’s key attributes include its landform, wooded character, open spaces, views and vistas, focal buildings, monuments, and bridges. Managing change through this strategy’s guidance and actions aims to:

- strengthen our understanding of the Waverley Valley;
- enhance the Valley’s green, blue and nature networks;

- upgrade the Ross Pavilion and park facilities; and
- inform the Waverley Station masterplan by setting out a Place Brief.

6.2 Heritage Research and Managing Change

Continuing to develop our understanding of the WHS is vital to its ongoing care and management.

An early output of this Strategy will be a Statement of Heritage Significance for Princes Street and the Waverley Valley.

This will further inform understanding of the valley and streetscape in terms of their significance or Outstanding Universal Value, present condition, and scope for improvement.

The Statement of Heritage Significance will support Planning and place management decisions in considering the effects of proposed changes on the WHS, evidenced by Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA).

It will add to the body of knowledge set out in existing references and support the 2025-35 WHS Management Plan.



View to Edinburgh Castle from the shade of the treed lawns, including the Robert Louis Stevenson Memorial in West Princes Street Gardens © Getty Images.

6.3 The Valley’s Greenspaces

At 15 hectares combined, East and West Princes Street Gardens are integral to the New Town layout.

The Garden’s formal layout of flower beds, specimen trees, shrub borders and sloping lawns represent a relatively intact example of a Victorian public park.

For their historic, scenic, and architectural value and as works of art of national importance, the Gardens are recorded on the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland.

The Gardens are one of the main reasons to visit the city centre, alongside shopping and travel, with their landscape quality, fresh air and tranquillity valued by the public as place for recreation and well as providing local through routes.

Recent changes in the Gardens include:

- restoration of the Gardener's Cottage, Ross Fountain and new memorials in the West Gardens.
- renovation and re-opening of the play park in the West Gardens has been appreciated by families and carers.
- accessible ramps formed in the East Gardens as part of the Scottish National Gallery's extension.

The Council and Historic Environment Scotland are reinstating access to the West Gardens from King's Stables Road with a new rock fall catch fence due to re-open in the Autumn. Restoring public access via the Castle Banks will be subject to further

assessment and measures as required to manage risk of rock fall and erosion.



Image above: the upgraded play park in West Princes Street Gardens, which re-opened in August 2024.

6.3.1 Princes Street Gardens Improvement Plan

Princes Street Gardens now require an improvement plan to deliver the [Council's Thriving Greenspaces 2050 Vision](#) and support this Strategy's joined up approach to the valley and its public realm. The Garden's improvement plan will consider:

- Safety, Access and Inclusion - ensuring the Gardens provide an accessible, healthy, safe and welcoming space for all the city's communities, with accessible routes, consideration for Women's Safety and cycle parking near entrances.
- Climate and Nature Emergencies – managing stormwater sustainably, adapting planting to changing climatic conditions, and connecting habitats and pollinator pathways to improve climate resilience.
- Heritage – conserving and raising awareness about our historic landscape whilst meeting modern-day needs – including a horticultural review of all planting and tree cover.
- Community – establishing a Friends Group to represent the Gardens, support voluntary and fund-raising activities.
- Children and Young People – offering a social and playful space in the city centre for all ages.
- Facilities – creating a quality visitor experience, accessible toilets, improved café offer and exploring the role of the Gardener's Cottage,

shelters, and potentially Waverley West Signal Box.

- Events and Activities – managing visitor pressures through an appropriate balance of events and activities, encouraging engagement with the Gardens through nature, culture and heritage-based activities.

Planning and/or Listed Building consent will be required for material changes to the Garden's layout, levels, boundaries, historic assets, or for the construction of new buildings, public art or statues.

Legal restrictions apply to the types of permanent buildings which can be constructed in Edinburgh's parks¹.

Building a new café for example in Princes Street Gardens would require legal amendments to permit this type of building and to allow the use of Common Good land for this purpose.

Any new built form should recede in the landscape, reflect the historic layout of the Gardens and avoid

impacts on views, trees, archaeology. Statues and memorials.

Image right: The Ross Fountain, West Princes Street Gardens, a fine example of 19th century French cast-ironwork, restored in 2017 by the Council, Edinburgh World Heritage, and the Ross Development Trust with funding from Historic Environment Scotland. Below: view of the terraces in the East Gardens © Getty Images.



¹ City of Edinburgh District Council Order Confirmation Act 1991

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1 St John's and St Cuthbert's Churchyards | 11 Calton Craigs |
| 2 Castle Terrace | 12 Calton Hill |
| 3 Castle Banks | 13 Canongate Kirkyard |
| 4 West Princes Street Gardens | 14 Dunbar's Close Garden |
| 5 Mound | 15 Regent Road Park |
| 6 Bank of Scotland | 16 Regent Gardens |
| 7 East Princes Street Gardens | 17 New Calton Cemetery |
| 8 Waverley Mall roof terrace | 18 Holyrood Palace Grounds |
| 9 Waverley Station operational land | 19 Scottish Parliament |
| 10 Old Calton Cemetery | 20 Holyrood Park |
| | 21 National Centre for Music |



Plan of existing and potential green and civic spaces contributing to the Waverley Valley

6.3.2 Green Blue Networks

In addition to Princes Street Gardens, the valley includes and is framed by major greenspaces such as Calton Hill, Regent Road Park, and historic churchyards and burial grounds.

Potential exists for new public realm at Waverley Market and Waverley Station to add to the valley's contribution to the city's blue green networks, indicated by a dashed line. Considering these spaces jointly and alongside new streetscape proposals, will enhance their collective value to the city's people and nature networks.

The National Centre for Music, led by the Royal High School Preservation Trust, will transform the category A Listed former Royal High School on Calton Hill, and re-interpret the former playgrounds as new publicly accessible garden spaces.

6.4 The Ross Bandstand



The Ross Bandstand or Theatre, West Princes Street Gardens and backdrop of Edinburgh Castle.

Cultural venues have long been part of Princes Street Garden's history, from the original 1880's bandstand to the 1930s version we see today.

In 2017, the Ross Development Trust proposed a new pavilion, welcome centre, café and events spaces as part of the £25m Quaich project.

The Quaich was not progressed due funding shortfalls, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its potential impact on the city's heritage.

There remains a need for an open-air, accessible venue in the city's cultural and festival landscape to provide for both small civic and community events

as well as larger concerts and performances. Recent changes to the operational schedule balance larger events and community use, ensuring local groups and schools retain access to the facility throughout the year.

The Bandstand is not protected as a Listed Building but its history of cultural use and simple, early 20th century design below Castle Rock, is valued for its vintage character by local people and contributes positively to the Gardens and New Town Conservation Area.

In the short-term, the bandstand requires to be upgraded. Subject to funding this will include:

- Adaptive re-use of the existing building to create a better equipped facility, including providing performers with accessibility requirements better access to the stage and enhancing both power and data supply, minimising generator use.
- Ongoing use of temporary stages to extend the venue for key events e.g. Hogmanay.

Longer-term, the Princes Street Gardens improvement plan will

consider options for upgraded facilities which:

- Create an amphitheatre space that is useable and welcoming throughout the year, replacing the concrete terraces with a mix of paved and landscaped seating, to reduce flooding and heat stress.
- Enable access for all by adapting the steep ramps down to the bandstand, linked to new entrance ramps from Princes Street (as set out in chapter 5).
- Ensure sensitive scale, massing, design and materials which respect the Garden's special character and the OUV of the WHS.



The £2.1 million restoration of the 1920's Kelvingrove Bandstand by Glasgow Building Preservation Trust in partnership with Glasgow City Council and Glasgow Life. Image courtesy Page Park architects © Andrew Lee

6.5 Waverley Station



Image above: The roofscape of Waverley Station within the Waverley Valley, as viewed from the Castle ramparts.

Edinburgh Waverley is a fine surviving Victorian railway station, nestled in the Waverley Valley beneath Waverley Bridge and North Bridge.

Network Rail seeks to reconfigure Edinburgh Waverley to serve the growing needs of intercity, national and UK travel, whilst optimising accessibility, connectivity and placemaking for all station users. This presents a significant opportunity to enhance the station's role as an

accessible multi-modal interchange with a world-class arrival experience.

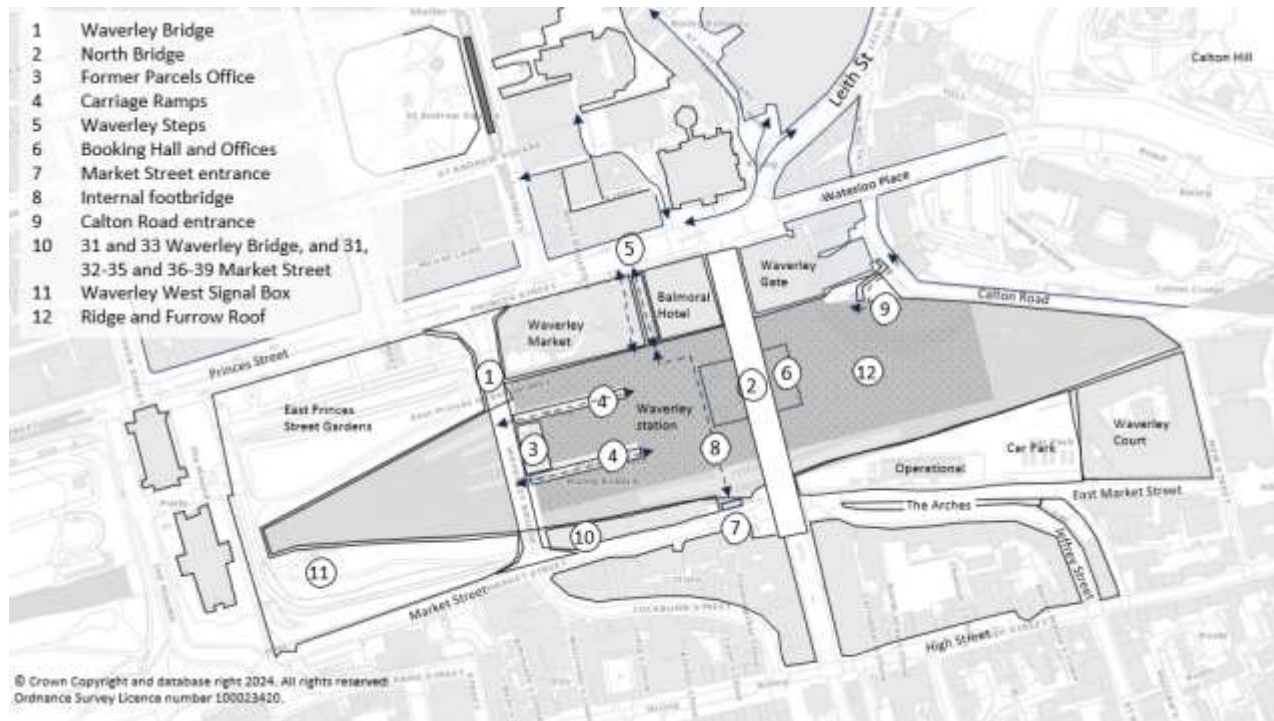
6.5.1 *The Station's existing features and attributes*

Key features which should inform the master plan process include:

- the Station is part of a [category A Listed Building group](#), together with Waverley Bridge, the former parcels office, and flanking carriageway ramps.
- outstanding features include the Booking Hall and the ridge and furrow glazed roof (restored

2014) set on cast iron columns and arcaded masonry screen walls.

- the Station's east end sits under the [category A Listed North Bridge](#), its three ironwork arches span the station's roof and tracks.
- the Station's sunken position and simple roofscape maintains open views across and along the Waverley Valley and enables outward views to the surrounding cityscape.
- other decorative elements include awnings and the Market Street entrance (new lifts and canopies added 2014).
- category B Listed former station buildings sit on Waverley Bridge and Market Street, [31 and 33 Waverley Bridge](#) and the fruit and vegetable brokering warehouses at [31, 32-35 and 36-39 Market Street](#).
- a [category B Listed Waverley West Signal Box](#) is located in East Princes Street Gardens.



Above: Waverley Station Plan of Existing Features

Above right: the Booking Hall's elaborate ceiling and central domed rooflight. Right: the relationship between Waverley Station's roof and the spans of North Bridge

Waverley Steps are not protected by listing but offer an iconic city gateway (canopy and escalators were added in 2014).

Between Market Street and the Waverley Steps, an internal footbridge provides platform access and a valued civic link across the valley.

Accessible routes include lifts at Calton Road, Market Street and via Waverley Market roof terrace from Princes Street.

The arrival experience at Waverley Station is remarkable for its views of the city, which are revealed when emerging from the Haymarket and Calton tunnels and upon ascending to street level, in particular the wide vista of the Old and New Town from Waverley Bridge.



The evolution of the Station's site and its earlier phases of railway development and settlement will require archaeological investigation, recording and interpretation.

6.5.2 Waverley Station Masterplan – Proposed Place Brief

The following Place Principles and supporting plan set out the Council's key requirements for the masterplan, as follows:

- strengthen interchange with public transport services, incl. bus, tram (and future tram safeguards) taxi, and cycle hire.
- improve wayfinding to and through the station.
- provide adequate internal, secure and accessible cycle parking, near to cycle access points, supported by short-stay cycle stands in the public realm.
- consider potential for a Cycle Hub in the public realm to offer hire and servicing facilities, retail, and visitor information.
- respect the station's setting and historic assets, its simple roofscape and relationship with the city, including the valley views, outward views from the station, and the passenger experience of arriving/departing Edinburgh.
- within the station, enhance the setting of key component features, such as the Booking Hall and Offices. Restore historic assets using appropriate conservation techniques, removing inauthentic additions.
- enhance accessibility through multiple step-free entrances and retain the internal civic walking and wheeling link between East Market Street and Princes Street.
- where possible, safeguard potential internal connections to Waverley Market in the future.
- maximise the station's contribution to the Council's net zero 2030 and car kilometre reduction targets by rationalising long-stay car parking, managing short-stay pick-up/drop-off, and promoting sustainable travel to the station.
- deliver positive effects for biodiversity within the Waverley Valley.
- bring forward public realm improvements at each of Waverley Station's entrances to benefit place, accessibility, and which promote community and women's safety. Aligned with Edinburgh's approved City Centre Transformation Strategy, deliver:
 - Waverley Bridge arrival plaza – forming a gateway space celebrating the iconic views of Edinburgh.
 - a suitably segregated, north-south walking, wheeling and cycling link across the east end of the valley, maintaining access out with revenue protection barriers; and
 - enhanced vertical connections with the Old and New Towns, including lift access between the level of the Station and North Bridge.
- modernise the station's retail, food and drink offer, to complement but not compete with the wider city centre.
- set out arrangements for servicing that minimise impacts

on adjacent streets and public realm.

- re-use downtakings that contribute to the Station's character elsewhere on site or within the public realm.
- retain publicly accessible toilets.
- explore potential for the station's energy needs to contribute to local heat or power networks.

6.5.3 *Land at East Market Street*

Adjacent to the Station, car parking and operational land present an opportunity for commercial led development, as follows:

- uses should reflect the Old Town and Station contexts, complementing New Waverley and shops and cafes at Sibbald Walk and The Arches.
- buildings and public spaces should be of appropriate scale and layout to:
 - respond to the setting of adjacent Listed Buildings.
 - respect the valley landform, grading in layers down from



Above: The existing car park and operational land located to the north of East Market Street, adjacent Waverley Station.

- the Royal Mile to Calton Road.
- enhance city views from the station and trains arriving and departing Edinburgh.
- resolve level changes, including with the existing deck of East Market Street.
- provide active frontages to East Market Street, broken up by public realm and views to the New Town and Calton Hill. Set back any built form from the street and avoid a continuous building line.

–articulate the roofscape, enhancing views across/along the valley, avoiding large flat roofs with plant housed within the building form.

- create a network of public realm, including civic space, play space, public gardens, street trees and rain gardens to benefit people, wildlife and manage surface water sustainably.

Liaison with Network Rail will be required, including with regard to arrangements for relocation of the Edinburgh Signalling Centre.

6.5.4 Waverley Market



Above: To the west of the category A Listed Balmoral Hotel (former North British Hotel) Waverley Market's roof terrace forms publicly accessible open space and viewpoint at the East End of Princes Street.

As part of any future redevelopment of Waverley Market, regard will be given to:

- protection of publicly accessible open space and creation of inclusive, child friendly, public realm.
- retention and improvement of accessible routes between Princes Street and Waverley Station.
- [legal height restrictions](#) apply to built form. The roofscape of the 1980's Waverley Market building

was deliberately kept low to preserve open views from Princes Street's footways.

- the role of the civic space as a setting for Listed Buildings and its contribution to designated areas, including the WHS.
- retention of open views to and from the site, including outward views to the Castle, Old Town ridge and Arthur's Seat from Princes Street's footways and the roof terrace.
- widening the footway to the south side of Princes Street and creating a wide, accessible, street level, set-back to the roof terrace to ease crowding and provide more space for people walking, wheeling, and accessing public transport.
- lighting improvements to promote a safe and welcoming space balanced with areas of darkness within the wider Waverley Valley.
- providing a balance of street trees and planting alongside paved civic space, as a contemporary response to the Market's historic rooftop garden and to further biodiversity.

- reuse of the remaining historic ironwork railings associated with the former 19th century market.

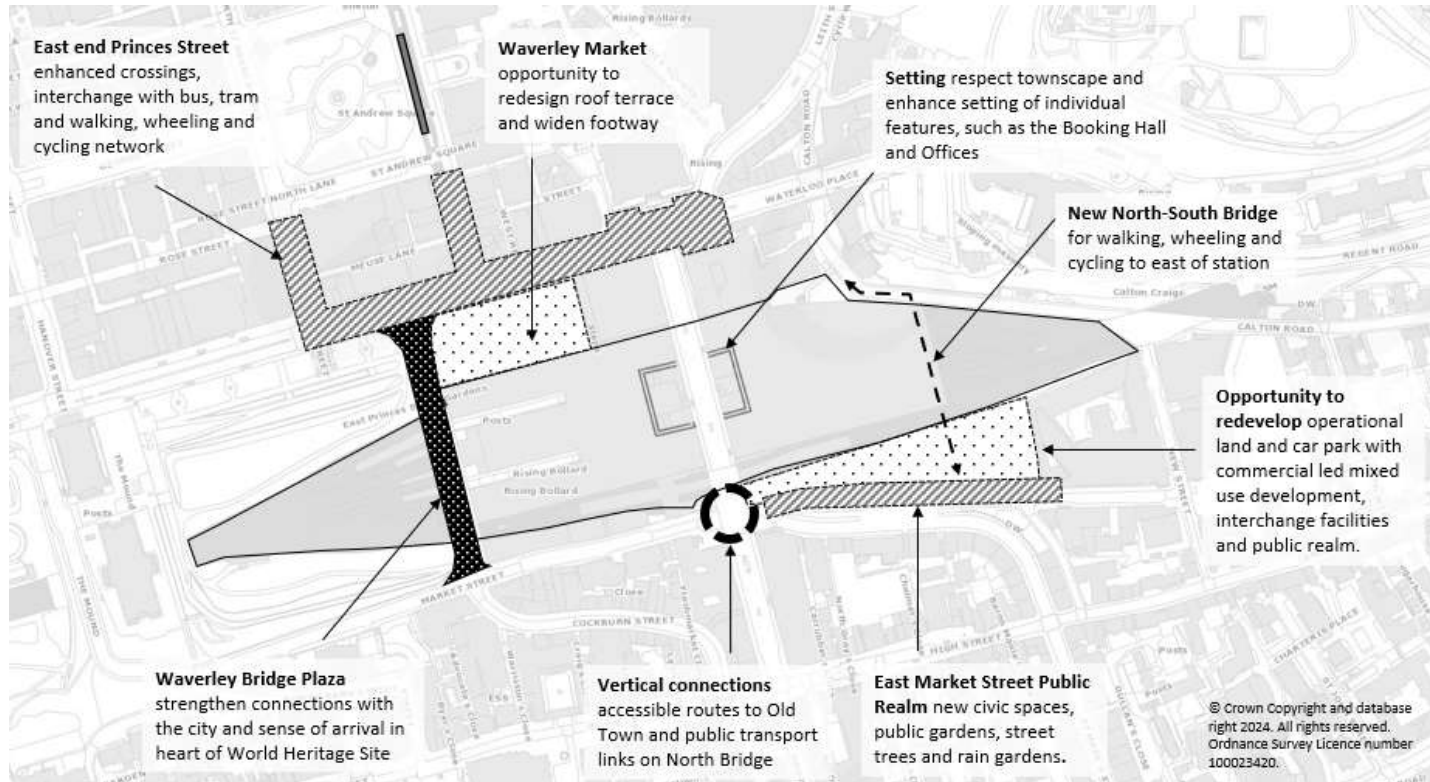
6.5.5 The Station Masterplan process

The Council continues to liaise with Network Rail and Transport Scotland to inform the station's masterplan and ensure it reflects the City's Planning and mobility policies in its role as an important civic facility.

Network Rail benefits from deemed consent for certain works to rail infrastructure under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Scotland Order 1992 (as amended). However, statutory consents apply in terms of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.

Development that falls outside the permitted development regulations will require planning permission and may require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and/or impacts on the outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site to be assessed.

Waverley Station – Place Principles



Development is encouraged through a comprehensive masterplan for the station area to create a successful place and integrated network of public realm.

Standalone proposals must not compromise co-ordinated development or the future operational needs of the station.

Above: Aerial view of the Waverley Valley as viewed from the east, showing the Canongate, Regent Road, Waverley Station and backdrop of Princes Street Gardens. Image courtesy Historic Environment Scotland.

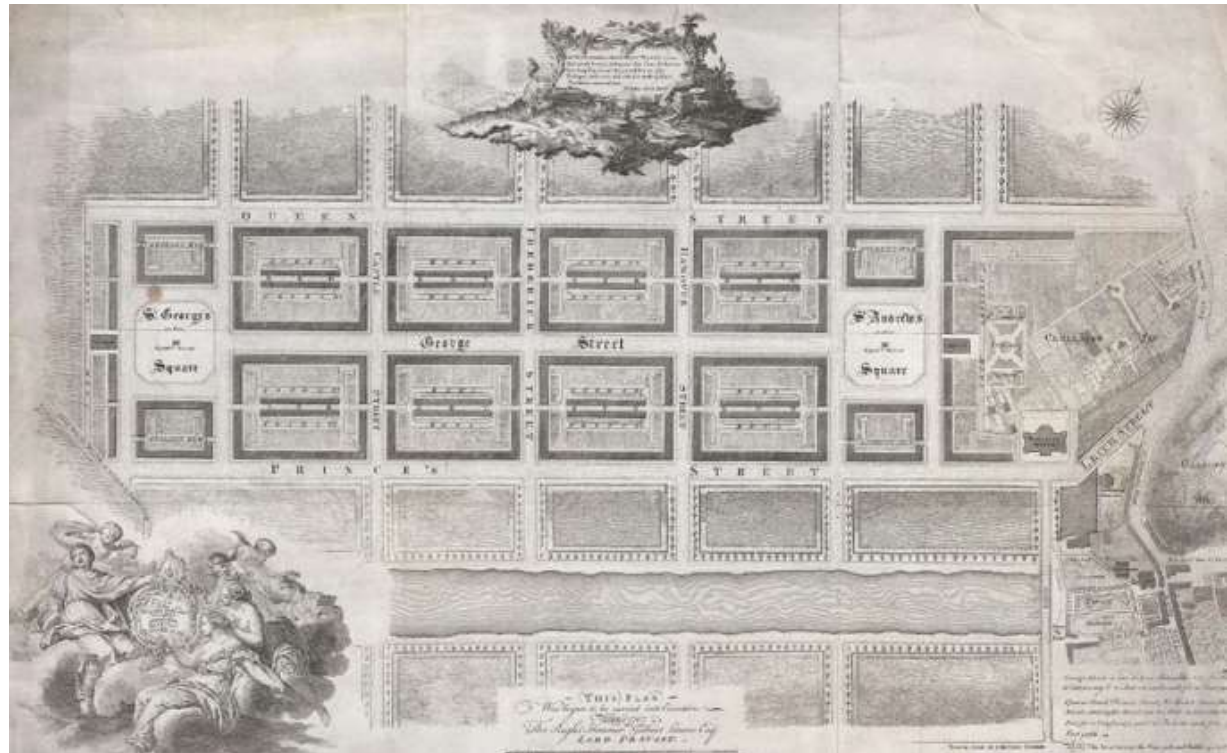
Appendix A - A Brief History and Case for Change

Princes Street is culturally significant as the southern-most street of Edinburgh's New Town. Its elegant Georgian and Victorian architecture, lush gardens within the Waverley Valley and panoramic views of the castle, create a unique scene of urban grandeur.

Sitting in the heart of Edinburgh's Old and New Towns World Heritage Site (inscribed by UNESCO in 1995), the unique position of the street and valley requires change to be managed with the greatest respect and sensitivity.

It should equally be recognised and understood today, through the findings of [The Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Legacy Review](#), that the wealth and physical expansion of the city in the 18th and early 19th century is inseparable from Edinburgh's role in slavery and colonialism.

Image right: extract of James Craig's plan for the First New Town 1767



A Brief History of The First New Town and Princes Street

Princes Street forms the southern edge of James Craig's New Town of 1767, a competition winning urban grid, inspired by the classical architecture of Ancient Greece and Rome.

This major, purpose-built, city expansion was designed to offer

improved living conditions in response to the crowded medieval burgh of the Old Town.

The symmetry and order of the New Town layout contrasts with the organic form of the Old Town, clustered around the defensive site of Castle Rock.

The New Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal describes The

First New Town plan as ‘a strikingly simple, self-contained grid, with a broad main street along the top of the ridge connected to two squares. Parallel to this street are two more streets, looking north and south out over the Forth and over the Nor’ Loch valley. Three equally spaced cross-streets bisect the grid. Along the long axis of each block is a smaller road, with mews lanes opening off it on each side.’

Between the two towns, in the drained Nor’ Loch, Craig planned pleasure grounds for the New Town residents.

The New Town’s formally planned streets and open spaces, together with underlying land form set up much valued views and vistas, including south over Princes Street Gardens to the Old Town ridge and east to Calton Hill. Equally, its roof-scape can be viewed from above, from the Castle, The Mound and Calton Hill.

Princes Street’s life began as a Georgian residential street, evolving to feature the mix of shops, cafes, offices,

hotels and cultural attractions which characterise the street today.

In the 1780s, Princes Street’s construction began at its east end. Controls emerged to limit its sandstone buildings to three storeys and a basement with pitched roofs.

Plans show the intention for up to 15 plots or feus fronting Princes Street. Modified townhouses remain on these narrower plots today, at corners and amongst the blocks, with [94-96 Princes Street](#) retaining a basement well.

The street’s relationship to the Old Town and Leith Walk, as well as its popularity as a thoroughfare, led to an increase in commercial activity and by 1800, the east end of the street was mainly non-residential. By the 1820s, shops and hotels featured along the whole street.

By the 1840s, additional floors appeared as height restrictions were relaxed. Grand Victorian and Edwardian commercial buildings soon replaced the townhouses and

tenements, infilling rear gardens, extending shop fronts and sweeping away the grain of the original plots.

In the early 20th century glazed extensions to form tea-rooms and restaurants on the first floor emerged to make the most of views to the Castle.

After World War II, Town Planner, Sir Patrick Abercrombie advised Princes Street should be remodelled to a standard, unifying design, separating pedestrians from traffic on a first-floor walkway.

This led to the street featuring modernist buildings to a pattern agreed by the 1954 Princes Street Panel.

Those built to this pattern include:

- 64 Princes Street (former BHS, now Uniqlo, listed Category B)
- 63 Princes Street (The Works)
- 91-93 Princes Street (demolished former Littlewoods store and replaced by Primark)
- 80-83 Princes Street (The Abbey Business Centre)

- 84-87 Princes Street (the New Club, listed Category A)
- 101-103 Princes Street (Boots)
- 107-108 Princes Street (demolished former Next); and
- 124-125 Princes Street (Urban Outfitters)

The panel design was later dropped when a conservation body and conservation policies for the New Town emerged.

The Princes Mall (today renamed Waverley Market) opened in 1985 at the east end, replacing the 1869 Waverley Market, which traded in fruit, vegetables and flowers. The Palace Hotel was destroyed by fire in 1991 and replaced by a 6-7 storey building with shops and offices at 113--117 Princes Street and corner of Castle Street.

Successive redevelopment over the last 30 years has continued. The early 2000s saw the city secure investment in George Street, Harvey Nichols, Multrees Walk, St Andrew Square and public access to its Garden, the arrival

of the Apple Store and St James Quarter redevelopment.

However, the second decade of the 21st century and early 2020s weighed heavily on Princes Street's most familiar department stores and high street names, with many closing following the global financial crisis, growth in online retail, COVID 19 pandemic, or relocating to the St James Quarter.

Encouragingly, ongoing development activity underlines the continued interest in the street, its world-renowned setting and potential to adapt.

The Statement of Heritage Significance to be developed under 6.2 of the Strategy will build on the existing body of knowledge set out in existing sources. These references include:

- The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Plan

- Conservation Area Character Appraisals for the New Town, Old Town and West End
- The [Princes Street Heritage Framework](#) (2008)
- [Princes Street Statement of Cultural Significance](#) (2008)
- [Edinburgh's Post-War Listed Buildings](#) (2016)
- Princes Street Gardens Conservation Management Plan (2003)



*Princes Street in 1858 showing carts, setted paving, original footways and lighting with the Royal Scottish Academy and Scott Monument. The City of Edinburgh Council – Libraries
www.capitalcollections.org.uk*

A Case for Change

In 1998, the Council commissioned the Danish Architect and Urbanist Jan Gehl to undertake a Public Spaces Public Lives study to examine future options for the improvement of Princes Street public realm. This work was further revisited in 2010.

Building on the Public Spaces Public Lives study, [Edinburgh's City Centre Transformation Strategy](#) set out some key challenges and opportunities for Princes Street.

Improvements have been made to address some of the challenges highlighted, including changes to planning guidance to enable a more varied mix of uses on Princes Street, but many remain.

Pedestrian Experience

Princes Street faces challenges to providing a high quality pedestrian experience.

At a strategic level, Princes Street has evolved into a high-volume bus thoroughfare. This results in

congestion on the carriageway, a noisy environment, and overcrowding on pavements especially around bus stops and at the interface with Waverley Station. Cyclists share the carriageway with this busy traffic including tram, heightening risks of conflict.

Crossing points face significant congestion and result in safety issues, which need to be addressed. This is due to crossings being signalled, limited waiting space, as well as the sheer volume of pedestrian activity.

Footway congestion can be a barrier to inclusion for people with physical or sensory impairments and for parents and carers with young children. It can also be intimidating and create opportunities for personal safety to be compromised.

There are limited places to dwell, and the small number of benches on the south side of Princes Street are oriented towards the traffic rather than towards views of the Valley, Old Town and Edinburgh Castle. The north side

of Princes Street faces south and presents an opportunity to create spaces to pause and appreciate the street's unique setting especially in good weather.



Congestion on Princes Street

Access to Princes Street Gardens presents challenges especially for people with disabilities due to steep path gradients. Points of access into the Gardens are often also overcrowded due to narrow pavements.



Existing 1870's access ramp between Princes Street and West Princes Street Gardens.

Notwithstanding recent upgrading of streetscape around St James Quarter, Picardy Place and St Andrew Square, much of the public realm across the First New Town and City Centre Retail Core, particularly that of Princes Street is in need of renewal. This is reflected by the low level of public satisfaction with the condition of the streetscape during consultation for this strategy.

Although several projects are coming forward, most notably the major remodelling of George Street and the recent completion of City Centre West East Link (CCWEL) active travel project, further investment and coordination is required to secure the

high quality renewal of public realm across Princes Street and the wider city centre, befitting of its UNESCO World Heritage status.

Street Condition

The general condition of Princes Street is in need of a comprehensive upgrade. Issues include:

- Existing concrete flag paving dating from the 1990s are now life expired, and do not reflect the world-class heritage status of the New Town;
- Poor drainage as a result of previous footway widenings;
- Lack of consistency in material finishes across the street.



Low quality, easily damaged pavement surfaces

The Waverley Valley, Princes Street Gardens and Waverley Station

Like many historic parks, Princes Street Gardens face a number of challenges.

- their ornamental layout and planting was established at a time when parks benefitted from large workforces to manage and maintain them.
- original tree planting is maturing and facing threats from disease and climate change.
- the climate and nature crisis require us to manage rainwater sustainably and adapt planting to suit both wet and dry conditions, and to benefit biodiversity.
- inclusive access and fit for purpose facilities are also needed to manage the expectations of all visitors, including residents, shoppers, workers, and tourists.
- scope exists to provide for greater community involvement

and volunteering, and to create a park that appeals to people of all ages.

Renewing the Gardens and other key public greenspaces that contribute to the Valley is central to the Council's Thriving Greenspaces 2050 and needs to be considered jointly with the improvement of surrounding streets and public realm.



In East Princes Street Gardens, recent improvements include the Scottish National Gallery's new exhibition space, landscaping, and access ramps.

Waverley Station occupies a pivotal position in the Valley between the Old

and New Towns. It began as three separate stations operated by separate railway companies before its expansion in the 1870s and 90s to create the Station we recognise today.

Network Rail recognises the need to restore and modernise the station to meet the need for longer platforms to accommodate longer and electric trains and the growing demand for regional commuters and intercity travel. The upgrading of accessibility, passenger facilities and need for ticket barriers to protect revenue are also key issues.

Managing change within the Valley as an urban landscape, which has evolved over two centuries, requires careful consideration to ensure that collectively the authentic and intact nature of this key part the World Heritage Site is not lost.

Through the World Heritage Site Management Plan, ongoing research

projects will support and further inform future planning and management decisions.

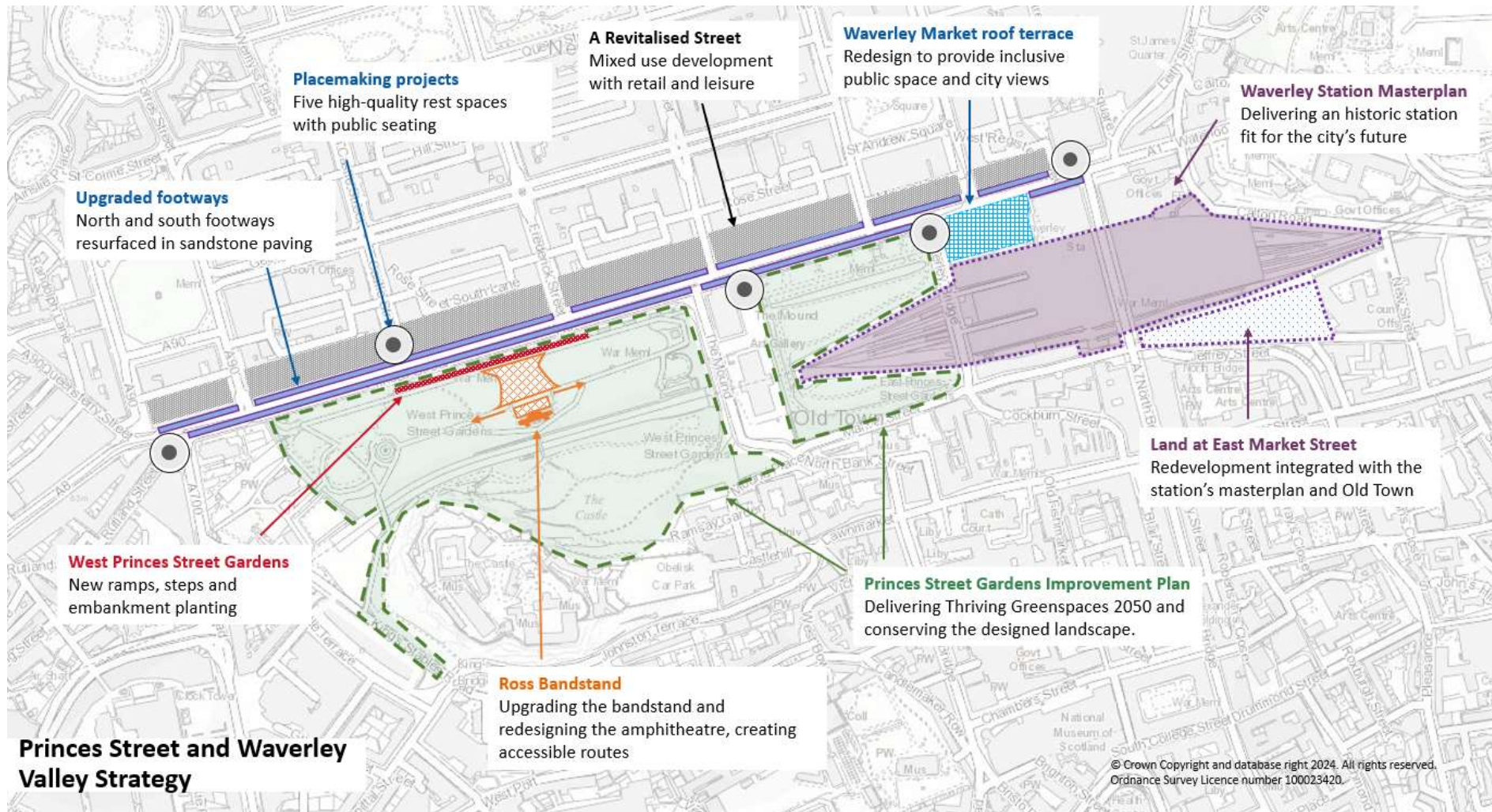
Safety

Enhancing safety, particularly with respect to addressing feedback from recent consultations on 'Women's Safety in Public Places', is critical.

Feedback from these consultations in the context of Princes Street and the Waverley Valley area presented both positive and negative views. Issues to further explore and address included improving lighting in areas of low coverage, reducing overcrowding on pavements, reducing spaces where people can hide, addressing antisocial behaviour especially associated with alcohol consumption, supporting uses/events which provide more activity at night, and regular cleansing and maintenance including graffiti removal.

Appendix B – Indicative Delivery Framework

High-level Plan of Key PSWV Strategy Actions by Location



Overview

The Strategy will be delivered by collective action towards its vision of a renewed street, improved public realm and gardens, and a station fit for the city's future.

With the exception of the development of premises on Princes Street, Waverley Market and the Waverley Station masterplan, delivery will involve Council services working together, alongside interested parties.

Delivery be coordinated and integrated with wider City Centre Transformation project delivery.

The proposals are currently unfunded and brought forward with an awareness of budgetary constraints. However, with an agreed package of proposals, aligned to funding sources, delivery could be achieved via the following potential routes, as follows:

Cross-service budgeting

Placemaking proposals could be funded by pooling funds for footway maintenance, climate resilience and nature, arts and culture, public safety, transport infrastructure and economic regeneration.

Grants for heritage and greenspace

The West Gardens Links proposal could be eligible for external grant funding for heritage and greenspace projects. Matched funding from the Council and other partners is likely to be required. Establishment of a Friends Group could enable additional fundraising from sources which are not available to local government.

Parks Events Levy

From October 2024, a levy has been applied to ticketed events held in the city's premier parks, including Princes Street Gardens. Income gained from events in Princes Street Gardens will be used to fund improvements split 50:50 between the West Gardens and Ross Bandstand.

Developer Contributions.

The contribution of City Centre development to public realm will apply through City Plan 2030 Policy Inf 3 where there is an increase in the commercial floorspace either by development, reconfiguration or changes of use, as set out in the Council's [Guidance on Developer Contributions and Infrastructure Delivery](#). This applies to developments

within the City Centre Contribution Zone, which includes Princes Street.

Edinburgh Visitor Levy

The Council will use the powers conferred to it by the Visitor Levy (Scotland) Act 2024 to impose a levy in respect of persons staying in certain types of overnight accommodation within the Council Area. Elected members will determine investment programmes around the scheme objectives which are required to improve tourist offerings and manage the impact of tourism.

Transport Led Investment

Investment in public realm could be delivered as part of new public transport infrastructure, including expansion of the tram network at the east end of Princes Street, measures to support bus prioritisation, and through delivery of the Waverley Station masterplan. By improving access for all, the West Garden Links may qualify for walking and wheeling funding.

Indicative Delivery Framework

Action	Who's involved	Potential Way Forward
Redevelopment/adaptation of building stock	Development sector	With development sector. The PSWV Strategy will form a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications, supported by the Statement of Heritage Significance. Significant proposals are expected to present to the Edinburgh Urban Design Panel.
Pop-Up Uses/decorative hoardings	Development and Arts sector, incl. specialists in commercial space, creative industries, and/or charitable organisations.	With development sector. The PSWV Strategy will form a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications, supported by the Statement of Heritage Significance. As well as relevant Planning consents, advice can be sought from The Council's Business Growth and Inclusion and Cultural Partnerships teams.
Footway Upgrades	City of Edinburgh Council Aligned with relevant ECCT projects, incl. George Street and First New Town, and Meadows to George Street. Bus/Tram operators.	Subject to the Council's Capital Programme, delivery of footway upgrades in a natural stone finish would be delivered by the Council's Roads and Infrastructure Team, prioritising the north footway due to its condition. This would require to be delivered in phases and split into blocks to avoid city centre construction activity, align with delivery of other CCT projects and maintain public transport services. Estimated cost. north footway £6.4m Estimated cost. south footway £2.37m Costs exclude carriageway resurfacing.
Placemaking Projects	City of Edinburgh Council - West End - Castle Street	Subject to funding and alignment with wider New Town palette of furniture, potential exists to deliver placemaking projects in conjunction with Princes Street footway renewal or other city transport and active travel projects.

	• Mound Precinct • Waverley Bridge • General Register House • East End Princes Street Aligned with relevant projects, incl. Lothian Road, George Street and First New Town, Tram. Key stakeholders including bus operators, Network Rail, businesses, development sector.	Estimated cost £0.5-1m. A further localised design solution, in addition to the above projects, requires to be brought forward for the East End of Princes Street, in conjunction with proposals for tram. However, interim measures towards this outcome may be possible in the shorter-term i.e. bus-gate, and footway widening to south side of Princes Street.
West Garden Links	City of Edinburgh Council	Subject to funding, one or more sets of ramps and steps could be brought forward ahead of, or in conjunction with, works to renew the south footway. Estimated cost £4.5-5m.
Heritage Research	Edinburgh World Heritage (lead), City of Edinburgh Council	A Statement of Historic Significance is in preparation with input from the management partners for the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site. The Statement is due to be published in early 2026 and will support delivery of the Strategy with due regard to the areas historic assets and attributes. Estimated cost approx. £30 K funded by The Council and Edinburgh World Heritage.
Princes Street Gardens Improvement Plan	City of Edinburgh Council	Project Development Phase The next step in preparing the Improvement Plan will be a project development phase, to provide: • an understanding of project costs; • resource requirements. • project timeline; • planned engagement; and • feasibility studies.

		The cost to deliver the full Improvement Plan is unknown and will be established by a £100 K development phase, which is currently unfunded.
Ross Bandstand	City of Edinburgh Council	Feasibility Study To provide a more detailed understanding of the potential to upgrade the existing facility and associated costs. The Events Levy will support provision of infrastructure for use by smaller events to allow greater use of space with minimal costs.
Waverley Market roof terrace	Development sector	With development sector The PSWV Strategy will form a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications, supported by the Statement of Heritage Significance.
Waverley Station Masterplan	Network Rail (lead) Transport Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council.	With Network Rail and development sector The PSWV Strategy will form a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications, supported by the Statement of Heritage Significance.