

City Centre Development Framework:

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- City Transport Strategy;
- Streetscape Work;
- Economy and Tourism;
- Open Space Strategy;
- Shop front grant scheme;
- Next Steps: City Centre Strategy required-guide and pull together the work of different services and provide link to external stakeholders.

Purpose of Framework:

- Set out conceptual **Planning** 'vision' for City Centre;
- Provide interpretation of LDP policy relative to the City Centre;
- Provide design principles for potential development sites;
- Identification of further work/potential projects.

1 Introduction:

The purpose of this document is to consider the issues facing the City Centre, the current strengths and weaknesses it has as a place, and identify opportunities moving forward to ensure the City Centre achieves the aspirations and vision the Council has for it. The document is presented as a Planning framework for development, and in many instances is the first step to work/further study, which will require the input and collaboration of a number of Council Services, and other stakeholders.

The Framework also identifies a number of sites, which have the potential for development, either immediately, or in the longer term, and which can make a contribution towards achieving our aims for the City Centre. Guidance is then given on the uses appropriate, and principles that should be adopted and considered in the detailed design of proposals.

This Framework, and the guidance contained within in it, is non-statutory, however the promotion, development and adoption of a City Centre Strategy does tie in with National Planning Guidance.

2 Stirling City Centre:

The Local Development Plan identifies the boundary of the City Centre for the purposes of Planning policy [insert map]. This takes cognisance of the many different functions and characters the centre of our City has. This area has many strengths and assets, but also faces some threats and challenges. These are explored in more detail below.

Context and identity:

History and landscape play a significant role in the identity of the City Centre, and the wider context within which it sits. Immediately recognisable, and standing proud on its Crag, is the Castle. The old town cascades down the tail towards the River and Stirling Bridge, the topography allowing for a dramatic roofscape and long distances views both to and from this part of Stirling to be enjoyed. Much of the built development within the City Centre is historic in nature, covered by Conservation Area status, with many Listed Buildings.

[insert images of the Castle and Old Town roofscape]

An equally dramatic landscape setting provides the natural backdrop to the built environment, with the flat carse lands of the River Forth providing the immediate setting to the City, accentuating and contrasting with the topography of the Old Town and Castle. The Ochil hills, and further a field the mountain ranges of the National Park, frame wider views of the city centre, and provide a constant reminder of Stirling's position as a gateway to the Highlands. The visual links between the Castle and Old Town, the Wallace Monument, and the wider landscape setting, provide Stirling, and its City Centre, with a truly unique image and identity.

[insert image demonstrating wider landscape setting]

Major City green spaces, such as the King's Park, King's Knot and the Royal gardens, and the Back Walk and Gowanhill, are in close proximity to the City Centre, as is the River itself.

[insert map identifying these features]

The functions of the City Centre:

The City centre has a number of different and varied functions. Due to the historic nature of much of the Centre, and the variety of related attractions on offer, not least the Castle, it is a popular **tourist** destination, particularly for day trips. It is also an important, regional, **shopping** destination, with a significant number of retail chains and independent shops situated in and around 'The Thistles' shopping centre.

It also has a wider **commercial and leisure** function, with a number of businesses and pubs/restaurants located within it. In addition it provides access to a range of civic and public agency services.

There are also a significant number of **residential** properties within the City Centre.

[insert photos to highlight these functions]

Major routes and gateways into the City Centre:

A number of important routes, gateways and arrival points into the City Centre have been identified. These are shown on the accompanying map, and are described and assessed below.

Stirling Railway and Bus Stations: When travelling into the centre of Stirling via public transport visitors arrive at either the railway station or the adjacent bus station. Both are located to the east of the main City Centre. The built environment and road network surrounding both of these city centre transport hubs gives the impression that the City Centre turn its back to visitors, and there is a distinct lack of any sense of arrival in the City Centre as a result. The lack of visible historic reference points on arrival, that set the wider context for the city centre also contribute to the confusion at these key arrival points.

[insert images to demonstrate points]

Dumbarton Road: This approaches the City Centre from the west, allowing spectacular views of the Castle with the Kings Knot below. Travelling into the centre, the street passes through the residential area of the King Park, typified by its sandstone villas. Towards the centre the northern side of the street has located along it a number of tourist and civic attractions, such as the Smith Museum and the Albert Halls. As it reaches its junction with Port Street, the built form steps up in height and scale, signifying the entrance into the core of the City.

Although a busy vehicular traffic route, the street environment along Dumbarton Road entrance is attractive, and is well connected into both the residential areas in Kings Park, and up into the Old Town and Back Walk, making it conducive to walking and cycling.

[insert images to demonstrate points]

Customs Roundabout and its environs: Approaching from the north, this route crosses the River Forth in close proximity to the historic 'Stirling Bridge'. It connects and is a route from Causewayhead, Cornton, Bridge of Allan and for vehicular traffic from Cambuskenneth. As such it is a real gateway and node into and around the City Centre, with a choice of routes, both pedestrian and vehicular possible.

Views of the Castle and wider historic 'top of the town, are evident from this position, as are the Ochil Hills and the Wallace Monument when viewed from the City Centre. Within the centre of the roundabout, there is a small green space and the impressive Customs Clock. Despite this historical context and many references, the perception of the gateway is largely defined by the presence of the roundabout, and the road signage directing traffic either towards the City Centre or to key through routes.

[insert images to illustrate]

Goosecroft Road: When travelling from the north this is the last in a series of connecting streets into the City Centre. However unlike the other streets (Cowane Street and Union Street) Goosecroft Road has minimal building forms fronting onto and accessed from it. It

therefore offers little in the way of activity, engagement and interest, and certainly does not allow travellers along the route the perception that they are entering into the City Centre. Due to the cannon effect of the rear of the Thistles Shopping Centre, lack of ground floor interest and traffic noise, the environment at the section of the Road between the Bus Station and the Craigs Roundabout, is particularly unattractive for pedestrians.

[insert images to illustrate]

The Dual Carriageway: The dual carriageway runs in a north-south direction connecting the Clock Roundabout with the Four Ways Roundabout in the south. It skirts the eastern edge of the historic city centre, between the Customs Roundabout in the North and the Craigs Roundabout in the South. It is over-bridged at a number of points, most notably to allow access to the railway station and into Riverside and Forthside. Together with the adjacent Goosecroft Road and the railway line, which runs parallel to it for most of its length within the City Centre, it creates a very definite edge and a physical barrier to east-west travel.

[insert images to illustrate]

Craig's Roundabout & Environs: This area sees the convergence of a number of significant traffic routes into and out of the City Centre. At this point the needs of the car and directional decision information provided for drivers dominate the space. The quality of the pedestrian environment and experience is limited, either walking along/across busy roads, or using underpasses. There is however a small attractive green space within the heart of the roundabout. The built environment at this point is relatively fragmented, with the attractive pool hall somewhat overshadowed by the rear of the Thistles Shopping Centre.

[insert images to illustrate]

St. Ninian's Road: This is one of the main thoroughfares into the centre from the south of the city. On approach this street provides access to both large residential areas (Kings Park and St.Ninians) and major employers (Central Scotland Police, the Hospital and Stirling Council HQ). The street continues directly into the centre, and is fronted by buildings for most of its length. It is also tree lined for a significant part. The scale and type of buildings announce the entrance into the centre at the streets junction with Wellgreen Road.

[insert images to illustrate]

Threats and challenges for the City Centre:

Whilst the City Centre undoubtedly has a great many strengths and attractions, it also suffers from a number of threats and challenges going forward. Some of these are, at least in part, a consequence of the recent economic climate or a change in the way traditional town and city centres operate. Others are as a result of the current physical environment.

The issues highlighted below are as a result of analysis carried out as part of the preparation of this Development Framework, but are also drawn from previous work done through the City Centre Health Check and through the Architecture and Design 'City Visioning' exercise.

Disconnection between Historic Hub and retail Hub: The City suffers from a lack of connection, in terms of people movement, between the Castle, top of the town, and the retail hub around the Thistles and adjacent streets. This is further accentuated by the lack of connectivity, due to physical constraints, with the Forthside area and the topography. Very often visitors to one will not spend time travelling to, or in, the other. The general consensus is that this does not allow the City to truly make the most of the numbers of visitors and residents that use the City Centre.

[insert image to demonstrate point]

The Centre has a 'limited offer': Not unrelated to the first point, there has long been the perception that the Centre has a relatively limited 'offer' for visitors and residents alike. This is supported by a number of studies that have suggested that opportunities and choice in a variety of uses is lacking, including the type and location of retail and office space, different residential tenures and availability of alternative activities.

Vacant Premises: The City Centre suffers from the existence of a number of empty units, both ground floor commercial units, and in some instances upper floors. Furthermore there are some geographical concentrations of such property, with King Street a particular example. This can lead to a negative perception of an area, and in some instances a lack of repair and management. This is a particular concern given the historic importance of much of the built fabric within the historic City Centre.

[insert images to demonstrate point]

The Centre suffers from poor arrival points: Visitors to the City, and the City Centre are often confronted with relatively poor arrival points. As has been highlighted early in the Framework, this is particularly relevant when travelling by public transport. The City presents a relatively unattractive and unwelcoming front to visitors at both the bus and railway stations, with backs of buildings, gap sites and a busy road all confronting people entering the City. There are also some routes or gateways through which people travel to reach the centre, where the physical environment could be improved.

[insert images to demonstrate point]

There is a lack of pedestrian connection to different parts of the City: The physical environment around the periphery of the Centre can make travel on foot an unappealing prospect. This is particularly the case to the east of the city centre, where the dual carriageway and the railway line have to be navigated.

[insert image to demonstrate point]

The prevalence of inappropriate shop fronts and advertisements: A common criticism of many town and city centres is that they have had their individual character and identity somewhat eroded. This is often put down to the fact that the same 'high street stores' are found in most centres, often bringing with them the same, corporate signs, banners and shop front colours. A further concern with Stirling City Centre is that in some instances the signs, and shop front alterations are not always appropriate and sympathetic to the building.

[insert image to demonstrate point]

Future Development in and around the City Centre may not consider the wider role it has to play: There is always the danger that new developments on vacant sites in and around the City Centre consider only the immediate site boundaries and context. Quite often, development can have a positive impact, wider than their immediate environs, if considered within a wider framework of development sites/opportunities.

The changing nature of town and city centres: Traditionally town and city centres were the one and only focal point for civic, retail, service and leisure facilities serving local communities. They were therefore often a vital destination for the majority of local people at least at one point in their day or week. However, with the advent and growth of out-of-town shopping and leisure, on-line purchasing of goods and services, and the ability to travel to other, competing destinations, a visit to the City Centre is now, more than ever, a choice and not a necessity, for a significant proportion of our population. The ability to adapt to this, whilst still recognising that for some there is still a need to have the ability to access retail, leisure and commercial services in the City Centre, will be vital if our City Centre is to continue to be a resilient and vibrant place to be.

3 A Vision for the City Centre:

The Local Development Plan vision for Stirling in 2033 is that it will be a fine small, walkable city, with a vibrant, improved City Centre, which has a range of uses and activities being undertaken being undertaken in a quality built and natural environment.

This is reflective of the Council's Single Outcome Agreement which seeks to make Stirling a place with a vibrant economy, and recognises that having a diverse, vital and vibrant City Centre, has a part to play in meeting this aim.

4 Suggested Actions/Themes:

Suggested below are a number of specific **actions** and themes that could help achieve the vision for the City Centre and address some of the weaknesses highlighted in previous sections:

1. To continue to value, protect and enhance the historic built environment;
2. To proactively promote design quality and principles;
3. To increase the linkage between the Castle and the retail/commercial centre;
4. To integrate the Central Scotland Green Network concept into the City Centre;
5. To enhance existing, and identify new connections (pedestrian, cycle and vehicle) into city centre hinterland;
6. To consider the movement of people through the City Centre, on foot, bike and vehicle; the priority each are given within the street space, and the quality of the physical environment and experience;
7. To increase the quality and vibrancy of the physical environment along key routes, gateways and arrival points into the City Centre;
8. Identify opportunities to facilitate the development and widening of the City Centre 'offer';
9. To consider ways in which the City Centre can adapt and respond to a changing economic climate and consumer buying and behaviour patterns;
10. To consider how best to 'plug in' development sites to maximise their contribution towards achieving better connectivity, accessibility and physical environment for the City Centre as a place to visit, work and live.

This Development Framework alone cannot deliver all aspects of the Council's and LDP vision for the City Centre, nor deliver on all the actions/themes highlighted above. To truly tackle the issues facing the City Centre will require a holistic approach. In many respects it should therefore be seen as a catalyst to further work and debate, much of which will involve collaboration, consultation and delivery with other services within the Council, and other relevant, public, private and community City Centre stakeholders.

[insert illustrations highlighting some of these points]

5 The Role of the Development Framework in delivering the Vision:

At this stage there are three main roles this Development Framework can have in supporting the delivery of the vision and contributing towards the actions outlined above. These are;

- the **promotion** of appropriate development opportunities and policy based approaches which seek to address the threats and challenges identified;
- the **protection** of the Historic resource and primary functions of the City Centre through guidance and policy interpretation;
- suggest further work and policy/guidance documents required to deliver on the vision for the future of the City Centre.

Development Framework: Promotional Role: Site Development Opportunities:

There are a number of sites, largely around the periphery of the City Centre, where development, or re-development, has an important part to play beyond its immediate boundary. These sites can start to enhance linkages and the physical environment along the edges of the City Centre and the routes into it, whilst the distribution of uses can provide a greater mix and offer. These sites are identified on the accompanying map.

Below each is taken in turn, with guidance given on the role they have to play, and urban design principles set for development. Where necessary future steps, or links to more detailed Development Briefs are highlighted.

It is recognised that ideally the development of these sites would be considered within a wider strategy for the City Centre, which brought together issues of people and traffic movement, streetscape etc. However in the current absence of such a strategy, and the need at this stage to recognise the importance of these site to the City Centre, it is felt appropriate to provide guidance. In doing so it, at the very, least ensures that development proposals consider the wider role, and contribution it has to make to the quality and vibrancy of our City Centre. As and when other work progresses the opportunity to revisit and refine the principles established within the Framework exists.

Viewforth Complex (incl. Linden Avenue Car Park & environs)

Site Status: Includes Development site identified in the Proposed Plan (H50);

Contribution to City Centre Vision: Proximity to the City Centre, the size of the site and the walkable distance into the heart of the commercial and retail hub, make this a key site in the delivery of the vision. Development of it, for a mix of uses, can help widen the city centre offer. It also abuts two key routes and gateways into the centre, and careful consideration of the built form, in tandem with open space and landscaping, can help both protect the existing character along St. Ninian's Road, and improve that along the Dual Carriageway.

Potential Uses: Mixed Use opportunity, primarily for office and residential. Hotel/leisure and subject to strict criteria some retail and/or commercial elements may also be considered.

Development Decisions: Whether the New Viewforth building remains in any form, or is demolished.

Design/Development Principles & Considerations:

-Need to consider, and allow for, a route for the proposed Link Road between Linden Avenue and St. Ninian's Road. If a decision is taken to demolish New Viewforth, the opportunity should be taken to explore the best route for this link, taking into account the affect on the existing Listed Buildings, trees, and the potential to develop the link as a 'street' using the principles advocated in Designing Streets;

-The setting of the existing Listed Buildings on site, and the character of the Conservation Area need to be respected by any new development on the site. In particular this affects the western section of the site. The position, height, scale, massing and design of all new buildings will have to be informed by, and assessed on, their impact on the setting of the Listed Buildings, and on views of the site from surrounding, public, vantage points.

-Development needs to take account of existing tree cover across the site, some of which is protected via a Tree Preservation Order. It is expected that the design process will seek to minimise the impact of development on existing trees, and proposal to be informed by a detailed tree survey. Any loss of trees will have to justified, and adequate mitigation proposed.

-Any proposals in the lower, eastern section of the site needs to consider and incorporate the principles of the Central Scotland Green Network. (See Supplementary Guidance 02: Green Infrastructure) It also needs to be located, scaled and orientated to provide a positive gateway into the City Centre at this point.

-The overall layout and design concept, whilst allowing for a mix of uses, and potentially different owners, should still result in a cohesive overall design solution, and development, which is permeable, and encourages walking to and from the City Centre.

-Proposals for any level of retail development on the site will only be supported where the type of retail, size and mix of unit(s), and location within the site is not considered to compete with, and be detrimental to the City Centre.

-In taking development proposals forward, the potential to link into, and complement, development on surrounding sites, should be explored.

Next Steps: Preparation of Masterplan for the whole site.

[insert annotated map]

DRAFT

Rainbow Slides, Goosecroft Road:

Site Status: Development site identified in the Proposed Plan (Ref: R1)

Contribution to City Centre Vision: The site is one of several that string along Goosecroft Road and Station Road, which together can start to address the fractured built form, lack of activity and arrival points at this important location in the City Centre. It is also situated at a key node/gateway into the City Centre from Riverside. Redevelopment of the site also offers the opportunity for additional floorspace in close proximity to both public transport nodes and the main retail and commercial hub.

Potential Uses: Mixed Use opportunity particularly for, retail, commercial, residential, office, leisure and hotel use;

Development Decision: Whether to demolish existing building or re-use;

Design/Development Principles & Considerations:

- Key to the development of this site is the need to consider the contribution re-development of the site can make towards starting to turn Goosecroft Road from being primarily a road, into a city centre street;

-This will require the built form to be primarily located along the frontage of the site with Goosecroft Road, orientated and accessed off it, to provide activity and interest.

-Development of the site and the uses proposed should take advantage of the excellent transport links and proximity to the City Centre.

-Scale, height and massing of buildings should respect character and views of the adjoining Conservation Area;

-need to consider mitigation along dual carriageway dependant on uses proposed;

Next Steps: Any development proposals should have cognisance of the detailed guidance prepared in the Development Brief.

[insert annotated map]

Station Road (North) Redevelopment site:

Site Status: Development site identified in the Proposed Plan (Ref: R2).

Contribution to City Centre Vision: Redevelopment of this site provides an opportunity to complete a city block, and transform the surrounding area. Appropriate development at this point can create an attractive townscape, arrival point and gateway into the historic centre, whilst bring increased activity and greater variety in the uses and facilities available within the City Centre.

Potential Uses: Mixed-use site-planning permission in principle for civic, hotel, residential, retail, and food & drink uses. Full planning permission exists for a building on part of the site that incorporates residential and commercial (retail & food and drink) uses.

-Design/Development Principles & Considerations:

-The Development should adopt a perimeter block approach to site that reflects historic urban form. This will require particular care and sensitive handling at the junctions where new development meets the existing, historic, built form;

-The scale, height and massing of new buildings needs to be informed by, and be reflective of, the adjacent historic urban form and grain, and its impact on views of the Old Town from the east;

-The location of uses within both the site and individual buildings requires careful consideration. The aim should be to locate uses in a manner which provides activity and interest at ground floor level, and which can be used as a tool to pull people up into the City Centre. There are two key areas in this regard-the junction at Station Road, and the route from Riverside;

-The built form needs to address the current lack of enclosure along Goosecroft Road, by reinforcing the street, and having main door access directly off it.

-There should be a consistent approach to the use of building materials and colours, which should generally be reflective of those found adjacent to the site. Any deviation from this approach, for the purposes of interest or contrast, will need to be carefully considered and the rationale explained;

Next Steps: Masterplan or Development Brief for the remainder of the site, having cognisance of the building already approved, should be prepared and agreed with relevant stakeholders. This should be informed by a detailed visual impact assessment of development on views of the site and its historic backdrop from important vantage points. These vantage points should be agreed in advance.

[insert annotated map]

Station Road (South);

Site Status: Development site, identified in the Proposed Plan (Ref: R3)

Contribution to City Centre Vision: Situated opposite both the Railway Station and the major development site to the north, this site has the potential, in the longer term, to complete the transformation of this part of the City Centre. Its proximity to the Thistles Shopping Centre, and its frontage along Station Road, Goosecroft Road, and Murray Place provide the opportunity to significantly increase the offer of the City Centre, improve the built environment and provide people with a reason to spend time in this part of the City Centre.

Potential Uses: Should be considered a mixed-use site, including potential for retail, commercial (including office), and food & drink.

Development decisions: the demolition of current buildings and land assembly to ensure a cohesive approach to the re-development of the area;

Design Considerations/Principles:

-The main aim of development on the site should be to enhance the entrance into the City Centre at this point, through careful consideration of the built form, mix of uses provided, and their location within the development and the site;

- The scale, height and massing of new buildings needs to be informed by, and be reflective of, the adjacent historic urban form and grain, and its impact on views of the Old Town from the east;

- The location of uses within both the site and individual buildings requires careful consideration. The aim should be to locate uses in a manner which provides activity and interest at ground floor level, and which can be used as a tool to pull people up into the City Centre.

-The built form needs to enclose and reinforce the street, with main door access taken directly off it. It also needs to address the current problem of all buildings presenting their backs, and rear service yards, towards Goosecroft Road.

- There should be a consistent approach to the use of building materials and colours, which should generally be reflective of those found adjacent to the site. Any deviation from this approach, for the purposes of interest or contrast, will need to be carefully considered and the rationale explained;

Next Steps: Masterplan or Development Brief for the site should be prepared and agreed with relevant stakeholders. This should be informed by a detailed visual impact assessment of development on views of the site and its historic backdrop from important vantage points. These vantage points should be agreed in advance.

[insert annotated map]

Burghmuir:

Site Status: Development Site identified in the Proposed Plan (Ref: R5). Planning Permission in Principle has been granted for a mixed-use development, incorporating retail, residential, leisure and hotel. At this stage development is most likely to come forward for convenience superstore and personal retail uses.

Contribution towards City Centre Vision: The site comprises a large area of land immediately adjacent to the retail hub of the City Centre. With that comes the opportunity to provide significant additional floorspace and uses which can be used to widen the City Centre offer. Located adjacent to a major gateway and route into the City Centre development of the site provides the opportunity to enhance the built form and sense of arrival at this point, whilst also considering ways in which greater permeability into and out of the centre can be achieved, particularly for those walking or cycling.

Potential Uses: Mixed use opportunity with extant permission in principle permitting retail, residential, leisure and hotel.

-Design Considerations/Principles:

- Cognisance of the fact that site is situated along a key route and at a major gateway into the City Centre should be demonstrated in the detailed design of the development. The layout of the development, including the location, design and orientation of all buildings should positively address their surroundings and reinforce the perception of arriving into the City Centre;

-The scale, height, and massing of the built form needs to balance being appropriate for site's more historic context whilst still being of significant enough a size to counterbalance scale of the Dual Carriageway;

-The development should incorporate the Central Scotland Green Network principles within the layout etc, and positively encourage permeability and connections through the site into the city centre. (see Supplementary Guidance 02: Green Infrastructure for further details);

-In taking development proposals forward, the potential to link into, and complement, development on surrounding sites, should be explored. Any such future potential should not be compromised by development proposals;

Next Steps: Any development proposals should also have cognisance of the detailed guidance prepared in the Development Brief [\[provide link\]](#) and should come forward in a comprehensive and cohesive manner.

[\[insert annotated map\]](#)

Tesco Site, Wallace Street;

Site Status: Currently occupied and in use as a retail food store.

Contribution towards City Centre Vision: This site is located in relatively close proximity to the City Centre, and adjoins a major route and gateway from the north. In the longer term, should the site and/or building become vacant, its redevelopment offers the opportunity to explore the delivery of a mix of uses on the site, and enhance the built form and streetscape at this point.

Potential Uses: Convenience retail, commercial, residential and leisure;

Development Decisions: Whether to retain or demolish existing buildings. Demolition of the buildings, allows the complete redevelopment of the site to be considered.

Design Considerations/Principles:

-Should the existing building be removed from the site, the layout of the site, and the design of all new buildings should both announce gateway and reinforce and positively contribute to the activity and frontage along Wallace Street and consider the frontage and relationship with the Dual Carriageway;

-In re-developing the site, consideration should be given to the opportunity to provide a mix of uses within the site. The location of these within the site should be carefully considered in order to provide activity and interest along Wallace Street;

-The height, massing and design of built form needs to consider, and be sympathetic to, the character of the adjoining Conservation Area and the impact on wider views of the Conservation Area afforded from the east and north.

-The impact of the development on the amenity of the residential properties opposite.

Next Steps: Development of a detailed Development Brief in consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

[insert annotated map]

Inland Revenue Site:

Site Status: Development Site identified in the Proposed Plan (Ref: R4)

Contribution towards City Centre Vision: The redevelopment of this site, which could ultimately include the demolition of the current building, has the potential to enhance the quality of the built form, and provide for a mix of uses, right in the heart of the City Centre. This could become a key node and attraction linking the Top of the Town with the retail core below.

Potential Uses: Opportunity for a mix of uses including ground floor commercial and/or food & drink, with residential or commercial above;

Design Consideration/Principles:

-Any new build development needs the buildings to reflect the surrounding historic built form in terms of height, scale & massing, and provide better 'fit' into urban grain that current building;

-At this location within the townscape the resultant built form needs to reinforce and respect building line;

-The site, has a frontage along both Spittal Street and Baker Street. These frontages are both equally important within the wider historic streetscape. Consequently, due to the narrowness of the plot, and the need for development to positively address both, a careful and innovative design solution is required;

-Ground floor uses and elevations should allow for activity and interest along the street. This is relevant for either the re-use of the existing building, or any new building(s) on the site;

Next Steps: Development of a detailed Development Brief in consultation with all relevant stakeholders.

[insert annotated map]

Development Framework: Promotional Role: Policy Interpretation:

Promotion of Active Frontages: Having active frontages along the streets within our City Centre can provide activity and interest for those on them. Such qualities can make streets attractive places to be, encouraging people into and around them. The perception that a street is busy and overlooked can also be a comfort to those using it, making it also feel a safe place to be.

These are qualities that we want our City Centre streets to have. Our policies and guidance regarding design generally (Ref: Policy 1; SG01:Placemaking) promote an approach to development which enlivens and defines street space, and this is particularly important within our City Centre. It is therefore imperative that all new development is considered to have a positive impact on the wider street scene, and provide for active and interesting street frontages.

Future work could include identification of important routes, where the promotion and protection of active frontages can help draw people into and around the City Centre.

Promotion of use of vacant units and upper floors: There are several instances within our City Centre of underused upper floors and vacant ground floor shop units. In a significant number of cases these are located within historic buildings. The continued vacancy of such units not only threatens the fabric of these historic buildings through lack of maintenance or neglect, but also the very vibrancy and vitality of our City Centre.

It is important therefore that as well as identifying opportunities for new build development, that we also acknowledge and promote the role finding new uses for these vacant units can have in vision for the future of the City Centre. Consequently, we will support individual proposals and initiatives designed to tackle the issue of vacant units, provided it can be shown that it will both contribute to the overall vitality of the City Centre whilst not impacting negatively on surrounding properties.

Future work could include the carrying out of a detailed study to identify the location and type of vacant units/floors. This could in turn lead to identification of appropriate alternative uses and/or individual initiatives designed to get units back into active use-start up units etc.

Development Framework: Protection Role: Policy Interpretation:

Protection of Primary Retail Function: It is still considered important to maintain and protect the retail function that our City Centre has. As such, through Policy 10 the Proposed Plan has identified a Prime Retail Area-which is shown on the accompanying map. Within this area there will be a presumption against the loss of Class One retail units to other uses.

Protection and consideration of views to and from the City Centre: As has been identified in previous sections of this Framework the context, setting and topography of our City Centre really define it as a place, and provide it with a truly unique identity. They also provide for fantastic short and long distances views both to and from parts of our City Centre.

It is considered important that new development does not erode or negatively impact on such views. Consequently we expect proposals for new development to consider whether they are likely to have a significant impact on views either of the City Centre, or views from vantage points within it. In instances where there is likely to be an impact, it will be expected that through careful consideration of the scale, design and location of development, and the use of appropriate landscaping and materials, any impact is successfully mitigated.

Future work could include carrying out a detail study to identify specific views to and from the City centre worthy of protection.

6 Links to other work & next steps:

Many services within the Council work within, and have an impact on our City Centre. The City Transport Strategy (CTS) shapes how people travel to and around the Centre, whilst Streetscape initiatives have brought physical improvements to areas around Port Street, Friars Street, Baker Street, and more recently Corn Exchange Road. The CTS will be reviewed, and will consider how to retain and improve (relative) the attractiveness of Stirling in terms of its accessibility for residents, visitors and businesses.

On a more day-to-day basis the work of our waste and street cleansing teams ensure that our City Centre streets remain attractive places for people to be.

The Council also has economic and tourism functions, the work of which impacts greatly on delivery of the vision put forward for the City Centre. The Council is currently preparing an Open Space Strategy, which will impact on how open spaces are managed and promoted around the City Centre.

The Stirling City Heritage Trust is part funded by the Council. The Trust run a number of small and large-scale grant schemes, applicable to parts of the City Centre, aimed at maintaining and improving historic buildings. The most recent of which involves improvements to buildings within King Street.

Throughout the Framework an indication of further work to be carried out, at least in part, by the Planning Service is given. However it is clear that to properly, and imaginatively, tackle current and future issues facing the City Centre, and to make a realistic attempt at achieving the vision set down, a collaborative and conjoined approach by all services within the Council is required. Furthermore, this needs the involvement of other relevant external stakeholders. The Action Programme for the Local Development Plan will consider how all these parties can be involved.

However to truly address the issues identified it is considered that the appropriate next step would be the consideration and creation of a City Centre Strategy, which aligns work of services, their priorities etc, and sets an overall vision for the future of our City Centre, and delivery mechanisms to achieve it.