

## **ITEM No ...4.....**

**REPORT TO:** CITY GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE – 17 NOVEMBER 2025

**REPORT ON:** CITY CENTRE – UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS

**REPORT BY:** EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CITY DEVELOPMENT

**REPORT NO:** 318-2025

### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 This report provides an overview of progress made on the City Centre Strategic Investment Plan 2050 since January 2024, and an update on progress in the Eastern Quarter and Union Street areas of the city centre.

### **2 RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- a notes the progress made in implementing the City Centre Strategic Investment Plan as set out in Appendix 1;
- b notes that the Eastern Quarter Masterplan is complete with a summary provided in the report; and
- c notes that a capital project in the Eastern Quarter/Murraygate area is currently being procured and the outcome of the tender exercise will be reported to Committee in February 2026.

### **3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. A separate report relating to Union Street will be considered by the Committee on 17 November. A report on conclusion of the tender process for Murraygate Improvements will be considered by Committee early in 2026.

### **4 BACKGROUND**

4.1 Reference is made to Item VI of the meeting of the City Development Committee on 31 October 2022 (Report 290-2022) which approved the City Centre Strategic Investment Plan (CCSIP). Reference is also made to Item VI of the meeting of the Fair Work, Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee on 8 January 2024 (Report 7-2024) which provided an update on progress in implementing the CCSIP and agreed that the Eastern Quarter of the city centre should be an area of focus over the next five years.

4.2 The CCSIP sets out a long-term vision for the future of the city centre. It identifies a variety of proposals for improvement across five key themes. In addition, it sets out radical ideas and conceptual plans for seven strategic development opportunity sites that have the potential to individually and collectively support the positive regeneration of the city centre.

4.3 Since the approval of the CCSIP, Elected Members have considered reports on several areas that underpin activity, investment and improvements across the City Centre area supporting the 5 themes of the CCSIP. These include:

- a Item X of the Fair Work, Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee, 21 April 2025. This report advised that the programme of interventions under the Community Regeneration Partnership includes a range of capital projects in the city centre;

- b Item VII of the Fair Work, Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee, 9 June 2025. This report provided an update on the proposed City Centre Business Improvement District;
- c Item IX of the Fair Work, Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee, 9 June 2025. This report approved proposals for city centre festive events during 2025; and
- d Item VI of the Fair Work, Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee, 19 August 2025. This report approved sourcing strategies for two projects: City Centre Traffic Modelling and Eden Active Travel Connections

4.4 Appendix 1 to this report summarises the progress that is being made across a range of projects and initiatives to support the city centre.

4.5 Development is progressing on three of the seven strategic development opportunity sites identified in the Plan:

- the award-winning Bell Street Green Transport Hub, supported by UK Government and Transport Scotland investment, which is due to open late 2025. The Hub sees the transformation of the car park into a low-carbon, multi-modal, transport hub, facilitating active travel routes to the north of the city centre; and
- planning permission has been granted for the repurposing of the former BT office on West Bell Street and Ward Road as student accommodation. Construction work is ongoing.

4.6 In addition, members will be aware of the proposed Wellgate development. Discussions continue with proposals that would see Dundee & Angus College relocate some of its existing campus operations from Kingsway into the City Centre as part of a wider regeneration and repurposing of the Wellgate Centre.

## 5 EASTERN QUARTER

5.1 Alongside the review of the LDP, it is important to consider what actions can be taken in the short to medium term that will help create a vibrant city centre. There are particular challenges and opportunities in the Eastern Quarter that merit focused attention.

5.2 Recognising the challenges in the Eastern Quarter, at its meeting on 8 January 2024, the Fair Work, Economic Growth Infrastructure agreed to focus on this area of the city centre over the next five years. Two areas of work have been progressed:

- a development of a longer-term Masterplan setting out a range of interventions that respond to the challenges and opportunities in the Eastern Quarter will be developed; and,
- b a programme of streetscape works in Murraygate to enhance the public realm as an early intervention to help attract more visitors to the street to help address immediate concerns in the area.

5.3 Specialist consultants LDA Design were commissioned to undertake the following elements of work in the Eastern Quarter:

- a Task 1: Area Masterplan - carry out a strategic assessment of the area and present proposals for future public and private sector development and improvements, which align with the overarching vision and outcomes of the CCSIP.
- b Task 2: Public Realm Improvement Projects - investigate, develop, cost and present a programme of public realm improvement projects that can be delivered within the area.

5.4 The “Dundee Eastern Quarter: Masterplan Review” document is available at the following link:

[Dundee Eastern Quarter - Masterplan Reviewhttps://dundeeconomy.sharepoint.com/:b/g/personal/alan\\_brown\\_dundeeconomy.gov.uk/EZHlb9a9RCFKmS5h5ckJwTgBX2QxvzufNc8ZhiKvzmmBQ](https://dundeeconomy.sharepoint.com/:b/g/personal/alan_brown_dundeeconomy.gov.uk/EZHlb9a9RCFKmS5h5ckJwTgBX2QxvzufNc8ZhiKvzmmBQ)

The “Dundee Eastern Quarter: Public Realm and Infrastructure Improvements” document is available at the following link:

[Dundee Eastern Quarter - Public Realm and Infrastructure Improvements.](#)

5.5 Dundee City Council Engineers, working with LDA Design Consultants are leading the detailed design of environmental improvements on the Murraygate. It is recognised that the street has significant levels of vacancies, and that work carried out by the Council can only play a limited role in addressing these issues. Work to secure the redevelopment of the Wellgate is the most significant contribution that public partners can make to addressing the concerns in this street.

5.6 The environmental improvement project will deliver a range of enhancements, including:

- lighting upgrades in line with the City Centre Lighting Strategy;
- new paving where required along the street, with a focus on retaining and reusing existing materials where possible;
- refurbished and rationalised street furniture to enhance the overall look and feel of the area; and
- improved wayfinding to make navigation easier for pedestrians.

5.7 Subject to tender process and final approvals, construction is scheduled to begin in Spring 2026.

## **6 UNION STREET**

6.1 The Union Street Project will transform infrastructure and the appearance of this key route. The project has been developed through a community co-design process led by professional designers in collaboration with partners and stakeholders including building and business owners.

6.2 In addition to delivering new infrastructure, the street will be fully pedestrianised (though allowing access for delivery vehicles and emergency services), improving connections between the city centre and waterfront. It will also provide improved crossings over the Nethergate to the north and Yeaman Shore to the south to provide a fully cohesive connection. What was once a road will be transformed to high-quality, accessible, level public space with seating, shelters, a public events space, planting, cycle parking, space for outdoor eating and drinking and new and improved lighting. An illustration is included in Appendix 2

6.3 Transport Scotland has confirmed a £1.1 million grant in construction phase funding for the 2026/2027 financial year. This funding will enable the final phase of the Union Street pedestrianisation project, marking the culmination of a journey that began with the removal of through traffic and placemaking in Summer 2020.

## **7 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 This report has been subject to the Pre-IIA Screening Tool and does not make any recommendations for change to strategy, policy, procedures, services or funding and so has not been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment. An appropriate Senior Manager has reviewed and agreed with this assessment.

**8 CONSULTATIONS**

8.1 The Council Leadership Team were consulted in the preparation of this report.

**9 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

9.1 None.

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## APPENDIX 1: CITY CENTRE STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PLAN PROGRESS OVERVIEW

The table below provides an update on the key progress made on each of the plan's five themes.

<b>Living Theme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant social housing completions:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 31 flats – 17-23 Murraygate (including new Tesco Metro).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Significant social housing developments under construction:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 53 flats – Thorter Loan, phase 2 (City Quay);</li> <li>– 49 flats – 3 Gellatly Street (former Job Centre); and</li> <li>– 28 flats – 3 Trades Lane (opposite Bus Station).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Upper floor conversions to private sector flats under construction:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 14 flats – 3 Whitehall Crescent; and</li> <li>– 4 flats – 9-17 Commercial Street (registered Building at Risk).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Purpose Built Student Accommodation completions:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 55 beds – new BT Headquarters, West Marketgait;</li> <li>– 77 beds – part conversion of Caledonian House, Greenmarket;</li> <li>– 163 beds – 63 Brown Street, Parklands Phase 1; and</li> <li>– 98 beds – 10 Douglas Street, Stanley Studios Phase 2.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Conversion of the former Telephone House is underway for 417 student beds.</li> </ul>
<b>Working Theme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new BT Headquarters on West Marketgait is complete.</li> <li>• The Grade-A office accommodation on Site 6 in the Central Waterfront is nearing completion</li> <li>• The “vacant to vibrant” pilot project to occupy a vacant ground floor unit on Castle Street, in partnership with Creative Dundee, is now being transformed by the award-winning artist Lindsey Mendick through the Jupiter+ Dundee project, commissioned by Jupiter Artland.</li> </ul>
<b>Visiting Theme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In May 2025, LiveHouse launched in the former Greens Playhouse/Mecca Bingo on the Nethergate. LiveHouse aims to be one of the largest and most versatile event spaces in Scotland becoming a centre for live music, entertainment, conferencing and the arts. The venue has the potential to host up to 4,500</li> <li>• The Overgate Centre is currently operating at close to full occupancy. Since its acquisition in 2023, both footfall and customer spend have increased significantly.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– new store openings include: Rituals, Castore, Søstrene Grene, Mango and Nomination;</li> <li>– Frasers Department Store (opened June 2025); and</li> <li>– in addition, existing retailers have extended their leases, many of which have undergone refurbishments, and some have expanded their premises.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Discussions continue with City Centre Stakeholders regarding proposals for a business led Business Improvement District (BID). A Steering Group has been established, a BID manager appointed, and a survey of local businesses is underway. Issues such a boundary, levy amount and focus of any investment are being considered. The timeline for the potential ballot is being confirmed subject to Committee approval of the position of the Council
- The Dundee Tourism Strategy and Action Plan was launched in October 2025. Delivery of the strategy will be overseen by the Tourism Leadership Group, which comprises senior representatives from the city's visitor attractions, hotels and tour companies, as well as VisitScotland and Dundee City Council.
- The Christmas in Dundee programme in 2025 will include the Christmas lights switch on event (16 November), the Dundee Hooley (30 November) followed by a programme of activity in City Square over the festive period.
- Invest Dundee and City Centre Management recently attended the GRO Retail Event in London 30 September and 1 October 2025.
- Final marketing plans are being devised through UKSPF funding, which will create new content that can be used across social media, including an awareness digital campaign promoting Dundee as a city break destination, and a programme of activities with influencers to promote the city and attract new visitors.
- Evening Economy: a Youth Diversionary programme was trialled over the summer for 20 weeks on Friday evenings. Street Soccer Scotland led activities, with extra events held on key Fridays during school holidays. These included a Youth Café at McDonald's, attended by Community Learning & Development, Hot Chocolate, Boomerang, Women's Aid who provided support and showcased activities in and out of the city centre. The aim is to engage with young people to help reduce early evening issues in the city centre and create a more positive evening atmosphere.

**Connectivity Theme**

- Development continues on the Bell Street Sustainable Transport Hub. The main works include the installation of EV chargers, PV panels, battery storage and electrical upgrades. The ground floor will be operated by the Dundee Cycle Hub and will include several key facilities: a Regional Bike Reuse Centre, public cycle storage, and a skills park for bikes and wheeled sports. These services are expected to open to the public in Spring 2026, following completion of fit-out works by the operator.
- The active travel freeway network recently secured £745K of external funding from Transport Scotland to develop the technical design of the Lochee and Arbroath Road Corridors in 2025/2026. Design and consultation works commenced in early April 2025 and are due to be completed by the end of the financial year.
- Secure cycle parking and storage works at Greenmarket and Olympia multi-storey car parks are now complete and open to the public.
- City Centre Active Travel: a funding bid was submitted to Transport Scotland's Tier 2 Active Travel Infrastructure fund for developing the technical/detailed design of active travel routes within the North-West quarter of the city centre. The outcome is now expected during the next financial year.

- City Centre Traffic Modelling: Consultants Systra were appointed in April 2025 to carry out a multi-option traffic modelling study for the city centre. The aim is to identify a transport network configuration that prioritises active travel and public transport, while ensuring essential vehicular access to support businesses and meet the needs of residents, workers, and those living in the city centre. Traffic survey data has now been collected, and development of a new city centre model is underway. Scenario testing aligned with the CCSIP is currently being prepared and will be undertaken later this year. The overall programme of work is scheduled for completion in summer 2026.
- Eden Connections: concept design work is currently underway for the active travel routes between the city centre and existing destinations to the east including Olympia and the Gallagher Retail Park as well as the proposed Eden site. A series of engagement events and stakeholder consultations has already been completed. Given the limited parking provision on the Eden site, this work is essential to ensure that walking, wheeling, and cycling routes between the city centre and the Eden site are fully developed and ready ahead of the site's opening.

Public Realm Theme	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The City Centre Lighting Strategy is now finalised and provides a clear, evidence-based framework to guide future lighting design across the city centre. It sets out principles and recommendations to ensure lighting schemes are well-informed, cohesive, and aligned with broader urban design objectives.</li><li>• In line with the City Centre Lighting Masterplan, a programme of works at McManus Galleries have now been completed. Continuing an approach of lighting prominent buildings in the City Centre area, funding has been secured through UK SPF which will see new lighting of the Caird Hall south façade. Works will be complete early 2026.</li><li>• The Eastern Quarter Masterplan commission is now concluded, delivering a Masterplan for the area along with costed concept designs for the shortlisted public realm improvement projects. The full document is available in at the following: <a href="#">Dundee Eastern Quarter - Masterplan Review</a>.</li><li>• The Murraygate Environmental Improvements project was selected from the Eastern Quarter Masterplan project shortlist. LDA Consultants have been appointed to lead on the projects detailed design stage, working in collaboration with Dundee City Council engineers. Subject to approvals, construction is scheduled to begin during Spring 2026.</li><li>• Dundee City Council has been allocated £20 million in Community Regeneration Partnership (CRP) funding from the UK Government. The programme is designed to tackle inequalities and barriers to growth, supporting regeneration, attracting investment and increasing opportunities for local people. The City Council are the lead authority tasked with managing the programme, which includes standalone capital projects delivered by the Council or third parties, challenge funds where organisations and firms are invited to bid, and also revenue investment. The three key funds are the Commercial Buildings Enhancement Grant, Community Facilities Challenge Fund, and the Historic Buildings Renewal Fund.</li><li>• Public Health and Safety: ongoing fortnightly meetings between Council Officers, Police Scotland other key stakeholders.</li></ul>

## APPENDIX 2: UNION STREET SOUTH FACING PERSPECTIVE

