

## Response ID ANON-B3JU-DST2-H

Submitted to **Local Development Plan Main Issues Report 2019 Consultation**  
Submitted on **2019-05-13 12:19:44**

### About You

#### What is your name?

**Name:**

Angus Dodds

#### What is your organisation?

**Organisation:**

Savills

**On behalf of:**

Palmer Capital and Manse LLP

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### How to Complete

#### 1 Introduction

**Section 1 provides a context for the Main Issues Report Do you have any comments in relation to this section?**

Do you have any comments in relation to this section?:

#### 2 Settlement Strategy

##### Question 1 New Housing Sites

**Do you agree with our preferred housing sites? Are there any other sites that would be suitable for housing?:**

Please see the response to question number 6 and the attached Development Framework for further discussion of the contribution the site at HarbourCity can make in terms of housing .

##### Question 2 Housing Allowances Beyond 2032

**Is there a need for us to identify further Housing Allowances or sites for the period beyond 2032?:**

##### Question 3 Brownfield and other Opportunity Sites

**Are there any further brownfield or other opportunity sites which would be suitable for redevelopment?:**

##### Question 4 New Healthcare Facilities

**Do you have any comments on these sites? Are there any other sites in these areas that we should be considering?:**

#### 3 Aberdeen City Centre and the Network of Centres

##### Question 5 City Centre Boundary

**Do you agree the Local Development Plan should modify its City Centre boundary to match the City Centre boundary shown in the City Centre Masterplan?:**

## Question 6 City Centre Masterplan Intervention Areas

### Do you agree that the City Centre Masterplan intervention areas should be identified as opportunity sites within the Local Development Plan?:

Yes. The attached Development Framework Document gives full details of the potential of the HarbourCity site as an opportunity area, and should be read in conjunction with this form.

In summary, the site at North Dee Quarter/HarbourCity presents a unique opportunity within Aberdeen to gradually re-purpose, re-imagine and re-generate a long forgotten corner of the city centre, that links the River Dee with the heart of Aberdeen City Centre. The isolated nature of this quarter, hemmed off from the rest of the city for many decades by the existence of busy roads, a railway line and a railway goods yard, has meant that it has a poorly articulated identity in the public consciousness.

If HarbourCity was to be marketed as an attractive and exciting home for 'urban pioneers', a term and concept that is well rehearsed in regeneration practice, it is not considered that the ongoing presence of the employment land Uses also on the site would create any adverse issues either for present occupiers or new residents.

We would therefore propose that the site be identified in the Proposed LDP, and described in the following manner:

An urban scale live/work quarter that provides attractive amenities for established and new business users, and for urban pioneers looking for a unique living quarter in the heart of the city. The district sits within a well-designed urban landscape that emphasises pedestrian connectivity, immediate links to city centre transport links, a mix of spaces to inhabit and dwell, and a range of local shops and eateries. Occupying a high profile position on North Esplanade overlooking the river, the mix of uses proposed on the site will allow for it to become in time an attractive stepping stone that creates permeability between the city centre and the River Dee, a link that has hitherto been severed since works to the harbour in the late 19th Century. The development of different activity generating uses in this area will help to reconnect the city with its waterfront and contribute to the overall experience of Aberdeen City Centre for residents and visitors, all in line with the objectives of the Aberdeen City Centre masterplan.

- New stacked uses across the seven blocks of the quarter including: class 1 retail; class 2 financial professional and other services; class 3 Food and drink; sui generis flatted accommodation; sui generis public house; class 9 housing
- Re-use of listed smoke houses for a variety of purposes and to create navigation points at critical areas of the quarter
- 'tightening' of broad road junctions to help enclose spaces and create imaginative new amenity areas that will make journeys through the quarter more legible and lend character and identity to the evolving district
- A range of different employment and housing uses throughout the quarter to ensure that it evolves as an urban live-work space, unique in the North East of Scotland.

## Question 7 City Centre Retail Core

Should the retail core be reduced to focus on a more compact area of Union Street and the existing shopping centres?:

## Question 8 Union Street Frontages

Should the Union Street Frontages percentages be reviewed? Do the current target percentages ensure there is a balance between a strong retail focus and allowing for other uses? What other uses should we allow on the retail core area of Union Street:

## Question 9 Out of Town Retailing

Should we direct high footfall uses to existing centres including the City Centre? Should we consider new out of town retail parks? What would the impact of these be on Union Street and the City Centre, and Aberdeen's network of centres?:

## Question 10 Commercial Leisure Uses

Should we continue to direct commercial leisure uses towards existing centres and the beach and leisure area?:

## Question 11 City Centre Living

How can we encourage more people to live in the City Centre? Would a document outlining the principles which need to be applied in converting a building into residential use be helpful?:

## MAIN ISSUE 1 Living in the City Centre

Should we include a policy in the Local Development Plan supporting residential development in the City Centre, including the conversion of upper and basement floors of premises to provide residential accommodation?:

Not Answered

## Question 12 Residential Development in the City Centre

Are there any other locations within the City Centre where residential accommodation could be provided?:

Yes, please see the attached Development Framework document for fuller details

## **MAIN ISSUE 2 A 24-Hour City**

Should 24-hour activities in Aberdeen be supported and encouraged to grow, especially in the City Centre? Could this be achieved through policy?:

Not Answered

### **Question 13 Encouraging the Creative Arts**

What can we do to support and encourage the creative sector to ensure a range of distinctive experiences so that Aberdeen City Centre is like no other place?:

### **Question 14 Proposals for Creative Arts**

Are there other buildings or areas within Aberdeen that could accommodate the existing, and support an emerging creative sector for desk-based and studio-based artists?:

### **Question 15 Percent for Art**

To ensure Aberdeen City Centre retains its distinctiveness, should developments with construction costs of £1 million or over be required to allocate at least 1% of construction costs for the inclusion of art projects in a publicly accessible/ visible place or places within the development?:

## **MAIN ISSUE 3 Support for Visitor Attractions**

To support our existing visitor attractions should Aberdeen have a policy about protecting and growing visitor attractions?:

Not Answered

## **4 Quality Places**

### **MAIN ISSUE 4 Minimum Internal Space Standards for New Residential Development**

How can we ensure that new residential development delivers an adequate amount of internal floor space for future occupants?:

Not Answered

### **Question 16 External Space Standards**

Do you think that the amenity spaces currently delivered are of a sufficient quality? Should we strive for a better quality/ quantity of private/ semi-private residential amenity space across the city and refuse planning permission to proposals which do not meet our high standards? What standards would you like to see set for new dwellings, flats, and conversions in respect of quality and quantity of external amenity space?:

### **Question 17 Natural Environment**

Do you agree that the proposed list of policies for Natural Environment gives a clearer and more coherent structure than at present?:

### **Question 18 Food Growing**

How can the Local Development Plan support the delivery of food growing projects in the City? Do you think food growing should be included in the next Plan by way of a new policy, or through existing policy and guidance?:

## **5 Transport and Infrastructure**

### **Question 19 City Centre Parking**

Should we reduce car parking in the City Centre to support the City Centre Masterplan? If so, how?:

### **MAIN ISSUE 5 Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure**

How best can we encourage the provision of infrastructure to support changes in transport technologies? :

Not Answered

### **Question 20 Digital Infrastructure**

Should high speed broadband be mandatory in all new residential developments with 5 or more units? Do you wish to suggest any other proposed changes to the Digital Infrastructure and Telecommunications Infrastructure policies?:

### **Question 21 Developer Obligations and Infrastructure Delivery**

Do we need to change our approach to securing developer obligations for future development proposals?:

## 6 Resource and Business Policy

### MAIN ISSUE 6 Low and Zero Carbon Generating Technologies and Water Efficiency

Should the requirement of existing Policy R7 be changed?:

Not Answered

### Question 22 Low and Zero Carbon Generating Technologies and Water Efficiency

What methodology should the Council use in calculating compliance with Policy R7, specifically how should the target of reducing carbon dioxide levels be calculated?:

### Question 23 Solar Farm Developments

Do you agree that Solar Farms should be supported within the Council's policy on Renewable and Low Carbon Energy developments, and should specific guidance be included within Policy R8?:

### MAIN ISSUE 7 Heat Networks

Should we include a policy in the Local Development Plan supporting the development of Heat Networks within the City?:

Not Answered

### Question 24 Supporting Business and Industrial Development

Should we carry forward our current policy approach to safeguarding existing business and industrial areas from other development pressures into the next Local Development Plan?:

### MAIN ISSUE 8 West End Office Area

Should the policy support a mix of uses in the West End Office Area? If so, what types?:

Not Answered

## 8 Sustainable Mixed Communities

### MAIN ISSUE 9 Inclusive Housing Mix (Housing for the Elderly and Accessible Housing)

How can the Local Development Plan ensure a greater mix of housing types is achieved in new developments?:

Not Answered

### MAIN ISSUE 10 Residential Care Facilities

How should the Local Development Plan cater for proposals relating to Residential Care Facilities?:

Not Answered

### MAIN ISSUE 11 Student Accommodation

How can the Local Development Plan cater to proposals relating to student accommodation?:

Not Answered

### MAIN ISSUE 12 Houses in Multiple Occupation

How can the Local Development Plan support sustainable mixed communities, with regards to HMOs?:

Not Answered

Percentage limit of HMOs in each area:

Please explain why you chose your answer:

Geographical boundary of each area:

Please explain why you chose your answer:

Threshold for when planning permission is required for a HMO:

Please explain why you chose your answer:



### **Question 27 Community Planning**

Is there anything else that the Local Development Plan can do to support the objectives of the LOIP or the aims of Community Planning?:

### **Question 28 Changing Places Toilets**

Should large new developments that require public access provide Changing Places toilets? What types of venues should provide them?:

### **Additional Documents**

**Please include comments on other documents below:**

**Please include comments on other documents below::**

Please find the following supporting documents attached:

1. Development Framework document
2. Flood Risk analysis
3. Transport Statement
4. Location Plan
5. Aberdeen Office Market analysis

### **Additional Files**

**If you have further information you would like to provide you may upload it here.:**

Aberdeen Office Market.pdf was uploaded



# 17142 - HarbourCity, North Dee

REPRESENTATION TO THE ABERDEEN LDP CONSULTATION (MAY 2019)







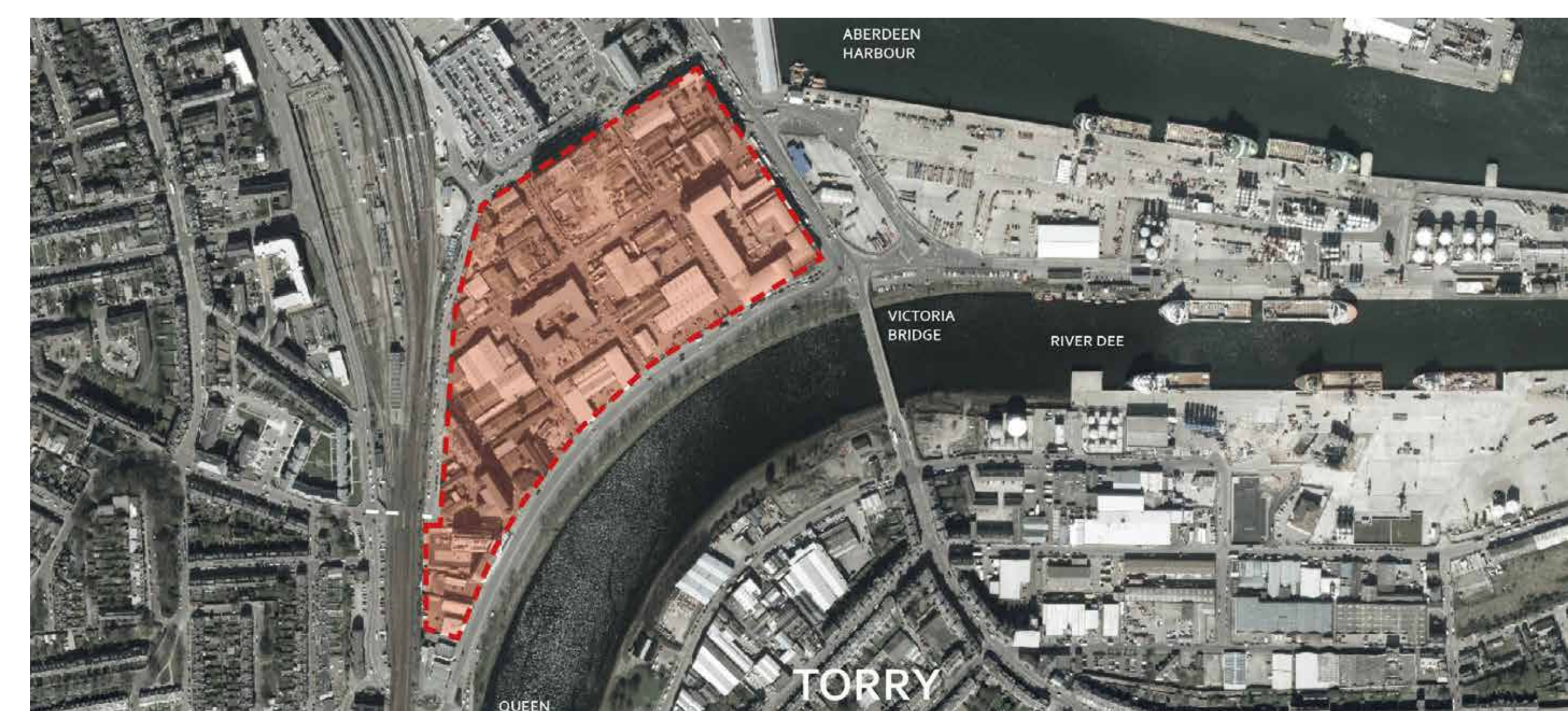
## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The site at North Dee Quarter / HarbourCity presents a unique opportunity within Aberdeen to gradually re-purpose, re-imagine and re-generate a long forgotten corner of the city centre, that links the River Dee with the heart of the Granite City itself. The isolated nature of this quarter, hemmed off from the rest of the city for many decades by the existence of busy roads, a railway line and a railway goods yard, has meant that it has a poorly articulated identity in the public consciousness.

There is an opportunity now to capitalise upon the site's riverside frontage and the excellent, immediate links to the City Centre retail core and the rail / bus interchange to the north. Over time, as wider infrastructure improvements to the city alter its geography in terms of business and transportation, this area will become an increasingly attractive home for urban pioneers to live and work in. The gradual redevelopment of this area to support a mixture of compatible uses is in accordance with the Council's City Centre Masterplan, and specifically with its challenging target of adding 3000 new residents to the city centre by 2040.

City centre living in this area will be vibrant and exciting both when adjacent employment uses are operational, and over time, non-operational. It is proposed to create a bold and vibrant mixed use quarter via phased re-development, with residential development supported by the range of complementary office and commercial uses already present, and by the potential to support new business innovation in the area and maintain active ground floor frontages, generating activity throughout the day and evening.

The overall concept draws on the wealth of other examples of comparable city centre waterfront sites in major European destinations, including Stockholm, Malmo and Copenhagen. Aberdeen must have the ambition to match if not exceed these exemplar developments, maximising the once in a lifetime opportunity which exists for the City.







NEW STREET TREES

NEW STREET TREES

8 STOREY APARTMENTS

CAFE / BARS

CAFE

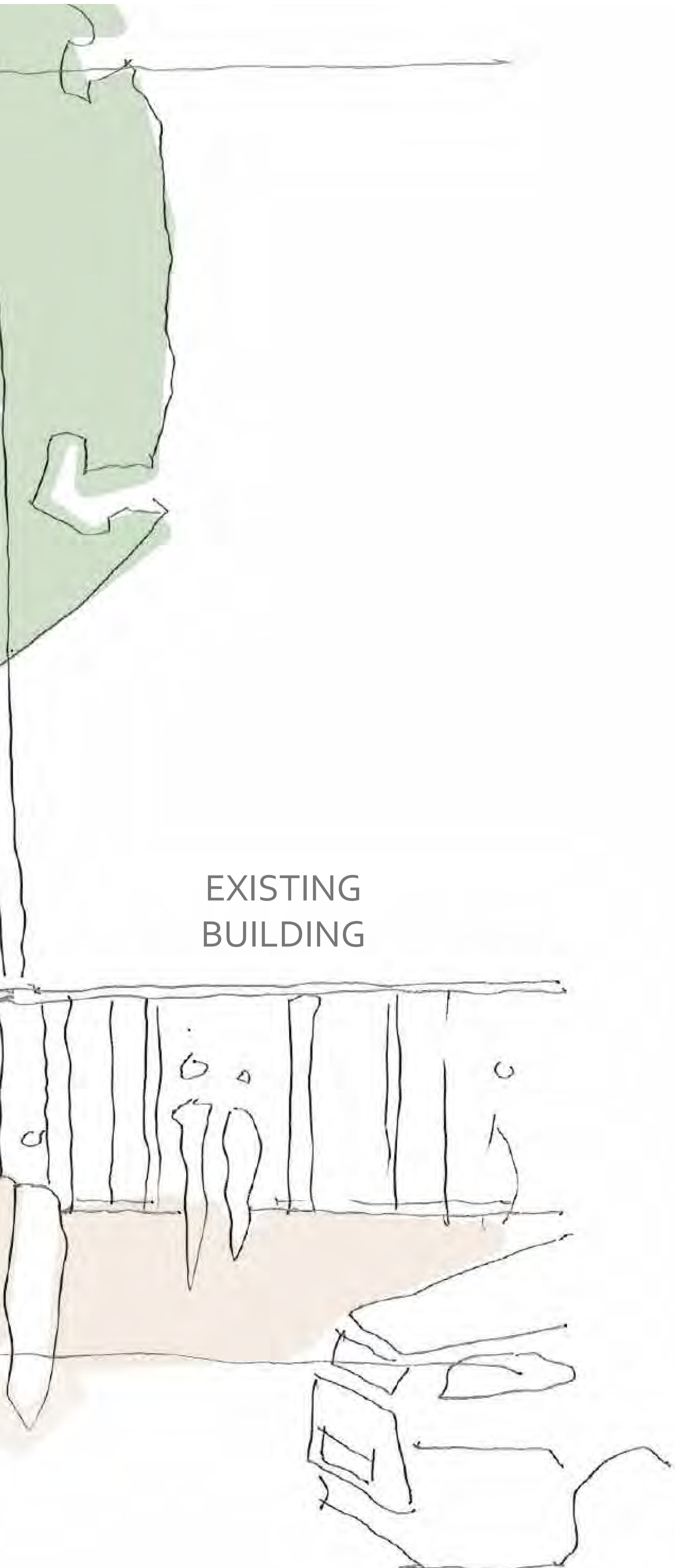
UNION SQUARE

NEW STREET ENVIRONMENT



# CONTENTS

- Developer / Project Team
- Site & Location
- Market Overview
- Planning Context
- Transport, Accessibility and Services
- The Masterplan
- MIR Response
- Key Views



EXISTING BUILDING



Developer: Manse LLP (in partnership with Palmer Capital)

Masterplanner: EMA Architecture + Design

Planning Consultancy: Savills







UNION SQUARE

ABERDEEN HARBOUR

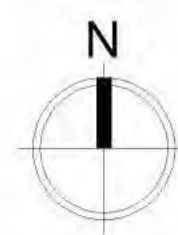
VICTORIA BRIDGE

RIVER DEE

TORRY

QUEEN ELIZABETH BRIDGE





## SITE / LOCATION

The site itself extends to around 10.6 hectares and is strategically located on the south side of Aberdeen City Centre, well positioned in relation to public transport routes due to the close proximity of both Aberdeen Railway Station and Aberdeen Bus Station. The site is situated on the north bank of the River Dee and west of Aberdeen Harbour. To the north of site lies Union Square Shopping Centre.

The site was created from made ground resulting from drainage works to the River Dee that also resulted in the formation of Albert Quay and the Albert basin around 1869/70. From the earliest maps depicting the site, it is shown as a location of industrial and employment uses. Maps from the 1880's to the 1940's show it as the site for a variety of 'Works' including: timber yards; stone yards; oil facilities; engineering facilities; fish smoking; ice making facilities etc. Reflecting this heritage, the area currently includes a large number of office and industrial buildings of varying use and condition. The form of the area since its completion at the end of the 19th Century has altered little, with seven key blocks filling the space between the Esplanade, Market Street and Palmerston Road.

Despite the continuity, however there is also an already established process of change taking place in the North Dee area as recognised by the City Centre Masterplan. While many of the buildings in the north of the area reflect their proximity to the nearby harbour, there are a number of new office developments especially on the southern part of the quarter that have been consented and/or constructed in more recent times since the area has been known as the North Dee Business Quarter. These include GDF Suez House, Pilgrim House and The Grande.









## MARKET OVERVIEW

### City Centre Development

A number of Phase 1 City Centre Masterplan initiatives have been implemented, including; the £30m redevelopment of Aberdeen Art Gallery; the £7.9m redevelopment of the Music Hall; a £3m investment in cleaning buildings and pavements and upgrading/removing/fixing and repainting street furniture on Union Street; a £2m+ fund to improve the fabric of historic buildings, a £3.2m redesign of Broad Street to deliver a new public realm space, and; the £20m revitalisation of Union Terrace Gardens.

Moreover, Union Square Shopping Centre, an identified City Centre Masterplan Development Project which adjoins the subject land parcels to the north, is subject to redevelopment proposals by its owner Hammerson, involving the extension of the existing shopping centre over the existing surface level car park, incorporating the existing retail warehousing within the main mall. The recently approved planning permission in principle (Ref: 152005) proposes additional enclosed retail (class 1) floorspace of around 11,148 sq.m (120,000 sq.ft), food and beverage space (class 3) of around 4,645 sq.m (50,000 sq.ft), with leisure uses including an IMAX / super screen cinema, hotel development and car parking/access reconfiguration.

### Aberdeen Office Market

The rise and fall of global oil prices between 2010 and the present has had a profound impact on office take up in the City. In 2014 office take up in the city was in excess of 1,000,000 sq.ft. This number dropped over 50% in 2015 (c.400,000 sq.ft) and then reduced by around half again to just c.230,000 sq.ft in 2016, - the lowest annual total in the city since detailed records began and well below the 10 year average. Aberdeen office Take Up in Q1 2019 was the lowest quarter witnessed on record at 37,117 sq.ft.

Given the foregoing, it may not come as a surprise that the office market is presently characterised by significant oversupply, and office supply across the city at present extends to an unprecedented 2.7million sq.ft. In close proximity to the site there is nearly 200,000sq.ft of office space already being marketed. Such sites comprise the Exchange, Market Street (c.15,000 sq.ft), Riverside House, Riverside Drive (c.60,000 sq.ft), Salvesen Tower, Blaikie's Quay (40,000 sq.ft), Regent Centre, Regent Road (30,000 sq.ft) and Atholl House, Guild Street (c.50,000 sq.ft).

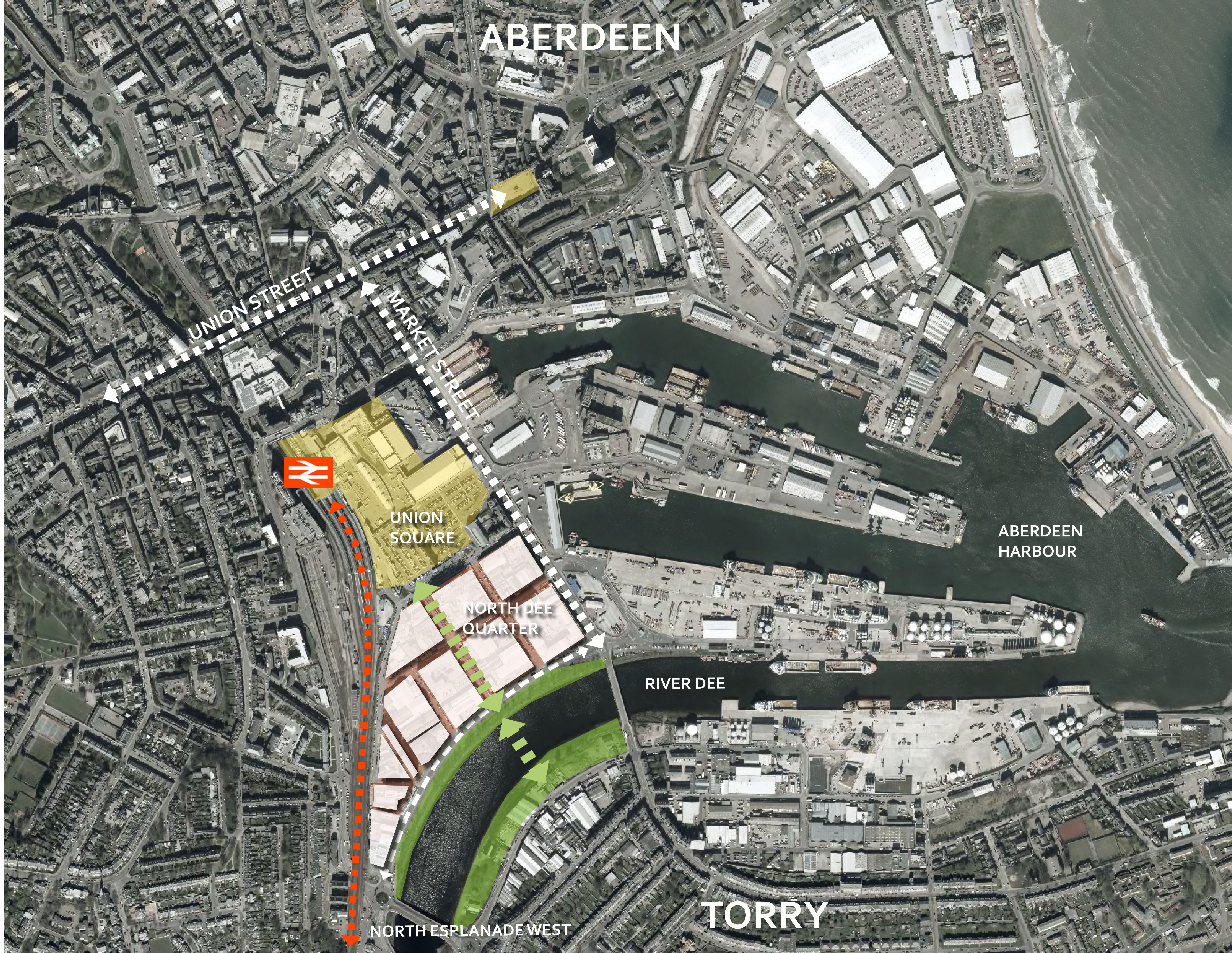
Marketed supply within the North Dee Business Quarter is currently at around 215,000 sq.ft (not including any 'grey space' that is unused but not marketed). This total therefore represents an equivalent of nearly all of the Office take-up across the City in 2016. There has been no office take up in the North Dee Business Quarter in the last 12 months.

The North Dee Business Quarter has largely been delivered in the last two decades mostly during comparatively buoyant market periods. The quarter now provides more than 500,000 sq.ft of High Quality City Centre office spaces in a range of buildings that have historically appealed to a broad spectrum of different users. The evolution of the southern part of the site as an identifiable business destination has successfully resonated with local businesses, and it is significant that most of the buildings within the Quarter used pre-lets or pre-sales (at least in part) to facilitate construction.





# ABERDEEN



UNION STREET

MARKET STREET



UNION SQUARE

NORTH DEE QUARTER

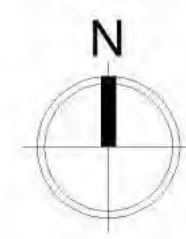
RIVER DEE

ABERDEEN HARBOUR

NORTH ESPLANADE WEST

TORRY





## MARKET OVERVIEW

### Aberdeen Office Market (continued)

Given recent turbulence in the local market, the City Centre Masterplan gives something of a 'shot in the arm' to the quarter by recognising its importance as a key part of the city centre. However, the oversupply of office spaces within the city makes speculative construction of further business space here unlikely at this time, while the last pre-let office construction took place back in early 2015, making that an unlikely avenue to prompt development as currently envisaged.

As an alternative, it is considered that Aberdeen should adopt an approach that has been taken in many other successful cities. By introducing a complimentary range of uses within a business quarter, this allows activity to take place both in the day and into the evening, injecting an energy and identity to a quarter that is liable to ebb away otherwise. Such an approach will consolidate existing businesses in the area, as well as encouraging others to join them. This would seem a more pragmatic way to address the issue created by current vacancy rates in an area that is fundamentally an attractive destination for business. Given the foregoing, a proposal to introduce a greater mix of uses here, seems the best way to encourage the energy, vitality and activity in the City Centre sought by the City Centre Masterplan.

### Housing Land Delivery

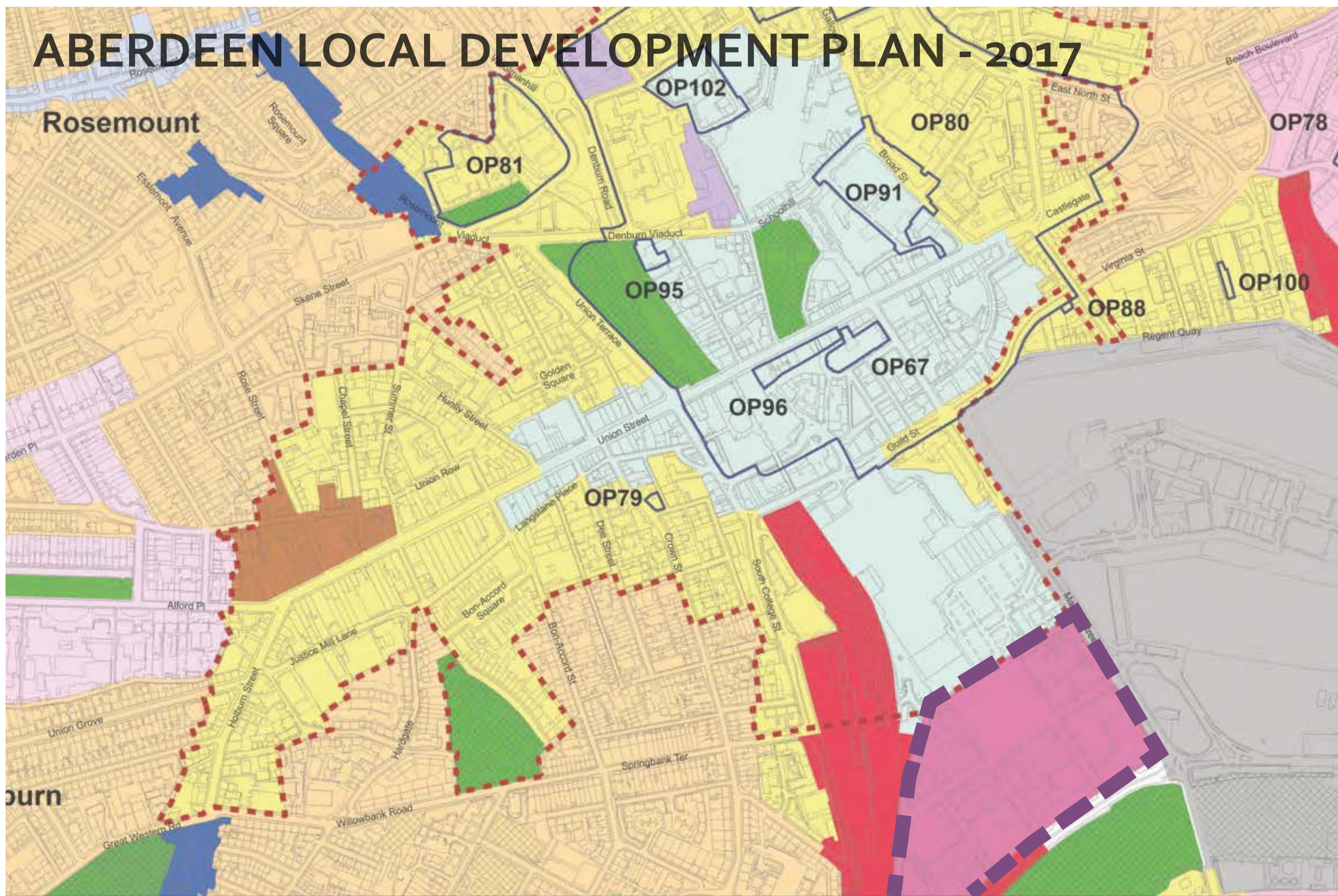
The April 2019 Housing Land Audit shows that across the city there is currently an effective land supply of 6950, while the Proposed Strategic Development Plan requires that there be an effective land supply of 6648. On the basis of this, the city is currently served by a 5 year effective housing land supply. However, looking more closely at the data within the audit, there are a number of factors that are worth considering in the context of actual delivery rates and what can be expected going forward. These matters should be material to Officers consideration of the HarbourCity site as a location that can contribute over time to city-wide housing targets.

In each of the City areas considered in the Audit, each one relies on one or a small number of very large sites to deliver substantial parts of their housing supply. It is worth noting that in each of these areas except Peterculter the largest 'effective' sites have to date delivered either none, or very few completions. In the Former City area the largest site is at Greenfold where an allocated site for up to 1470 units is referenced as being constrained or non-effective owing to land ownership issues. In addition to this, a further 81 units across the Former City area are also shown as being non-effective. Overall, of the 4478 units that are shown as comprising the remaining capacity for the Former City area in the audit, 1557 units are recognised as being non-effective.

Further, the sites that are recognised as being effective are also not delivering the number of units anticipated. Among the effective sites identified in the audit, Broadford Works is the largest in this part of the city where 460 units are anticipated. However, none of these units have to date come forward, and the site only presently enjoys a Planning Permission in Principle, suggesting that commencement may be some way off. Overall amongst all of the sites in the Former City area that are included in the latest audit, only 307 units have been delivered in the three years since 2016.

The challenges that have faced the Aberdeen housing market in recent times have been well-rehearsed. However given the city centre itself forms only a part of the Former City area, and the Council is actively looking for up to 3000 new homes in the city centre to be delivered, these overall delivery totals must be considered a matter of concern.





CITY CENTRE MASTERPLAN - 2015



## PLANNING CONTEXT

This Development Framework identifies an informed, considered approach to the effective and logical transformation over time of the North Dee Quarter into a liveable mixed use district.

### National Planning Policy Context

In line with National Planning Framework 3 and the findings of the National Review of Town Centres Town Centre Action Plan, SPP directs a town centre first principle, which promotes an approach to wider decision making that considers the health and vibrancy of town centres (Paragraph 59). In this regard, planning for town centres should be flexible and proactive, enabling a wide range of uses which bring people into town centres. (Paragraph 60)

### Local Planning Policy Context

Within the context of the current adopted Aberdeen City Local Development Plan (2017), the site is currently allocated as a Specialist Employment Area. The corresponding Policy B2 supports Class 4 (Business) uses.

In June 2015 the Council unanimously approved its City Centre Masterplan (CCMP) following extensive public consultation. The Masterplan seeks to transform the city centre and enhance its reputation as a place to “live, work and visit”. The CCMP recognises that increases in new city centre housing will make a major contribution to the expected 28% increase in the population of the city over the next 25 years. However, recent research shows that Aberdeen’s city centre accounts for only 8% of the city’s population, a figure that seems out of step with UK trends for increased urban living.

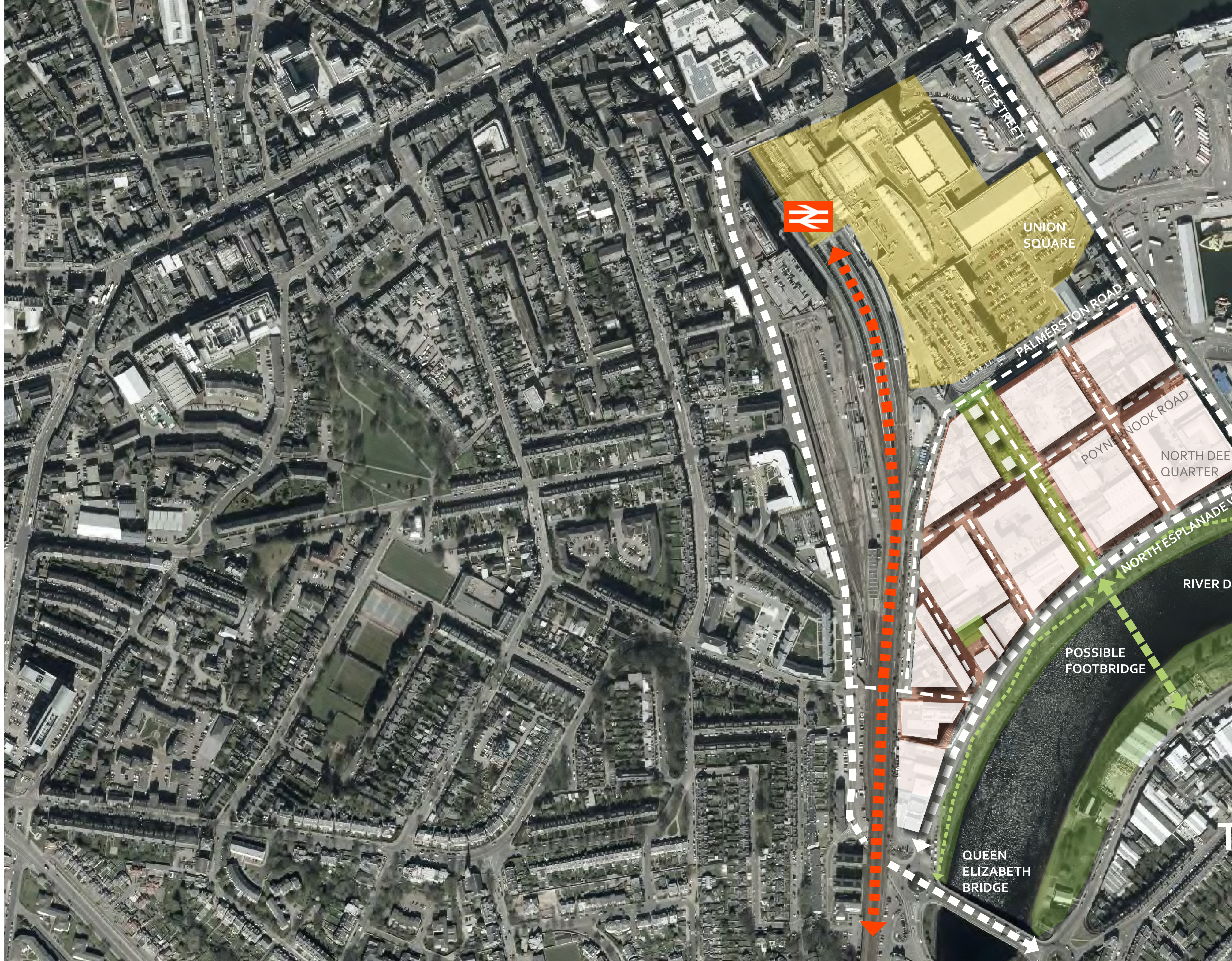
As it stands, the buildings on this site reflect the working nature of the harbour area. However as recognised by the CCMP, there is an already established process of change in the North Dee area, which has seen the land use character of North Dee shift over time. Overall, the CCMP hopes in this area to capture the growing momentum for change by establishing a network of high quality streets and spaces, linking Union Square with the River Dee. Such a district would offer “pedestrian connectivity, a mix of spaces to inhabit and dwell, and a range of local shops and eateries”.

Within the CCMP document, change on this site is envisaged as taking the form of redevelopment for business uses. However the market conditions outlined earlier in this Development Framework are considered to be a strong rationale for the gradual redevelopment of the site to support a variety of uses instead. Such an approach to introduce uses such as residential onto the site, would remain in line with the high-level aims of the CCMP, while redeveloping individual blocks incrementally in response to their varying condition and ongoing functional capability, would follow a long tradition of riverside regeneration taking this form.

The attraction of the Harbour City site for such development is that the local environment and amenities already in situ allied with future improvements to the public realm that would come forward as part of any development, would quickly create a distinctive, safe and pleasant, easy to move around, welcoming, adaptable and resource efficient area. This is something that could allow a very strong new identity for the site to be imagined very quickly. This would transcend the different types of resident likely to be interested in this type of city centre living. If HarbourCity was to be marketed as an attractive and exciting home for ‘urban pioneers’, (a term and concept that is well rehearsed in regeneration practice), it is not considered that the ongoing presence of employment land Uses also on the site would create any adverse issues either for present occupiers or new residents.







UNION SQUARE

MARKET STREET

PALMERSTON ROAD

POYNE WOOK ROAD

NORTH DEE QUARTER

NORTH ESPLANADE

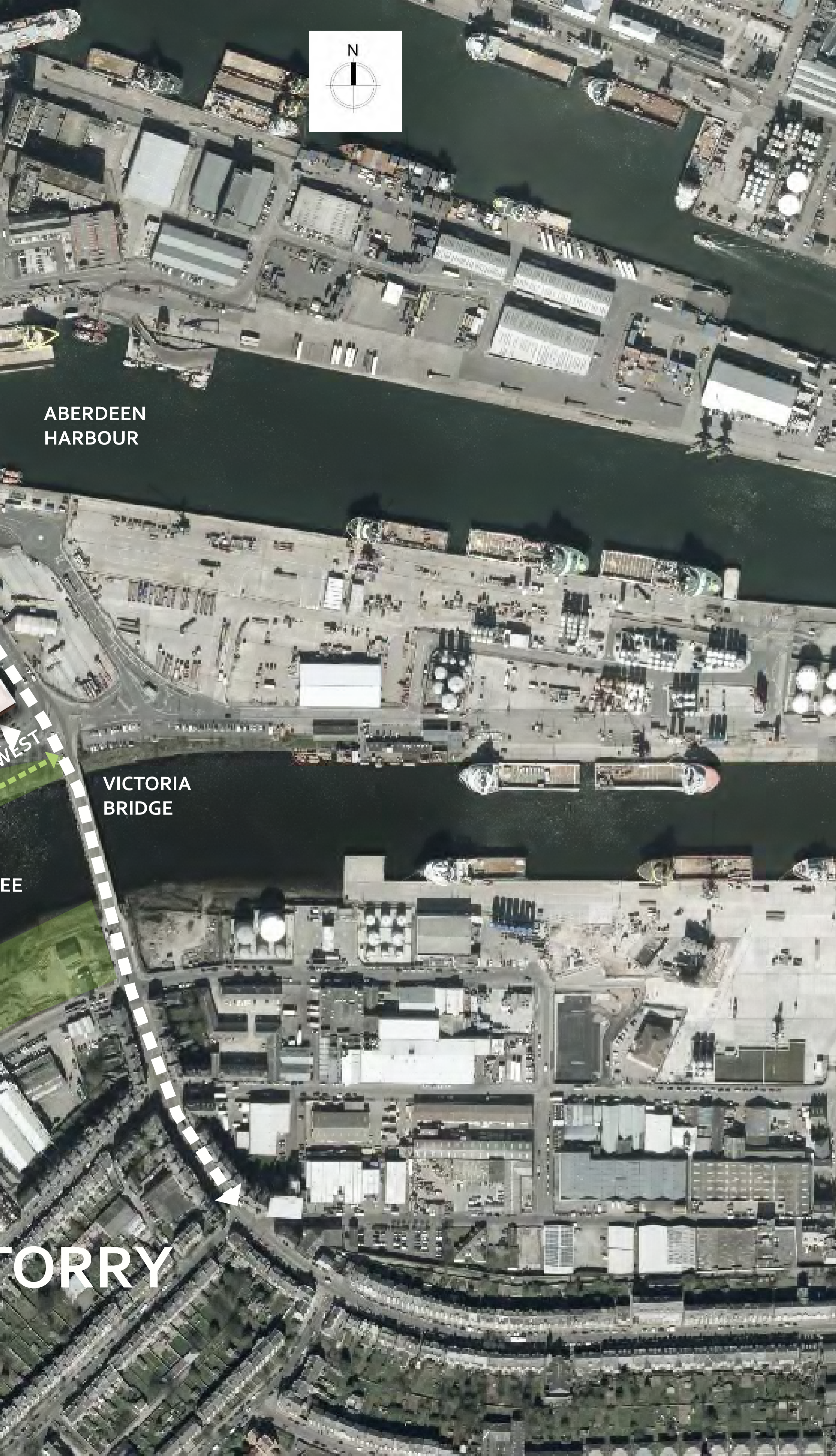
RIVER D

POSSIBLE FOOTBRIDGE

QUEEN ELIZABETH BRIDGE







In establishing the suitability of the site in terms of National and Local Transport Policy, it is necessary to assess the accessibility of the site by sustainable travel modes and, the availability of services and facilities in the local area.

#### Sustainable Transport

In relation to public transport, bus, train and ferry services are highly accessible from the development site. There are numerous public bus services on Market Street, which bounds the development site to the east. Also, Aberdeen Bus Station is accessible from the development site, located some 650m on foot from the southernmost extent of the development site, while bus stops on Crown Street are located within 400m walk from the south-western portion of the development area.

Aberdeen Rail Station, similarly, is within a 650m walk of the southern extent of the development site, providing rail travel to destinations throughout Scotland.

Partial cycle facilities are available on South College Street to the west, and Market Street to the east of the development site. Also, there is a continuous cycle route on North Esplanade to the south, running east-west along the river, and crossing facilities are available at the junction of Raik Road with North Esplanade. The CCMP seeks to improve cycle facilities within Aberdeen, and that development is well placed to benefit from these improvements.

In addition, ferry services are available close by to the east, where Aberdeen Ferry Terminal is located, some 800m walk from the southernmost edge of the development site.

There are established existing walking routes through the development area, and onwards to wider destinations, particularly to the north. Guild Street is some 650m walk from the southernmost extent of the development area on North Esplanade.

Union Street is circa 1,000m walk from North Esplanade, however it is acknowledged that there is a notable height difference at the end of this route. Studies have been undertaken by others of the ability to improve pedestrian accessibility from areas south of Guild Street up to Union Street.

The height difference itself is a reality of City Centre topography, and will not prove a barrier for the majority of the population or residents of the proposed development. Nonetheless, with respect to that minority of the population of a development with reduced mobility (the elderly, infirm or young families), it is acknowledged that improvements to the accessibility of Union Street and city centre to the north is important. It is understood that such improvements are being pursued by the Council, and pursued through the City Centre Masterplan.





# Union Square

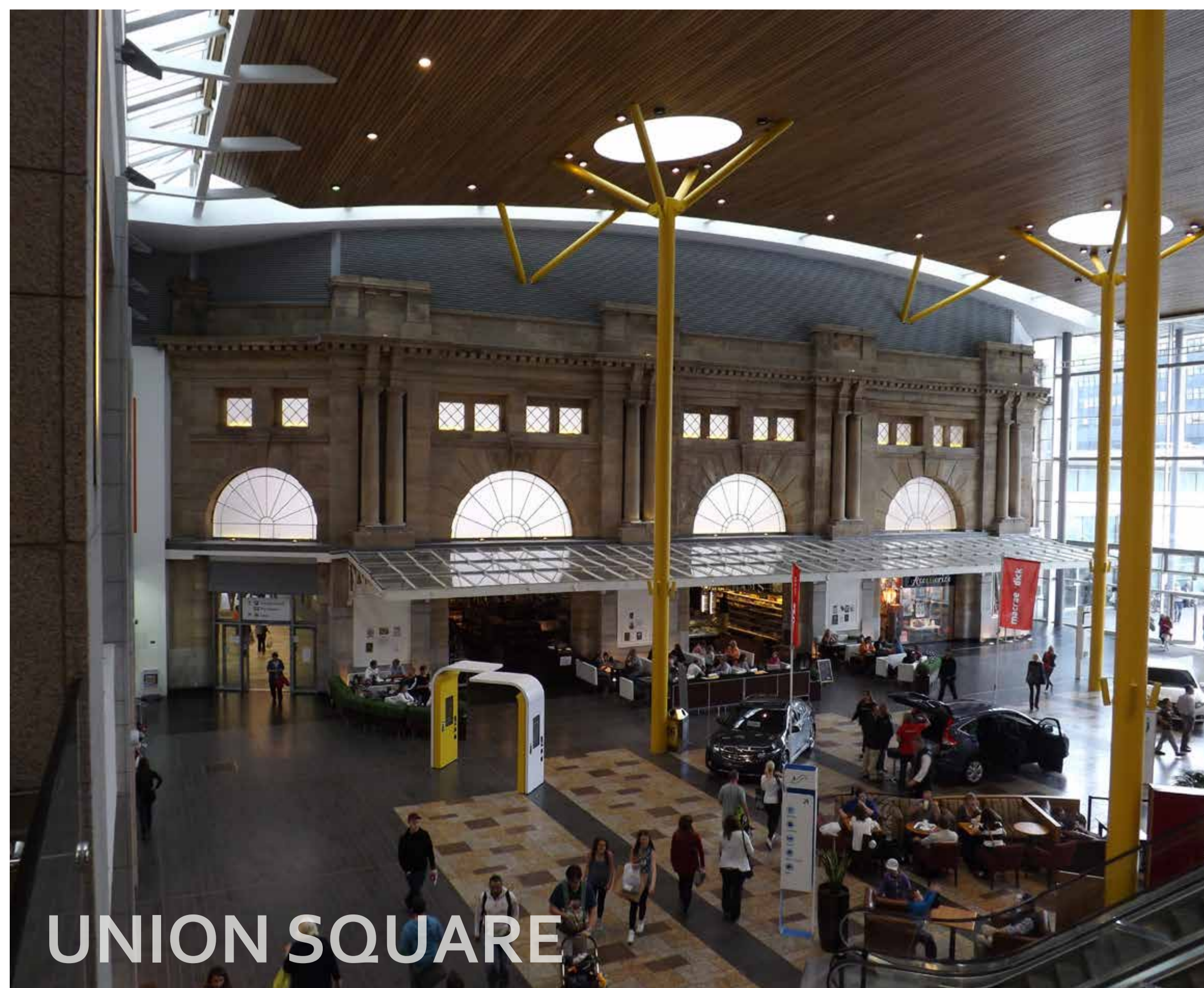




RAILWAY STATION



BUS STATION



UNION SQUARE

## Traffic Impact & Parking

Traffic impact and parking will be key considerations for a development on this scale. Notwithstanding, there is ample opportunity to minimise demand for car travel by encouraging the use of the available public transport, and promoting the use of available sustainable travel modes. On this basis, detailed assessment of traffic and parking considerations will be carried out in association with any planning application for redevelopment.

## Local Facilities

The development area is located within the City Centre of Aberdeen and, as such, has excellent accessibility to a broad range of services and facilities. Immediately adjacent is Union Square Shopping Centre, where extensive retail and leisure facilities are available. These include food and non-food shops, food and beverage outlets and leisure facilities, with a multi-screen cinema proposed. The shopping centre is within easy walking distance (less than 400m) of the development area.

There is a very broad range of other facilities within the City Centre and easily accessible from the development area, including financial, leisure and cultural facilities, and also educational establishments. These facilities are centred on Union Street, which is accessible from the development area. Sports facilities are also available close by in the form of a number of gym and fitness locations. There are gyms and fitness facilities on Shiprow to the northeast, or at the southern end of South College Street.

## Conclusions

The development site is ideally located with respect to both National and Local planning policy for transport and planning. There are existing facilities for pedestrian and cyclists throughout the local area, connecting to the wider networks throughout the City Centre, and it is anticipated that these networks will continue to be improved through the LDP and City Centre Masterplan provisions. There are numerous bus services available within easy walking distance of the development site on Market Street. Aberdeen Bus Station is also within walking distance of the whole development site, where a broader range of bus services is available. Aberdeen Train Station is within convenient walking distance of the site providing local train services and also services over the wider network to destinations throughout Scotland. Long distance travel is also catered for at the nearby Ferry Terminal.

It can be concluded that the development site is ideally located in terms of planning policy to minimise the need for car travel and promote and encourage sustainable travel on foot, by cycle and using public transport wherever possible. Furthermore, matters of traffic impact and parking would be resolved in accordance with Council policy and the City Centre Masterplan. It is therefore considered that the site presents an excellent opportunity for a truly sustainable residential led, mixed use development close to surrounding local amenities and with the potential to bring more people into the city centre. In summary the site is the most sustainable location for housing in Aberdeen.







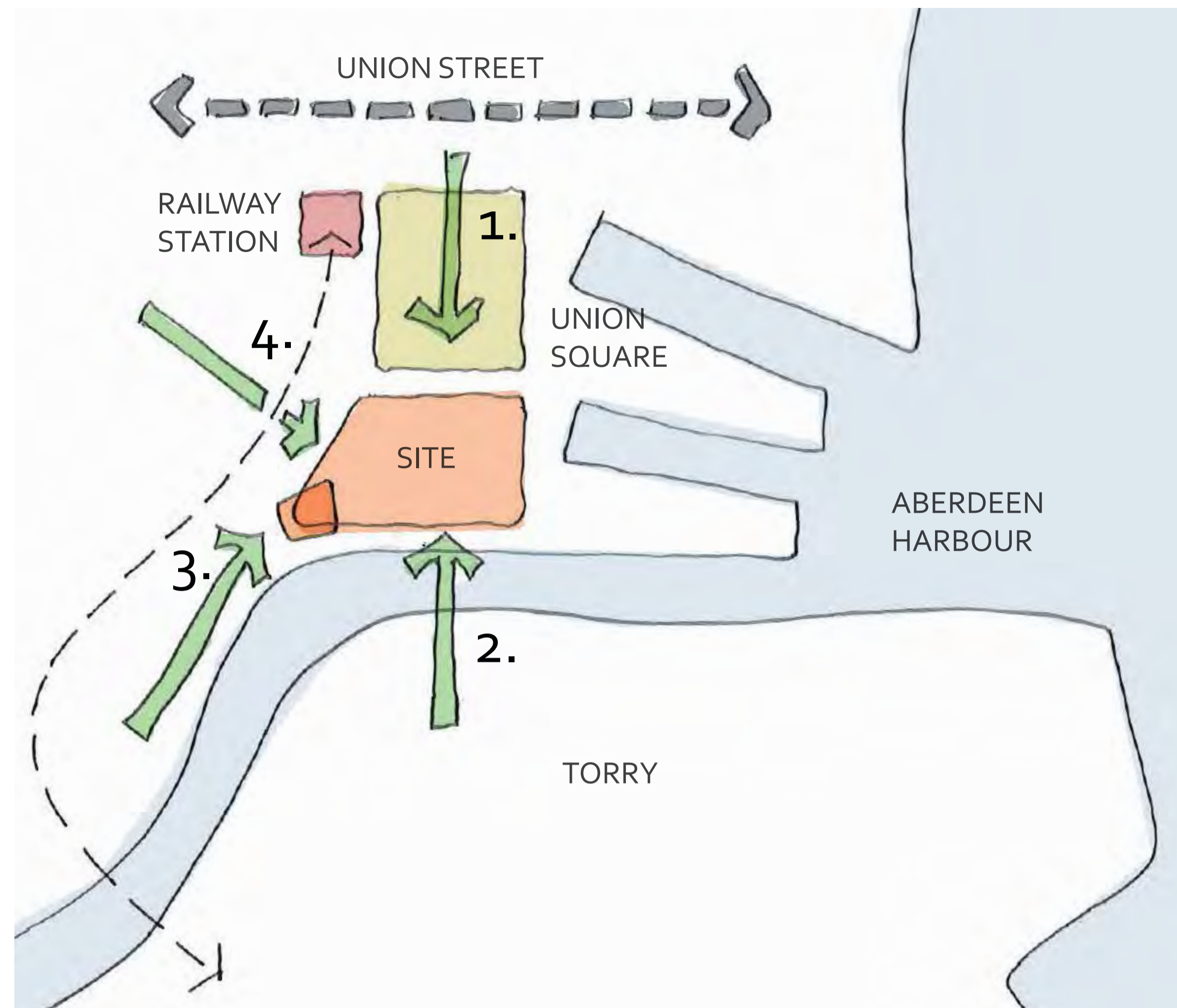
# MASTERPLAN

The masterplan for the North Dee Quarter aims to provide a framework for the incremental urban regeneration of this area which sits between North Esplanade West, Market Street, Union Square and the existing railway line to provide a new living and working neighbourhood for the city. Over the years the various warehouses, smokehouses and markets within the area have decreased in number, some falling into disrepair and some replaced by large commercial businesses and offices. The area has a mix of building types and uses, and can be selectively re-purposed over time to create a unique and vibrant district that can be home to city centre residents and businesses. The current Local Development Plan has identified the site as a specialist employment area, but market conditions would suggest that alternative uses in this area may prove more viable over time and may include residential development for 'urban pioneers'. This framework looks to build upon the recent success of the Union Square development which has brought new life and activity into this part of the city.

The concept draws on the wealth of other examples of comparable city centre waterfront sites in major European destinations, including Stockholm, Malmo and Copenhagen where redevelopment has been tackled in this way. Aberdeen must have the ambition to match if not exceed these exemplar developments, maximising the once in a lifetime opportunity which exists here for the City.

## OBJECTIVES

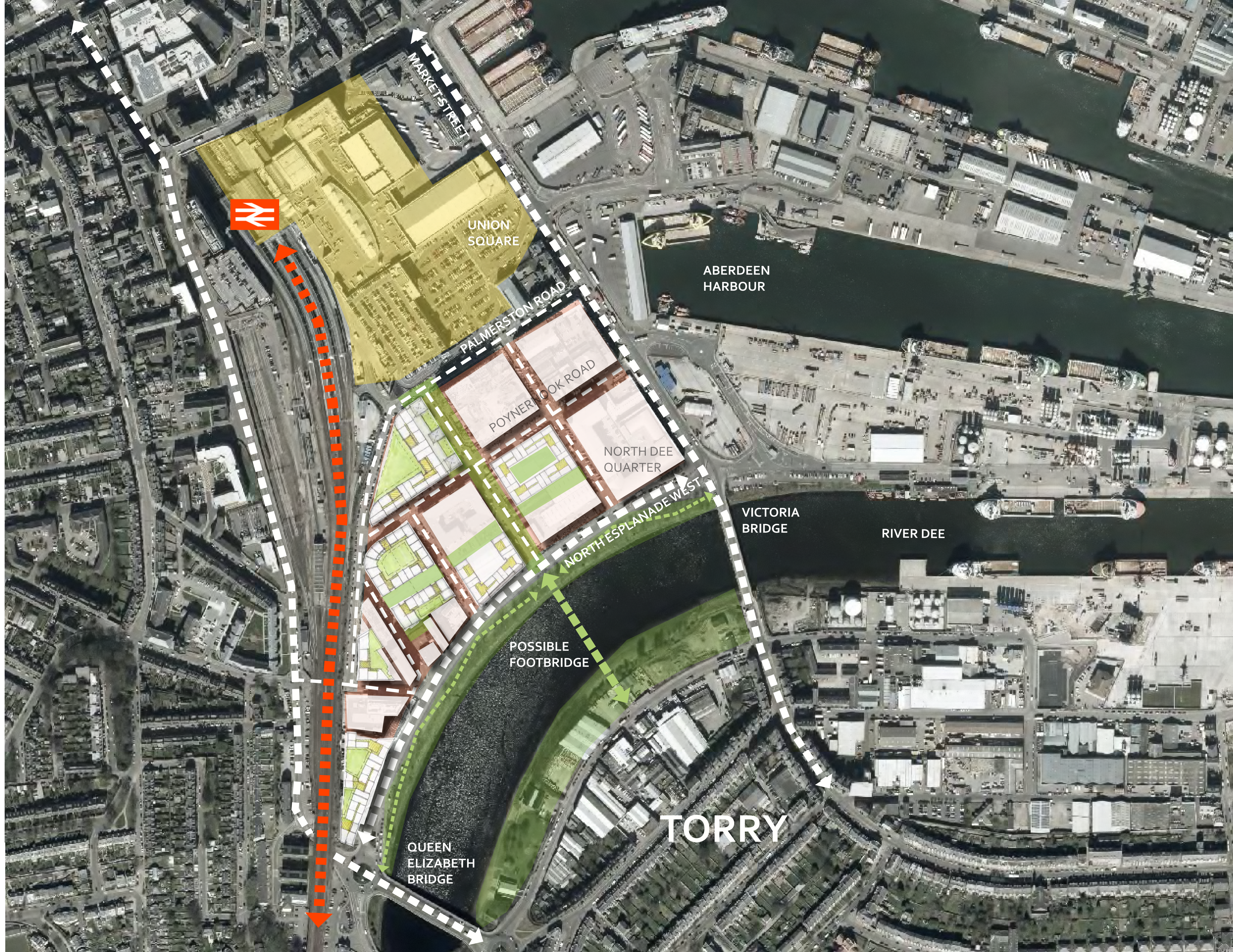
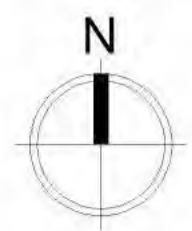
The proposals seek to increase the amount of people, homes and activity within this area and bring new residents to the area who will not depend on vehicles to access nearby services within Union Square and the city centre. This would create a truly mixed use and sustainable community within an area which is in need of re-generation.



## CONCEPT

- 1. APPROACH FROM CITY CENTRE THROUGH UNION SQUARE
- 2. APPROACH FROM TERRY
- 3. APPROACH INTO CITY ALONG RIVERSIDE DRIVE
- 4. APPROACH INTO SITE FROM SOUTH COLLEGE ST. / FERRYHILL





MARKET STREET

UNION SQUARE

ABERDEEN HARBOUR

PALMERSTON ROAD

POYNER DOCK ROAD

NORTH DEE QUARTER

VICTORIA BRIDGE

RIVER DEE

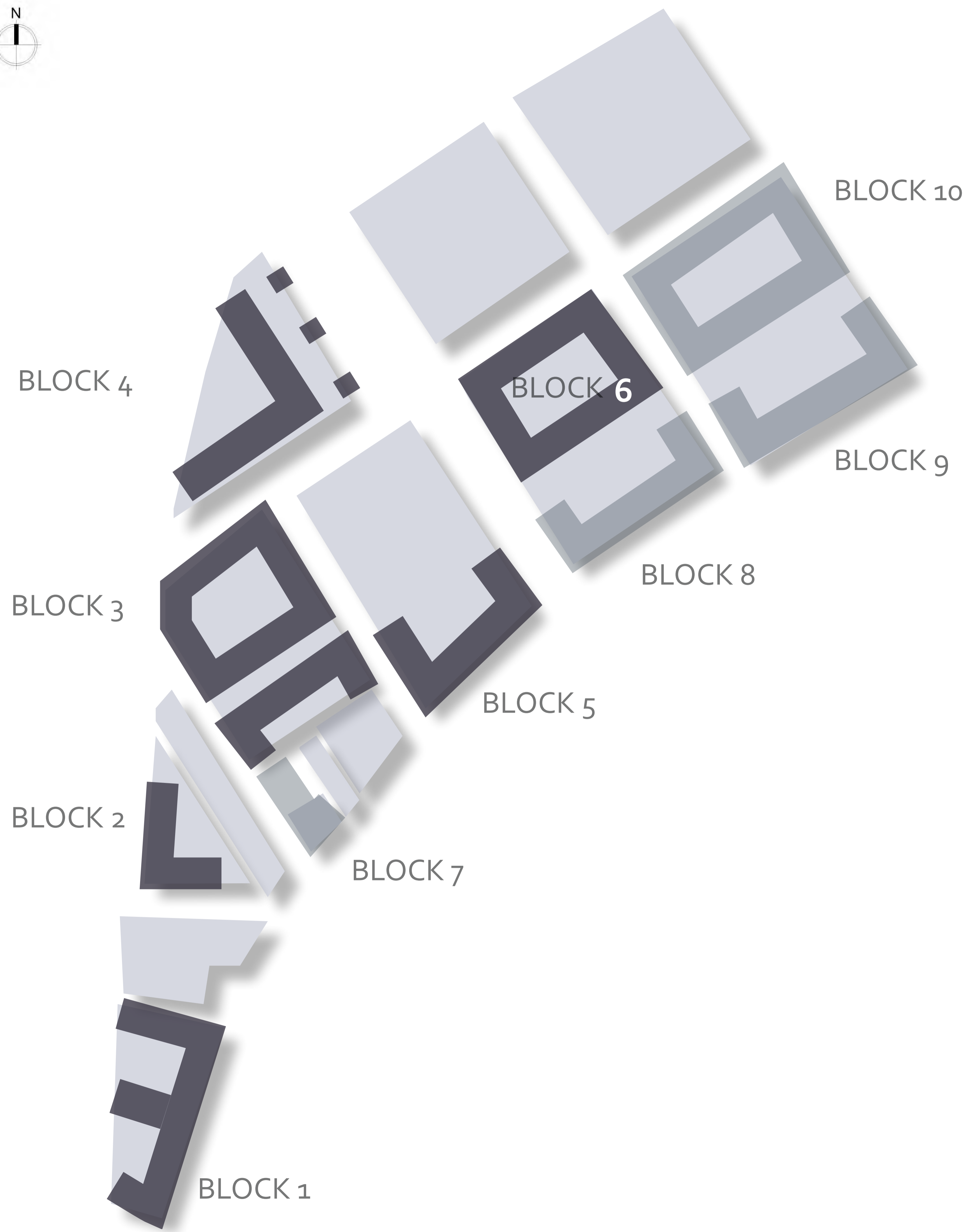
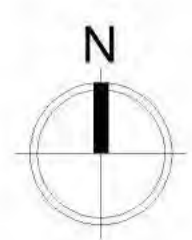
NORTH ESPLANADE WEST

POSSIBLE FOOTBRIDGE

QUEEN ELIZABETH BRIDGE

TORRY

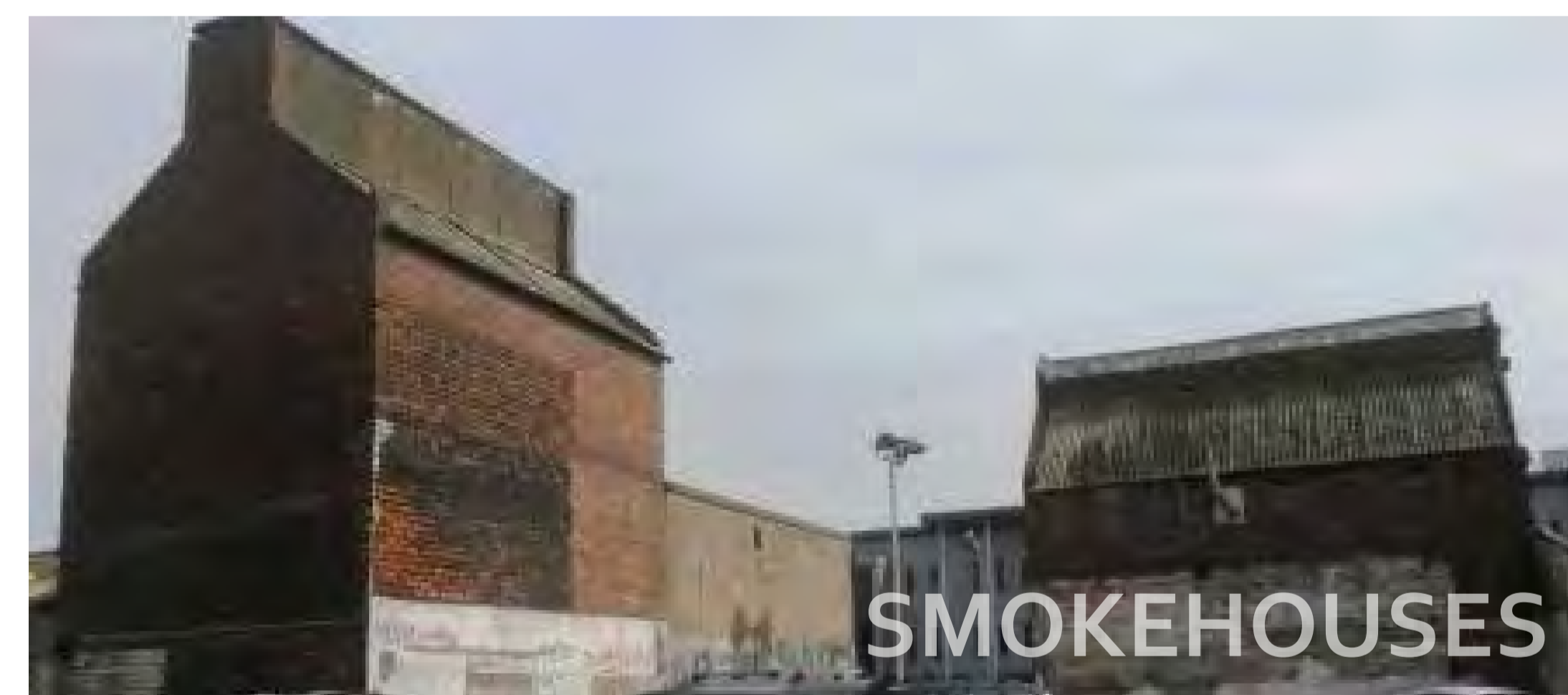




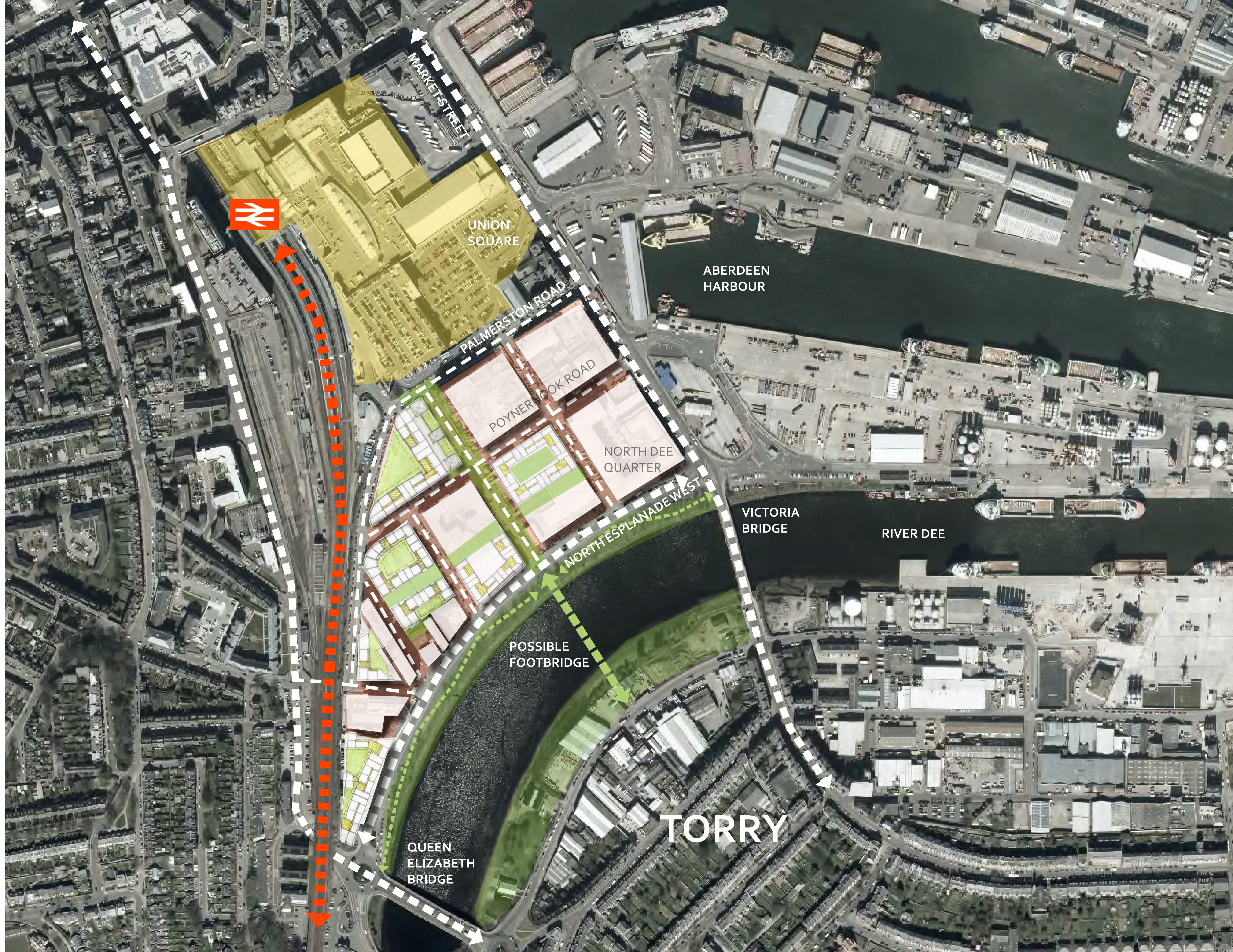
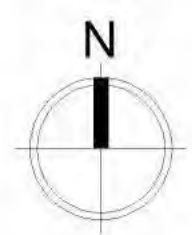
## PROPOSED USES

The new apartment blocks could have commercial use at ground floor. This would help activate ground floor facade and create a pleasant and attractive street environment. Upper floors would be predominantly residential accommodation. This will bring more people into the city centre who do not need to use vehicles to access adjacent services and facilities. There will also be opportunities for cafes, bars and restaurants within the proposals. These could be located within the rebuilt old smoke houses or at ground floor level of the apartment blocks. Other alternative uses may also be appropriate within a genuine mixed use new development.

It is intended that a framework plan would allow individual applications to come forward and be controlled prior to any re-allocation within the local development plan.







UNION SQUARE

ABERDEEN HARBOUR

PALMERSTON ROAD

POYNER DOCK ROAD

NORTH DEE QUARTER

VICTORIA BRIDGE

RIVER DEE

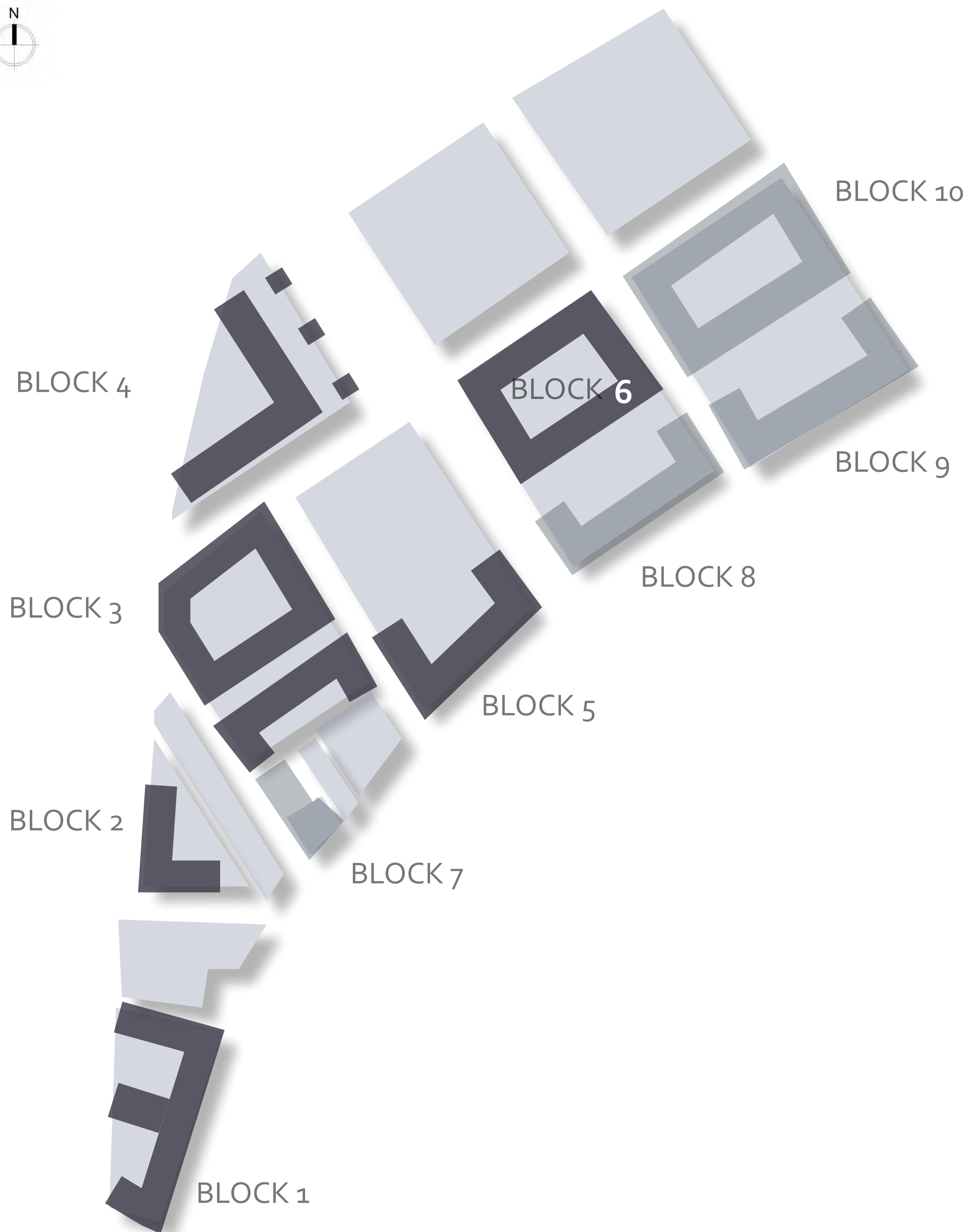
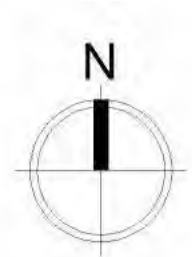
NORTH ESPLANADE WEST

POSSIBLE FOOTBRIDGE

QUEEN ELIZABETH BRIDGE

TORRY





“An urban scale live/work quarter that provides attractive amenities for established and new business users, and for urban pioneers looking for a unique living quarter in the heart of the city.

The district sits within a well-designed urban landscape that emphasises pedestrian connectivity, immediate links to city centre transport links, a mix of spaces to inhabit and dwell, and a range of local shops and eateries. Occupying a high profile position on North Esplanade overlooking the river, the mix of uses proposed on the site will allow for it to become in time an attractive stepping stone that creates permeability between the city centre and the River Dee, a link that has hitherto been severed since works to the harbour in the late 19th Century. The development of different activity generating uses in this area will help to reconnect the city with its waterfront and contribute to the overall experience of Aberdeen city centre for residents and visitors, all in line with the objectives of the Aberdeen City Centre masterplan”.

- New stacked uses across the seven blocks of the quarter including: class 1 retail; class 2 financial professional and other services; class 3 Food and drink; sui generis flatted accommodation; sui generis public house; class 9 housing
- ‘tightening’ of broad road junctions to help enclose spaces and create imaginative new amenity areas that will make journeys through the quarter more legible and lend character and identity to the evolving district
- A range of different employment and housing uses throughout the quarter to ensure that it evolves as an urban live-work space, unique in the North East of Scotland.





NEW  
FLATS

TORRY

NEW STREET  
TREES

NEW STREET  
ENVIRONMENT









QUEEN ELIZABETH  
BRIDGE



12 STOREY TOWER





COPENHAGEN



MALMO

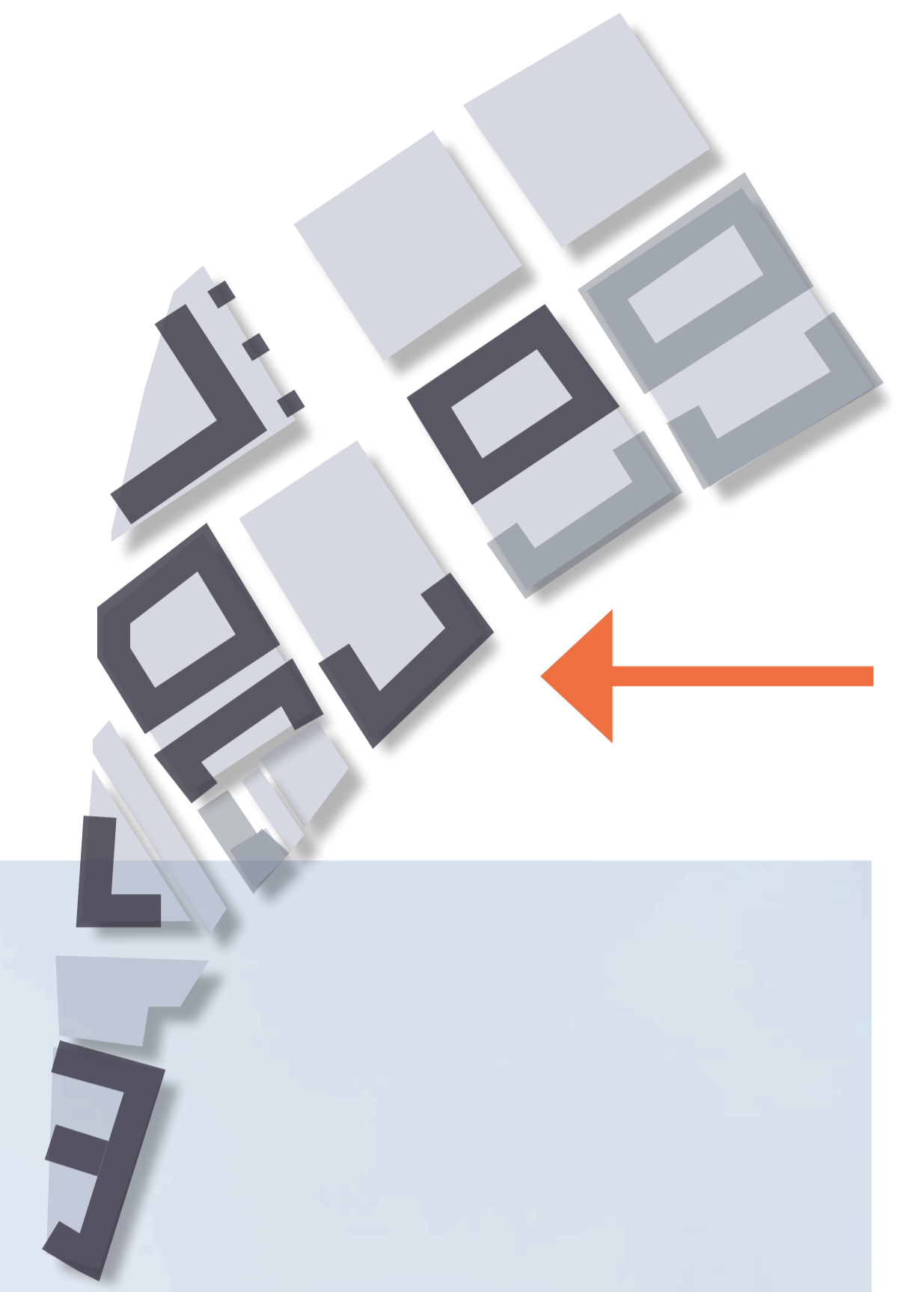


NEW HOUSING

NEW HOUSING

NEW QUAY / FOOTBRIDGE





EXISTING

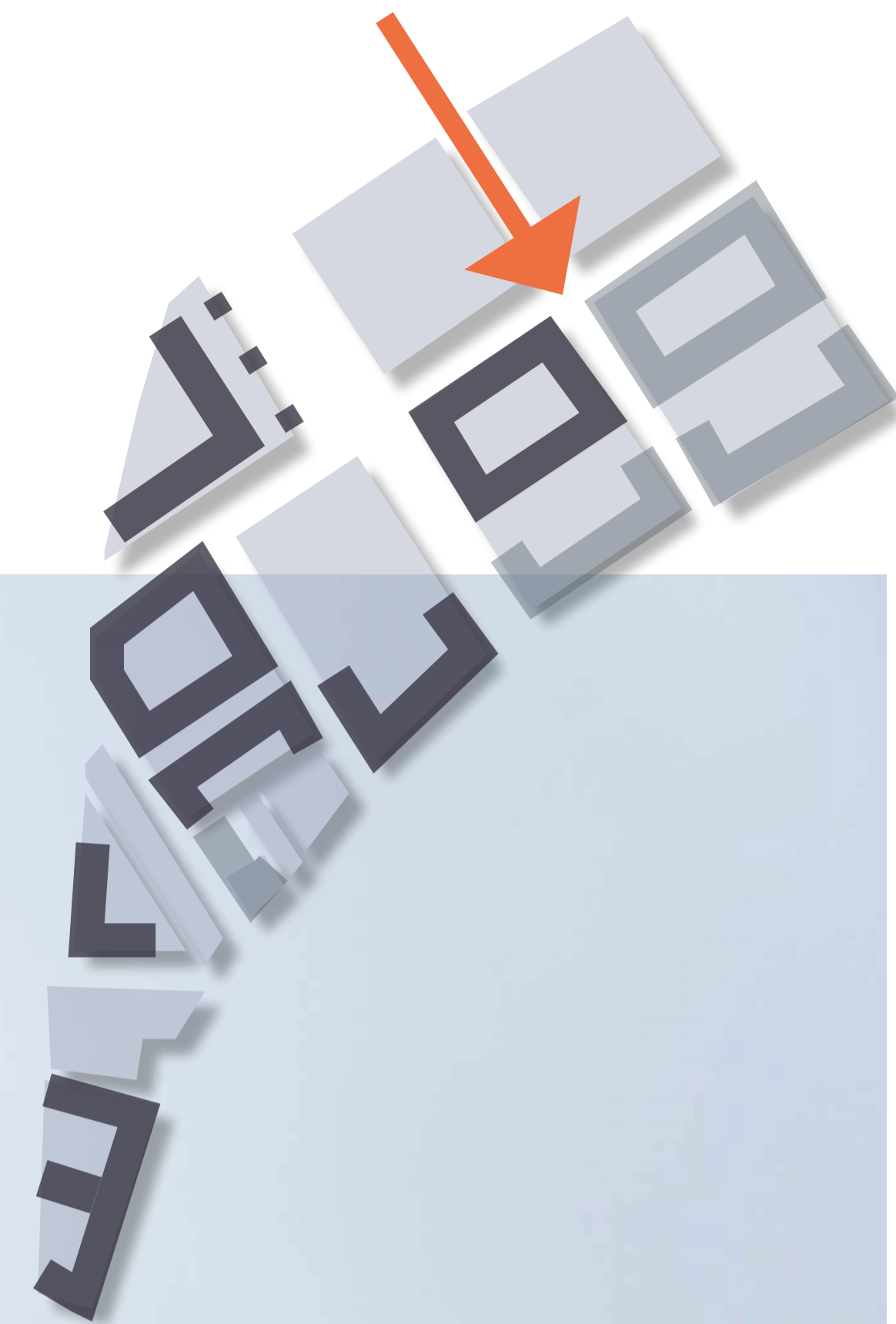


Opportunity to improve the public realm along North Esplanade West and restore important links from the River Dee to Union Square / Train Station / Union Street. Possibility for higher density buildings along this edge.



**PROPOSED**





**EXISTING**



# VIEW 2 - SOUTH EAST ALONG STELL ROAD

Opportunity to reduce impact of cars, improve pedestrian and cycle amenity, improve streetscape and create a more pleasant and attractive public realm. Streets could be narrower with higher buildings more appropriate for an urban / city centre area.



**PROPOSED**



## VIEW 3 - NORTH EAST ALONG POYNERNOOK ROAD

Opportunity to reduce impact of cars, improve pedestrian and cycle amenity, improve streetscape and create a more pleasant and attractive public realm. Streets could be narrower with higher buildings more appropriate for an urban / city centre area.



**EXISTING**



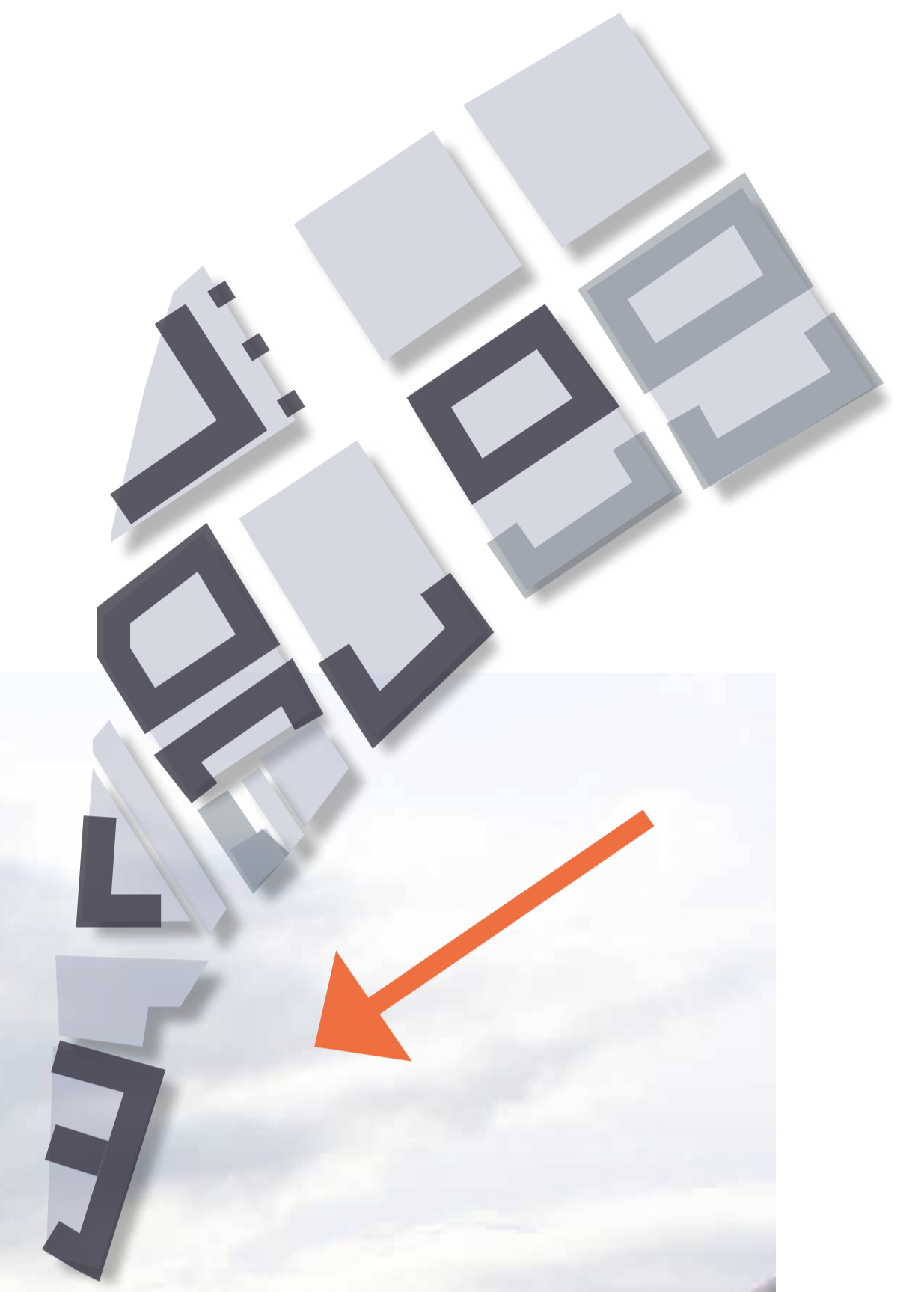


PROPOSED



## VIEW 4 - SOUTH WEST OVER RIVER DEE TOWARDS NORTH ESPLANADE WEST

Opportunity to improve the public realm along North Esplanade West and create positive frontage to River Dee. Possibility for higher density / gateway type building.



**EXISTING**





PROPOSED



**ema**

EMA Architects + Masterplanners  
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EDINBURGH EH2 4HQ  
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[www.ema-architects.co.uk](http://www.ema-architects.co.uk)



# Technical Memo



**DATE:** 9<sup>th</sup> May 2019  
**TO:** Savills  
**FROM:** Michael Stewart  
**PROJECT:** Aberdeen Harbour City Development  
**SUBJECT:** Flood Risk Statement

---

Kaya Consulting Limited has been commissioned by Savills to undertake an initial assessment of flood risk for the proposed Aberdeen Harbour City Development. The aim of the assessment is to identify potential flood risks to the site, assess potential work required at the planning application stage of the development and to make an initial assessment of approaches to flood risk management.

## 1. Site Location and Overview

The site location is shown in Figure 1. The site is located in the heart of the city of Aberdeen, close to the harbour and bounded by the River Dee to the south. The site is currently developed.

The general topography of the site is shown in Figure 2, with cross-sections through the site in Figure 3. The data is based on an Infoterra LiDAR DTM, purchased for this assessment.

The main sources of flood risk to the site are;

- River Dee, from both river and tidal flooding
- Culverted Denburn
- Culverted Ferryhill Burn
- Surface Water Runoff (pluvial flooding)
- Existing Scottish Water drainage infrastructure

Groundwater is not thought to be a significant primary source of flooding at the site. It is not considered in detail here but the risks would need to be reviewed in a full flood risk assessment.

The SEPA Flood Maps of the area show the site potentially at risk from river and surface water flooding. The SEPA appears appear to suggest that flooding of the site is from either the Denburn or Ferry Burn and not from the River Dee.

There are known flooding risks in the centre of Aberdeen, with the site included in SEPA Potentially Vulnerable Area (PVA) 06/18. Flood risks are identified in the Aberdeen City Council Local Development Plan, Strategic Flood Risk, with more detailed modelling of flood risk from surface water flooding and culverted watercourses in the Aberdeen Integrated Catchment Study (2015) undertaken by Scottish Water and Aberdeen City Council. Council planners have noted that there have been instances of surface water flooding under the railway bridge close to the junction of Palmerston Road/Place and S College Street, at the edge of the site.



## 2. Assessment of Flood Risk

### 2.1 River Dee

The River Dee flows along the southern edge of the site. A cross-section across the site and the river (based on LiDAR topographical data) is shown in Figure 3. There is higher ground between the river and the site, with the site sitting at levels of around 4m AOD.

The river is tidal in this location. Based on SEPA's Coastal Flood Boundary (CFB) extreme sea level predictions, coastal flood levels for the River Dee are presented in Table 1. The 200 year flood level for the present day is 3.29m AOD at the mouth of the Dee. Some increase in levels might be expected within the river, upstream of the coast, but with ground levels along the southern edge of the site rising up to around 5m AOD, the site does not appear at direct risk of flooding. By 2100 the 200 year level is predicted to reach 4.08m AOD, again not likely to directly inundate the site, but at this time high water levels in the river would impact the ability of the site to be drained, with land within the site below 4m AOD.

There is no freely available information that includes flood levels produced by river flooding, although the Aberdeen City Council Local Development Plan, Draft Strategic Flood Risk Assessment presents a 1 in 75 year flood map for the River Dee, that shows no flooding of the site. Based on available information, the site does not appear to be at risk from river flooding.

**Table 1: Extreme Sea Level Predictions from SEPA CFB Data**

Return Period (year)	Extreme Sea Level – 2008 (mAOD)	Extreme Sea Level – 2019 (mAOD)	Extreme Sea Level – 2100 (mAOD)
2	2.76	2.84	3.63
10	2.91	3.00	3.79
50	3.06	3.16	3.95
100	3.12	3.22	4.01
200	3.17	3.29	4.08
500	3.24	3.37	4.16
1000	3.45	3.65	4.22

*a – Base data for SEPA CFB information is 2008, data for calculation point 3228*

*b – Corrected to 2019 using UKCP19 predictions RCP8.5 (High Emissions) and 95%ile upper*

*c – Corrected to 2100 using UKCP09 predictions RCP8.5 (High Emissions) and 95%ile upper*

For a planning application a full flood risk assessment would need to undertake mathematical modelling of the River Dee, considering both river and coastal flooding, including the joint probability of occurrence of events from these two sources.

### 2.2 Denburn

The Denburn flows to the north of the site along a route shown in Figure 4. Historical maps of Aberdeen show the burn flowing in an open channel through the city (including the area around Union Terrace Gardens), but the burn now flows in a culvert through the city before outfalling into the Harbour.



The burn does not flow through the site, but SEPA flood maps suggest there may be a risk of flooding of the site if water were to emerge from the burn. The local topography (see Figure 4) shows the culverted watercourse flowing within a defined valley to the north of the site, before ground levels open onto a flatted plain around the harbour. The culvert takes a 90 degree bend close to the station and the SEPA maps and the local topography suggests that water overtopping the burn would tend to flow towards the site.

The volume of water able to reach the site would depend on the capacity of the culverted watercourse and the location of manholes. Modelling undertaken to support the SEPA flood maps is thought to have included the culverted watercourse, so although the SEPA maps are considered to be indicative, they highlight a potential flood risk that would need to be considered though the development of the site.

In summary and based on available information, the site may be at flood risk from the Denburn and for a planning application a full flood risk assessment would need to undertake mathematical modelling of the watercourse. The site is located close to the harbour and River Dee, therefore any flood management measures for the site (e.g., improved drainage to manage flood waters from the Denburn) are unlikely to adversely impact surrounding land and could look to mitigate existing risks with wider benefits in the area.

### **2.3 Ferryhill Burn**

The Ferryhill Burn flows to the south of the site along a route shown in Figure 4. Historical maps of Aberdeen show the burn flowing in an open channel, but the burn now flows in a culvert through the Ferryhill area of the site before outfalling into the River Dee, through the southern tip of the site.

The local topography suggests that flood waters from the Ferryhill Burn may flow south away from the site but there remains a risk that flooding could impact the site, consistent with the floodplain predicted for the Denburn in the SEPA maps.

Based on available information the site may be at risk from the Ferryhill Burn and for a planning application a full flood risk assessment would need to undertake mathematical modelling of the watercourse. The site is located close to the harbour and River Dee, therefore any flood management measures for the site (e.g., improved drainage or culvert improvements to manage flood waters from the Ferryhill Burn) are unlikely to adversely impact surrounding land and could look to mitigate existing risks with wider benefits in the area. There are known flooding issues at the railway bridge close to the junction of Palmerston Road/Place and S College Street. The Ferryhill Burn runs under this location and any improvements to the burn or surface water drainage within the site could be used to mitigate existing flood risks.

### **2.4 Surface Water Runoff**

Surface water flooding can occur when a rainfall event exceeds the capacity of the ground or the local drainage systems to accept the rainfall, e.g., July 2015 rainfall event resulted in surface water flooding within the centre of Aberdeen. SEPA flood maps of the area suggest risks of ponding of surface water in the site and based on the local topography it is clear that the site sits at a local low point in the land with higher ground to the west and north.



There is a risk of surface water flooding at the site and a planning application would need to be supported through a detailed assessment of surface water flooding risk. Surface Water management within the site will be guided by the results of the Aberdeen Integrated Catchment Modelling Study.

## **2.5 Existing Drainage Systems**

Scottish Water service drawings of the site and surrounding area show the extensive Scottish Water surface water and combined sewer networks within the site, with at least 4 surface water outfalls to the River Dee.

As for the surface water management at the site, the development of the site drainage will be guided by the results of the Aberdeen Integrated Catchment Modelling Study. Drainage systems developed for the site would need to comply with appropriate Scottish Water (SuDS for Scotland), SEPA and Aberdeen City Council guidance ('Drainage Impact Assessment – guidance for developers').

Given the urbanised area of the site at present there are clear opportunities to re-develop the site with modern Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to provide improvements to the current surface water management, e.g., more attenuation of rainfall within the site, separation of foul and surface waters and provision of flow pathways and improved drainage to manage surface water flooding and any flows from culverted watercourses.

## **3. Summary and Conclusions**

This initial flood risk assessment has identified a number of possible flood risks to the site. The site is located on flat, low-lying land close to Aberdeen Harbour and the River Dee. There is high ground to the north and west of the site.

Although the site does not appear to be at direct risk from the River Dee under present day conditions, the site appears to be at risk from the Denburn and potentially the Ferryhill Burn, which are culverted through the centre of Aberdeen. The site may also be affected by flood risk from surface water runoff generated from outside the site boundary and existing Scottish Water drainage systems. All these sources of flooding would need to be assessed in detail in a full flood risk assessment, prepared in support of a planning application.

Due to the location of the site close to the River Dee and the harbour it would appear possible to develop the site while managing existing flood risks, without increasing risk to others. The development of the site would appear to allow the development of flood management measures that could benefit the wider area. This would include;

- Better surface water management within the site, through the implementation of modern Sustainable Drainage Systems
- Upgrades to river banks and flood protection along the River Dee
- Better understanding and management of flood risk from culverted watercourses within Aberdeen City Centre
- Removal of surface water from existing Scottish Water systems
- Provision of flow pathways and flow corridors to manage surface water flooding from existing drainage systems and culverted watercourses
- Mitigation of existing surface water flood risks and/or risks from culverted watercourses



It is recommended that these measures are considered in consultation with Aberdeen City Council, Scottish Water and SEPA, who have already undertaken a number of studies of flood risk in the centre of Aberdeen,



Figure 1: Site Location

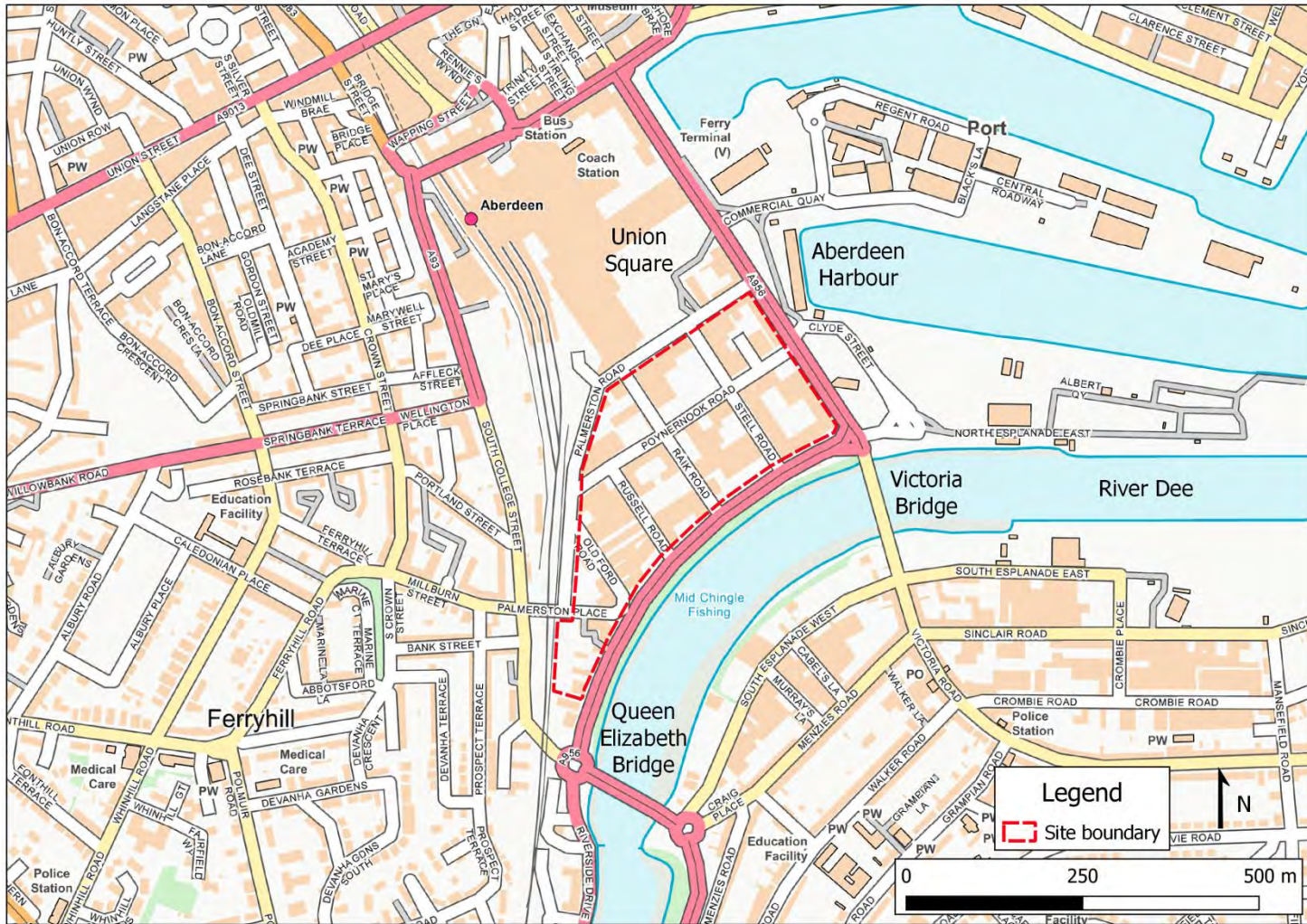




Figure 2: Local topography (from LiDAR DTM), with location of cross-sections shown in Figure 3

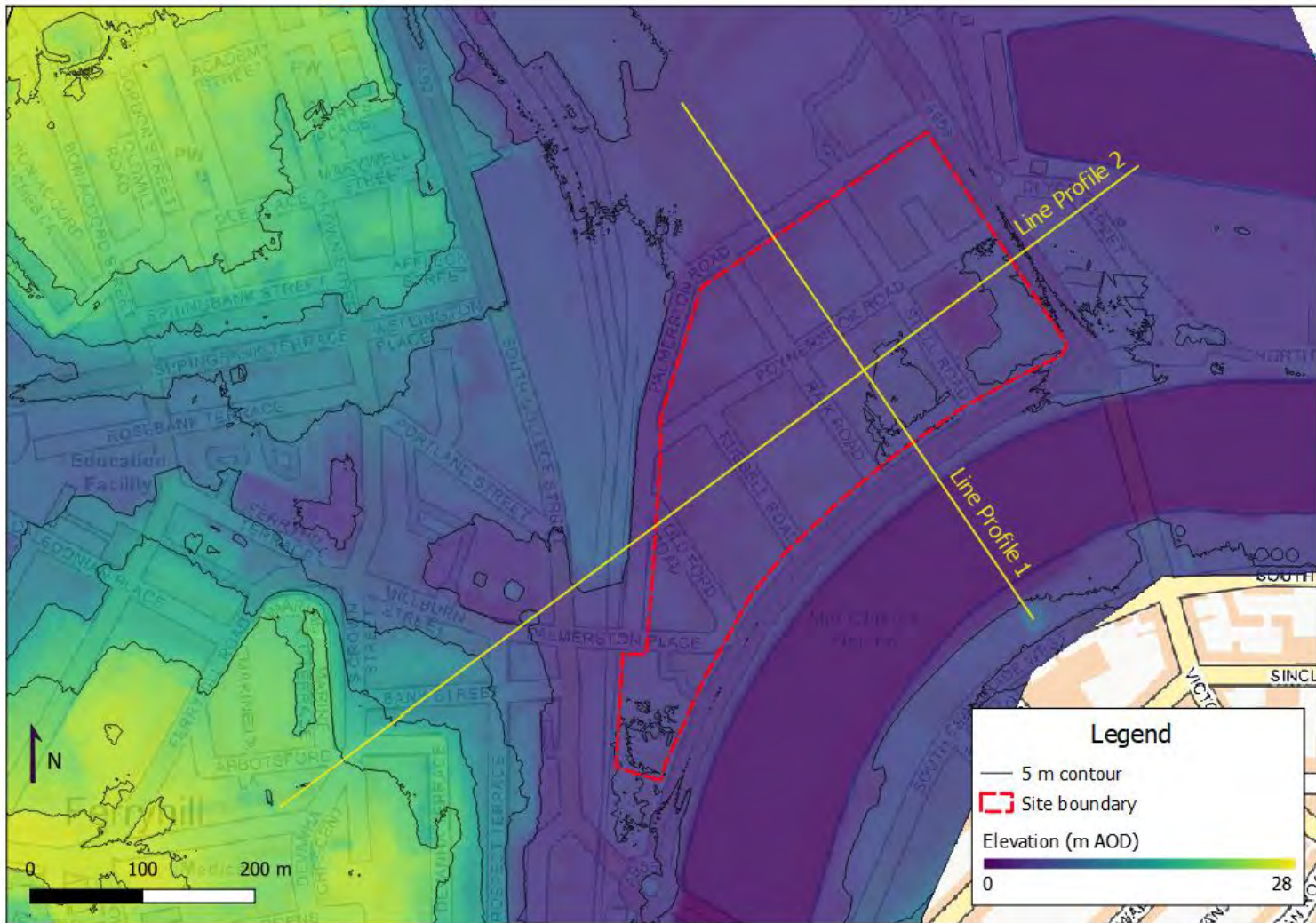




Figure 3: Cross-sections from Figure 2. Profile 1 at top and profile 2 at bottom

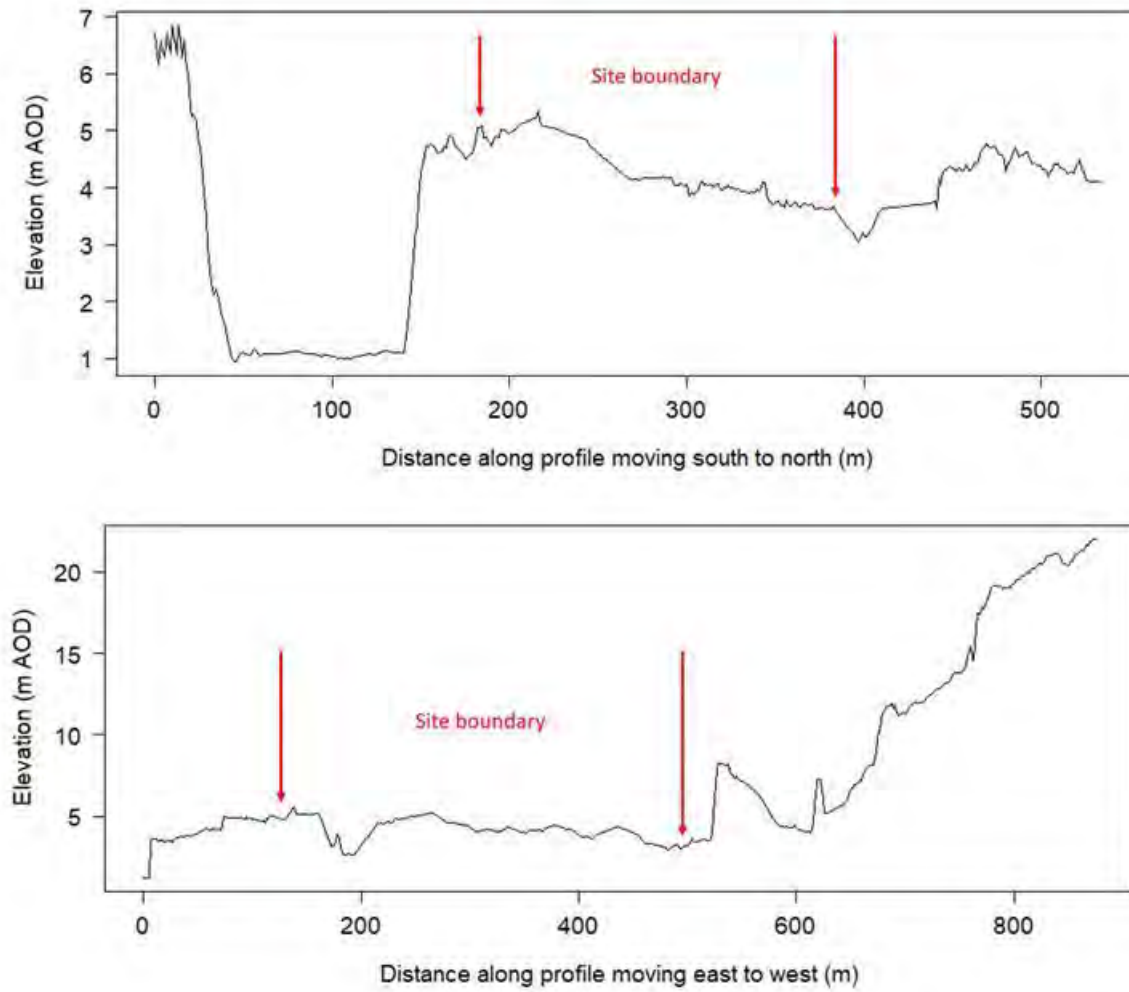
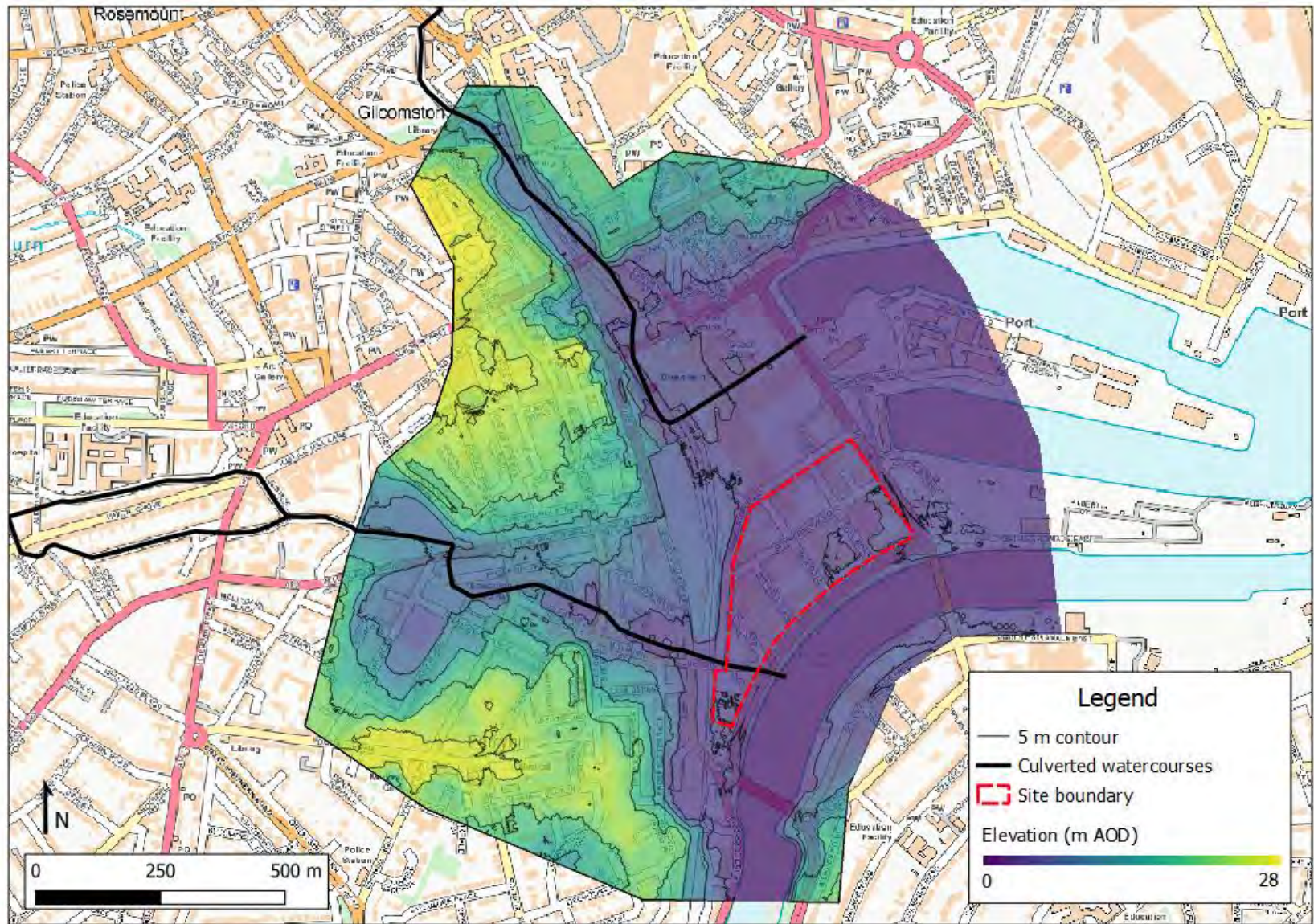




Figure 4: Wider topography with culverted watercourses shown in black (Denburn to north and Ferryhill Burn to south of site)







MARKET STREET

UNION SQUARE

ABERDEEN HARBOUR



VICTORIA BRIDGE

RIVER DEE

QUEEN ELIZABETH BRIDGE

TORRY



# MANSE

## Harbour City, Aberdeen Assessment of Transportation and Accessibility Issues

### Transport Statement

May 2019

Dougall Baillie Associates



civil. structural. transportation. water management

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## Document Control

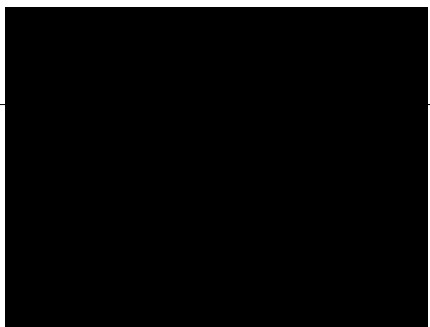
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Assessment of Transportation and Accessibility  
Issues

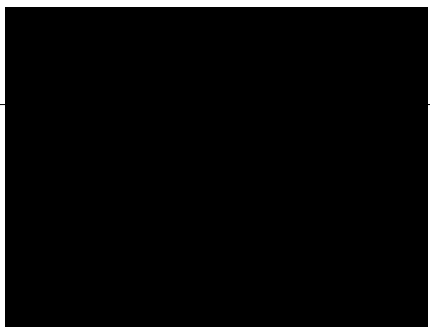
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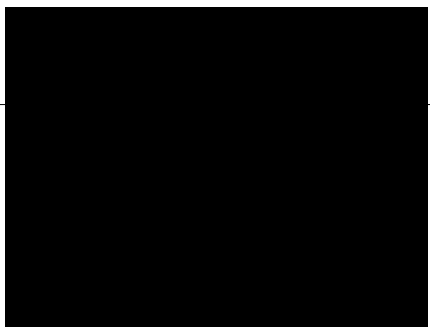
Project Title: - Harbour City

Directory and File Name: - /Users/robinduncan/Documents/DBA/DBA  
Jobs/19136/19136ts01c Harbour City.docx

## Document Approval

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Authorisation:  Date: 12.05.2019

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-	08.05.2019	Client team	Draft for comment
A	09.05.2019	Client team	Final draft for issue
B	12.05.2019	Client team	Updated Final Draft
C	12.05.2019	Client team	Finalised for submission



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6	Conclusions .....	15



# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Manse appointed Dougall Baillie Associates (DBA) to undertake a high-level review of the transportation accessibility of this development area in Aberdeen, on the north bank of the River Dee and south of Union Square Shopping Centre. DBA produced a Transport Statement in May 2018 in relation to those issues.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Transport Statement is to illustrate the proposed strategy for future development in the North Dee area through:
  1. exemplar analysis of approaches to transport in transitional business and residential areas;
  2. exemplar analysis of greening approaches to servicing routes; and
  3. summary of how the proposed residential-led repurposing of the North Dee site over time is consistent in transportation terms with the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan, in terms of traffic management strategy.
- 1.3 The location and extent of the site are shown in Image 1.1.

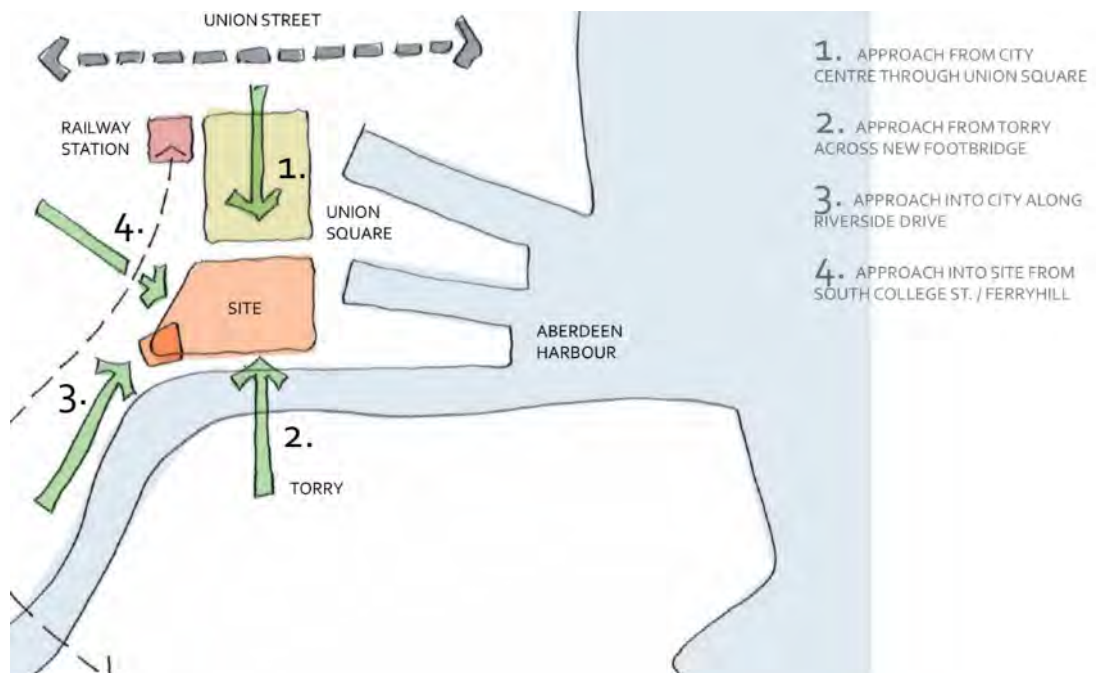


Image 1.1 - Site Location (EMA Architects)



## 2 Transport Approaches in Transitional Areas

2.1 There are many examples of contemporary approaches to transport planning in transitional business and residential development areas, and of transport infrastructure evolving over time to suit development purpose.

### Quatermile, Edinburgh

2.2 The redevelopment of the former Edinburgh Royal Infirmary site for mixed use, substantially residential led development included the reassignment of existing road space to sustainable travel modes, or the increase in public realm space to encourage increased use of sustainable travel.

2.3 In various locations, such as on Chalmers Street (Image 2.1), existing standard adopted footways were supplemented with significant expansion of public realm space to enhance the pedestrian environment and encourage local trips on foot.

2.4 In other areas, adopted road space was re-purposed over the course of the development to provide vehicle-free routes for sole use by foot and cycle traffic, such as the link off Nightingale Way (Image 2.2). By this approach, any dominance of private cars and service vehicles can be removed, and the character of an area transformed to encourage sustainable travel.



Image 2.1 - Chalmers Street, 2008 & 2018 (Streetview)

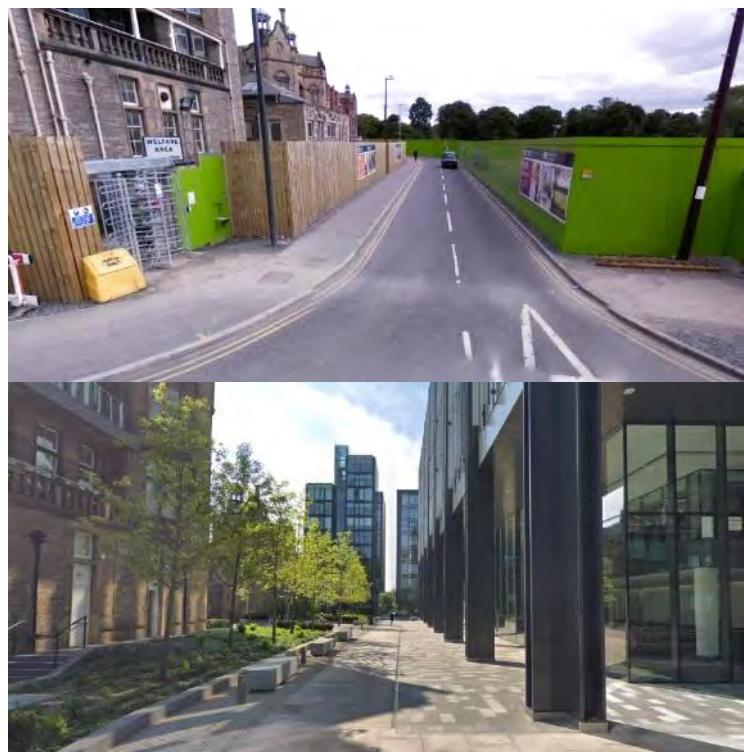


Image 2.2 - off Nightingale Way, 2008 & 2018 (Streetview)



Merchant City, Glasgow

2.5 In Glasgow's Merchant City, many streets have been reconfigured over time in one of more of their fundamental characteristics, such as parking restrictions, reducing capacity, limiting direction of travel (such as on Shuttle Street, Image 2.3) or closure to vehicular traffic altogether.



Image 2.3 - Shuttle Street, Glasgow (Streetview)

2.6 Surface treatment, materials, street furniture and design alignment are other aspects successfully employed in the Merchant City over time as development has moved towards increased residential development within the City Centre, particular associated with universities and colleges.



2.7 On some street, including Hutcheson Street (Image 2.4), road carriageway and on-street parking have been reduced or removed altogether, with parking being rationalised and the role of off-street charged parking being increased, giving the Council the ability to influence mode choice of residents and visitors.



Image 2.4 - Hutcheson Street, 2009 & 2018 (Streetview)



### 3 'Greening' of Urban Service Routes

3.1 Increasingly, Local Authorities in Scotland are moving ahead with schemes in their cities and major towns involving the reallocation of road capacity on key sections of the urban grid to 'greener', more sustainable modes of travel.

3.2 In key areas, emphasis is moving away from vehicle accessibility, with emerging transport strategy aimed at excluding vehicles or control types of vehicles permitted within parts of the urban area.

#### Edinburgh City Centre

3.3 Edinburgh has undertaken a major reallocation of urban road space away from cars and goods vehicles by reintroducing trams to the core of Edinburgh's City Centre road network (Image 3.1).

3.4 The Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route marks an opportunity for Aberdeen to embrace a similar strategy of 'greening' at key locations within the City Centre to address issues of air quality, sustainability and quality of City Centre spaces.

#### Glasgow City Centre

3.5 Glasgow has introduced a Low Emission zone which will change the type / design of vehicles on key city streets, and new bus gates have influenced the character of certain streets by greatly reducing flows.

3.6 On Waterloo Street (Image 3.2), the Council has created a main cycle 'highway' in to Central Station in the heart of Glasgow City Centre. This



Image 3.1 - Atholl PI, Edinburgh, 2011 & 2018 (Streetview)



Image 3.2 - Waterloo Street, 2008 & 2018 (Streetview)



route was enhanced by creating substantially expanded public realm associated with development of fronting office development.

Sauchiehall Street

3.7 Glasgow is developing a City Centre-wide strategy of 'greening'. The (Y)our City Centre initiative, and the creation of a number of boulevards, reallocating road space away from cars and service vehicles and expanding road space allocation to sustainable travel on foot and cycle (Image 3.3).

3.8 Sauchiehall Street will be the first of these boulevard schemes to be completed, and its transformation over an almost 600m length includes 'greening' by introduction of planting, and the conversion of unnecessary levels of pedestrian space to providing a dedicated cycle highway on the north side of Glasgow City Centre (Image 3.4).



Image 3.3 - Sauchiehall St, 2017 & 2019 (Streetview)



Image 3.4 - Sauchiehall St, 2017 & 2019 (Streetview)



#### 4 Aberdeen CCM Traffic Management Strategy

- 4.1 The Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan (CCM) has been adopted by the Council as the strategy for the development of the City Centre in the next 20 years. It is indicated that the CCM is a document 'to inform future decisions by the council and other stakeholders undertaking development in the city centre.'
- 4.2 Accompanying the CCM report is the Council's Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) which sets out the detail of the CCM's response to transport issues in the City Centre. The SUMP is indicated to be an evolving document.
- 4.3 One of the study areas within the CCM is North Dee / Torry (Image 4.1), and this Transport Statement considers the compatibility in transport terms of the Harbour City proposals with the Council's strategy for the area.

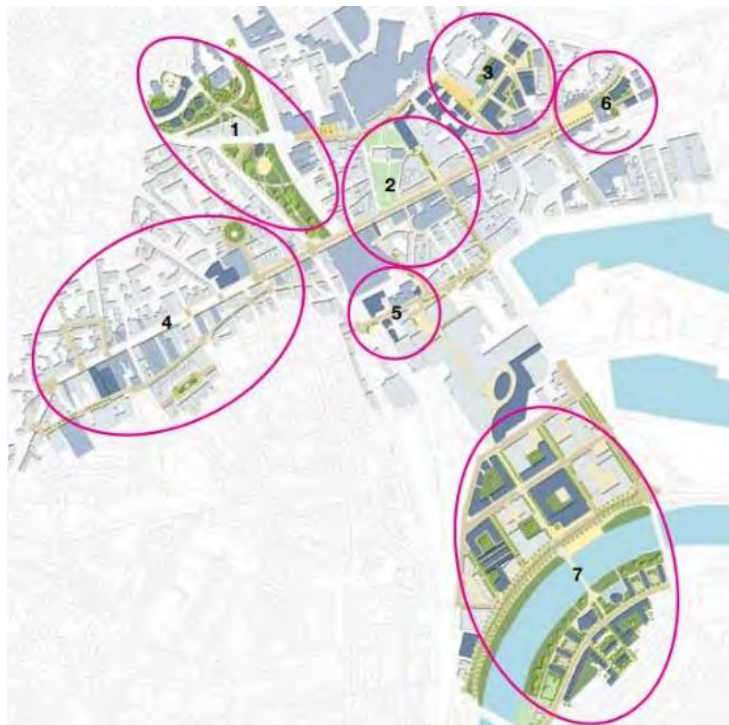


Image 4.1 - Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan (ACC)

#### 4.4 The overall objectives of the CCM SUMP are:



Image 4.2 - Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan SUMP (ACC)



- 4.5 The existing character of the North Dee area is one of cars and goods vehicles dominating the streetscape, with on-street parking significantly restricting movement and impacting on road safety, in particular that of any pedestrians or cyclists travelling to the area, or through it to neighbouring destinations such as Union Square, the Bus Station or the Ferry Terminal. Visibility is reduced, hampering road crossing and generally presenting an unfriendly environment to sustainable travel, rather than encouraging it.
- 4.6 The recent development of the Annan House on Palmerston Road reflects a new approach to the North Dee area, aimed at enhancing the pedestrian environment, increasing public realm space by removing on-street parking, catering for but also controlling car demand by providing off-street, multi-storey parking at levels agree with the Council.
- 4.7 This more sustainable approach is at the heart of the CCM and the SUMP, expressed in its objectives, as they relate to North Dee. The Council has in the past developed a proposed Controlled Parking Zone for North Dee. The CCM acknowledges the issue that parking represents, proposing the removal of on-street parking on Raik Road (Image 4.3), and the creation of increased pedestrian and cycle facilities within North Dee, including pedestrian priority.

Capabilities on project:  
Transportation

	Walking		Cycling				Bus/Taxi			Freight		Car				
	Pedestrian Priority	Pedestrians/Cyclists Only	Segregated Cycleway	Cycle Lane	Shared Use Path	Unsegregated Cycle Route	Cycle Hub	Bus/Taxi/Cyclist Only Street	Bus Lane	New Bus Stops	Full Time Servicing Access	Part Time Servicing Access	General Cars Prohibited	On-Street Parking Removed	Road/Junction Improvements	One Way Street
<b>CCMP Intervention Areas</b>																
<b>7. River Dee and Torry Waterfront</b>																
Cabel's Lane	✓										✓	✓	✓			
North Esplanade West					✓						✓					
Palmerston Place						✓					✓					
Poyernook Road											✓					
Raik Road	✓						✓				✓				✓	

Image 4.3 - Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan SUMP extract (ACC)

- 4.8 The CCM identifies continued redevelopment of North Dee as a central business district. This strategy brings with it continued and increasing pressure to cater for car commuter trips, and the challenge of achieving a sizeable shift in existing and future commuter travel mode choices. Introducing residential development in North Dee however is expected to contribute substantially to achieving the Council's transportation and environmental aims, and reducing pressure on road travel through an integrated land use planning approach.
- 4.9 Reducing on-street parking, controlling permitted off-street parking and introducing increased car club provision all would contribute substantially, it is expected, to encouraging modal shift and reducing the existing reliance on private car use for travel to and from North Dee. Residents easily could make trips on foot to retail and leisure facilities or to employment within the City



Centre, in particular at Union Square, immediately adjacent to the north.

- 4.10 Also, all modes of sustainable travel are available within a 10 minute walk of the whole North Dee development area. It is well-established that it is much easier to influence modal choice at the start of a journey. Such is the unparalleled level of public transport services available to future residents of North Dee, the potential to achieve a highly sustainable integration of land uses is, arguably, unparalleled within Aberdeen and the wider area in the North East.
- 4.11 Winning back increased levels of road space for pedestrians and cyclists within North Dee would encourage use of proposed cycle and pedestrian links across the River Dee into Torry to the south, and northwards through Union Square to the train station, bus station, and Union Street beyond. This approach would be enabled and supported by an integrated residential, street-level leisure and business development strategy, permitting significant enhancements to the streetscape not just of Raik Road (as planned by the CCM), but of all routes within North Dee.



## 5 'Greening' of North Esplanade West

- 5.1 An important element in the evolution of North Dee according to the higher-level vision in the CCM, but also in accordance with the aspirations for the development of a more sustainable residential-led approach, will be the treatment of North Esplanade, and the success of strengthening links to Torry and the City Centre.
- 5.2 With respect to the City Centre to the north, a range of proposals exist within the CCM and development proposals by Union Square and for Aberdeen Station, Atholl House and the Trinity Centre. In combination, these proposals will remove traffic from Guild Street and strengthen pedestrian links, enhancing the public realm and encouraging increased walking and cycling to the south of Union Street, which itself is identified for significant environmental enhancement, including removal of private traffic.
- 5.3 To the south of North Dee, North Esplanade is proposed for environmental enhancement in the CCM to strengthen and develop the existing environment (Image 5.1), and encourage increased movement across the Dee and between Torry, North Dee and the City Centre, but also movement along that important transport corridor.



Image 5.1 - North Esplanade (Streetview)

- 5.4 The exemplar of Glasgow Broomielaw route bears many similarities to North Esplanade. A new river crossing links the south and north banks of the River Clyde linking the city centre to the emerging Buchanan Wharf, which is a masterplan that brings business, leisure and residential development together in close proximity to Central Station. That development will create a sustainable setting through mixed development, and will greatly enhance streetscape, pedestrian environment and connectivity to achieve that end.
- 5.5 Such opportunities exist in North Dee with the right approach to promoting sustainability through integration of land uses and minimising the need to travel, particularly to commute.





Image 5.2 - South from Broomielaw to the Tradeston Bridge



Image 5.3 -Broomielaw to the east, greening & cycle infrastructure

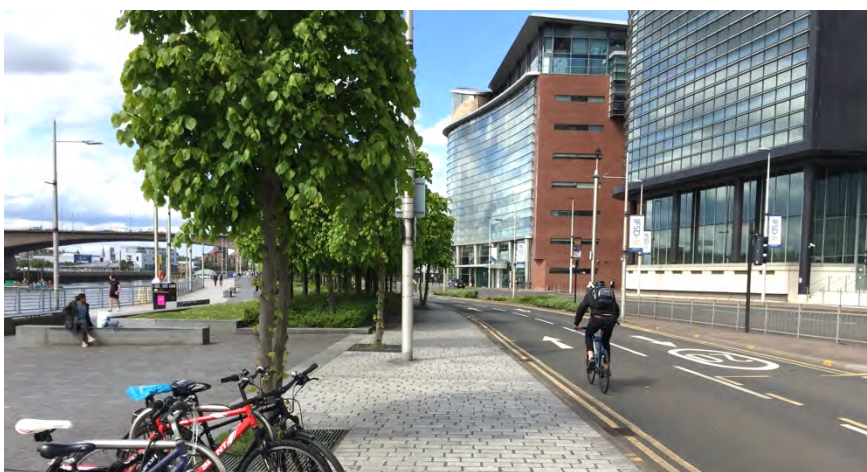


Image 5.4 -Broomielaw to the west, bus link, greening and cycle route



- 5.6 As an exemplar of what might be achieved on the North Esplanade West, measures implemented on the Broomielaw have reset the balance of priority between travel modes, introducing enhanced public realm, new cycle facilities and bus priority measures, in conjunction with significantly enhancing the environment through greening of the route (Images 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4).



Image 5.5 - Sauchiehall Street greening

- 5.7 As identified in this report, it is considered that there are significant opportunities, in conjunction with a residential-led approach to redevelopment of North Dee, to green that area and various of its routes and public realm spaces, creating an environment that encourages journeys to and from the area to be made on foot, or by other sustainable modes available in the local area. This approach also would promote linkage through the area to redeveloped areas using new and enhanced existing sustainable transport infrastructure.



## 6 Conclusions

6.1 In transport terms, it is considered that there is no more sustainable location than North Dee in the whole of Aberdeen, due to the range and proximity of facilities and sustainable travel infrastructure immediately adjacent to and easily walkable from the North Dee development area.

6.2 As such, the opportunity exists to achieve substantial levels of sustainable travel to and from the area with right development strategy. The Council's CCM understands this, and rightly identifies the need to improve sustainable transport infrastructure and links in order to maximise the sustainability of future development.

6.3 The development of North Dee (almost) solely for business use however, it is considered, would be a missed opportunity to achieve a truly integrated development area by introducing a strong residential element and introducing significant environmental enhancements, in particularly greening of the area. Such an approach would truly integrate residents with the destinations and land uses to which they travel on a daily basis, thereby directly influencing travel mode choice at the start of the trip, which is known to be the most effective approach to maximising sustainable travel.

6.4 With a sensitive and ambitious approach to transport planning for future development of North Dee, it is considered that a residential-led strategy for the area can address and maximise all of the Council's Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan and Local Transport Strategy objectives as they would apply to future development in North Dee.



Image 6.1 - Sauchiehall Street



Image 6.2 - Sauchiehall Street



## **Aberdeen Office Market**

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### **Background**

Since the 1970's, Aberdeen and its surrounding areas have enjoyed low levels of unemployment and high levels of disposable income in comparison to other parts of the UK, primarily due to the city's position as the main European centre for oil and gas exploration and production.

That industry has become so dominant that the economic fortunes of the city are now directly linked to those of businesses involved in oil and gas exploration and production. The fortunes of most local businesses are in turn closely linked to the price of crude oil, for which the Brent Crude Oil price is the industry benchmark.

Between September 2010 and September 2014, Brent Crude oil price scarcely fell below \$100 per barrel. This encouraged a significant amount of investment worldwide in exploration and production of oil and gas and made reserves appear viable which had previously been seen as too expensive to exploit.

Aberdeen based companies, who have particular expertise in exploration and production in deep water and harsh environments, were significant beneficiaries during this boom. However, industry costs rose quickly as demand for skilled labour in particular outstripped supply. While the oil price remained high, solving resource issues (almost at any price) took priority. The comparatively insignificant cost of commercial premises to accommodate staff and businesses became largely irrelevant.

In July 2014, the oil price began to fall gradually and, following the decision of OPEC (the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) not to reduce supply to support the price as it had done previously, the fall in oil price accelerated ending 2014 below \$50 per barrel. For the following two years, oil price went through a particularly volatile period, initially recovering to in excess of \$60 per barrel, but falling below \$30 per barrel in January 2016.

In December 2016, OPEC announced their commitment to cut their production of oil in order to assist with over supply in the market, and in an attempt to stabilise the oil price. Following this decision, we have witnessed a comparatively stable trading environment and the last few months has seen Brent Crude oil maintain a consistent and relatively buoyant price level of c.\$70+ (c.\$70.50 - 08/05/18).

The effects of the low oil price environment since mid-2014 continue to be felt locally, with the majority of oil companies and service companies having significantly rationalised their cost bases in order to realign overheads with reduced activity and turnover. A sustained lower oil price environment is likely to continue to impact the oil and gas market in Aberdeen and, by extension, the local commercial property market.

In an Aberdeen commercial property context, there is a glut of available commercial property of all size, use and specification. Many buildings are unlikely to ever be reoccupied, irrespective of future activity in the Oil and Gas market.



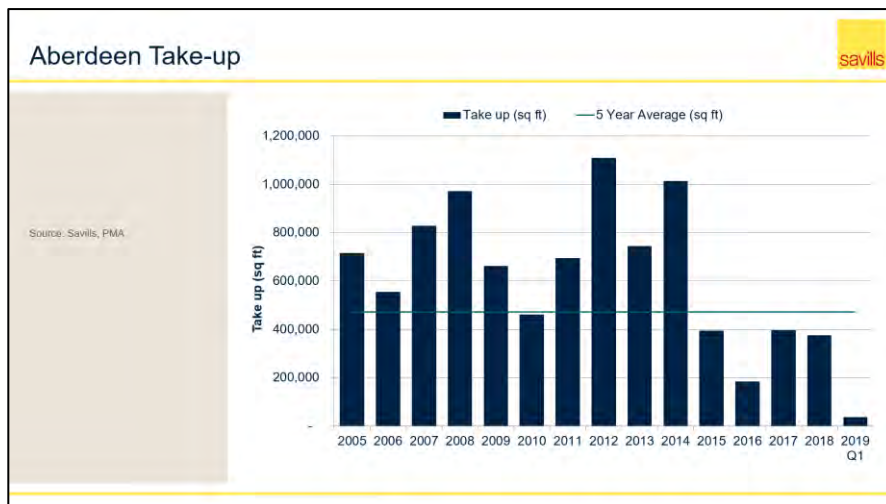
The supply / demand equation is heavily weighted in favour of the occupier and many companies still lease/own “grey space” which they do not physically occupy. Even with a short/medium term improvement in the oil and gas market, occupiers are likely to backfill such space prior to going to the wider market with any new space requirements.

Over the last few months we have seen an influx of private equity investors into the North Sea; Chrysaor (who purchased assets from Shell for c.\$3.5bn in 2017) are reported to be close to purchasing ConocoPhillips interests, Delek Group (who bought North Sea operator Ithaca Energy last year) are rumoured to be front runner to purchase Chevron’s drilling rights and RockRose are in detailed dialogue with Marathon Oil over their interests. Whilst these are all positive signs for the future of the North Sea, the businesses acquisitions have tended to include properties, which has meant little activity in the office market.

**Aberdeen Office Market**

In times of peak demand, the lucrative returns which could be made in higher value office developments attracted many developers to the city. The office sector witnessed far more speculative development than any other sector, and lower value industrial schemes were often overlooked in favour of office development.

In 2012-2014, the city witnessed record levels of take-up, slowed down only by the development time lag in 2013 whilst more space was built to accommodate burgeoning demand. Pre-lets and forward commitments accounted for a large amount of the office space which was built at this time, a characteristic which made Aberdeen almost unique in terms of its market dynamic.





Year	Take Up (sq.ft)
2013	756,114
2014	1,020,939
2015	403,224
2016	231,225
2017	402,765
2018	388,227
2019 Q1	37,117

In 2014 office take up in the city was in excess of 1,000,000 sq ft. This number dropped over 50% in 2015 (c. 400,000 sq ft) and then reduced by around half again to just c.230,000 sq ft in 2016, - the lowest annual total in the city since detailed records began and well below the 10 year average. We saw a marked improvement in 2017, when office take up rose to c. 405,000 sq ft (a similar level to 2015, but still less than half of the peak in the market).

In 2018, the market recorded office take up of c.390,000 sq ft which was broadly in line with 2017's figure, however there were no significant relocations in the year and this figure has consequently been made up of a larger number of smaller transactions. The City Centre, including the West End office district, recorded 174,764 sq ft, approximately 45% of this total take up.

Aberdeen office Take Up in Q1 2019 was the lowest quarter we have witnessed on record at 37,117 sq.ft. The largest deal in Q1 was 9,100 sq.ft at The Exchange in Market Street, where DNVGL provided a substantial incentive to John Crane Group to commit to an assignation of their lease.

The average deal size in 2018 was 4,130 sq.ft, and the average deal size in Q1 was 2,474 sq.ft.

Year	Average Deal Size (Sqft)
2013	9,001
2014	14,585
2015	7,074
2016	3,729
2017	6,011
2018	4,130
2019 Q1	2,474

Whilst on the one hand, take up being made up of many smaller transactions portrays a healthier market, and one which is less susceptible to significant fluctuation, the absence of any large active requirements



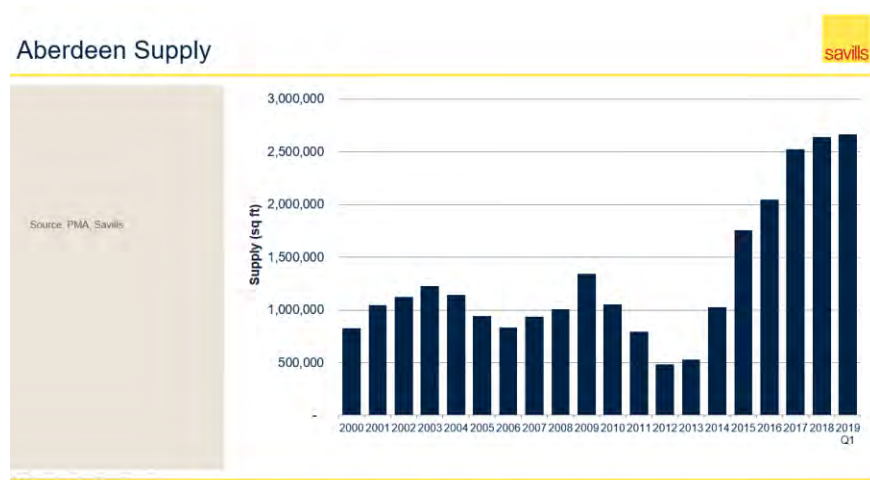
does support the view that we are unlikely to see any sizeable increase of take up in the short / medium term.

Given the foregoing, it may not come as a surprise that the office market is presently characterised by significant oversupply, and little in the way of noteworthy occupational demand. Office supply across the city at present extends to an unprecedented 2.7m sq.ft.

A number of new city centre schemes were forward committed during the period of significant market buoyancy; The Capitol (c.80,000 sq.ft), The Silver Fin (c.132,500 sq.ft) and Marischal Square (c.175,000 sq.ft).

All three buildings were under construction in late 2014, when oil price dropped. This resulted in a considerable amount of new build office space being introduced to the market, just as demand from energy sector occupiers tailed off dramatically.

Despite achieving practical completion in early 2018, there remains substantial vacancy in The Silver Fin building and Marischal Square, standing at c.92,500 sq.ft (c.70%) and c.100,000 sq.ft (c.57.5%) respectively.



Our view is that around one third of this supply is high quality 'Grade A' office space, around one third is 'Grade B' and around one third is functionally or locationally obsolete, and unlikely to be re-occupied as office space again in the future.



The most recent prelets in the Aberdeen office market were in early 2015; AAB took 45,000 sq.ft in Prime Four in Jan 15, KCA Deutag committed to c.70,000 sq.ft Jan 15 70,000 sq.ft. LR Senergy Jun 15 100,000 sq.ft.

Current market availability and the lack of occupational demand means that it is highly unlikely that there will be any pre-lets or significant speculative construction in Aberdeen until the oversupply issues are resolved.

### **North Dee Business Quarter**

In the context of the North Dee Business Quarter, current availability stands as follows;

<b>Address</b>	<b>Availability (Sq.ft)</b>
Bridgeview	22,953
Freedom House	31094
Admiral Court	40,488
Consort House	70,978
Annan House	11,464
Pilgrim House	13,878
13-21 Palmerston Road	2,554
Centurion Court	12,589
Ardent West	7,825
TOTAL	213,823

This does not include substantial availability at nearby The Exchange, Market Street (c.15,000 sq.ft), Riverside House (c.60,000 sq.ft), Salvesen Tower (40,000 sq.ft), Regent Centre (30,000 sq.ft) and Atholl House (c.50,000 sq.ft).

There were no substantial lettings in North Dee Business Quarter in 2018.

### **Summary**

Demand for office accommodation in Aberdeen has dramatically reduced since the energy sector downturn in 2014.

Q1 2019 office take up was 37,119 sq.ft, which is one of the lowest quarterly totals on record. Take up for 2017 and 2018 were around 400,000 sq.ft, which is less than half of the figures recorded at the market peak.



New build (and never occupied) city centre Grade A availability is in excess of 200,000 sq.ft, the bulk of which is accounted for by The Silver Fin building and Marischal Square - c.92,500 sq.ft (c.70%) and c.100,000 sq.ft (c.57.5%) vacancy respectively. Both buildings were built speculatively, and achieved practical completion in 2018.

Aberdeen office supply is at an unprecedented c.2.7m sq.ft. We are of the view that at least one third of this supply will never be re-occupied as office accommodation, and will require to go to alternative use.

There have been no office pre-lets in Aberdeen since 2015. Current market demand and availability suggests that this situation is likely to persist at least until we have seen resolution to the current oversupply issues.

The dearth of large active office requirements and the low average deal sizes support the view that we are unlikely to see any sizeable increase of take up in the short / medium term. These stats also suggest that it is highly unlikely any developers will commit to speculative development at least until we see a wholesale shift in market dynamic.

Almost all of the office developments in the North Dee Business Quarter were delivered in a comparatively buoyant market, and required pre-lets or pre-sales (at least in part) to facilitate construction.

Supply within the North Dee Business Quarter is c.215,000 sq.ft. This does not include any grey space which is not being formally marketed.

There has been no office take up in the North Dee Business Quarter in the last 12 months.