

Buchanan Bus Station Masterplan – Progress Update

Date of meeting 5 September 2025

Date of report 20 August 2025

Report by Head of Policy and Planning

1. Object of report

To update the Committee on the progress of the Buchanan Bus Station (BBS) Masterplan project.

2. Background to report

Members will recall from previous updates to this Committee^{1,2,3}, SPT's proposal to develop a masterplan for Buchanan Bus Station and the surrounding city block.

BBS is a key strategic hub within the west of Scotland's transport network and occupies a significant site within Glasgow city centre. While aspects of the facility have been modernised to improve the passenger experience and the safety and efficiency of operations, BBS has remained largely unchanged in 30 years, the surrounding environment has evolved, and is evolving, including, for example:

- the Glasgow City Council (GCC) Avenues Programme developing proposals for active travel corridors on North Hanover Street, Renfrew Street/Killermont Street, Cowcaddens Road and West Nile Street;
- Land Securities developing proposals for the Buchanan Quarter, including Buchanan Galleries;
- the GCC City Centre Living Strategy, aiming to double the population of the area to 40,000 over the next fifteen years by encouraging greater emphasis on residential development across the city centre; and
- the continued development of the Caledonian University campus with increasing student numbers.

This momentum created both a need and opportunity for SPT to consider how BBS itself may change to reflect emerging operational requirements and how it could help assist with wider development aspirations for the city centre.

To that end, an Invitation to Tender for the development of a masterplan was issued in March 2024, with a contract award to AtkinsRéalis UK Limited approved by the SPT Operations Committee on 26 April 2024⁴, with the masterplan due to complete by December 2025.

¹ https://www.spt.co.uk/media/3mvp1fyc/sp090623_agenda5.pdf 7.pdf

² https://spt.production.d8.studio/media/1ftdizwm/sp291124_agenda

³ https://www.spt.co.uk/media/yz3modtg/sp130625_agenda5.pdf

⁴ https://spt.production.d8.studio/media/sjpdrc0/ops260424_agenda13.pdf

3. Outline of proposals

The BBS Masterplan is being taken forward in two parts:

- Part 1 – Baselineing, option development, evaluation and refinement; and
- Part 2 – Preferred concept masterplan and design strategies development and refinement and public engagement.

A project team has been established to take the project forward, consisting of officers from SPT, Glasgow City Council and AtkinsRéalis.

Project progress has been positive, with Part 1 now complete. The following sections provide an update on progress to date.

- Part 1 - Baselineing, option development, evaluation and refinement

Initial work focused on baselineing and benchmarking, undertaking a thorough review of relevant policies and planning policy, an analysis of market conditions, best practice elsewhere, current and future operational requirements, and the opportunities and constraints presented by the surrounding area.

This work culminated in the development of initial concept design strategies, setting out some high-level principles for the development of the masterplan; these are set out in Appendix 1.

Thereafter, an engagement exercise was carried out on the future of the site involving workshops, focus groups, promotional campaigns, and an online survey. Several key priorities were identified, including better connectivity, enhanced safety and improved accessibility, re-affirming the importance of BBS's primary function as a critical transport hub for the west of Scotland.

Building on the understanding developed from baselineing, benchmarking and engagement, conceptual options were developed ranging from 'do-minimum' up to 'do-maximum' levels of development on the site. These options were then subject to further refinement, each presenting a different approach to the redevelopment of BBS, with varying focuses on operational efficiency, passenger experience, and land use distribution and utilisation.

Eight key criteria were then developed based on work to date in order to assess the options and identify a preferred approach; the criteria came under the following headings:

- Urban Design & Placemaking
- Transport Integration
- Operational Flexibility
- Delivery & Phasing
- Safety & Accessibility
- Sustainability
- Economic & Commercial Potential
- Social & Cultural Integration

More detail on the evaluation criteria is available in Appendix 2.

The 'do minimum' option was discounted as there was limited opportunity to provide an enhanced operational environment, flexibility or resilience and passenger experience,

and operational capacity was limited. It did not support substantial enhancement of the urban environment and provided a limited activation of the surrounding streets and limited development potential.

The 'do maximum' option, which sought to provide the maximum development opportunity, reduced the visibility of the bus station and the quality of the passenger experience by placing the station under a development platform. Fire safety concerns were raised with this option. The delivery of this option would also be challenging.

The preferred approach to be taken for further refinement in Part 2 presents a distinct design with sufficient capacity to enhance the operational environment and the passenger experience while also allowing for flexibility and resilience, as well as the development of high-quality public spaces and other development opportunities.

- **Part 2 - Preferred concept masterplan refinement and public engagement**

Work on Part 2 of the masterplan development process is underway, with the development of architectural, engineering, landscape and operational design proposals to support the creation of an overarching concept masterplan.

The summer period has provided time to further develop the operational layout to ensure capacity, flexibility and resilience, and enhance the passenger experience. Refinement of the preferred approach in line with planning policy and design requirements and commercial market analysis is underway. Positive dialogue has taken place with Glasgow City Council Development Management officers, to ensure the approach and the refinement work is in line with other emerging development proposals and the city's aspirations for the area.

The draft concept masterplan will be subject to stakeholder and public engagement over coming months, with masterplan development remaining on time to complete by December 2025, following which it will be presented to the Partnership for approval.

4. Committee action

The Committee is recommended to note the content of this report and project progress to date.

5. Consequences

Policy consequences	<i>In line with Policy 18: Integrated public transport system; Policy 21: Bus Quality and Integration and Policy 28 Interchanges and Sustainable Mobility Hubs, and other supporting policies, of the Regional Transport Strategy.</i>
Legal consequences	<i>None at present.</i>
Financial consequences	<i>Costs relating to the development of the masterplan are covered within existing budgets.</i>
Personnel consequences	<i>None identified.</i>
Equalities consequences	<i>Accessibility and inclusion are clear requirements. Impact Assessments are being carried out as part of the project.</i>

Risk consequences	<i>A risk register is maintained as part of project management.</i>
Climate Change, Adaptation & Carbon consequences	<i>The project outputs will align with SPT's Climate Change Strategy and action plan and will develop a proposal which minimises lifecycle carbon emissions and facilitates the decarbonisation of the bus network and resiliency to the effects of climate changes.</i>

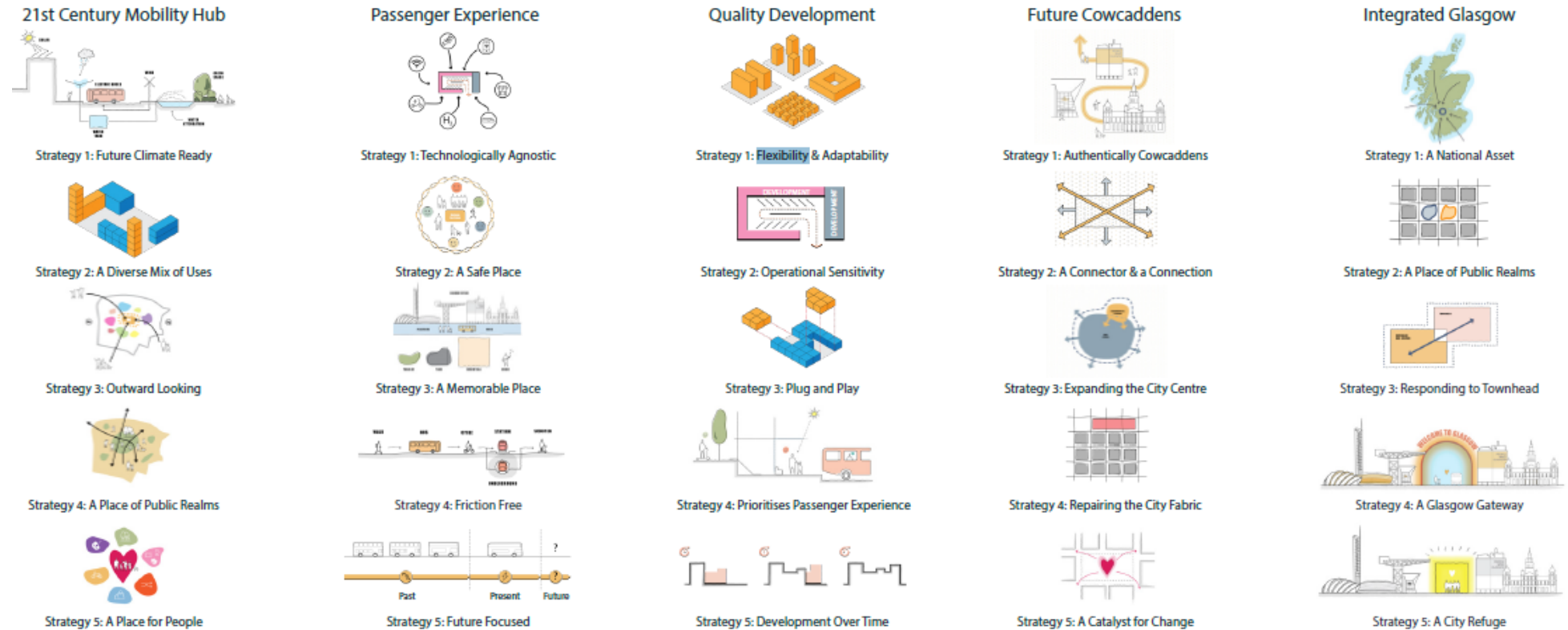
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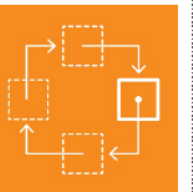
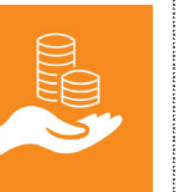
APPENDIX 1

Initial Design Strategy Summary



APPENDIX 2

Options Evaluation Criteria

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
CRITERIA								
	Urban Design & Placemaking	Transport Integration	Operational Flexibility	Delivery & Phasing	Safety & Accessibility	Sustainability	Economic & Commercial Potential	Social & Cultural Integration
CONSIDERATIONS	• CONNECTIVITY • QUALITY PUBLIC SPACE • DISTINCTIVE DESIGN • PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES & CONNECTIONS • COMMUNITY OFFER • LANDSCAPE • ACTIVATION	• PASSENGER EXPERIENCE • INTERMODAL CONNECTIVITY / ACTIVE TRAVEL • SEAMLESS CONNECTIONS • PICKUP/DROPOFF • PASSENGER FACILITIES • TRAIN & METRO (CURRENT AND FUTURE) • ACCESS • INTUITIVE WAYFINDING	• IMPACT ON BUS STATION OPERATIONS • IMPACT ON STAFF • FLEXIBILITY & ADAPTABILITY • FUTUREPROOFING FOR CHANGING TECHNOLOGIES • QUALITY DRIVER FACILITIES AND ACCESS	• EASE OF PHASING • OPERATIONAL PHASING (ENSURING THE BUS STATION REMAINS OPEN AND OPERATIONAL) • BUILDABILITY • EXTENT OF DEMOLITION	• SAFE ENVIRONMENTS FOR ALL • ACCESS FOR ALL • WALKING DISTANCES • PASSENGER SAFETY	• ENERGY • CARBON • ENVIRONMENT • BIODIVERSITY • ACTIVE TRANSPORT OPPORTUNITY • EXPANSION AND ADAPTABILITY • REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE • WHOLE LIFE CARBON • AZOLLA	• DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL • FUNDING POTENTIAL • CATALYST FOR REGENERATION	• SOCIAL VALUE • SOCIAL IMPACT • WELLBEING • INCLUSIVITY • CULTURAL INTEGRATION • AUTHENTICALLY GLASGOW • NOISE AND AIR QUALITY



BBS Masterplan

Bruce Kiloh, Head of Policy & Planning
September 2025







BBS Masterplan area

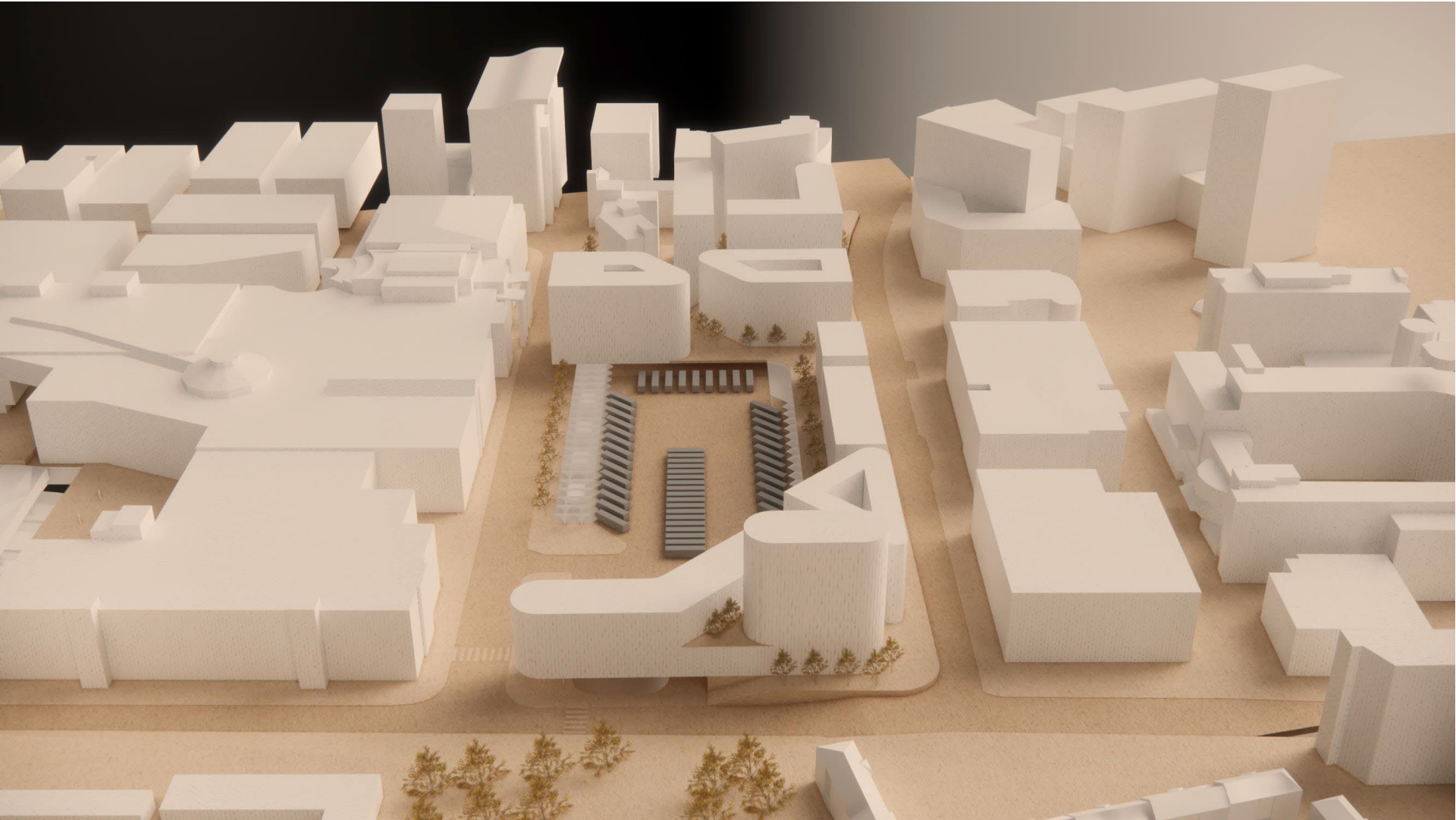


Figure 10: Buchanan Bus Station site boundary

Key

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ① Royal Concert Hall | ② Concert Square Car Park | ⑤ Theatre Royal | ⑥ The Royal Conservatoire Scotland |
| ③ Buchanan Galleries Shopping Centre | ④ Glasgow Caledonian University | ⑦ Glasgow Queen Street Station | |

Do Minimum



Do Maximum



Do Medium (1) – Sawtooth (preferred)



Do Medium (2) - Drive through (preferred)

