

City Centre Princes Street Development Framework

Approved by the Planning Committee 4 October 2007 Executive Summary



市中心 Princes Street 發展架構：執行摘要
2007年10月4日獲規劃委員會核準

সিটি সেন্টার প্রিন্সেস স্ট্রীট উন্নয়ন অবকাঠামোঃ কার্যকরী সারসংক্ষেপ
প্ল্যানিং কমিটি কর্তৃক ০৪ অক্টোবর ২০০৭ এ অনুমোদিত

مرکز شهر پرنس سٹریٹ Princes Street کی تعمیر و ترقی کا ڈھانچہ: ایگزیکٹو کا خلاصہ
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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this framework document is to set out development principles to guide and co-ordinate development and investment in Edinburgh city centre. The framework complements the Edinburgh City Centre Action Plan 2005-2010.

1.2 Development Framework

The City Centre Princes Street Development Framework (CCPSDF) has been prepared by Broadway Malyan on behalf of the Council. Broadway Malyan's team of architects, masterplanners and planners have worked closely with the Council and, initially the Edinburgh City Centre Management Company (ECCMCo), to produce the framework. This document is a summary of the framework.

The CCPSDF focuses on the regeneration of the area between Princes Street and Rose Street Lane North within the context of the wider city centre. A successful city centre, and in particular a successful Princes

Street, is essential if Edinburgh is to maintain its position as the principal focus of activities which are integral to its role and function as a capital city, a regional service centre and major tourist destination.

The development framework has been subject to extensive public consultation and will inform the preparation of development briefs for individual urban blocks along Princes Street and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications that come forward for the city centre.

1.3 Site description and context

The development framework has to be considered within the context of the 'string of pearls' concept which is a chain of interconnected development opportunities stretching from Calton Hill to Haymarket. (see Figure 1 below). Each 'pearl' is different, and is an entity on its own right. However, taken collectively they represent a series of development opportunities which are of a greater value than their individual parts.

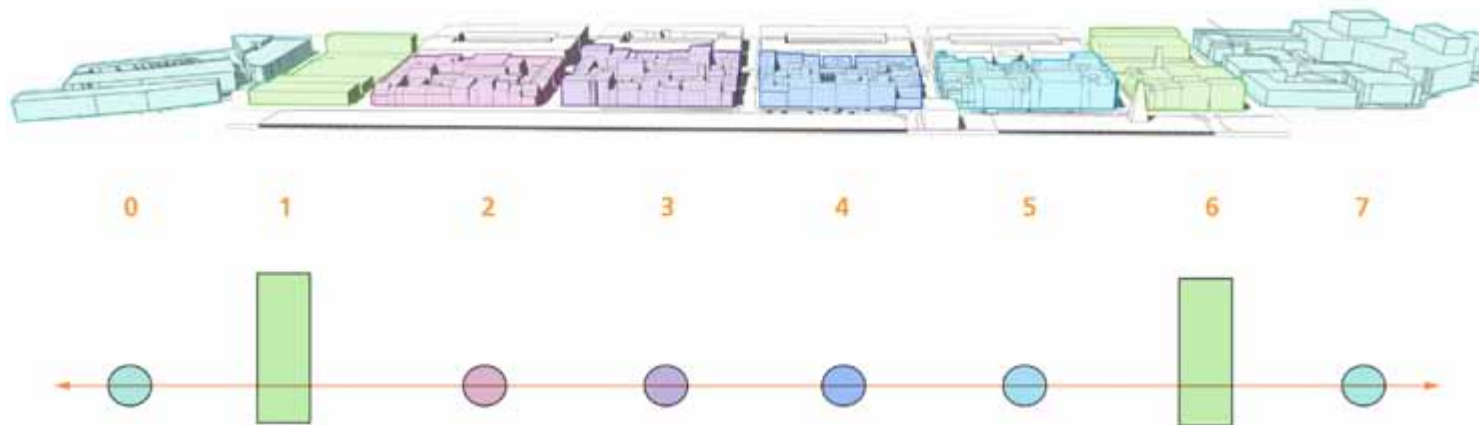


Figure 1: String of Pearls Concept

1 Introduction

This summary document refers to the area outlined in green shown in Figure 2 below. This includes Princes Street, Rose Street, George Street, the connecting streets of Castle Street, Frederick Street, Hanover Street and smaller lanes within the boundary. The boundary extends from Leith Street to the east and Hope Street to the west. Notwithstanding this, the framework has to be seen within the context of the overall city centre and the 'string of pearls' concept.

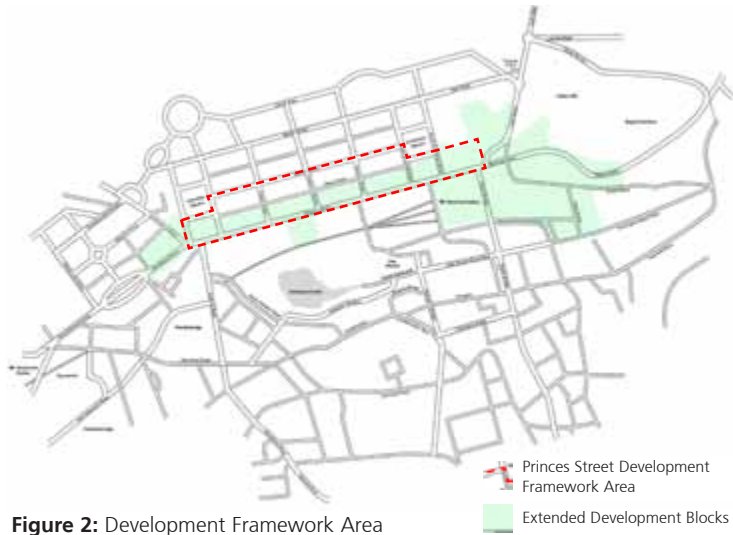


Figure 2: Development Framework Area

1.4 Historical Context

Princes Street was originally a residential street lined with small scale, Georgian buildings. From around 1800 onwards the street changed its character to become a commercial street, adapted for retail use – basement areas were paved over and shop fronts pulled forward. Since then, new buildings have been built on the street and significant alterations have taken place. By the 1930s, little thought had been given to the means of imposing an urban design discipline on the rapidly changing face of the area, particularly Princes Street. As a result, the street began to lack cohesion and unity. It was criticised by The Abercrombie Plan of 1949, which prescribed an overall framework for height and massing to restore cohesion to the street. There was freedom within the Plan to alter shop fronts providing a standard frame unified all shops.

The 1967 Princes Street Panel Report recommended that the street should be comprehensively redeveloped. It was suggested that a unified design would be achieved by controlling height, materials, floor levels, frontage widths and modelling of elevations. A standard section incorporating a continuous elevated walkway with shop fronts at first floor level was devised. The Panel formula was abandoned in the 1970s, with only isolated sites rebuilt. Conservation of buildings on Princes Street became an issue in the 1970s, with many of the buildings obtaining statutory listing. By then Princes Street contained an extremely diverse architectural mix of Georgian houses, Victorian and Edwardian buildings, such as Jenners Department Store, The Balmoral Hotel and inter-war and post-war buildings.



1804



1819



1850



1893

Figure 4: Historical Maps of Block 3



Figure 3: Photographic records of Princes Street and previous proposals (A Civic Survey & Plan For Edinburgh, Oliver and Boyd)

2 Planning

2.1 Planning Policy Context

The Council's planning policies for the city centre are contained in the Edinburgh & the Lothians Structure Plan (2015) (ELSP) and the Central Edinburgh Local Plan (1997) (CELP), which together comprise the development plan for the area. In addition to the development plan there are a number of documents that will be material to the consideration of proposals that come forward for the city's retail core. Principal among these is the finalised Edinburgh City Local Plan (March 2007), which, when adopted, will replace the CELP. Other material considerations include:

- Inspiring Action: The Edinburgh City Centre Action Plan 2005-10
- Local Transport Strategy 2007-2012, including the Council's Parking Strategy
- The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Plan
- New Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal
- Edinburgh Area Retail Needs Study (EARNS) 2005
- Edinburgh Tourism. A Framework for Growth 2007-2015
- Edinburgh Standards for Streets
- Tram Design Manual
- Edinburgh Standards for Sustainable Building
- Edinburgh Skyline Study
- Other approved masterplans and briefs such as the Caltongate Masterplan (October 2006) and the St James Quarter development brief (April 2007).

The Council's planning policies for the city centre seek to create a

diverse, thriving and welcoming city centre. To this end, it seeks to maintain and strengthen the city centre as the principal focus of activities which are integral to Edinburgh's role and function as a capital city, a regional service centre and major tourist destination. An intensively developed, vibrant city centre character should be maintained and a wide range of uses encouraged – shopping, cultural, leisure, entertainment, business, higher education and civic uses. An emphasis is placed on mixed uses within individual sites and locations to foster city centre vitality. Special attention is paid to streets and public spaces and how these may be improved and made more pedestrian friendly. This is coupled with a balanced approach to transport that reduces unnecessary car use, congestion and pollution. The Council also supports and encourages new retail development that will enhance the city centre's regional shopping centre status.

Princes Street and the surrounding area lie within the New Town Conservation Area, for which a character appraisal has been prepared. It also lies within a UNESCO inscribed World Heritage Site. While the designation of the Site does not carry any additional planning powers or controls, the impact of proposed development on the Site will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.



Figure 5: Aerial View of the First New Town

3 Land Uses

3.1 Shopping

Set with the city centre retail core, Princes Street is the main shopping street in Edinburgh and the Lothians. However, city centre retail has been in decline in the last two to three years. It has moved from 16th place in the UK retail rankings in 2003 to 25th in 2007. Edinburgh is expected to slip even further down the rankings and is predicted to be overtaken by a further 17 UK cities by 2008. The Edinburgh Area Retail Needs Study (EARNs) 2005 indicated that the city centre needed an additional 52,000 m² of additional (net) floorspace, as well as an improved quality offer and size of space, to attract and retain quality retailers. The study predicts that there will be an un-served retail spend in the study area of £544m by 2015. Despite Princes Street being one of the finest streets in Europe due to the outstanding views to Edinburgh Castle, the overall quality of the retail offer does not currently match that of a typical capital city. Nor does it meet the demands or exceed the expectations of a growing population of shoppers.

According to research for the Edinburgh and Lothians Structure Plan 2015 (approved 2004) there are fewer shoppers than before attracted to Edinburgh's city centre from outside the Lothians, with a net outflow of spend to areas outside the Lothians, possibly Glasgow. Princes Street has now fallen from its status as the most expensive place to rent shop space in Britain, outside London. However, it still remains a popular destination for visitors.

This document sets out a framework to address the decline in retail offer and promote inward investment. In conjunction with continuous retail uses at ground level on Princes Street, the framework encourages proposals which will enhance the development blocks by locating a range of uses in the currently empty upper levels. These are discussed below.

3.2 Commercial Leisure & Hotel Uses

Although the creation of new retail floorspace is a key objective for the Council, the success of the city centre is based on a rich mix of activities. The Council seeks to promote the growth of Edinburgh as a cultural, artistic, leisure and entertainment centre of international significance and to guide these activities to locations compatible with residential amenity. These are the uses that one expects to find in the city centre

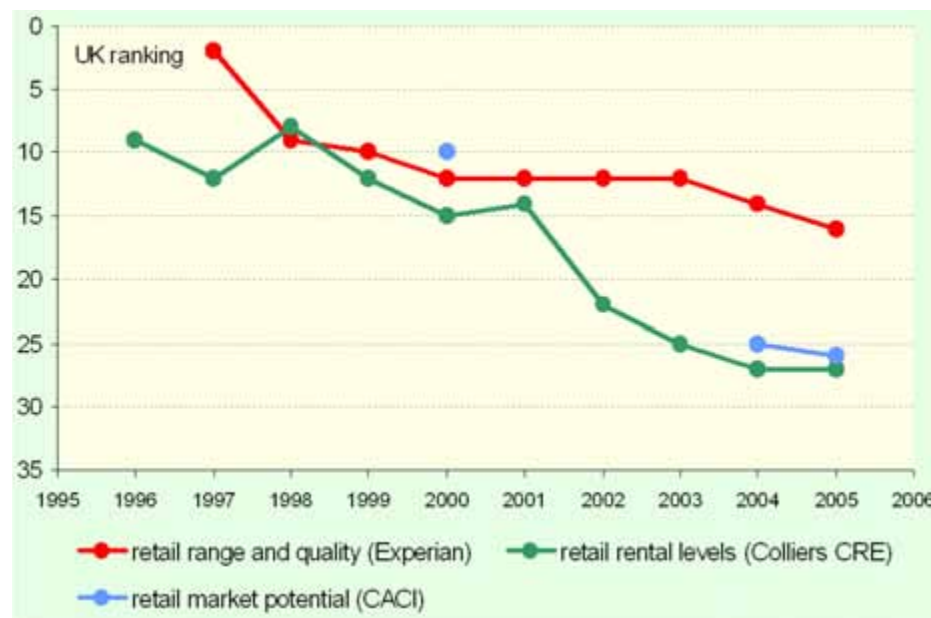


Figure 5: Edinburgh's UK ranking as a shopping centre
Source: Edinburgh and Lothian Structure Plan 2015. First Biennial Monitoring Report



Harvey Nichols



Rose Street



40 Princes Street

3 Land Uses

and are an aspect of its leisure and tourist roles. Leisure and tourism is thus integral to the restoration of individual buildings, to the revitalisation of wider areas and generally to the restoration of city centre life and its image as a festival city.

3.3 Office Use

The development plan supports the refurbishment and modernisation of office buildings. It encourages new office development provided such development would not inhibit the retention or introduction of other city centre activities important to its character and vitality.

3.4 Residential

Residential uses, as part of a broad mix of uses, are acceptable in principle within the city centre retail core, provided proposals are compatible with other policies of the ECLP.

3.5 Car Parking

There are currently over 5000 off-street public car parking spaces within the city centre. These facilities provide a significant amount of public car parking to meet the needs of the area, though it is recognised that there is a shortfall in supply in the west /north-west of the city centre. While public transport provision to the city centre is excellent, and the Council wishes to encourage the use of this and other sustainable modes, it is understood that car parking has a role to play in sustaining the economic health of the city centre.

It will be necessary to find the right balance between encouraging more sustainable forms of transport whilst providing an appropriate level of parking for shoppers, visitors and residents to ensure that the desired regeneration of the city centre is deliverable.

The Council would expect proposals to take into account the existing provision, the extent to which it is used and to incorporate improvements to the quality of this provision. Consideration would be given to the provision of additional short to medium stay parking at a level which can be clearly justified. Options to maximise the role of Park and Ride should be explored. Proposals that enable reduction of on street parking

provision and the delivery of improvements for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport should be encouraged.

The Council's Parking Strategy seeks to maintain and improve the economic vitality of the city centre whilst ensuring parking provision does not encourage commuter car travel to central Edinburgh. Proposals should comply with the Strategy. Policy Park 4 of the Local Transport Strategy 2007-2012 states that 'The Council will seek to increase the supply of short to medium stay public off street parking close to the western/north western end of the city centre retail core'.



Figure 6: Existing transport Infrastructure and Proposed Tram Route

4 Considerations

4.1 Architectural Interest

The study area contains a significant number of statutorily listed buildings and is within the New Town Conservation Area. Regeneration within the framework area will offer the opportunity to improve the condition of existing listed buildings on Princes Street and neighbouring streets. Redevelopment proposals should use this as an opportunity to sensitively integrate these historic buildings and reinforce their special character.

Applications for the demolition or substantial alteration of a listed building must be accompanied by a thorough structural condition report demonstrating that the proposals are necessary or justified and, in the case of demolition proposals, that every possibility of retaining the building in an alternative viable use must be explored.

The preservation and enhancement of the setting of listed buildings in the area is an important consideration for the Council and has informed the preparation of the development principles set out in this framework.

4.2 World Heritage Site

The regeneration of Princes Street as part of the city centre represents an opportunity to address the adverse impact which some of the buildings within the framework area have on the townscape of the area. It is important that all new development should contribute positively to its surroundings and respect the context within which it is to be sited. In this regard an understanding of the Outstanding Universal Values, as set out in the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh Management Plan, is considered essential in development proposals within the city centre.

4.3 Gardens and Designed Landscape

The framework area sits within the boundary of the New Town Gardens which is on the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes. Whilst development on Princes Street may have no direct impact on the designed landscape, the gardens form part of the special setting for Princes Street and the New Town and any proposals should be sensitive to this context.



signature corner pieces



signature buildings



princes street gardens

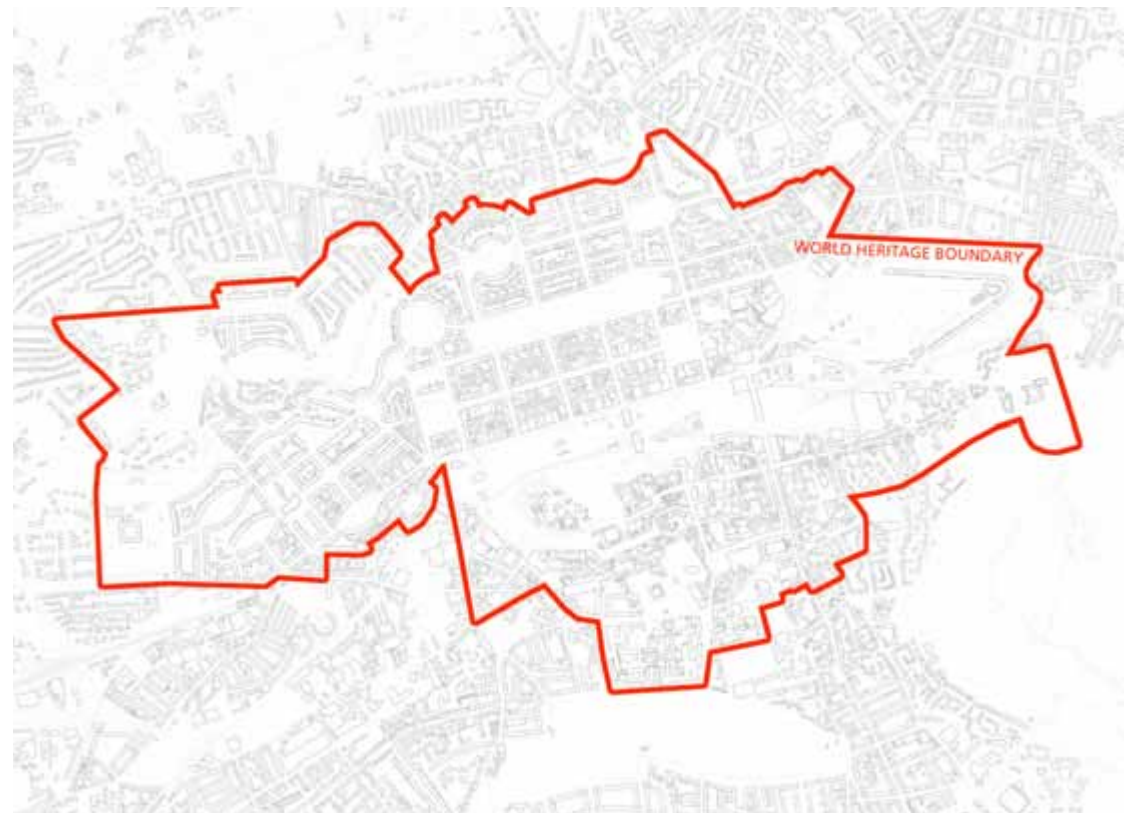


Figure 7: World Heritage Site Boundary

4 Considerations

4.4 Transport and Connectivity

Transport is a key issue for the regeneration of the city centre. The city centre is well served by an extensive network of bus services, by Waverley Railway Station and by Edinburgh Bus Station. In the future it will benefit from trams as part of an integrated transport network. The area also includes key traffic routes and junctions and extensive parking provision. Princes Street is the dominant public transport route through the city centre. As such, in the foreseeable future, there is no realistic alternative that would allow any substantial reduction in the number of buses operating along Princes Street.

Transport to and within the development framework area will need to be considered carefully within the context of a Transport Strategy for the city centre and of course the wider Local Transport Strategy. The needs of retailers and other business interests, residents, motorists, public transport users, pedestrians and cyclists will need to be integrated and balanced. Key issues to be considered include access for public transport, car parking provision and servicing for retail. Proposals should provide linkages of the highest quality to and from tram stops, bus stops and other public transport nodes including Waverley Station and the Bus Station.

4.5 Planning Agreements

Regeneration on the scale envisaged within the city centre and on Princes Street will have a significant impact on the provision of infrastructure and services in the city. Redevelopment on Princes Street will require developers to enter into legal agreements to secure the appropriate contribution towards meeting identified requirements. In this regard reference should be made to the following council guidelines:

- Tram Project: Developer Contributions
- Movement and Development
- Affordable Housing
- Developer Contributions in Schools

The Council will also seek to secure significant improvements to the public realm within the city centre. One area for securing this and other improvements is through developer contributions.



Buses on Princes Street



Bustling footways



Pedestrian crossings



Future tram project

5 Summary Urban Analysis |

5.1 Current Situation

This Executive Summary is informed by a site analysis of the current economic and physical context of the city centre and specifically Princes Street. The more detailed analysis contained within the framework supplements this Executive Summary and includes the following:

- an outline of the Edinburgh city centre and Princes Street shopping context
- an outline of visitor and tourism demands
- an overview of the transport network
- a streetscape analysis
- a building occupancy and analysis
- a review of servicing and waste management

5.2 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Constraints

A summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints arising from these analyses are as follows:

Key strengths

- Edinburgh's international profile
- Strong cultural, academic and commercial sectors
- Strong urban context and setting
- Preferred location for visitors
- Served well by all modes of transport
- Historic buildings and heritage



National Galleries of Scotland



Multrees Walk

5 Summary Site Analysis

Key Weaknesses

- Pedestrian environment weak in some areas
- Lack of quality modern retailing
- Erosion of historic plan form
- Unsympathetic infill development
- Vacancy on upper floors
- Poor servicing arrangements



Poor servicing in Rose Street Lane



Key Constraints

- Developing within a sensitive context
- Perception of limited car parking
- Land assembly and servicing of blocks
- Permeability between the blocks

Key opportunities

- Enhance the skyline and key views of the New Town
- Improve the public realm and the pedestrian environment
- Increasing the availability of modern retail floorspace
- Enhance the historic plan form including the use of service lanes
- Improve servicing arrangements
- Implement sustainability standards
- Improve car parking provision
- Re-use and adaptation of historic buildings



Hogmany Fireworks



Edinburgh Farmer's Market



Shopping at Harvey Nichols

6 Framework Development Principles

6.1 Unique Selling Points

The concept of the 'string of pearls' describes the unique experience of Princes Street. Each pearl offers its own distinct character and beauty and opportunity for regeneration. Each pearl holds its own Unique Selling Points, which is paramount in creating a sustainable retail core.

6.2 Development Principles

The long term aspiration of the Council is to sustain and enhance the city centre as the regional focus for shopping, entertainment, commercial leisure and tourism related activities and encourage the development of the highest quality. The development principles outlined below will be a starting point for developing the detailed proposals within the framework area.

Principle 1: To reconcile the needs of the historic environment with the requirements of contemporary users.

- An understanding of the original masterplan should be at the core of development proposals. The historic urban grain should be recognised in any redevelopment proposals with its legibility reinforced and enhanced where possible.
- There will be a presumption in favour of retaining listed buildings, with a subsequent evaluation of their roles arising from an understanding of their listings and role within the wider development.
- The adaptation and re-use of historic buildings, including upper floors, should be considered as part of any regeneration proposals.
- The Council recognise that there may be circumstances where a case can be made that outweighs the retention of an individual listed building. This could include the benefits of a substantial regeneration scheme, the planning benefits gained, the quality of the replacement buildings and the restoration of other listed buildings.
- The Council will welcome development opportunities afforded by the removal of un-listed buildings which make no positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

- Building heights of contemporary development should respond to those of existing structures (see Figure 8). Redevelopment should seek to create a varied and coherent roofscape with the opportunity taken to enhance the existing roofscape.
- The Council will seek innovative solutions to integrate existing and proposed structures within the wider block redevelopment.



Figure 8: Rolling Roofscape Elevation

6 Framework Development Principles

Principle 2: To optimise the site's potential through a retail-led mixed use development.

- Street level activity across the site should be driven by retail units. Development should ensure a diverse retail experience by providing high quality, commercially attractive units of varying types and sizes, capable of accommodating a wide range of retail uses.
- The change in ground level between Princes Street and Rose Street could be capitalised to encourage permeability across the site. Ground floor of retail units fronting Princes Street may extend beneath Rose Street Lane South. It may be necessary for a minor increase in the level of Rose Street Lane South to achieve this. (See Figure 9). Likewise, the first floor level of retail units fronting Princes Street may exit directly onto Rose Street Lane South, encouraging pedestrian use and enhancing the quality of environment in the lane.
- Development and regeneration proposals must be considered within the context of the wider framework and their inter-relationship with other blocks.
- There may be potential to locate mixed uses, such as hotel or residential units in the upper floors of accommodation. Access to upper floor accommodation may be provided by one or more entrance lobbies providing access from ground level.
- Redevelopment should provide a clean, safe, attractive, and well-maintained area which provides facilities for visitors.

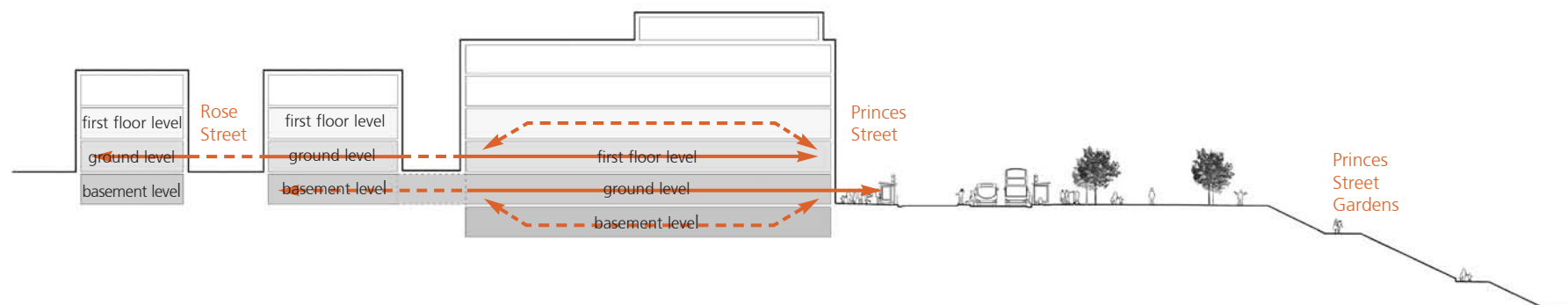


Figure 9: Sectional Diagram for indicative purposes only

6 Framework Development Principles

Principle 3: To create a high quality built environment and public realm.

- The design of new development should be of the highest quality and be driven by an underlying conceptual approach and an understanding of the qualities of existing structures on the site.
- The design of new buildings on the site should be of a contemporary idiom and utilise materials that are contextual to Edinburgh.
- Supported by a contextual analysis, new development on the site should respond to the established street hierarchy and take account of existing scale, uses, and façade design characteristics.
- Development design will need a high degree of ingenuity and creativity with proposals taking account of proposed and future uses to ensure that site's potential is maximised.
- The design of the public realm should accord with the Edinburgh Standards for Streets and seek to achieve a high quality and durable environment that reflects the nature of adjacent uses.
- Key areas and routes within the development should receive special design consideration and aid permeability through the site.
- The overall development design should seek to meet and exceed the Edinburgh Standards for Sustainable Building. An environmentally responsive design approach should be implicit within the overall development and considered from the outset.



Crowds at The Mound



Eyre Place



The National Museum of Scotland



Couple at Jenners

7 Implementation/Delivery

7.1 Delivery Process

On 29 June 2006, the City of Edinburgh Council agreed to establish a 'City Centre Development Partnership' Board to lead the development agenda in the city centre. The purpose of this complex development partnership will be to focus solely on delivery of the redevelopment of the city centre.

The City Centre Development Partnership (CCDP) is essentially a strategic body, which will make recommendations and offer guidance to progress the city centre development. There is also a requirement for a separate dedicated 'delivery vehicle' to deliver the objectives on behalf of the Development Partnership. This will include the delivery of the framework, delivery of specific projects, co-ordination of investment in redevelopment of masterplan areas, and managing liaison between the public and private sector.

The CCDP consists of the City of Edinburgh Council, Edinburgh World Heritage, Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh and Lothians (SEEL), and various private landowners and investors.

Following the establishment of the delivery vehicle for The City Centre Development Partnership, the remit of Edinburgh City Centre Management Company (ECCMCo) now focuses on the development of Business Improvement Districts (BIDS). This encompasses maintenance, cleanliness, security and marketing. ECCMCo also promote city centre activities and the management and development of a more strategic approach to street events and activities. The CCDP and associated delivery vehicle will focus on promoting and delivering redevelopment projects.

7.2 Implementation

The Development Framework will inform proposals for redevelopment within the framework area. Forthcoming proposals in the form of masterplans, individual development briefs or planning proposals should be in accordance with the development principles contained within this brief and continue the ongoing consultation with the local community, key stakeholders and the Council.

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