



Glasgow City Council

**Neighbourhoods, Housing and Public Realm
Policy Development Committee**

Report by Executive Director of Development and the Economy

Contact: Jane Laiolo

Ext: 77207

Item 2

12th March 2019

GLASGOW CITY CENTRE AVENUES: PROGRESS REPORT

Purpose of Report:

To update Members on progress with the City Centre Avenues programme.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Members:

- (i) Consider the contents of this report;
- (ii) Notes the progress of the City Centre Avenues programme;
- (iii) Notes that further reports will be brought back to Committee for consideration as individual Avenues are progressed.

Ward No(s): 10

Citywide:

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Members will be aware of the Glasgow City Centre Avenues programme: a £115 million investment in public realm infrastructure that is funded through the Glasgow City Region City Deal Programme.
- 1.2 A full report on the Avenues is being prepared for the Neighbourhoods Policy Development Committee on 4 June 2019. This will focus on updating Members on the delivery of Sauchiehall Street Avenue, the demonstrator project for the wider public realm programme, along with the findings from the Lessons Learned Review. In addition, it will provide an update on the full Avenues programme which involves the upgrade of 17 key streets in Glasgow city centre over the period to 2025.
- 1.3 The purpose of this interim report is to update members on progress to date with Avenues that have recently progressed through public consultation, specifically the Underline and Sauchiehall Street Precinct.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The concept of city centre Avenues was established as part of the development of the City Centre Strategy 2014-19. This proposed network of green infrastructure had a series of principal objectives focused upon:
 - Linking key gateways, neighbourhoods and focus points;
 - Displaying good street design with a focus on a people-centred approach;
 - Promoting sustainable modes of transport and active travel opportunities;
 - Improving perceptions of areas, drawing people to active and engaging part so of the city;
 - Providing opportunities for integrated infrastructure.
- 2.2 The Avenues activity is being taken forward through the City Deal programme. Seventeen Avenues in total will benefit from this significant investment in public realm infrastructure over the period to 2025, including the pilot Avenue at Sauchiehall Street West. These Avenues have been consolidated into three blocks, each comprising a number of streets. These are referred to as Blocks A, B and C.
- 2.3 In addition, a further block of potential Avenues has been identified which may be eligible for *Sustrans Community Links Plus* funding (Block S). Funding bids are being prepared for consideration in mid-2019. If successful, this would provide funding for additional Avenues activity that is focused on delivering active travel outcomes. It would not substitute for existing funding or planned activity.
- 2.4 The independent Glasgow Connectivity Commission was established in November 2017 by Glasgow City Council Leader Susan Aitken. The Commission was chaired by Professor David Begg and was challenged to generate bold, fresh ideas to transform Scotland's biggest city, making it a more liveable and breathable place which is more attractive to visitors, businesses and citizens. It is noted that the first of the Commission's reports, published in

November 2018, strongly supports the Avenues programme and has recommended its acceleration and expansion. Officers from DRS and NS are reviewing options in this regard.

3. SAUCHIEHALL AVENUE WEST

- 3.1 Sauchiehall Avenue West was selected to be the pilot Avenue, to demonstrate this new approach to public realm design and placemaking strategy in Glasgow city centre. This has been an extremely useful exercise, and while this Avenue is not scheduled to be completed until May 2019 the lessons learned process is underway. A full report on this will be brought to Committee for consideration on completion of the works.
- 3.2 In addition to the complexities of constructing an entirely new street design in a city centre environment, Sauchiehall Avenue West was significantly affected by two fires: the Victoria's Nightclub site in March 2018, and the Glasgow School of Art in June 2018. Both fires created massive dislocation on the street, inhibiting connectivity, footfall and trade.
- 3.3 In relation to the Avenue, the construction programme had to be substantially revised to accommodate the requirements of the GSA site in particular. Amongst other things, this resulted in the O2/Campus block being cordoned off. Public access was very limited and no Avenue works could be undertaken at that block.
- 3.3 In mid-February 2019 the construction team gained access to the Campus block as the cordon was withdrawn, and the last group of Avenue trees will be planted there in March. The final phase of work will deliver the new street lighting columns, street furniture, and complete the snagging works. Despite the various issues, it is expected that full completion of works will be achieved by the original programme end date of end May 2019.
- 3.4 **Appendices 1 and 2** illustrate Sauchiehall Avenue West as it looked prior to any works, and how it is shaping up six months from completion.

4. BLOCK A: GENERAL UPDATE

4.1 Background

- 4.1.1 The Block A Design Contract has been subdivided into three separate working groups:
- (i) North Hanover Street and Cathedral Street
 - (ii) Argyle Street West, Argyle Street East, Dixon Street, and St Enoch's Square
 - (iii) The Underline, Cambridge Street, and Sauchiehall Street Precinct
- 4.1.2 The progress of some groups has been restricted by the requirement to effectively test the impact of proposed Avenue interventions on the traffic network. There is a parallel workstream underway focused upon updating the City Centre Traffic Model, and therefore those Avenues which have the

potential to deliver significant space reallocation away from private vehicles have not yet been conceptualised to any great degree. The City Centre Traffic Model is now updated and is currently modelling the full Avenues programme, different scenarios for potential bus corridors, and the options of full or partial pedestrianisation of George Square.

- 4.1.3 North Hanover Street and Cathedral Street Avenues will be most critical to the traffic model, and on that basis no work has commenced beyond early concept analysis.
- 4.1.4 Argyle Street Avenue, covering the area from the Kingston Bridge to Trongate, has completed its concept design, and is now moving to the next stage of detailed and technical design. However it also requires further testing at this stage in order to understand the full effect on the traffic network, particularly in the the context of the full Avenues programme.
- 4.1.5 Accordingly, the focus of work so far has been on the Underline, Cambridge Street and Sauchiehall Street Precinct Avenues.

4.2 The Underline

- 4.2.1 The Underline Avenue will reinstate a historic connection between Great Western Road and the Sauchiehall Street Precinct via New City Road and Cambridge Street. This Avenue will focus on repairing a historically direct route through communities that were fragmented in the 1970s by the construction of the M8 motorway. It offers an exciting opportunity to regenerate an area perceived by many as being remote from the city centre.
- 4.2.2 The Underline Avenue has been divided into seven zones for the purposes of this report:
 - (i) St Georges Cross
 - (ii) New City Road west
 - (iii) Phoenix Road
 - (iv) New City Road east
 - (v) Cowcaddens
 - (vi) Cambridge Street North
 - (vii) Cambridge Street South
- 4.2.3 An Underline Avenue Zone Map and various concept images have been provided at **Appendices 3 - 7**.
- 4.2.4 All seven zones have the same design strategy in terms of delivering the overarching Avenue design principles of:
 - (i) Improved pedestrian/cycle space
 - (ii) Green/blue infrastructure (in the form of rain gardens or planted pots as a result of constraints set by the underground railway tunnel)
 - (iii) Improved lighting features
 - (iv) Traffic lane reductions

- 4.2.5 These design principles are derived from the Avenues programme objectives, which in turn were based on the City Centre Strategy's priorities for creating places for people with quality public realm, green infrastructure and innovative technology.
- 4.2.6 The Underline design process has been informed by an extensive stakeholder engagement exercise that comprised workshops, on-street engagement and online questionnaires. The results of this exercise demonstrated that stakeholders were largely in favour of the new placemaking approach to street design and in particular the introduction of a continuous pedestrian and cycle priority route that improved connectivity to the city centre.
- 4.2.7 Development of the RIBA Stage 2: Concept Design for The Underline has highlighted a need to establish connections between the city centre and the west. These connections will create attractive gateways to the city centre that will remove the perceived and physical barriers imposed by the M8 motorway.
- 4.2.8 The Underline provides a viable opportunity to introduce a pedestrian and cycle priority route that will promote active modes of transportation as a more viable means of travelling to and from the city centre from the west end.
- 4.2.9 The stakeholder engagement exercise has highlighted possible risks to the design and delivery of the Underline Avenue. It is expected that all or most of these risks can be mitigated against during development of the RIBA Stage 3: Developed Design and RIBA Stage 4: Technical Design. Continual engagement with key stakeholders will help inform the overall design process and ensure the final design is fit for purpose.

5. BLOCKS B, C AND S

- 5.1 The Block B Design Contract has also been awarded and subdivided into three separate working groups. A detailed design programme has been developed and concept development is underway on the first group of streets. This block includes the proposed River Park, which is currently subject of public consultation as part of the Broomielaw District Regeneration Framework.
- 5.2 The Block C Design Contract is scheduled to be awarded in July 2020.
- 5.3 As outlined earlier, the Block S Design Contract is contingent on the approval of an external funding bid, the results of which should be known in July 2019.

6. POLICY AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Resource Implications:

Financial: There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

Legal: The report raises no new legal issues.

Personnel: No direct personnel issues.

Procurement: Works will be procured according to Council Standing Orders.

Council Strategic Plan: The project supports the following themes:

- A Healthier City
- A Sustainable and Low Carbon City

And the following priorities:

- No 54. Invest in roads and pavement maintenance, improving conditions, residents' satisfaction and contributing to active travel networks. Ensure community involvement in local decision making about this investment.
- No 55. Prioritise sustainable transport across the city.
- No 59. Progress reducing the speed limit on all suitable residential roads to 20mph.
- No 65. Build high quality, inclusive travel infrastructure to make Glasgow an excellent cycling and walking city.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-22

The project will help deliver **Outcome 9** by removing barriers and improving access to physical activity for people with protected characteristics.

The project will help deliver **Outcome 10** by involving people with protected characteristics in the design process.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

A full EqIA will be undertaken for each Avenue. This process is ongoing from the start of the concept design to the completion of the detailed and technical design, and involves an overarching steering group chaired by the Glasgow Disability Alliance, with membership from RNIB, Guide Dogs Association, and the GCC Sensory Impairment Unit. This group is used by the design team to discuss all aspects of the design, assist with Accessibility workshops, etc.

The completion of the works which this funding enables is considered to impact positively on the majority of users.

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio economic disadvantage.

The proposal will enhance accessibility and promote a socially inclusive environment.

Sustainability Impacts:

Environmental:

Promotion of sustainable transport and active travel.

Social, including Article 19 opportunities:

Encouragement of cycling for commuting and leisure, and provision of a socially inclusive environment. Enhancements to the pedestrian environment will encourage active travel with associated health benefits.

Economic:

The Public Realm works will encourage footfall and activity in and around the city centre with associated increased spend, greater demand for goods and services, and other direct and indirect economic benefits.

Privacy and Data Protection impacts:

None

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended that Members:

- (i) Consider the contents of this report;
- (ii) Notes the progress of the City Centre Avenues programme;
- (iii) Notes that further reports will be brought back to Committee for consideration as individual Avenues are progressed.

8. APPENDICES:

- **Appendix 1:** Sauchiehall Street West – Pre Avenue
- **Appendix 2:** Sauchiehall Street West: Avenue mid-construction (January 2019)
- **Appendix 3:** The Underline – Zone Plan
- **Appendix 4:** The Underline – St George’s Cross (concept)
- **Appendix 5:** The Underline - Phoenix Road (concept)
- **Appendix 6:** The Underline – New City Road
- **Appendix 7:** The Underline – Cambridge Street

Appendix 1: Sauchiehall Street West – Pre Avenue



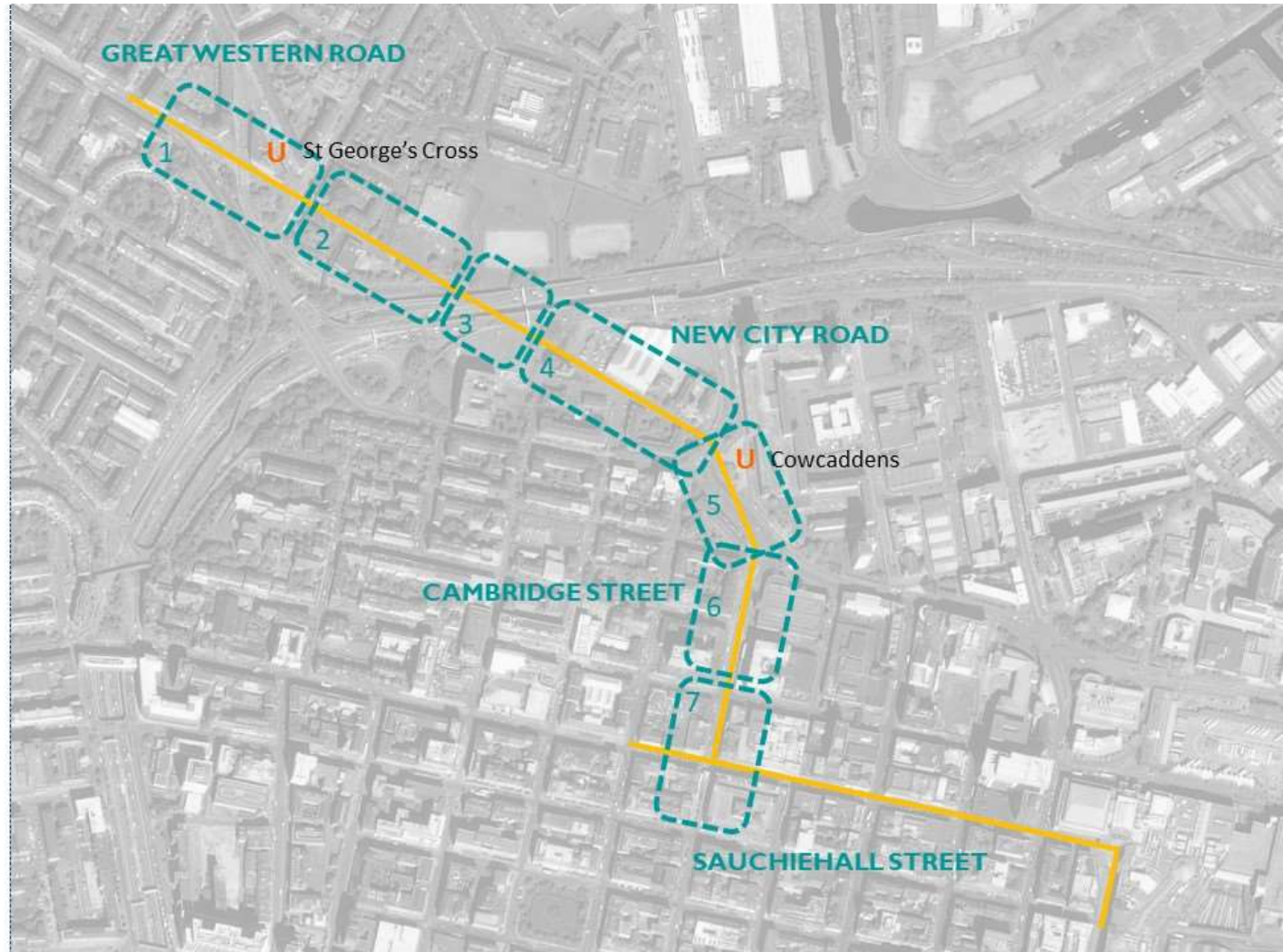
Appendix 2: Sauchiehall Street West: Avenue mid-construction (January 2019)



Appendix 3: The Underline – Zone Plan

Zone plan

1. Great Western Road / St. George's Cross
2. New City Road west
3. Phoenix Road
4. New City Road east
5. Cowcaddens
6. Cambridge Street north
7. Cambridge Street south



Appendix 4: The Underline – St George's Cross (concept)



Appendix 5: The Underline - Phoenix Road (concept)



Appendix 6: The Underline – New City Road



Appendix 7: The Underline – Cambridge Street

