Inverness Interchange Bus Station & Car Park Feasibility Study

HITRANS
September 2025
Final Draft Report V1

Austin·Smith:Lord

Contents

Project Team

The Project Team have undertaken this Study during Spring and Summer of 2025. The multi-disciplinary team has consisted of:

Client	**HITRANS**
Partners	**The Highland Council** **Network Rail**
Lead Design Consultant Architects, Landscape Architects, Urban Designers, Conservation Architects	**Austin-Smith:Lord**
Transport Planners	**SCP**
C&S Engineers	**Cameron + Ross**

It should be noted that the Civil & Structural Engineering inputs in the Feasibility Study were restricted to advising on the Rose Street MSCP.

Part 00
Introduction

Introduction

Inverness, as a growing City at the heart of a City Region and as the Gateway to the Highlands, is undergoing a strategic masterplanning process to reimagine and guide the transformation of its city centre, and transport infrastructure.

As part of this initiative, HITRANS (the Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership) has commissioned the Feasibility Study to explore the creation of a strategic multi-modal transport interchange within the Inverness Station Masterplan area and in line with Recommendation 43 in STPR2 regarding Major Station Masterplans.

This Study considers the feasibility of a range of key transport infrastructure interventions, specifically a new and reconfigured Bus and Coach Station, a resized replacement Multi-Storey Car Park and dedicated Active Travel Hub. These interventions, in combination with enhancements to the immediately adjacent Inverness Railway Station, will greatly enhance the quality of public transport interchange serving the City and the Highlands. The redevelopment of the Station Quarter also presents Inverness with an opportunity to extend and redefine the northern City Centre with a mixed-use development that transforms Inverness at the Gateway to the Highlands.

The proposed Interchange aims to seamlessly integrate various modes of transport; bus and coach, rail, active travel, and car parking into a coherent and future-proofed place that meets the needs of both local residents and visitors. This design-led approach is underpinned by a commitment to ensure that the Station Quarter positively contributes to the quality of the City Centre experience and provides a welcoming, barrier-free and inclusive environment for all, including those with sensory and mobility impairments. Considerations around future technological developments, sustainability, and resilience also form part of the analysis and case for change.

In preparing this Feasibility Study there has been a focus on;

- **People :** Delivering a high quality and inclusive pedestrian and passenger experience for all users, whether accessing the transport facilities or passing through the Station Quarter
- **Process :** Ensuring operational and logistical efficiency, safety and security for the day to day functioning and maintenance of public transport and active travel facilities and the associated mixed-use developments
- **Place :** Focusing on enhance the quality of place-making to ensure an attractive, active, resilient and convivial Station Quarter that contributes to the economic, social and cultural health of the City Region.

Purpose of this Study

This Study has been prepared by a multi-disciplinary design team led by Austin-Smith:Lord for HITRANS to establish the feasibility and potential for reconfiguring and enhancing Inverness Bus Station, Rose Street Multi-Storey Car Park (MSCP) and Active Travel Hub.

The purpose of this Feasibility Study is to support informed decision-making in the development of a strategic, integrated transport interchange in Inverness City Centre.

Specifically, this Study aims to:

- Identify viable options for the location, size, and indicative design of a multi-modal interchange that accommodates buses, coaches, cars, cyclists, and pedestrians.
- Evaluate the infrastructure needs and operational requirements of various transport modes, including rail replacement, express services, and tourist coach operations.
- Assess how the interchange can integrate with existing and future transport networks, including road access from the A82/Rose Street roundabout and connections to Inverness Railway Station.
- Explore promoting sustainable travel options and future-proofed design elements, including EV charging, Active Travel facilities, and green urban infrastructure.
- Recommend solutions for the Rose Street MSCP, including potential replacement, relocation, and interim arrangements during construction phases.
- Improve user experience, safety, and accessibility for all, including those with sensory and/or mobility impairments.
- Support broader City Centre place-making and regeneration objectives aligning with, and enabling, future changes central Inverness.

By addressing these goals, the Study intends to play a critical role in shaping the future of transport and mobility in Inverness, by helping to create a more connected, accessible, and sustainable urban environment.

This Study is exploratory and based on available site information and transport data. It does not include construction costs, revenue projections nor any extensive engineering input with respect to site conditions, constraints and utility infrastructure requirements. All of these aspects, and more besides, are required in the subsequent phase of design and option development to support any future Outline and Full Business Case.

Project Brief and Study Area

Project Brief

The Project Brief at project inception stated the following:

Inverness Interchange Bus Station & Car Park Feasibility: Scope

To inform the Inverness Station Masterplanning process, HITRANS are commissioning a feasibility study into the creation of a strategic multi-modal transport interchange that considers bus, rail, active travel and parking.

The study should consider the potential options for accommodating the following within the Inverness Masterplan area:

- *Bus/coach interchange*
- *Car parking*
- *Active Travel Hub*

Below is a list of key issues to be considered by mode:

Bus

- *Understanding requirements for local bus, interurban and express services. Consider business case for inclusion of other tour coach operations.*
- *Ownership and management*
- *Size and shape for operational needs and passenger facilities – based on current and projected requirements*
- *Access and egress for different options into local and strategic road network*
- *PRM access*
- *Opportunities for improving placemaking and approach from trunk road / town centre*
- *Detailed factors to be considered for all options*
- *Passenger facilities and access arrangements - Share with railway? etc*
- *Stances, floating, herringbone etc*
- *One way / two way*
- *Rail Replacement buses*
- *Cruise coach and other tourism*
- *Event demand*
- *Low emission zone / demand management*
- *Efficient access from Rose St roundabout/A82*
- *Bus length*
- *Foot access to Platform 7 and to rest of rail station*
- *Retail and servicing*
- *Staff facilities*
- *Future proofing – tech, AV*

Car Parking

- *Options for the Rose Street multi-storey car park*
- *Replacement*
- *Relocation*
- *Access and egress to trunk road*
- *Pedestrian access and egress*
- *Capacity including an understanding of City Centre capacity and demand*
- *Integration with bus / rail interchange*
- *EV charging infrastructure / provision*
- *Design*
- *Future proofing - solar, battery storage etc*
- *Consider temporary provision in event of reduced capacity during construction*

Opportunities for improving placemaking and approach from trunk road / town centre

Active Travel Hub

- *Access arrangements to above facilities and rail station*
- *Parking provision for cyclists at above or dedicated hub*
- *HI-Bike provision and operation and maintenance*
- *Security*

Study Area

1. Inverness Bus station
2. Old Town Rose Street Multi Storey Car Park
3. Inverness Railway Station
4. Station Car Park
5. Inverness Library
6. Longman Road / A82
7. Falcon Square
8. Eastgate Shopping Centre
9. Academy Street
10. The Victorian Market

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

Key Findings

In line with the Project Brief this Feasibility Study has assessed the need to upgrade or reprovide the existing Inverness Bus Station and Multi-Storey Car Park (MSCP) within a Study Area, and to assess whether the Study Area has the capacity to accommodate facilities that meet current and future needs and standards.

The Study Area is adjacent to Inverness Railway Station at the northern edge of the City Centre. The Study Area currently accommodates the existing Inverness Bus Station and Rose Street MSCP as well as an A Listed Building that currently serves as the City's Main Library and the former Royal Mail Sorting Office. The Study Area is bounded by the Railway Station and sidings to the east and north, the A82 Longman Road dual carriageway to the north, Rose Street to the west and the rear of properties on Academy Street to the south.

Key findings from this Study can be summarised as:

- The existing Bus Station and Multi-Storey Car Park need to be replaced.
- There is sufficient space to accommodate a replacement Bus and Coach Station, MSCP and Active Travel Mobility Hub as part of a wider mixed-use regeneration of the 'Station Quarter' on land assembled by, and within the ownership of, The Highland Council and Network Rail / Scotland's Railway.

It is therefore deemed viable, subject to more detailed technical design work, to redevelop the Station Quarter to accommodate the requirements of the Brief. Capital, revenue and whole-lifecycle costings have not been undertaken within the scope of this Study and should be considered alongside the investment and funding options to deliver the project in line with recommendations outlined below.

This Feasibility Study sits alongside the ongoing preparation of a Masterplan for Inverness Railway Station being progressed by Network Rail / Scotland's Railway. This Feasibility Study considers an area deemed to be with the 'collaboraton zone' associated with the Inverness Railway Station Masterplan. In accordanace with the 'collaboration zone' this Study has been developed for HITRANS in collaboration with Network Rail / Scotland's Railway and The Highland Council and in consultation with ScotRail and Stagecoach (who operate the existing Bus Station).

1. The existing Bus Station and Multi-Storey Car Park need to be replaced.

The existing Bus Station is currently sub-optimal from an operational and passenger perspective. It is inadequately sized to cater for the size of vehicles and frequency of services now and does not have capacity for future growth. It currently has 7, mostly island, stances which introduce pedestrian and vehicular conflict. These 7 stances are 'double-stacked' in practice to be equivalent to operating as 14 stances. The current layout fails to meet contemporary standards expected of modern public transport infrastructure in terms of accessibility and quality of service as well as operational efficiency and safety.

There is no scope to reconfigure the existing Station to meet future needs and full replacement / reprovision is recommended.

It is recommended that a replacement Bus and Coach Station be provided with a minimum of 14 stances, and ideally 16 stances; preferably with scope for future expansion. The replacement Station should be constructed near to the Railway Station to provide an enhanced public transport interchange. The new Station should be accessed from the A82 Longman Road with a preference for additional access / egress from Academy Street.

The Multi-Storey Car Park (MSCP) has restrictions on use following structural assessments and will need to be demolished in future. Retaining and upgrading the existing structure would not be deemed best value. The current MSCP was designed to accommodate 1,000 cars but a combination of structural loading restrictions and increased vehicle size and weight has resulted in a lower operational capacity of 850 cars being imposed.

It is recommended that a replacement MSCP be constructed adjacent to the Railway Station and the A82.

2. There is sufficient space to accommodate a replacement Bus and Coach Station, MSCP and Active Travel Mobility Hub as part of a wider mixed-use regeneration of the 'Station Quarter'

Options Analysis would indicate that there is adequate space within the Study Area to accommodate a new and compliant 16 stance Bus and Coach Station and an 850 space MSCP alongside an Active Travel / Mobility Hub as part of a mixed-use 'Station Quarter' with enhanced public realm / urban spaces that enhance the setting of the Listed Building (Library).

This Options Analysis would also indicate that it is possible to enhance the passenger interchange between Railway Station, Bus and Coach Station and MSCP and that all 3 facilities can better serve the City Centre with careful reconfiguration of the 'Station Quarter' by applying best practice urban design and adhering to the national hierarchy of sustainable travel modes.

Executive Summary

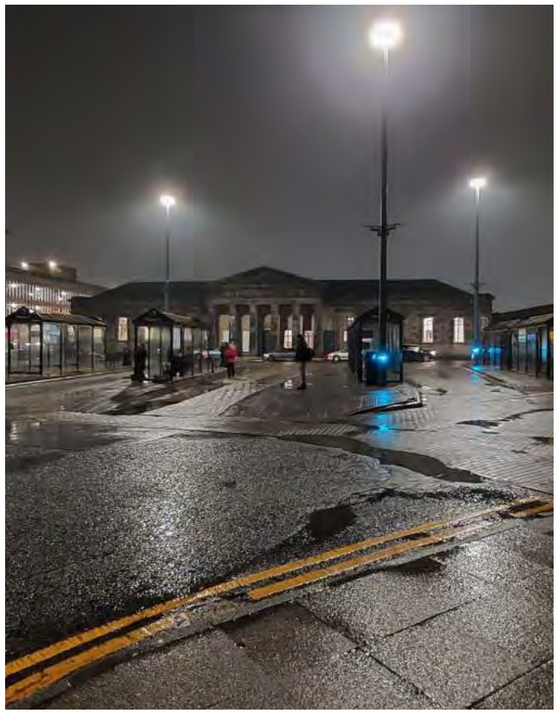
Feedback to date from Project Partners

During the Options Development and Analysis there has been several rounds of engagement with the Highland Council, Network Rail / Scotland's Railway, ScotRail and Stagecoach, alongside HITRANS. The findings below summarise a composite of the engagement to date:

- There is unanimous agreement that the Bus Station needs to be upgraded and be redefined as a Bus and Coach Station.
- Widespread acknowledgement that the MSCP needs to be replaced.
- Recognition that the re provision of Bus Station and MSCP, coupled with the landownership and site assembly by THC and Network Rail, presents a significant opportunity to redefine the wider study area as an northern expansion of the City Centre creating a new 'Station Quarter' as a gateway to Inverness / the Highlands and a link to Longman and the Green Freeport.
- There is widespread support for a new Urban Park / Civic Space at Farraline Park (subject to finding a suitable location for a new Bus Station) and to restore the setting of the Listed Building / Library.

Inverness LIbrary

Multi Storey Car Park



Island Stances at existing Bus Station

Executive Summary

Design Principles

Based on Options Analysis, Project Partner Engagement and Technical Review the following design principles have been identified and should inform any future brief for design development for a replacement Bus and Coach Station, MSCP and Active Travel Mobility Hub within the 'Station Quarter'

Principal factors governing the reprovision of the Bus Station include:

- Proximity to, and ease of passenger interchange with, the Railway Station.
- Pedestrian accessibility to and from the City Centre, Falcon Square and Longman (in that order of priority).
- Increased number of stances to take local buses and inter-urban coach services (min 14 stances, ideally with scope for 16 – with no provision for tourist coach drop-off / pick-up).
- Scope to enable bus access / egress onto Academy Street (with Strothers Lane the preferred routing) in addition to access / egress onto A82 trunk road (Longman Road).

Principal factors governing the MSCP include:

- Setting the future capacity to anticipate future demand, demographics and the trend to larger vehicles and EVs.
- Scope to consolidate surface parking in the Study Area into the MSCP to free up space for future development.
- Location close to the A82 trunk road (Longman Road) to intercept cars / private vehicles and reduce penetration into the City Centre.
- Proximity to, and ease of passenger interchange with, the Railway Station and (to a lesser extent) the Bus Station.

On the basis of the Options Review and Analysis we would note that:

Locating the MSCP north / behind the Library and adjacent to the Railway is preferred:

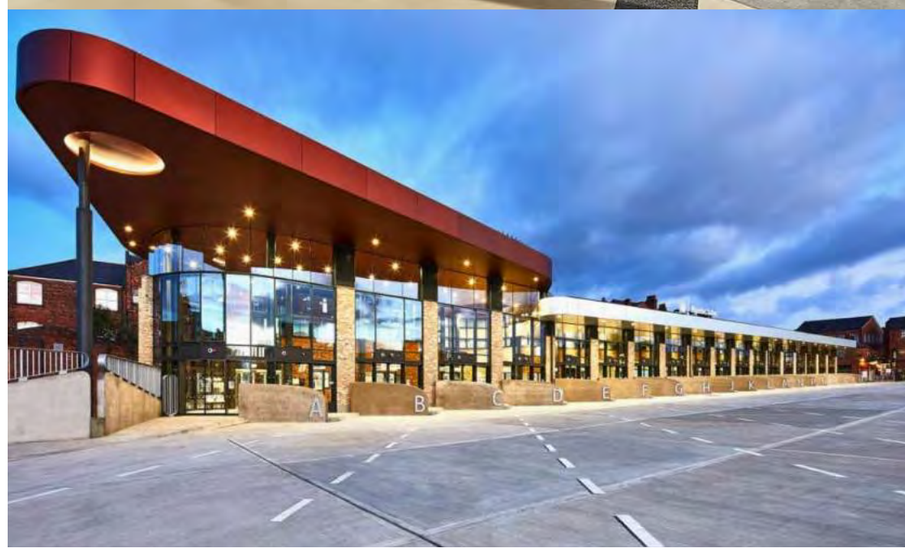
- To intercept traffic coming off the trunk road.
- With good pedestrian access to both Stations and the Station Quarter more generally, to enable construction of (part of) the MSCP to enable the option of phased relocation.
- To locate the MSCP in the least attractive / lowest value location in the Station Quarter and,
- In a location compatible with the current and potential future Railway Station layout, including possible connection to Milburn Rd.

Locating the bus and coach station to the north and/or east of the library is preferred:

- To enable close / direct interchange with the Railway Station and potentially encourage shared Bus and Rail passenger facilities.
- Allowing good pedestrian accessibility to / from key City Centre destinations.
- So long as there is bus / coach access to / from Academy Street, preferably via Strothers Lane and,
- In a location compatible with the current and potential future Railway Station layout, including possible connection to Milburn Rd.

Comprehensively improving public realm across the station quarter with a focus on;

- Establishing a new City Centre Urban Park at Farraline Park,
- With integrated active travel / cycle infrastructure including a Mobility Hub (location tbc)
- Barrier-free streetscapes that are fully accessible / inclusive,
- Largely traffic-free and naturally traffic-calmed to create a pedestrian friendly urban neighbourhood



Case Study - Wigan Bus Station (Austin-Smith:Lord)

Executive Summary

Approach

Following Site Analysis and in response to a review of the Project Brief (including assessment of the number and optimum format of Bus and Coach stances and MSCP parking spaces) a long-list of potential Options was developed for review.

Through an iterative process of project team reviews this longlist was honed in discussion with HITRANS.

Throughout the process new / alternative Options emerged to ensure a diverse array of Options. The longlist Options were presented to The Highland Council and Network Rail at an Options Workshop in Inverness on 01 April 2025, with subsequent Workshop sessions with Network Rail, ScotRail and Stagecoach.

The 01 April 2025 Workshop made reference to an Options Assessment 'Scorecard' (refer to Appendix E). The outcome of this process is summarised in the tables in this Report Chapter.

This Report presents twelve Options, catalogued Options A through to L in a sequence defined by the proposed location of the Bus Stations relative to the Listed Building / Library. Option A shows the Bus Station located south of the Library and the sequence then progresses clockwise based on alternative Bus Station locations culminating with Option L and the Bus Station located to the east of the Library.

Potential Development Zones around the Library

Key Considerations and Working Assumptions

These Options shown are indicative and all would require design refinement to ensure compatibility with relevant regulations and requirements.

The Options shown in this Report indicate:

- Retention of the A-Listed Building (Library) in all Options.
- Retaining / enhancing pedestrian access to the Railway Station from Strothers Lane / west in all Options.
- Bus / Vehicular access off Longman Road / A82 in all Options.
- Bus / Vehicular access indicated on Strothers Lane where applicable.
- Stopping up of Margaret Street in all Options.
- The creation of a public / civic square in-front of the Library.
- Minimum 14 stance Bus and Coach Station in all Options laid out to avoid / minimise pedestrian / vehicle conflict with clear delineation between pedestrian and vehicle movements.
- Avoiding island stances (as existing) and only using drive-in, reverse-out (DIRO) or drive in, drive out / sawtooth ('Hybrid') stances.
- Replacement MSCP providing circa 850 spaces (with allowances for disabled and EVs).
- That Rail Replacement Bus Services can be accommodated within the new Bus & Coach Station.
- 'Development zones' shown in all Options areas where potential mixed-use development could occur.

The Options have been prepared:

- In the absence of any site information or assessment regarding site constraints (including ground conditions, buried structures / voids / services / utilities / drainage etc.)
- On the basis that any existing site constraints can be mitigated and site infrastructure / utilities capacities are sufficient to enable future higher density development.
- That re-provision of the Bus Station car parking can be phased to enable development and that this may require off-site / near-site temporary provision.
- On the basis that tourist coach drop-off and pick-up continues to be provided 'off site' (at Ardross Street, as currently) and that no tourist coaches or mini-buses are to use the public transport Bus & Coach Station within the 'Station Quarter.
- It is recommended that early assessment of the existing site conditions and constraints is undertaken to manage and mitigate project risk.

Executive Summary

Emerging Preferred Options

Following initial Options Assessment of twelve Options (catalogued A through to L) against the criteria outlined in the 'Scorecard' and summarised in Part 03 of this Report the following Options have been deemed the most viable and warranting further consideration.

All of the Emerging Preferred Options:

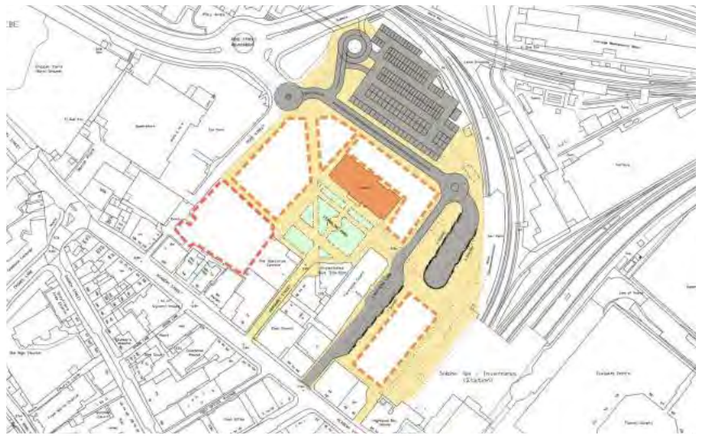
- Propose a Bus & Coach Station located to the east (and north) of the Study area on / near Strothers Lane thereby providing direct passenger interchange between Bus and Railway Stations and bus access / egress from the Longman Road / A82 and Academy Street.
- Propose a MSCP in the north of the Study area adjacent to Longman Road / A82.
- Retain the Listed Building / Library and create a new traffic-free public space at Farraline Park and Margaret Street at the Spectrum Centre.
- The Options provide a range of Bus Station layout alternatives that also affect the relationship between Farraline Park and the Railway Station.

Executive Summary

These Options are:

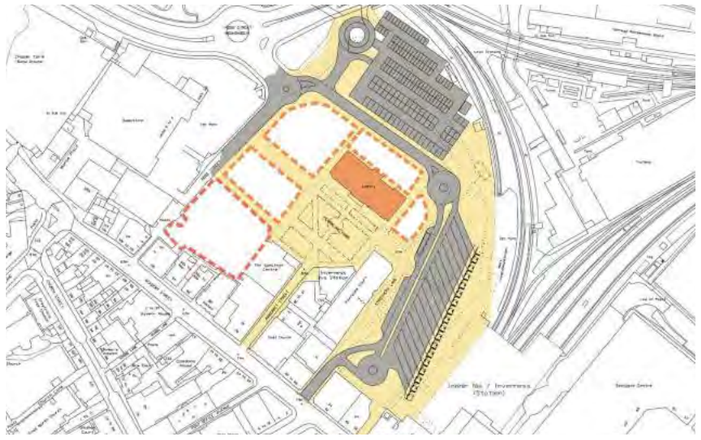
Option I

16 stance Bus and Coach Station located north and east of the Library consisting of 10 bay DIRO behind / north of the Library with a 6 bay drive-through on Strothers Lane in the current TK Maxx / Station car park). New MSCP adjacent to Longman Road at the north of Station Quarter.



Option J

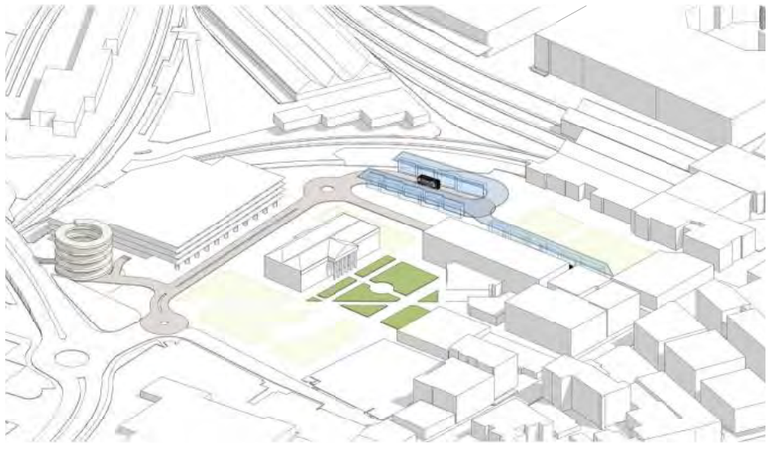
15 stance Bus and Coach Station located east of the Library consisting of 7 bay drive-through on Strothers Lane with an 8 bay horseshoe drive through at the end of Strothers Lane in the current TK Maxx car park. New MSCP adjacent to Longman Road at the north of Station Quarter.



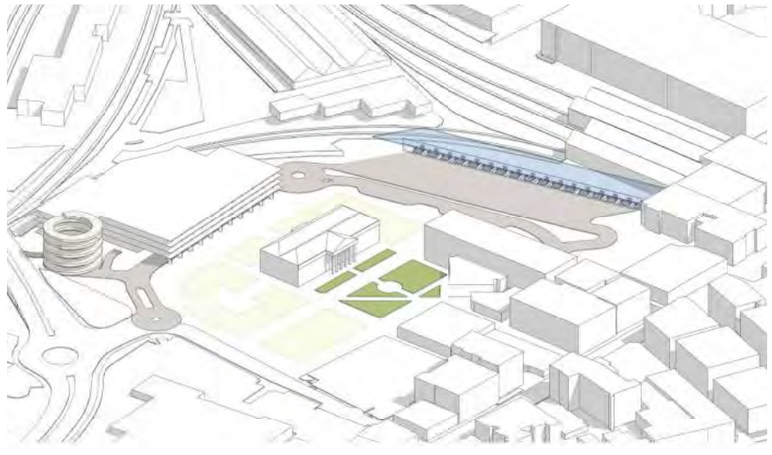
Option L

16 stance Bus & Coach Station located east of the Library and consisting of a DIRO layout on the TK Maxx site with access via Strothers Lane. New MSCP adjacent to Longman Road at the north of Station Quarter.

Aerial view of Option I from west



Aerial view of Option J from west



Aerial view of Option L from west

Next Steps

Based on the findings from this Feasibility Study the following Next Steps emerge and warrant further consideration:

Confirm Partnership Working Arrangements :
It is vital that the principal project partners (HITRANS, the Highland Council, Network Rail / Scotland's Railway) supported by Transport Scotland alongside key stakeholders (ScotRail and Stagecoach – as Bus Station operators) continue to work in close partnership to progress the findings of this Feasibility Study and deliver in line with Recommendation 43 of STPR2 re Major Station Masterplans. Project Governance arrangements (perhaps in a joint venture or other formal structure), the appointment of a Project Champion and partnership with the Inverness Station Masterplan for the Railway Station needs to be clarified to ensure a collaborative, coordinated and focused approach consistent with the Scottish Government's Place Principle.

Project Risk Register :
To guide next steps the Project Partners should establish and regularly review and update a Project Risk Register to assess and proactively mitigate or eliminate project risks.

Landownership / Site Assembly Liaison :
It is extremely advantageous that the Study Area and the land required to deliver the Brief is within the ownership of The Highland Council and railway station. It is vital that all parties / Project Partners commit to discussing any future plans regarding these sites with each other on the basis that coordination of project delivery will require both parties to work in close liaison. It may be anticipated that some form of pooling / equalisation of land values maybe explored to enable development and ensure the best option is developed, rather than the most commercially advantageous for either landowner. The identification of a development partner may also be desirable to enable the project to progress quickly.

Confirmation of the Status of the MSCP Structure and Parking Requirements :
It is important that there is a clear position established vis-à-vis a realistic operational life of the Rose Street MSCP and that a contingency plan is established to provide a temporary and permanent solution to the car parking required in the Station Quarter during the phased redevelopment of the area. This may require the acquisition or leasing of adjacent sites as part of enabling works.

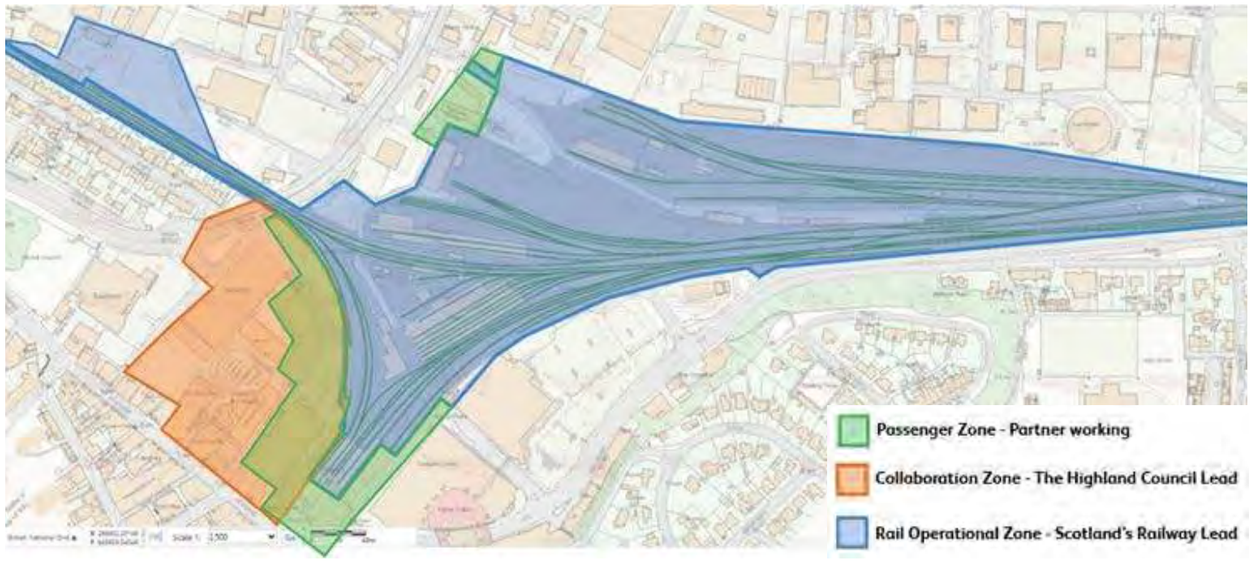
Confirmation of an Operational Brief for the Future Bus and Coach Station, MSCP and Active Travel Hub :
Work to date suggests the number and format of stances and parking spaces recommended for the Bus and Coach Station and MSCP respectively. These operational requirements, alongside ancillary passenger, staff and associated facilities and the Active Travel Hub, will need to be developed to enable a whole-lifecycle costed scheme, a phasing strategy and delivery programme / timeline to be prepared as the basis of a Business Case that takes account of build sequence, staged delivery, inflation, CapEx, OpEx (incl maintenance) and Carbon budgets.

Development of the Business Case and STAG Appraisal :
The preparation of an Outline and Full Business Case that tests the ownership scenarios (public, private, shared ownership) and considers the revenue generation via departure charges, parking charges, commercial offer and cross funding the public transport facilities from land values, TIF or other innovative project finance models. In tandem with the OBC a STAG appraisal progress should be progressed to inform the Business Case.

Stakeholder and Public Engagement Plan :
It is anticipated that ongoing and early engagement with Elected Members (Councillors, MSPs and MP), business community (Business Improvement District(BID), Chamber of Commerce etc.), project partner Boards and other key stakeholders needs to be progressed imminently, prior to public facing engagement. This requires careful stakeholder mapping, messaging and coordination of the Engagement Plan.

Part 01
Context and Analysis

Study Area - Land-ownership



Extracts from Scotland's Railway presentation re Station Masterplan.

The Study Area is largely in the ownership of The Highland Council or Network Rail. Stagecoach are understood to lease the current Bus Station from The Highland Council. The Highland Council also own and operate the Old Town Rose Street MSCP and the A Listed building currently occupied by the Council's Library service.

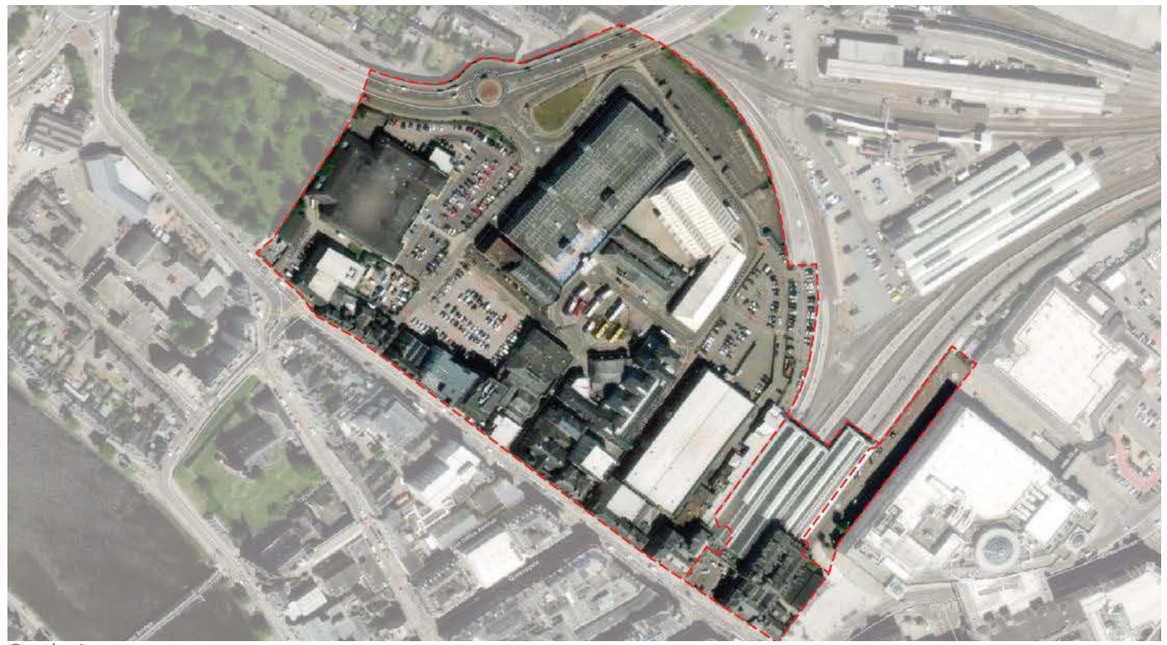
Study Area Description

The Study Area is a 22 hectare site located immediately north of the historic core of Inverness City Centre and adjacent to Inverness Railway Station.

The Study Area is a largely flat and currently accommodates the existing Inverness Bus Station and Rose Street MSCP as well as an A Listed Building that currently serves as the City's Main Library with vacant industrial units behind it that were previously Royal Mail Sorting Office.

The Study Area is bounded by the Railway Station and railway lines approaching Platforms 6 and 7 to the east and north, the A82 Longman Road dual carriageway on an embankment to the north, Rose Street (with a retail park) to the west and the rear of properties on Academy Street to the south.

To the south and east of the Study area is Strothers Lane, which runs perpendicular to Academy Street, and has a large TK Maxx retail unit next to the Railway Station and a mixed-use development next to the Bus Station with flats above ground floor commercial units. Parallel to Strothers Lane is Margaret Street which is approximately on axis with the neo-classical Listed Building and currently provides Bus Station egress and a taxi rank.



Study Area

Aerial view from the north-east of Railway Station with Library, Bus Station and MSCP visible to the right of the image

Relationship the Railway Station

The Study Area is immediately west of the Railway Station.

The Railway Station has three pedestrian access points; one to the east on to Falcon Square and the Eastgate Shopping Centre, one at Station Square facing Academy Street and the historic City Centre to the south, and one to the west providing an unattractive pedestrian access route past Platforms 6 and 7, through surface car parks for the Station and TK Maxx (and also service access for both properties) and onto to Strother Lane to proceed to access the Bus Station and MSCP beyond.

The combination of Bus and Coach access routes from the Longman Road / A82 , traffic on Strothers Lane, car parking and service access for TK Maxx and the Railway Station, and narrow pedestrian access into the Railway Station shed at the ‘blind side’ of Platform 6 result in a hostile and unattractive pedestrian access between Railway and Bus Stations, blighted by severance, lack of wayfinding, poor lighting and a counter intuitive pathway that discourages interchange.

Aerial view from the west with the MSCP and A82 in the foreground, with Library and Bus Station in the centre and Railway Station and Eastgate Shopping Centre beyond

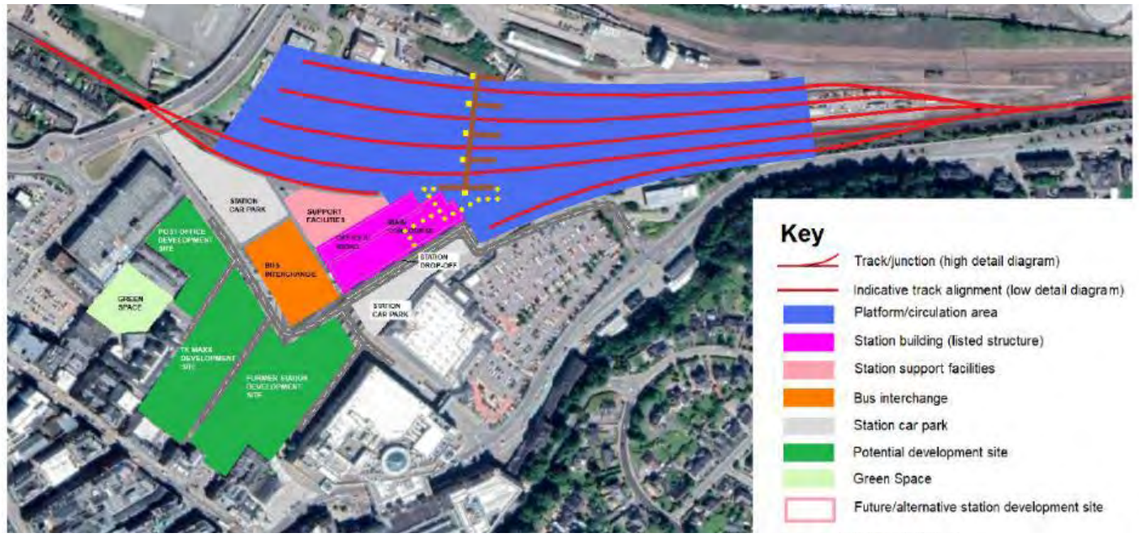
Relationship to the City Centre

The Study Area comprises 22 hectares of land and presents a major opportunity to extend and redefine the northern City Centre. For comparison the core historic City Centre between the River Ness, Academy Street, Bridge Street and Friar's Bridge / A82 is circa 32 hectares.

This Report conceives of the Study Area as a 'Station Quarter'; a new mixed-use City Centre district with a major interchange comprising Bus, Coach and Railway Stations which acts as the gateway to the City and the Highlands.

In addition to the current context there is an ongoing Masterplan for the Railway Station being prepared. One long term option that may be possible is the reconfiguration of the rail infrastructure to develop a through platform layout rather than the current terminus / railhead layout thereby further expanding the northward expansion of the City Centre and extent of the 'Station Quarter'. See exploratory schematic layouts of potential test layouts testing what may be achievable within the Railway Station extents. The proposals for the Study Area need to take cognisance of this potential, long-term ambition.

Study Area



'Potential Future Context - schematic exploratory Railway Masterplan prepared by Network Rail

Place Analysis

Overview

The character of the Study Area is generally that of an edge of City Centre area dominated by the Railway and Bus Stations and associated car parking, service areas and warehousing. It is not an attractive urban environment. The only building of any significant architectural merit is the A-listed neo-classical Library (originally a school). There are no public spaces of any merit, and no soft landscaping.

It is a hostile environment for pedestrians and feels traffic dominated; with bus and coaches crossing over pedestrian desire lines and the multi-storey car park dominating the townscape. The Study Area is a challenge for all pedestrians to navigate, especially those with sensory and mobility impairments.

The night-time experience is even less attractive, with poor light levels and general lack of footfall and limited passive surveillance from dwellings / flats resulting in an unwelcoming environment which feels less safe than other better lit and higher trafficked streets in the City Centre.

The Study Area gives a very poor first impression when arriving by Bus, Rail or Car. The Area also fails to function as a positive ‘everyday’ environment and is a poor quality urban environment that creates a ‘gap’ in the links between the City Centre and Longman, the Green Freeport and the regeneration areas to the north of central Inverness. The Study Area does not encourage footfall, dwell time and has very little positive day-time or night-time economy. It is an area that requires significant improvement, but also benefits from the proximity to the Railway and Bus Stations and the City Centre as a great location well placed and ready for significant regeneration and place transformation.

Inverness Bus Station

Site Analysis

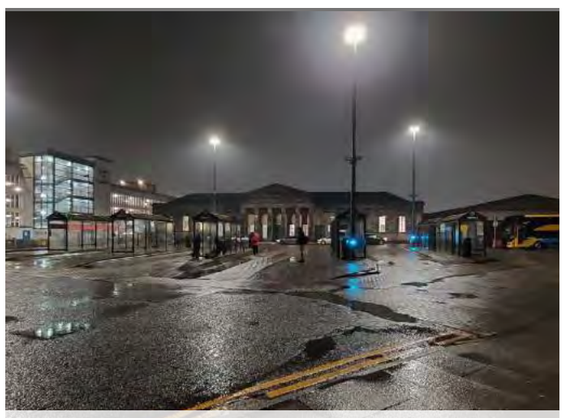
City Centre Bus Station and City Library

Multi-Story Car Park (MSCP)

Gateway to Inverness and Highlands

Opportunity for seamless Interchange

Opportunity for seamless Interchange



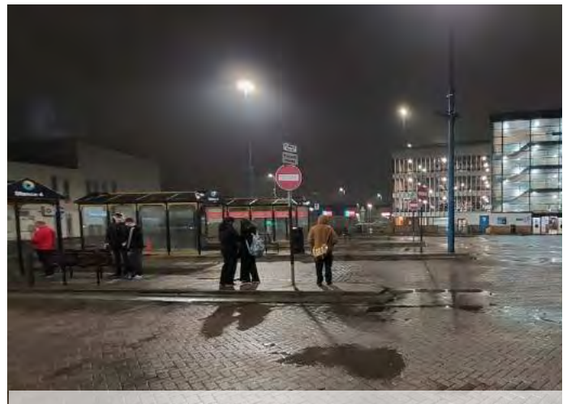
Lacking sense of welcome and safety

Hostile pedestrian environment

Stance Accessibility

Passenger/Bus Conflict

Lack of sense of arrival; Challenging access to island stances



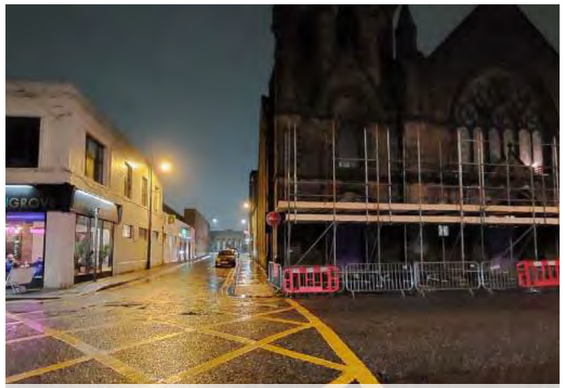
Accessibility challenges to island stances

Bus station operational challenges

Site Analysis

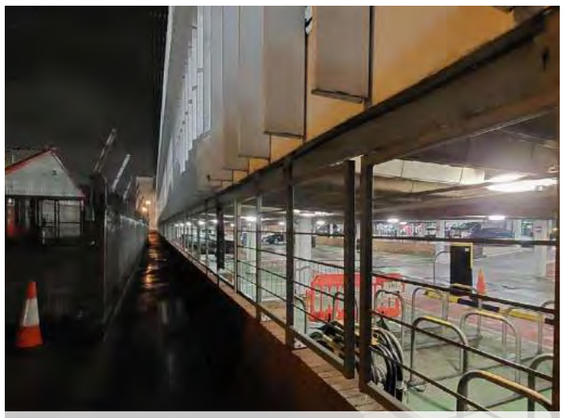
Traffic management and conflicts

Gaps in customer information, wayfinding, orientation



Poor City Image / First Impression

Unwelcoming environment,barriers to safe and inclusive use

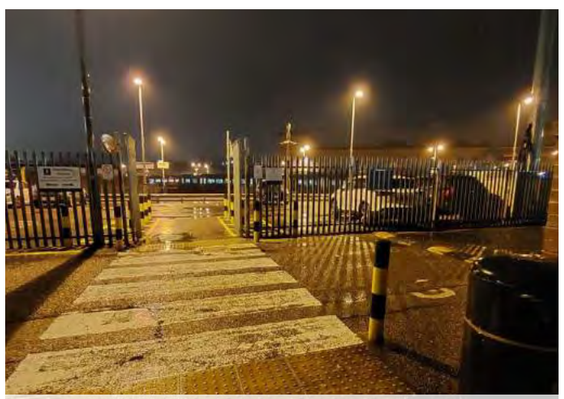


Unwelcoming environment

Opportunity to improve Active Travel user experience

Active Travel : Enhanced user interface

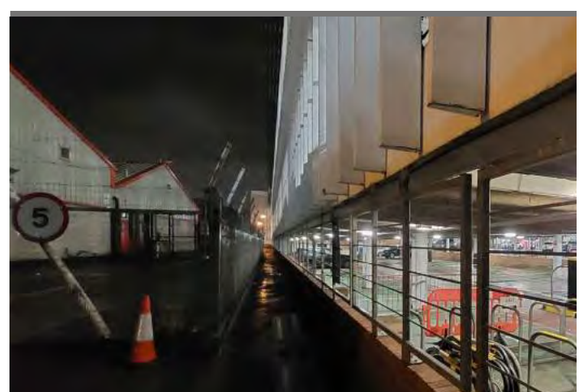
Lack of parking enforcement



Disjointed movement and unclear routing

Unwelcoming Environement

Barriers in the Interchange Environemnt



Scope to improve lighting

Site Analysis

User barriers in the Interchange Environemnt

Poor wayfinding

Poor wayfinding

Poor quality setting and access to Listed Library, Bus Station and MSCP

Setting and access to A listed library (and MSCP)

Pinch points and wayfinding gaps

Pinch points and wayfinding gaps

Pinch points and wayfinding gaps

Confusing arrival

Confusing arrival

Confusing arrival

Key pedestrian route lacks quality

Site Analysis

Rose Street: Key pedestrain route need for sense of place

MSCP in deteriorating condition

Railway Terrace : unwelcoming

Railway Terrace – traffic dominated. Lack of layover

Station Quarter / City Centre: Poor first Impression

Access to northern quarter

Access to northern quarter

Grade separated connections + severance

Grade separated connections + severance

Potential development opportunity

Public space opportunity

Heritage and identity

Site Analysis

Heritage and identity

Heritage and identity:destination

Heritage + identity : positive 1st impressions

Heritage + identity : positive 1st impressions

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Bus Station and MSCP close to Railway Station.
- Established City Centre location for public transport.
- Proximity to Old Town and Eastgate.
- Easy vehicular access off A82.
- Site assembly / land-ownership with principal Project Partners.
- Alignment with local and national policies.
- Listed Building as centre-piece of Station Quarter.
- Exisitng Partnership working between key stakeholders.

Weaknesses

- Poor passenger / user experience.
- Poor interchange interface between Bus and Railway Stations.
- Hostile pedestrian experience which is traffic dominated and discourages active travel.
- Non-compliance re inclusive design and accessibility for all building conditions deteriorating – esp. MSCP with structural restrictions and limited operational life.

Opportunities

- Seamless interchange between Active Travel Hub, Railway, Bus / Coach + MSCP.
- Scope to provide Bus / Coach Station meeting best practice design standards and future-proofed for projected capacity.
- Quality new Gateway to City Centre (and the Highlands).
- Catalyst to drive wider Station Quarter mixed-use regeneration and place transformation; an extension of the City Centre.
- Extended City Centre with new Station Quarter creating positive link to Longman, Green Freeport and northern Inverness.
- Promote sustainable travel options; especially integrating active travel infrastructure and Hub.
- Restore public trust / support for regeneration and public transport infrastructure enhancements and interventions.

Threats

- Failure to coordinate investment / interventions results in disjointed and poorly integrated public transport interchange and piecemeal City Centre regeneration.
- Do nothing – continued poor user experience and blight on City Centre, restricting footfall, City Centre investment and reinforcing negative first impressions.
- Unplanned loss of MSCP without suitable replacement displacing car parking and creating traffic management issues in the City Centre.
- Prejudicing potential redevelopment of the Staton Quarter due to incoherent, piecemeal development.
- Loss of public trust / support compounding issues arising from previous proposals in the City Centre.

Transport Analysis

Bus Station Review

SCP have developed analysis on the current and projected future attributes of a Bus Station serving Inverness City Centre.

Bus station departures are organised to maximise the use of each stance throughout each hour and through the day. In assessing the efficiency of bus station operations and whether there is spare capacity we estimate the theoretical 'spare minutes' recognising that much of this time will be required as recovery time, for early or late departures, plus other disruptions. Inverness Bus Station is in our opinion operating at between 85 - 95% of its capacity throughout the day and through the week. This is considered as effectively 'at maximum capacity' and provides no opportunity for service or passenger growth, and can prove insufficient at certain times of the day or year (for example on peak summer Saturdays)

The current Bus Station has 7 island stances operating as 14 bays by ‘double stacking’ each island stance. The existing Bus Station meets current need, but only at a basic level and with a low level of passenger experience. There is currently limited spare capacity over all stances, as the stances are fully occupied on average for the following total minutes:

- AM - peak - 43 minutes
- Inter peak hour - 44 minutes
- PM peak - 30 minutes

There are 41 services, with 228 departures, using the existing Bus Station on a weekday; with 1,421 departures per week. There is a mix of longer distance intercity coaches and regional services.

Facilities reflect the needs of passengers (waiting, refreshments, luggage) but require improvement to meet contemporary standards. The current island stances layout create potential passenger / bus movement conflicts and the issues of passenger safety are recognised by operators. There are currently poor linkages for passengers between the Bus Station and the Rail Station and to stances on Queensgate and Falcon Square for local services.

Transport Analysis

Developing the Brief for a new Bus and Coach Station

SCP have assessed the operational requirements for an enhanced Bus Station; redefining it as a Bus and Coach Station recognising the diversity of vehicle fleet and service types to meet the regional and inter-urban services that use the Station.

Based on initial analysis it is deemed that a 14 stance would continue current operational pressures, but better managed 16 stances would offer 60 + minutes recovery capacity throughout day.

Regardless it is deemed that there is insufficient capacity to allow use by local services and/or tourist coaches.

Layout Options

There are essentially 3 Bus Station layout typologies. These are illustrated above and comprise:

- DIRO (drive-in, reverse-out)
- Hybrid Sawtooth (drive-in, drive out)
- Island (as existing)

The Operator's preference for DIRO or hybrid sawtooth and this accords with the recommendation to avoid Island stances where possible to reduce the possibility of vehicle and passenger conflicts.

Defining Passenger Needs

Inverness ‘Bus Station’ is a coach station, meeting regional needs. This results in a very different passenger profile than if solely serving a local catchment.

The objective should be for a step change in enhancing the passenger experience through improved passenger facilities. As a guide this could include:

- Double the existing Waiting Area provision
- Café – enhanced quality offer, may be adjacent, third party offer
- Booking office/enquiries - important for visitors
- Luggage store - automated?
- Accessibility improvements throughout – including customer information and wayfinding

There may be scope for some shared facilities with the Railway Station (depending on proximity) but should not be overstated or relied upon to make options feasible.

Operational back of house functions (including staff facilities) require input from operators. Operators minimal needs will need to be defined and met, but some trade-offs may be achievable if space is at premium.

The existing buildings is approx. 832 sq m, over two floors.

DIRO example : Wigan Bus Station (Austin-Smith:Lord)

Hydrid Sawtooth example : Chester Bus Station (Austin-Smith:Lord)

Island stance example : Partick Interchange, Glasgow (Austin-Smith:Lord)

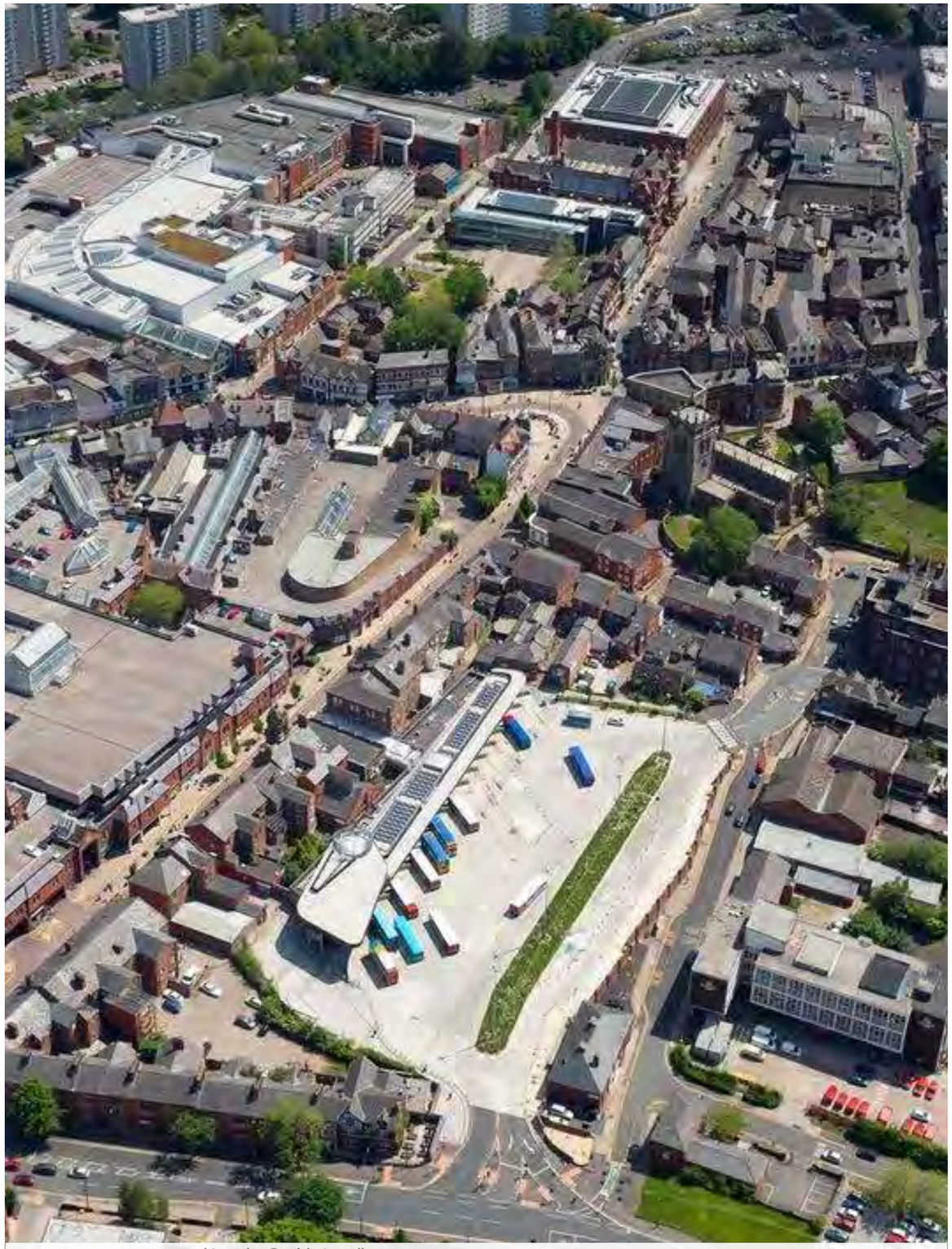
Transport Analysis

Layout Options

Images showing Bus station layout options:
DIRO (drive-in, reverse-out)

Wigan Bus Station Interiors
(Austin-Smith:Lord)

Wigan Bus station Stances (Austin-Smith:Lord)



Wigan Bus Station Aerial (Austin-Smith:Lord)

Transport Analysis

Layout Options

Images showing Bus station layout options:
Hybrid Sawtooth

Chester Bus Station Entrance (Austin-Smith:Lord)

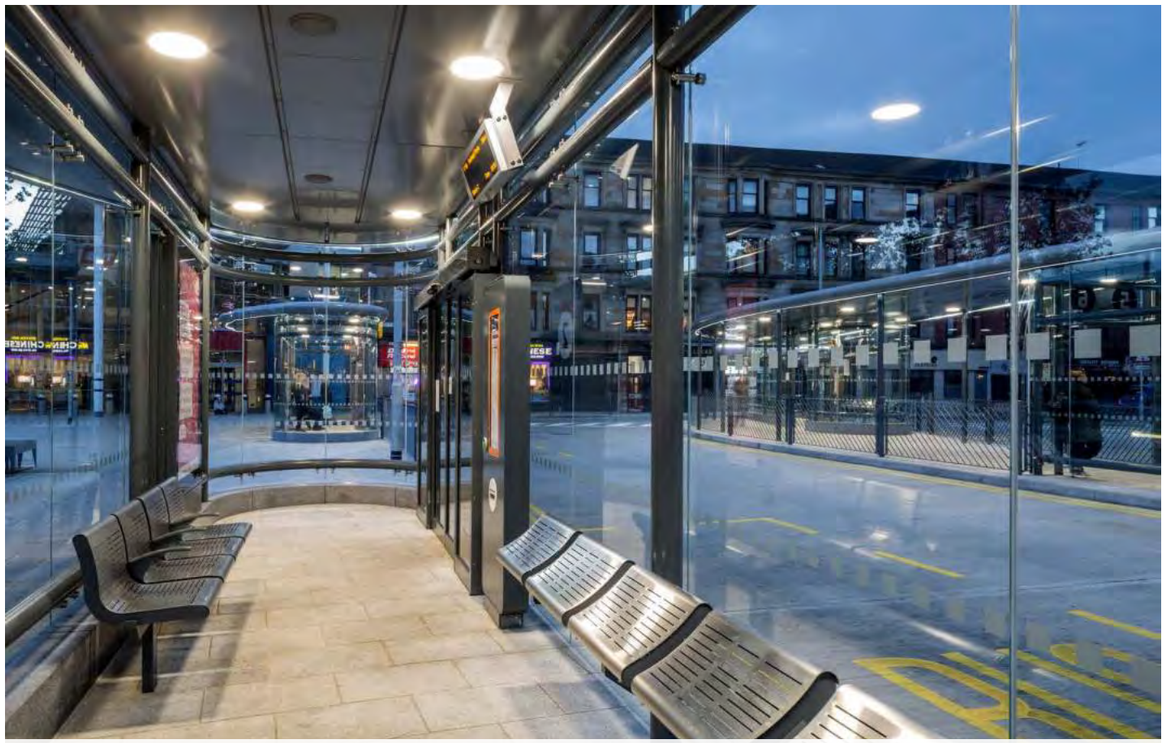
Chester Bus Station aerial view (Austin-Smith:Lord)

Chester Bus station Stances (Austin-Smith:Lord)

Transport Analysis

Layout Options

Images showing Bus station layout options:
Island Stances



Partick Bus Station Stances (Austin-Smith:Lord)

Partick Bus Station Aerial (Austin-Smith:Lord)

Partick Bus Station interiors (Austin-Smith:Lord)

Transport Analysis

Summary

Route strategies

- All options tested for access to A82 and Academy Street.
- Marginal additional mileage may occur, particularly if restricted to A82 access / egress only.

Stance number/allocation

- 7 current double stances operating as 14.
- 14 stances modeled as minimum all adopting DIRO and/ or hybrid sawtooth layouts.
- Separate out regional and interurban services.

Passenger & staff facilities

- Minimum re-provision of current but need to set ambition for better / enhancement.
- Opportunities for shared facilities with Railway Station dependent on site location.

Norreport Station, Copenhagen (Gottleib Paludan and COBE)

Multi-Storey Car Parking Review

Baseline Conditions

The last major parking review was undertaken in 2015 which gathered information on all the car parking within the wider Inverness City Centre.

There was a total of 4,178 spaces identified at that time (109 on street bays), with the only notable change since then having been the demolition of the Rose St Decked Car Park.

Across the city the peak occupancy of parking was 69% Traffic flows on the A82 Longman Road are currently comparable to 2015 when the previous study was undertaken.

Local Provision

The Rose Street car park has up to 1,016 spaces when all are available, with the 2015 data suggesting a peak occupancy of 73%. Currently the car park has a capacity of 850 spaces.

More recent data from 2023 reinforced this indicating occupancy with an absolute peak of 80% of the 850 spaces. Circa 200 spaces have been closed off due to maintenance work, equivalent to 20% of capacity without any significant capacity issues or overspill elsewhere with 2024 data showing a peak of around 80% occupancy

Surface parking is available within and adjacent to the Study Area at:

- TK Maxx 58 spaces
- Railway Station – 60 spaces
- Rose St Retail – 172 spaces
- Total availability – 290 spaces

Future Provision

There is a lack of specific guidance on the future provision of parking within the city centre, but the City Centre Masterplan and the LTS make reference to increased pedestrianisation of key streets and this implies a reduction of on street parking.

The demand for parking at Rose Street can be considered to be around 762 spaces (75% of the current capacity).

Reproviding the existing capacity within a new MSCP would also accommodate:

- TK Maxx Car Park
- Rail Station Parking; and
- Up to 90% of existing on street provision within the city centre

This is without any additional demand management measures which could include P&R at Kessock or Torvean, Active Travel network delivery.

Design Requirements

The original structure would have been built with standard parking bays of 2.4m by either 4.8m or 5m length.

The 2023 IStructE Multi Storey Car Park design guidance recommends a bay size of 2.6m x 5m length.

As a result to reprovide the existing provision would require either a bigger footprint (to retain existing arrangements) or a higher structure with additional levels.

The exact footprint will vary depending on whether ramps are internal or external – some recent car parks of similar scale are shown overleaf.

Some ‘at grade’ parking could be retained within the wider ‘Station Quarter’ possibly accommodating disabled provision close to the Library and transport interchanges.

Stevenage North

Chester New Market

Sunderland Riverside

Transport Analysis

Other Considerations

There will be a requirement to provide drop off provision to the Stations.

Taxi provision close to the Stations or interchange will be desirable.

Servicing of the Stations will require to be provided.

Retail and/or mixed-use development will require service access.

Refuse collection will be required – the existing station provision creates direct conflict with pedestrians and public parking.

Mobility Hub / Cycle Hire Station to be accommodated within transport hub (possibly MSCP).

Provision / access for British Transport Police (at the Railway Station), enhanced safety and security generally including lighting and CCTV.

Radcliffe Bus Station (Austin-Smith:Lord)

SPT Hamilton Bus Station Redevelopment (Austin-Smith:Lord)

Wigan Bus Station (Austin-Smith:Lord)

Oldham Bus Station (Austin-Smith:Lord)

Partick Bus Station (Austin-Smith:Lord)

Policy Context

There is an array of local, regional and national policies that will influence and support the 'case for change' and inform the preparation of a Brief for a masterplan for the Station Quarter and the specific designs for the reprovision of a Bus & Coach Station and MSCP in the area.

HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy Consultation (Jan 2025)

Strategy Objective 1: To make a **just transition** to a post-carbon and more environmentally sustainable transport network.

Strategy Objective 2: To transform and **provide safe and accessible connections** between and within our city, towns and villages, to **enable walking, wheeling and cycling for all.**

Strategy Objective 3: To **widen access to public and shared transport and improve connectivity** within and from / to the region.

Strategy Objective 4: To **improve the quality and integration of public and shared transport** within and from / to the region.

Strategy Objective 5: To **ensure reliable, resilient, affordable and sustainable connectivity** for all from / to our island, peninsular and remote communities.

Strategy Objective 6: To **improve the efficiency, safety and resilience of our transport** networks for people and freight and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Inverness City Vision – The Highland Council

Project Outcomes:

1. The recognised prime **destination for people** and businesses to invest their time and money.
2. **Welcoming mixed-use** neighbourhoods that provide quality homes for young people, families and older people.
3. An attractive, healthy built and natural environment where people can meet, dwell and socialise in **safe accessible public spaces.**
4. **Zero Carbon** Region + Just Transition .
5. A **safe place that is easy to walk and wheel around,** where public transport is accessible, and **vehicles do not dominate** available space.

Inverness City Centre Development Brief – The Highland Council (2018)

The City Centre Development Brief was adopted in Feb 2018 and includes a Vision for 2030, an outcomes focus around a series of overarching themes (A Great Place for Business; A Great Place to Visit; A Great Place to Live; Accessible, Easy and Safe to Move Around; Distinctive and Attractive).

The Priorities for Development are summarised as;

1. Improvements to City Centre access and connections.
2. Physical enhancement of Academy Street and its surroundings.
3. Redevelopment of key sites to create new visitor and cultural attractions.

All of these Priorities are of relevance to this Study.

The Development Brief as Site Specific Development Guidelines including a focus on the 'Station Quarter' which comprises site specific guidance for Inverness Railway Station, the Royal Mail Building / Strothers Lane, Victorian Market and 36-40 Eastgate.

Policy Context

The Highland Council Inverness City Centre Vision

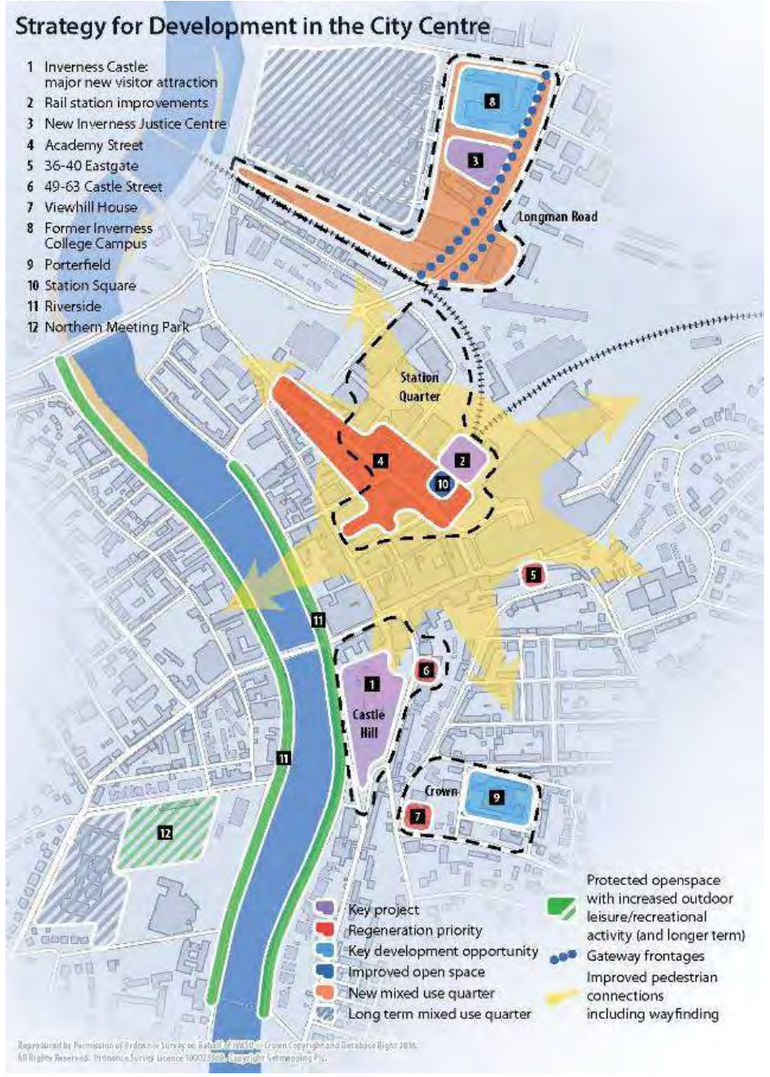
Vision for 2030

The document outlines a Vision for the City Centre;

Inverness has a vibrant, prosperous and unique City Centre on the river, well connected and accessible, and valued as an attractive place to work, live and visit.

The overarching Strategy and Map 6.1 clearly articulate the Development Brief for the Study Area with a focus on;

- Retaining and enhancing the setting of the Library / Listed Building as a key destination.
- Establishing Farraline Park as a key destination and 'important civic space with improved pedestrian environment'.
- Ensuring that Railway Terrance and Strothers Lane are priority routes for active travel improvements.
- Ensuring that all other routes in the Study Area (including Margaret Street and Rose Street are important pedestrian routes.



Map A.2 Site 1 : Inverness Railway Station.

Map A.3 Site 2: Royal Mail, Strothers Lane.

Policy Context

Inverness City Centre Vision

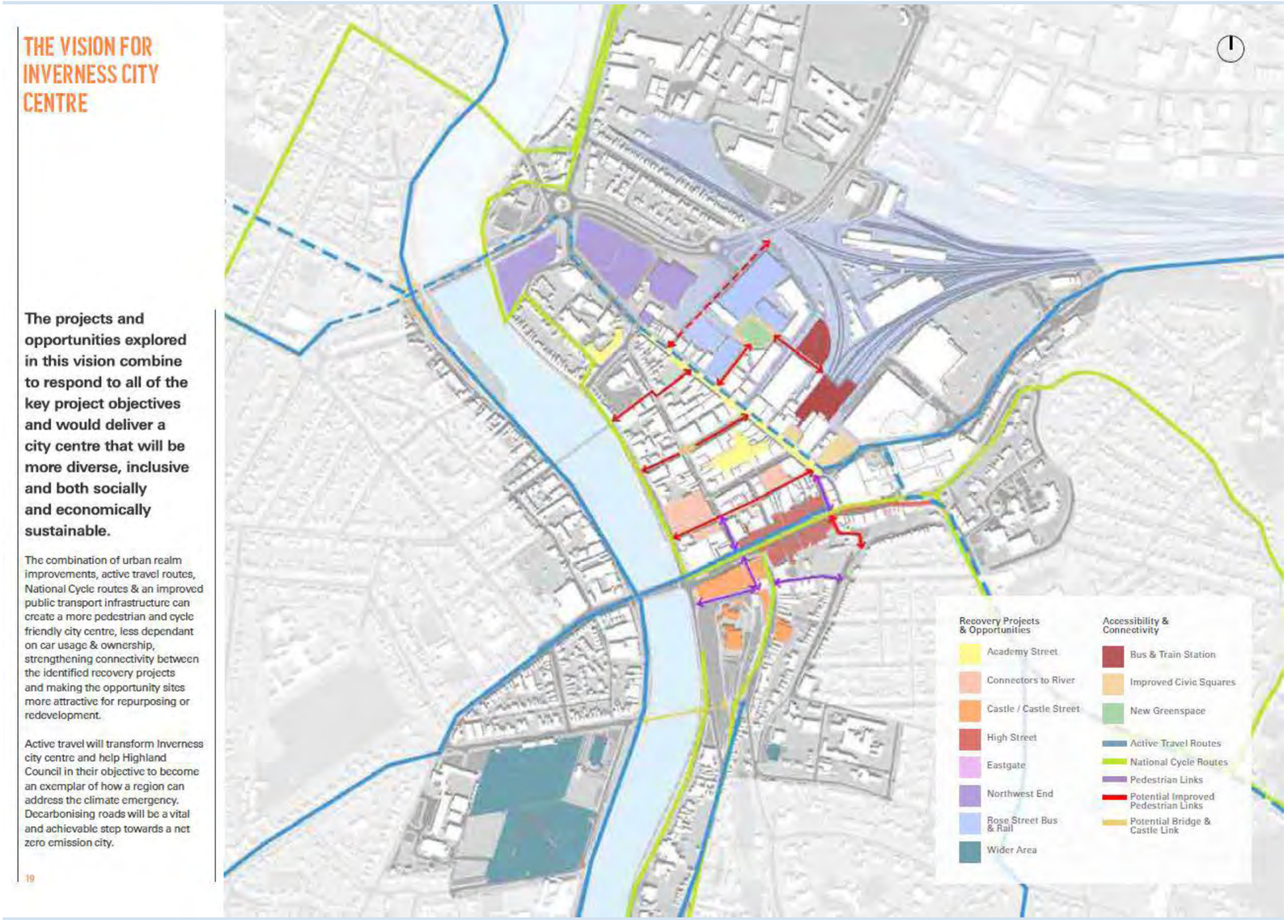
Published post-Covid this document seeks to illustrate interventions that are consistent with the Development Brief and reassert the need and importance of regeneration across the Station Quarter, and the reprovision of the Bus Station as part of a wider regeneration strategy.

The Report reaffirms a number of potential key moves that are summarised as;

1. Railway Station improvements.
2. Relocation of Bus Station to Interchange with Railway Station.
3. Re-routed Railway Terrace.
4. Urban Greenspace at Farraline Park.
5. Pavilion Building on the current Bus Station building.
6. Pedestrianisation of Margaret Street.
7. Improved Connection to Longman Road.
8. Mixed-Use Development on the TK Maxx site.
9. Tourism / Leisure Building on the Post Office Site.
10. Expanded Library / Civic Hub.
11. Residential Block on Car Park site adjacent to Platform 7.
12. Redevelopment of Spectrum Centre site.
13. New Hotel on Gap Site.

These key moves are consistent with the emerging preferred Options outlined in this Study.

The document is illustrated with indicative plans which depict the retention of the MSCP (which now needs to be demolished), a new urban space at Farraline Park and the relocation of the Bus Station (albeit relying on island platforms which are discouraged due to passenger safety, and showing a layout which is too small for vehicular movements and has fewer stances than the existing facility and no passenger facilities).



Policy Context

Inverness City Centre Vision

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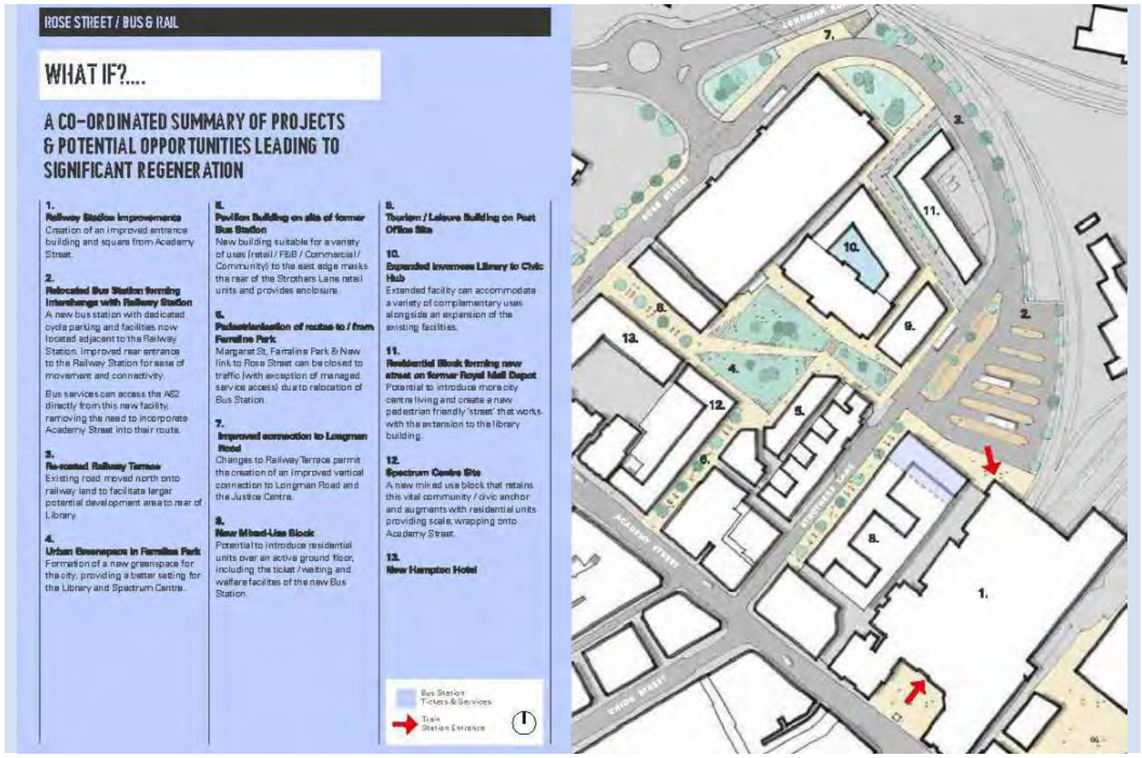
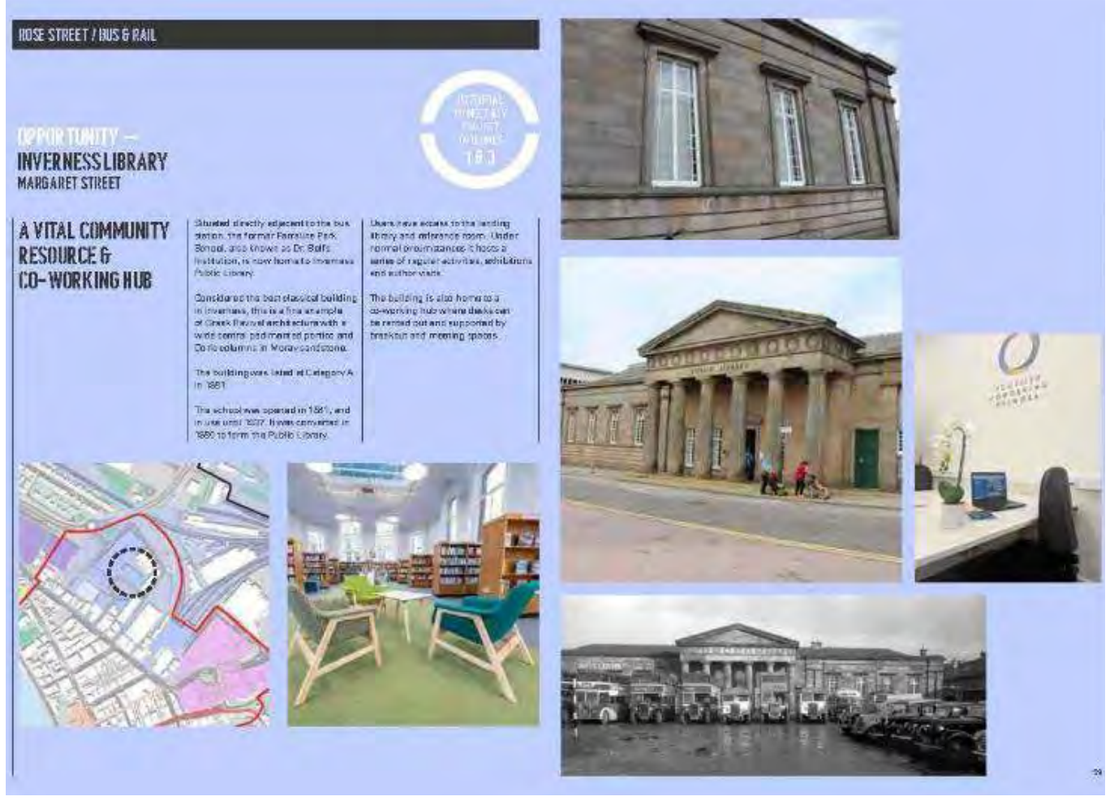
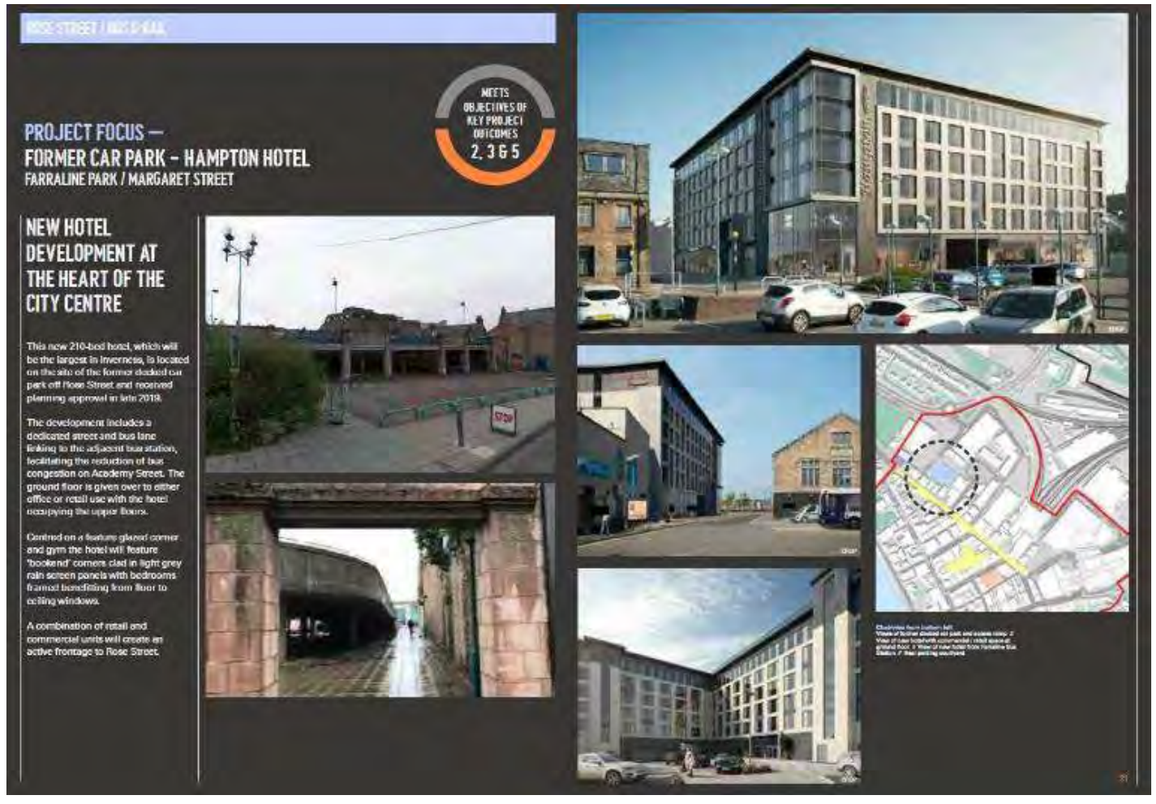




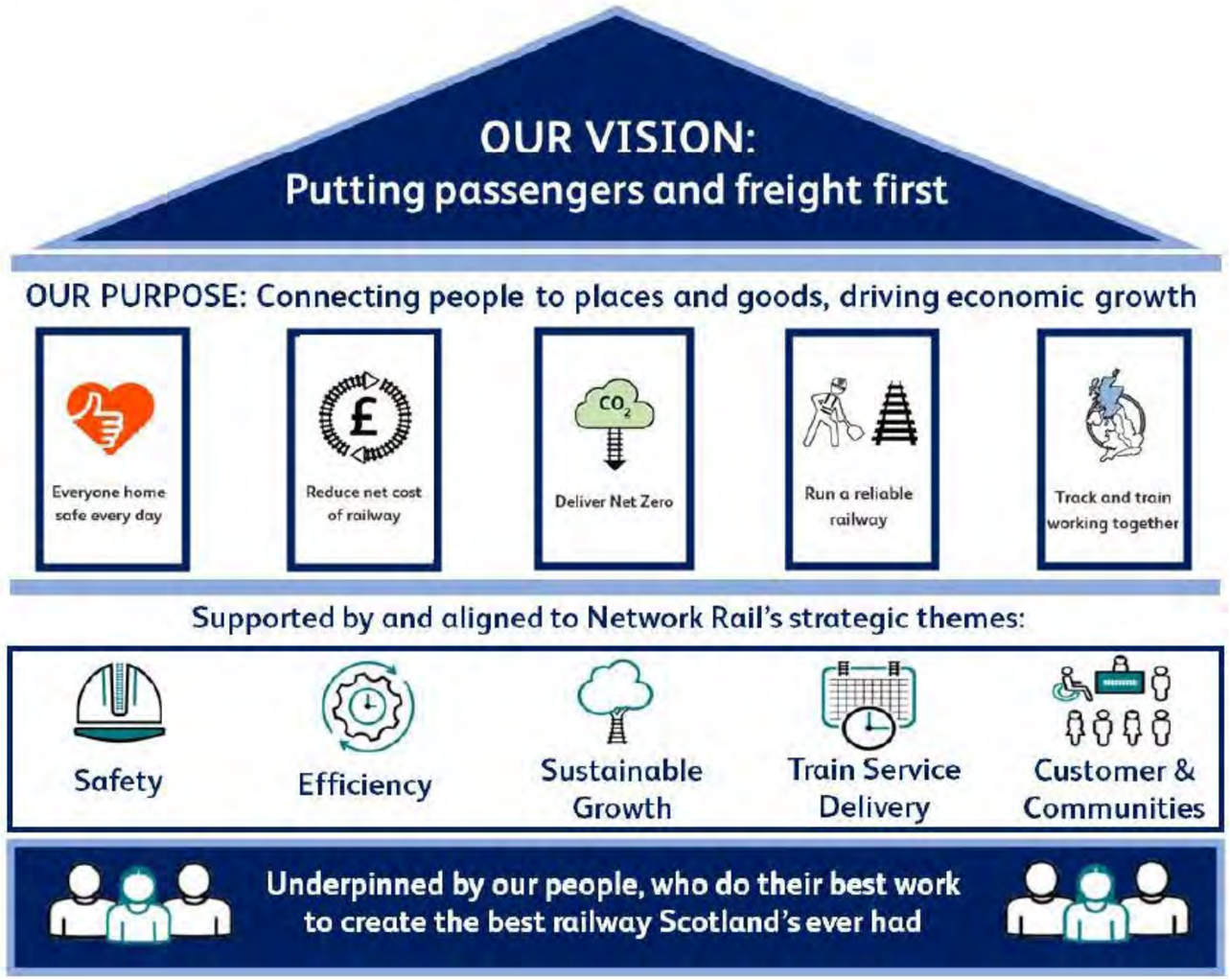


Policy Context

Our Strategic Business Plan for Scotland's Railway – Network Rail (2023

Network Rail's Strategic Business Plan follows on from the periodic review 2023 (PR23) process and outlines their Vision, Purpose and Strategic Themes for Control Period 7 (CP7) April 2024 and March 2029. Network Rail's Strategic Themes are of relevance to this Study and include;

- Safety
- Efficiency
- Sustainable Growth
- Tran Service Delivery
- Customer & Communities



Scotland's Railway vision and objectives

Place Analysis

Policy Context Summary: Future Public Transport Interchange – Inverness City Centre

The development of a public transport interchange and bus station in Inverness City Centre is shaped by a clear hierarchy of national, regional, and local policy frameworks aimed at promoting sustainable travel, modal shift, and place-based development.

Relevant policy documents influencing the Project can be summarised as;

National Policy Documents (Scotland-wide)

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) – Scottish Government, 2023
Setting out spatial priorities for Scotland, including the transition to net zero and compact, connected places. Relevant policies include Policy 10 (Sustainable Transport) and Policy 1 (Plan-led approach to sustainable development).

National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2) – Scottish Government, 2020
Promotes a sustainable, inclusive and accessible transport system, with emphasis on modal shift, integration, and decarbonisation.

Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2) – Transport Scotland, 2022
Identifies Inverness as a key regional hub and proposes improvements in public transport, active travel, and multi-modal connectivity across the Highlands. Recommendation 43 specifically cites Inverness as one of four Major Station Masterplans.

Regional Policy Documents (Highlands and Islands / Highland Council area)

Highland Council Local Transport Strategy
Supports modal shift, accessibility, and improved transport integration in and around Inverness.

Highland Regional Spatial Strategy – Highland Council, 2021
Positions Inverness as a regional growth centre and supports investment in strategic infrastructure and place-based development.

Inverness and Highland City-Region Deal – UK and Scottish Governments, from 2017
Framework for investment in infrastructure, innovation and connectivity, with funding directed to transport and active travel.

Local Policy Documents (Inverness-specific)

Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP) – Highland Council, adopted 2015; review draft 2023–24
Promotes Inverness City Centre as a focal point for sustainable regeneration and transport improvements.

Inverness City Centre Development Brief – Highland Council, 2018
Aims to enhance the attractiveness, accessibility, and sustainability of the city centre, including integrated public transport.

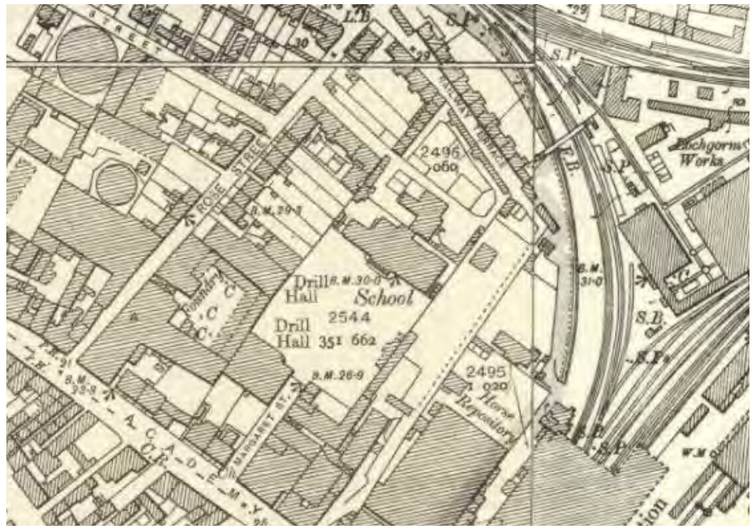
Inverness City Active Travel Network – Ongoing projects by Highland Council and Sustrans
A strategy to improve walking and cycling infrastructure and connect active travel with public transport options.

Highland Council Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) – Emerging Reinforcing City Centre priorities and support infrastructure investment in line with climate and transport goals.

Site History

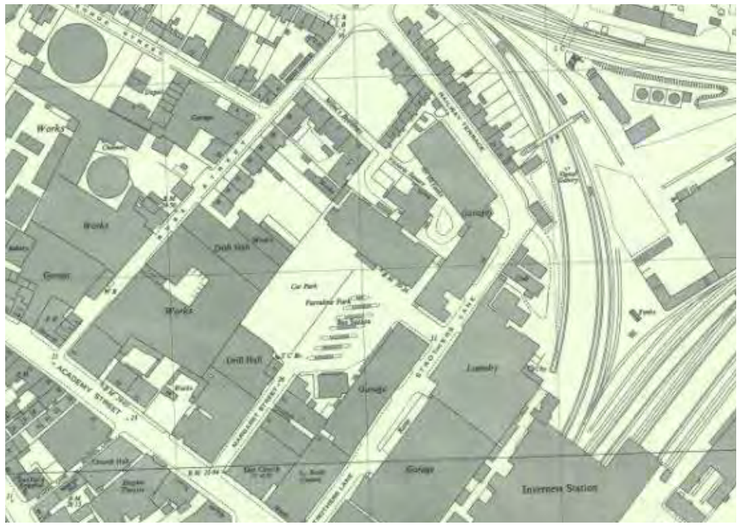
Site History (1867)

A review of site history and map progression clearly shows that the site as it is today is largely consistent with the historic pattern of development. The listed Library (originally a school), the Church at the corner of Margaret Street and Academy Street, the Railway Station and the buildings on both sides of Academy Street remain intact today, as do the dwelling houses on Innes Street to the north.



Site History (1892)

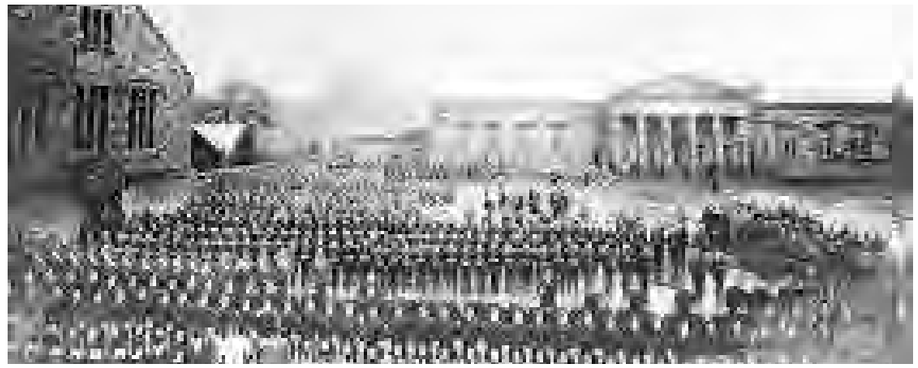
This part of Inverness has been shaped by the proximity to the Railway and accommodated support functions to the Railway (such as the Laundry with landmark chimney stack) as well as a plethora of industrial and city infrastructure including gas works, extensive garages and several drill halls adjacent to Farraline Park (which has not been a greenspace for most of he last two centuries). Farraline Park appears to have been used as a drill yard for military and reservists prior to becoming the town's Bus Station in the early / mid 20th Century.



Site History (1944)

The establish street pattern north of Academy Street is still discernible today with Strothers Lane, Rose Street and Railway Terrace in their current alignment. The rupture caused by the construction of the A82 Longman Road embankment and bridge removed a corridor of the dense industrial and residential area north of the Study Area, and replaced the previous connection linking Rose Street to Longman Road.

Site History



Place Analysis

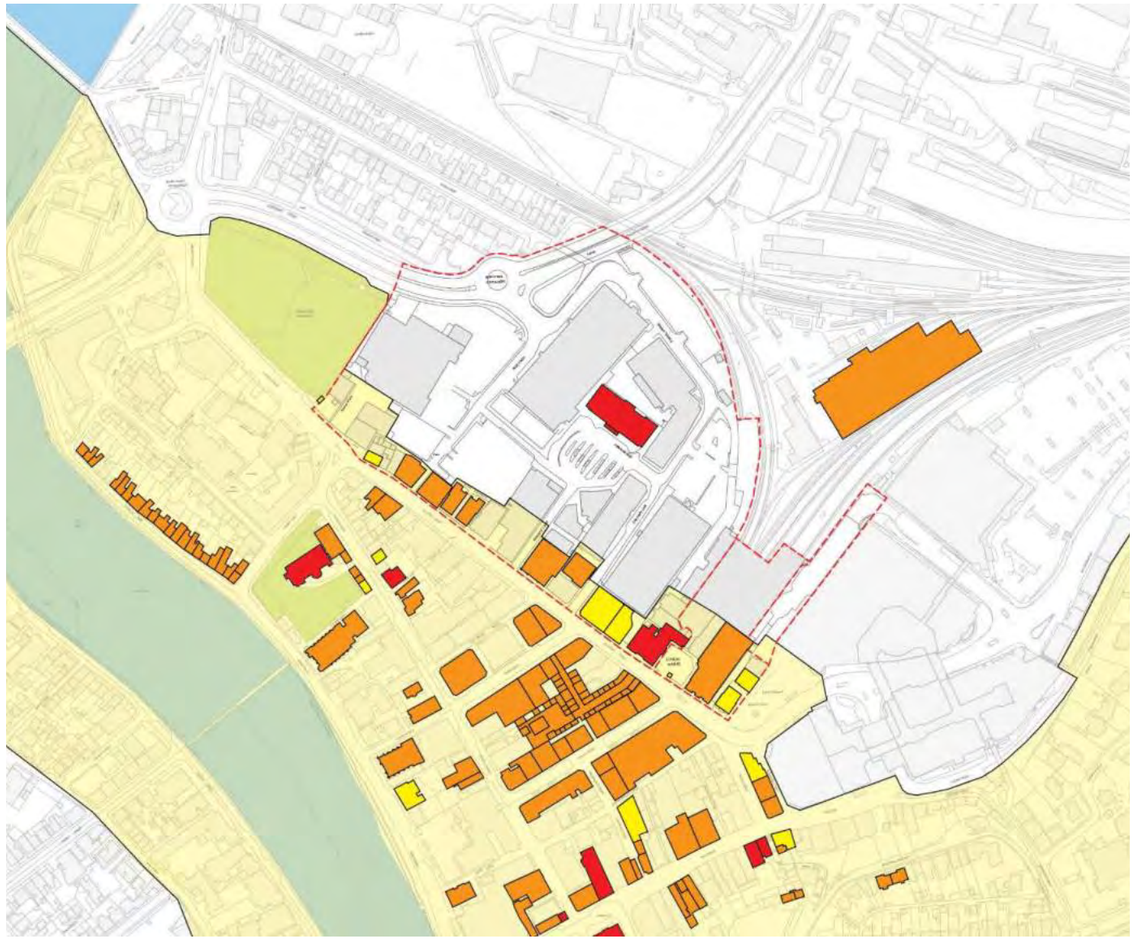
The Station Quarter, as described earlier in this Study, is a fairly discreet area north of the historic core of Inverness City Centre and framed by the A82 Longman Road to the north, the Railway Station to the east, Academy Street to the south and the Chapel Street Cemetery to the west.

It is the established location of Inverness' Bus Station, has no buildings or urban spaces of any architectural merit except for the A Listed neo-classical Library and is dominated by cleared sites, vacant industrial and Royal Mail Sorting Offices, surface and multi-storey car parks

Aerial view

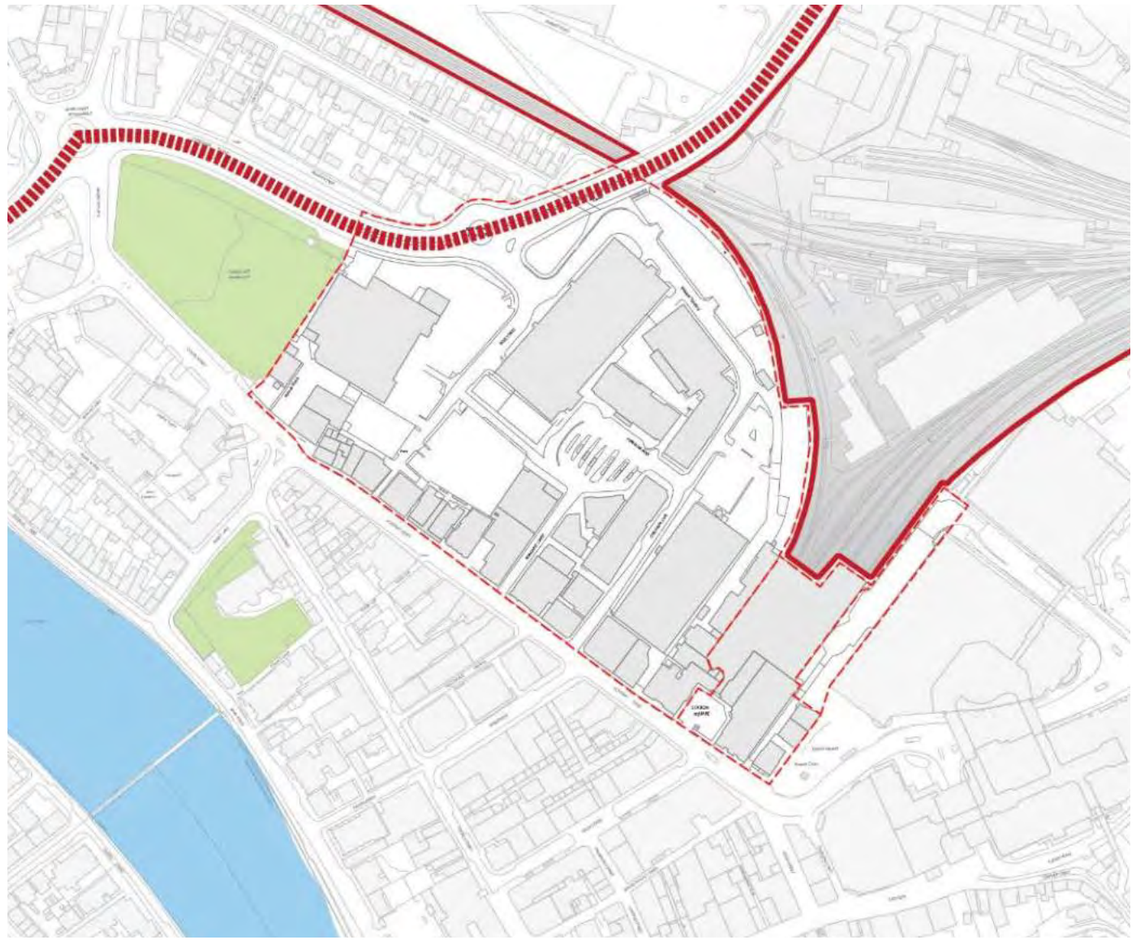
Place Analysis

Listed Building and Conservation Area



The low townscape quality of much of the Study Area is confirmed by the location of Listed Buildings and the Conservation Area in the City Centre. With the exception of the A Listed Library Building (one of the finest in Inverness and of national significance) and the array of B and C Listed Buildings along Academy Street there are no buildings of significance in the Study Area. The Study Area is also largely beyond the extent of the City Centre Conservation Area.

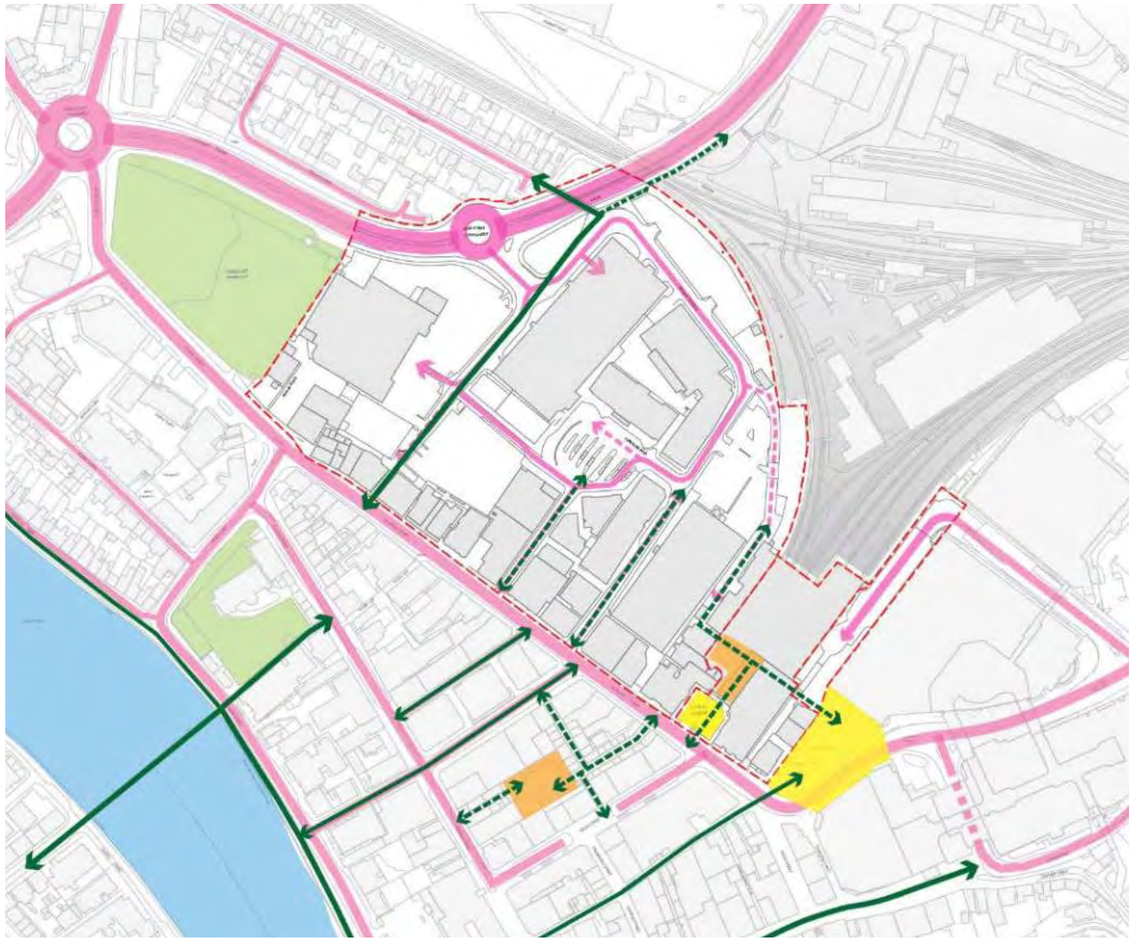
Severance



The Railway Station and the Railway lines create significant severance essentially containing central Inverness and creating a northern edge to the City Centre. This is further reinforced by the severance caused by the A82 / Longman Road embankment which adds a further physical barrier that contains the Study Area and discourages connectivity to Longman area to the north.

Place Analysis

Connections + Destinations



Whilst there a number of established routes and connections to and through the Study Area none of them are of a high quality and none could be described as pedestrian-friendly or prioritising active travel.

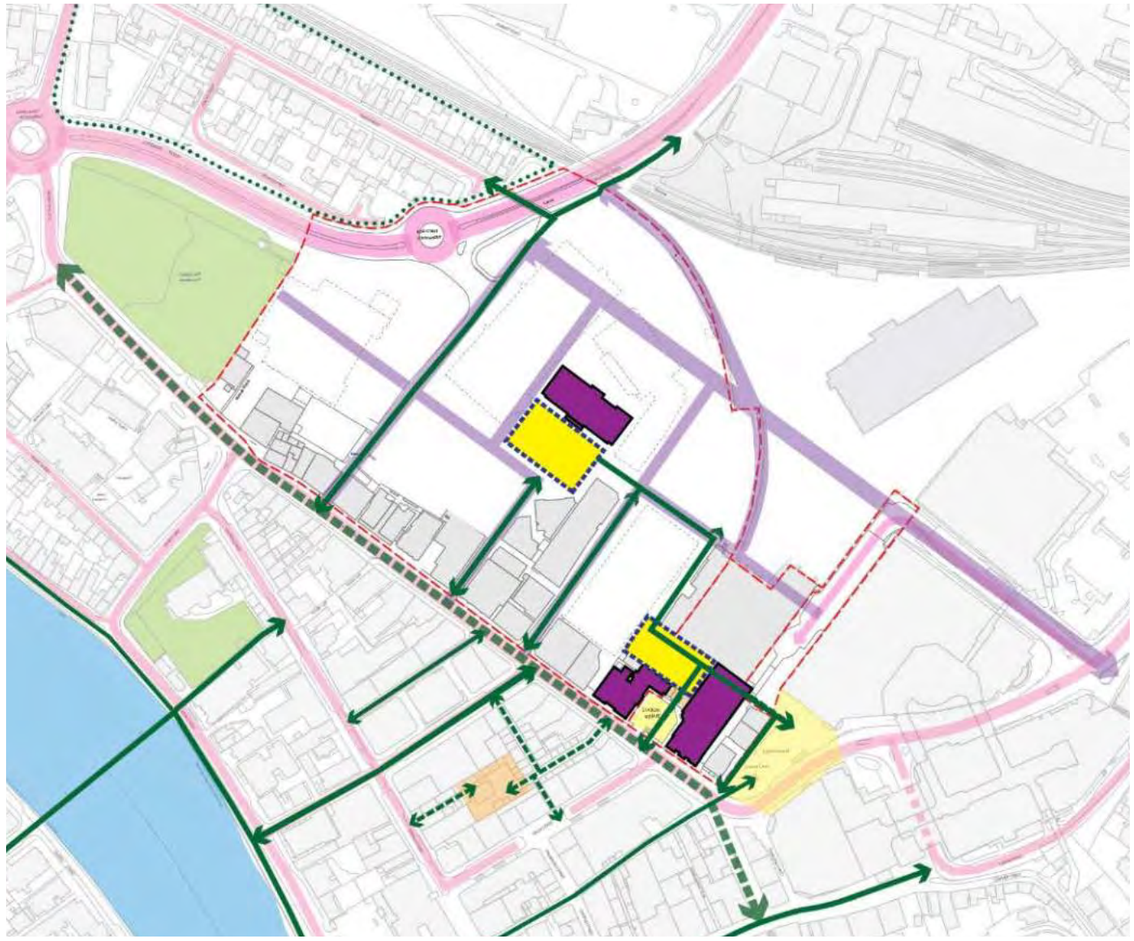
Currently key destinations tend to be to the south and east of the Study Area and are principally the historic City Centre (including the main visitor attractions) to the south and including the immediately adjacent Victorian Market, the Railway Station immediately adjacent to the east and Falcon Square and the Eastgate Shopping Centre beyond the Railway Station.

There is a desire to enhance connections to the north, to the new Courts / Law Quarter at Longman and the Green Freeport beyond that, as well as anticipate the potential for the Railway Station to be reconfigured and relocate northwards on the main through line thereby reducing severance and opening up scope for significantly enhanced east-west connectivity to and through the Station Quarter.

Pedestrian connections to the north concentrate on the A82 Longman Road underpass. Pedestrian connections are of low quality and essentially end on Rose Street at the retail Park. Pedestrian connections to the east and entirely reliant on Academy Street or routes through the Railway Station (which are of low quality and feel tenuous). Academy Street is the main interface between the Study Area and the City Centre and other destinations south, east and west. Any improvements to enhance the pedestrian experience should be explored to improve connectivity and first impressions upon arriving in the City from the Bus and Railway Stations.

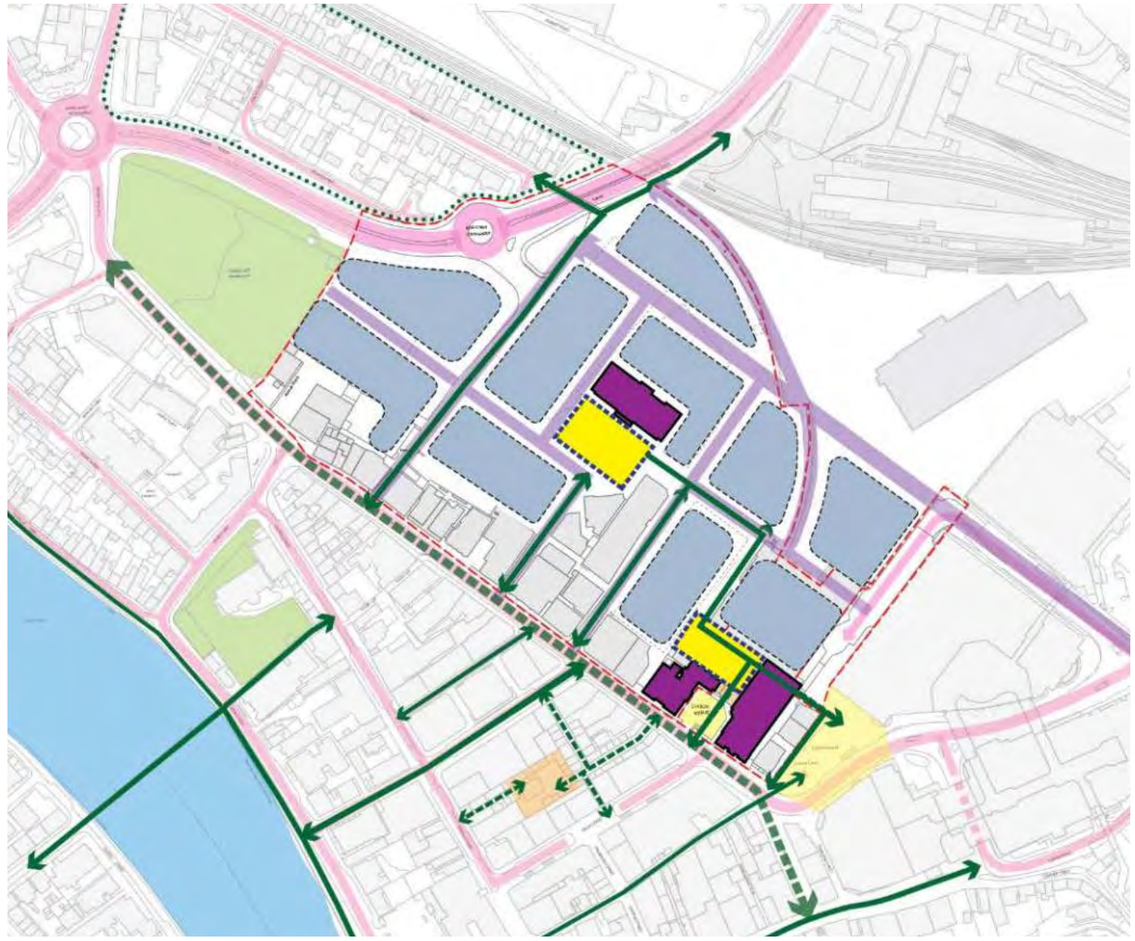
Place Analysis

Potential Connectivity



This diagram suggests some enhanced connections, based on the key moves and destinations described in the previous section, that would establish a lattice grid network of streets and squares connecting into Falcon Square, the Railway Station Square and concourse, Farraline Park and even the Victorian Market galleria and Eastgate Shopping Centre to establish a seamless sequence of high quality (and often sheltered) public spaces.

Place Transformation



The enhanced connectivity, townscape and public realm described in the previous section would help transform the Station Quarter and create a network of development sites to accommodate enhanced Interchanges as well as high-quality City Centre mixed-use development for City Centre living, leisure, cultural attractions and supporting the day-time, night-time and visitor economies.

This place transformation would help reposition and extend Inverness City Centre northwards, augmenting the historic core to create a vibrant and positive new district providing an enhanced first impression as a world-class Gateway to Inverness and the Highlands and establish the Station Quarter as one of the most significant regeneration and mixed-use development opportunities in Scotland.

Part 02

Feasibility Study: Approach and Objectives

Methodology and Approach

Our Approach – People, Place, Process

The approach adopted in this Study is to focus on People first (the quality of pedestrian and passinger experience), enhancing Place-making and ensuring the operational excellence and efficiency of the Interchange by understanding the logistics and Processes of a Bus / Rail / Active Travel hub.

It is intended to seek design options that are both Visionary and Pragmatic.

The key aspects of hte People, Place, Process approach can be summarised as:

People – the user experience (bus / train passengers, pedestrians, cyclists, car park users) : comfort, convenience, safe, inclusive.

Place – enhancing quality, look and feel; connections / accessibility, people first, public spaces, townscape and heritage, positive image / 1st impressions, thriving and vibrant.

Process – optimising operational effectiveness, efficiency, compliance, safety, reliability, resilience in use.

A Listed Library Building : the jewel in the heart of the Station Quarter

Best Practice Precedent : Wigan Bus Station - a modern high quality passenger experience (Austin-Smith:Lord)

Pre-STAG

In anticipation of the recommendation to proceed with a STAG appraisal to make the case for change the approach adopted here reflects Transport Scotland's (TS) updated STAG guidance where greater emphasis is placed on how projects meet the overarching government transport priorities addressing inequality, inclusion, climate change and health and wellbeing rather than pure cost benefit analysis.

To be consistent with the latest STAG guidance and the strategic dimension within the Five Box Model set out in the Green Book – is based on three key groups of activities:

- Analysis of problems and opportunities.
- Spending and policy objectives.
- Understanding the stakeholder environment.

Analysis of Problems and Opportunities

- Barriers to overcome including wider regional connectivity.
- User accessibility to public transport networks across the region.
- Active travel and placemaking opportunities.
- Opportunities for integration with land-use patterns.
- Mobility hubs and Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure provision.
- Relevant masterplans and policies.
- Issues and constraints including powers required to promote the required change, land use or environmental and heritage constraints.
- Interdependencies with other local and regional programmes or projects that may have an impact on the corridors.

Spending and Policy Objectives

- Setting out the objectives of the STAG study will involve the following activities:
- A review of local, regional and national policy, as well as relevant plans and strategic goals to identify established policy objectives.
- This will include NTS2, STPR2, HItran's RTS, andlocal transport strategies, among others.
- Draft the project objectives showing how these address the problems and opportunities previously identified.
- Determine the approach and extent to which each of the STAG criteria will be assessed throughout the appraisal process.
- Carry out a review of best practice including benchmarking parameters for future monitoring and evaluation.
- We will develop an options assessment framework to guide the preliminary and detailed options appraisal.

STAG Principles

Understanding the Stakeholder Environment

- As part of the project, we will conduct a review of the stakeholder environment, including key recent engagement and feedback, to understand how these could influence the development of the future project and what their key interests and objectives may be.

Pre-STAG

The objectives of STPR2 are consistent across Scottish Government policy.

By addressing these topics, this ensures that STPR2 recommendations align with relevant Scottish Government policy, delivery and investment plans in order to help achieve their priorities set out in the National Transport Strategy and its Delivery Plan meet the objectives and stated purpose of STPR2.

The Inverness Interchange is part of Recommendation 43 pertaining to the Inverness Station Masterplan. We would recommend adopting STPR2 objectives as part of the business case assessment criteria. These are summarised in the graphic (see illustration).

STPR2 Objectives

Strategic Objectives

Based on the Inverness City Vision articulated in the 2018 Development Brief for the City Centre we would note the folllowing strategic objectives:

A Great Place for Business

- A strong and diverse economy; a vibrant mix of uses; hub for the Highlands and Islands and an attractive destination.

A Great Place to Visit

- internationally-acclaimed tourist destination that attracts local, national and international visitors.

A Great Place to Live

- A thriving, desirable place to live and work that enjoys convenient access to services, public transport, green infrastructure and recreational facilities.

Accessible, Easy and Safe to Move Around

- Network of safe, attractive routes gives clear priority to walking, cycling and use of public transport, ensuring efficient access for vehicles, including parking.

Distinctive and Attractive

- A high quality City Centre that celebrates / safeguards its unique natural, cultural and built heritage.

Case Study : Helensburgh - Colquhoun Square - before

Case Study - Helensburgh - Colquhoun Square public realm transformation and Outdoor Museum (Austin-Smith:Lord)

Potential Project Outcomes and Design Principles

Potential Project Outcomes

The following principles have informed the development and assessment of the Options outlined in Part 03.

At this stage of the design process we would recommend identifying some KPIs that could be adopted and become targets and measures of success (monitored before, during and after project delivery and to inform the business case).

These Objectives could include:

- Increased bus and train patronage.
- Increased footfall, dwell time and local spend in the Station Quarter / City Centre.
- Increased cycling and use of Active Travel Hub.
- Increased diversity of users in the area (reflecting the local and visitor demographic).
- Removal of barriers to inclusive accessibility for all (esp vulnerable users e.g. disabled).
- Improved connectivity / proximity to key destinations (train station, Old Town, Eastgate etc.).

Potential Design Principles

- **Adopt a 'people first' approach** to significantly enhance the pedestrian experience (walking, wheeling) for all, across an area that should have high footfall.
- Provide **barrier-free accessibility** for all and particularly vulnerable users, including those with mobility and sensory impairments.
- **Prioritise women's safety** in the design and management of the area ensure everyone is and feels safe, welcome and able to enjoy the city.
- **Enhance pedestrian connections** between bus, train and MSCP and to key destinations in the City Centre (eg train station, old town, castle etc.).
- **Contribute to increased footfall and a 'magnetic experience'** to increase dwell time, return visits and spend throughout the day / night, week and year.
- Enhance the **setting for key heritage and cultural assets** (e.g. The library).
- Add / **augment investment already planned** / being progressed.
- **Integrate cycle infrastructure and traffic management** to enhance active travel and maintain essential access to the existing properties.
- '**Green the grey**' to enhance place quality, adopt sustainable surface water management, create quality public open space in the city centre.

Helensburgh CHORD (Austin-Smith:Lord)

Part 03
Options Overview and Initial Assessment

Introduction to the Options

Approach

Following Site Analysis and in response to a review of the Project Brief (including assessment of the number and optimum format of Bus and Coach stances and MSCP parking spaces) a long-list of potential Options was developed for review.

Through an iterative process of project team reviews this long list was honed in discussion with HITRANS. Throughout the process new / alternative Options emerged to ensure a diverse array of Options. The long list Options were presented to The Highland Council and Network Rail at an Options Workshop in Inverness on 01 April 2025, with subsequent Workshop sessions with Network Rail and Stagecoach.
The 01 April 2025 Workshop made reference to an Options Assessment 'Scorecard' (refer to Appendix E). The outcome of this process is summarised in the tables in this Report Chapter.

This Report presents twelve Options, catalogued Options A through to L in a sequence defined by the proposed location of the Bus Stations relative to the Listed Building / Library. Option A shows the Bus Station located south of the Library and the sequence then progresses clockwise based on alternative Bus Station locations culminating with Option L and the Bus Station located to the east of the Library.

Key Considerations and Working Assumptions

These Options shown are indicative and all would require design refinement to ensure compatibility with relevant regulations and requirements.

The Options shown in this Report indicate:

- Retention of the A-Listed Building (Library) in all Options.
- Retaining / enhancing pedestrian access to the Railway Station from Strothers Lane / west in all Options.
- Bus / Vehicular access off Longman Road / A82 in all Options.
- Bus / Vehicular access indicated on Strothers Lane where applicable.
- Stopping up of Margaret Street in all Options.
- The creation of a public / civic square in-front of the Library, where applicable.
- Minimum 14 stance Bus and Coach Station in all Options laid out to avoid / minimise pedestrian / vehicle conflict with clear delineation between pedestrian and vehicle movements.
- Avoiding island stances (as existing) and only using drive-in, reverse-out (DIRO) or drive in, drive out / sawtooth ('Hybrid') stances.
- Replacement MSCP providing circa 850 spaces (with allowances for disabled and EVs).
- 'Development zones' shown in all Options areas where potential mixed-use development could occur.

Commentary on Local Access to Station Quarter

Within all of the emerging options there are a number of changes to access to different roads within the study area. All of the options identified will see the creation of Margaret Street as a traffic free connection to Academy Street as it will no longer function as an access to the bus station. In relation to Strothers Lane it is clear from the feedback received that there will be a requirement to retain vehicular access to or from Academy Street. The precise arrangement of this will be worked through in the next stages of the design as to whether this requires to be one-way or two-way, but it is anticipated that any access will be restricted to buses and/or services vehicles and there will be no through route for general vehicular traffic from Railway Terrace.

At the west of the site the preferred options remove any requirement for connection to Rose Street and as such this road would operate as a cul-de-sac providing only local access to the existing car parking, retail units and other users directly fronting the road. This would remove the requirement to retain the bus gate on Rose Street as there would be no through connection.

The Options have been prepared:

- In the absence of any site information or assessment regarding site constraints (incl. ground conditions, buried structures / voids / services / utilities / drainage etc.)
- On the basis that any existing site constraints can be mitigated and site infrastructure / utilities capacities are sufficient to enable future higher density development
- That re-provision of the Bus Station car parking can be phased to enable development and that this may require off-site / near-site temporary provision.

It is recommended that early assessment of the existing site conditions and constraints is undertaken to manage and mitigate project risk.

Introduction to the Options

OPTION E

OPTION F

OPTION G

OPTION H

OPTION I

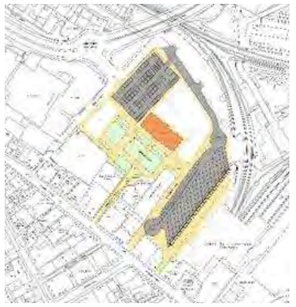
OPTION D

Study Area zones relative to Listed Building / Library (shown in purple)

OPTION J

OPTION C

OPTION K



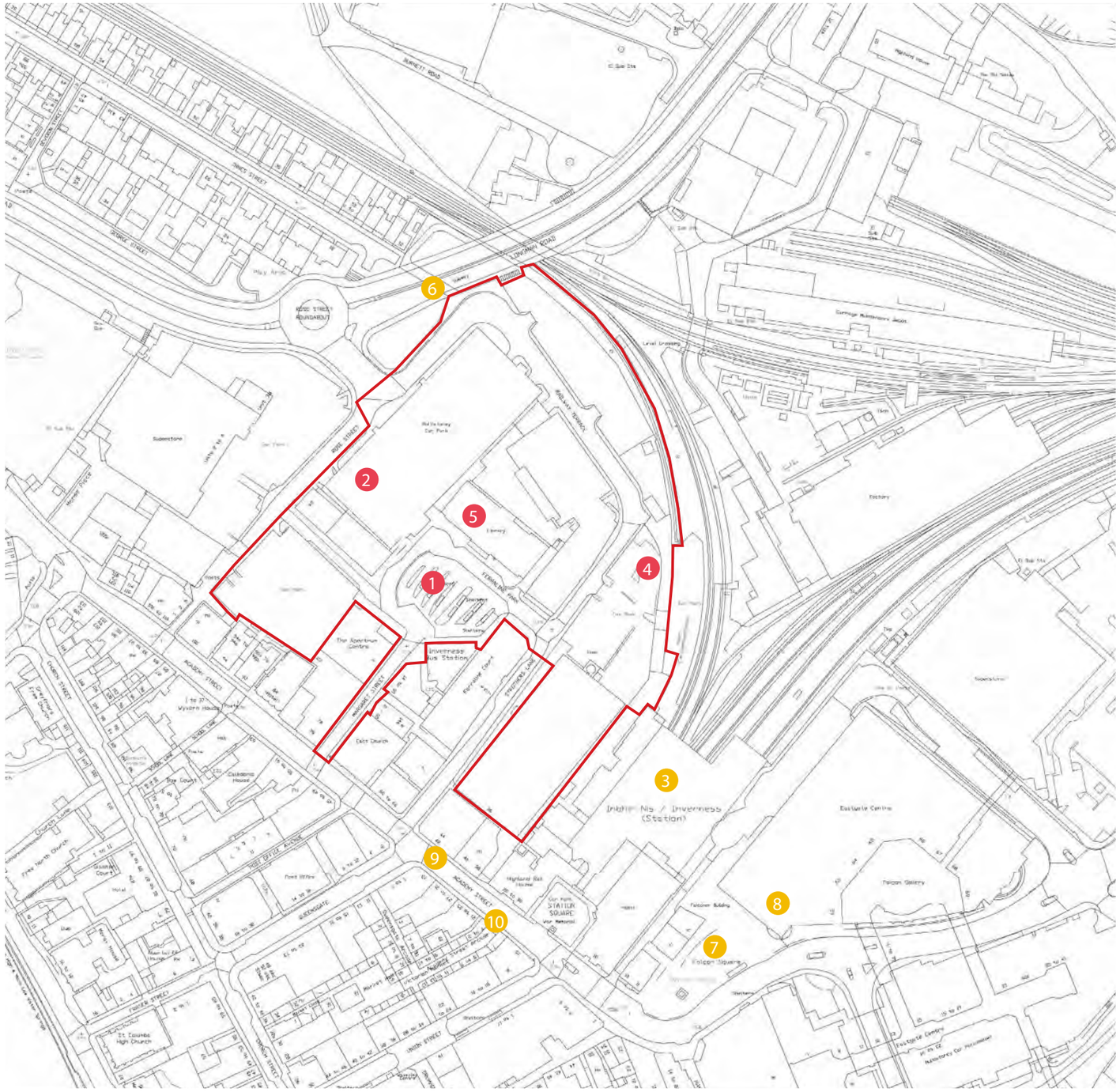
OPTION B

OPTION A

OPTION L

Introduction to the Options

Study Area



Introduction to the Options

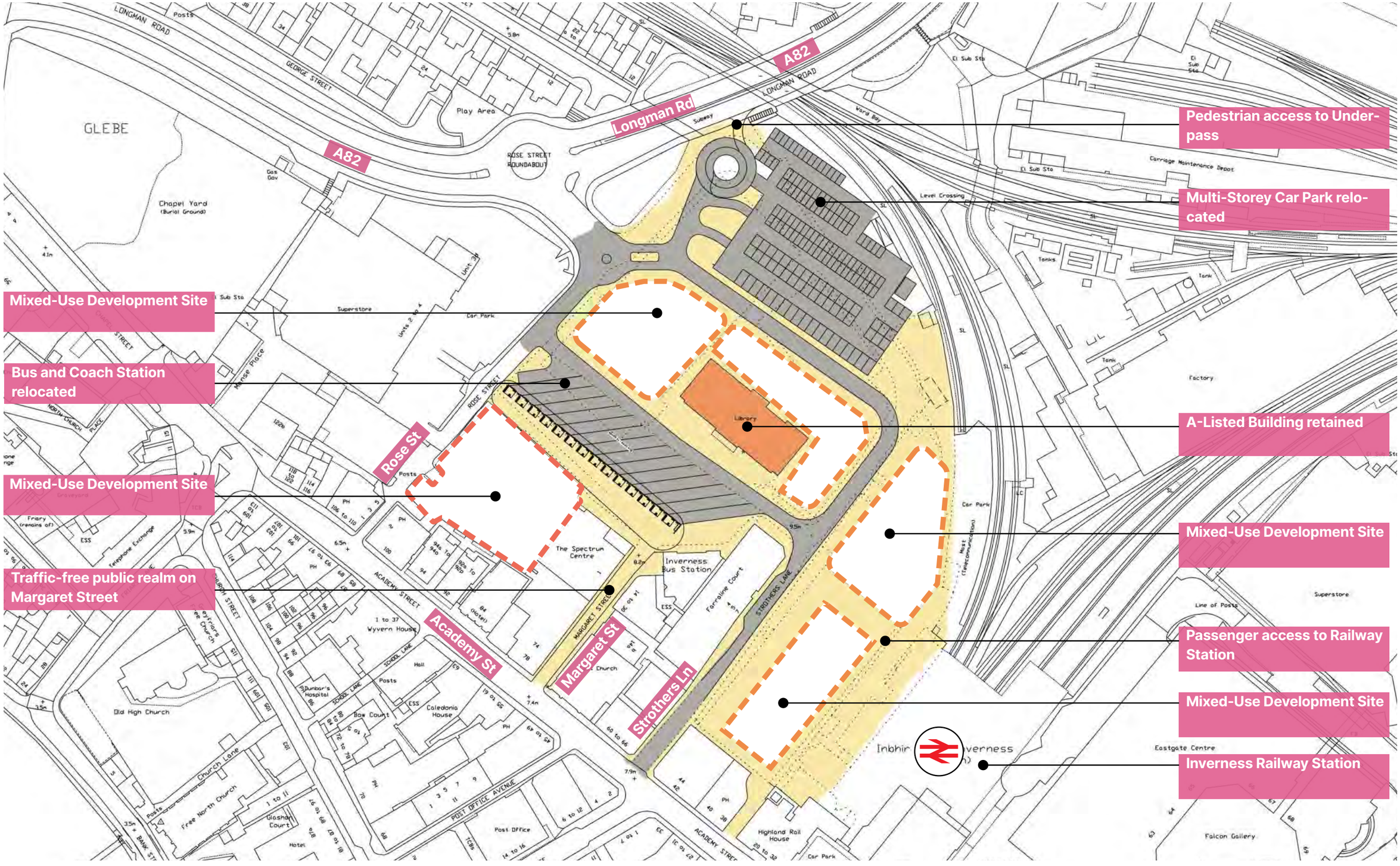
Options Summary Table - Definitions / Guidance

Each of the Options have been assessed and the Summary findings are captured in the table for each Option.

Option	*Name of Option*
Location / Description	*Outline description of Bus Station and Multi-Storey Car Park (MSCP) location / layout*
People	*Initial assessment of the quality of the pedestrian / passenger experience of the Stations (Bus and Rail) and the Station Quarter and how the proposals affect accessibility and connectivity to key destinations immediately adjacent (City Centre, Falcon Square, Longman).*
Process	*Initial assessment on the operational functionality / efficiency of the Bus Station layout with a focus on vehicular movements*
Place	*Initial assessment of how the proposals affect the look, feel and setting of the place; with a focus on the character of the area, the streets and public spaces and scope for regeneration and future development.*
Bus / Coach Impacts	*Summary of feedback received to date based on initial review of the options*
Rail Impacts	*Summary of feedback received to date based on initial review of the options.*
Urban Realm Impacts	*Summary of feedback received to date based on initial review of the options.*
RAG Rating	*Red = Rejected / Set Aside* *Amber = Viable but Not Recommended* *Green = Viable and warrants Detailed Consideration*

Option A

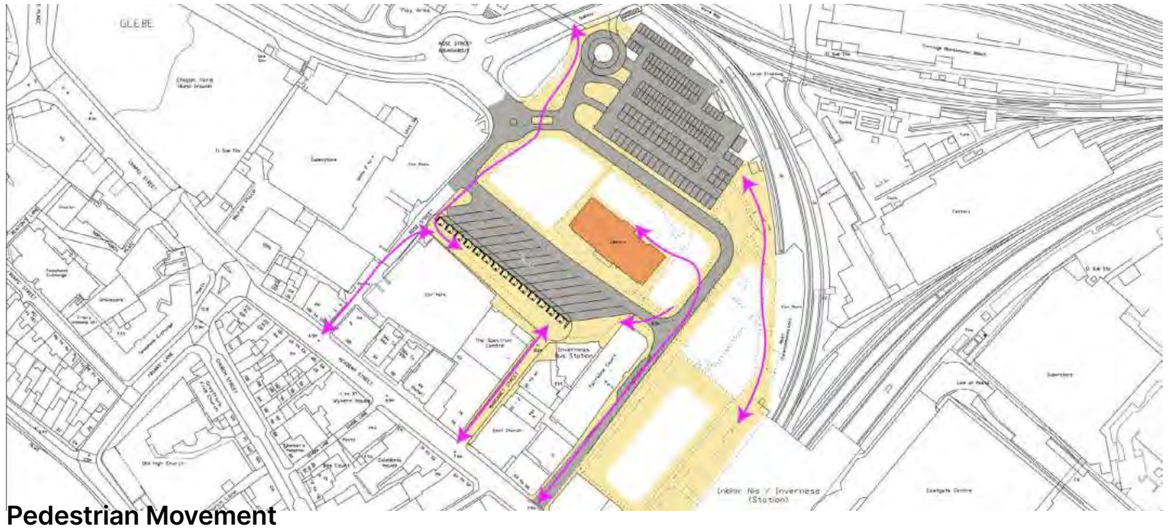
Existing Site DIRO 14 stands- 864 Total Car parking 5 floors



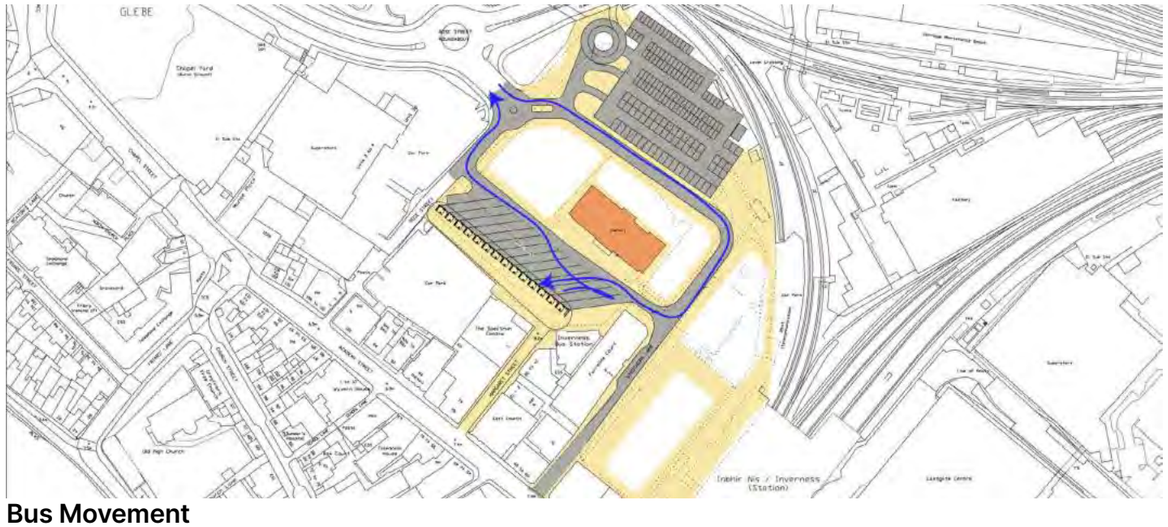
Austin·Smith:Lord

Option A

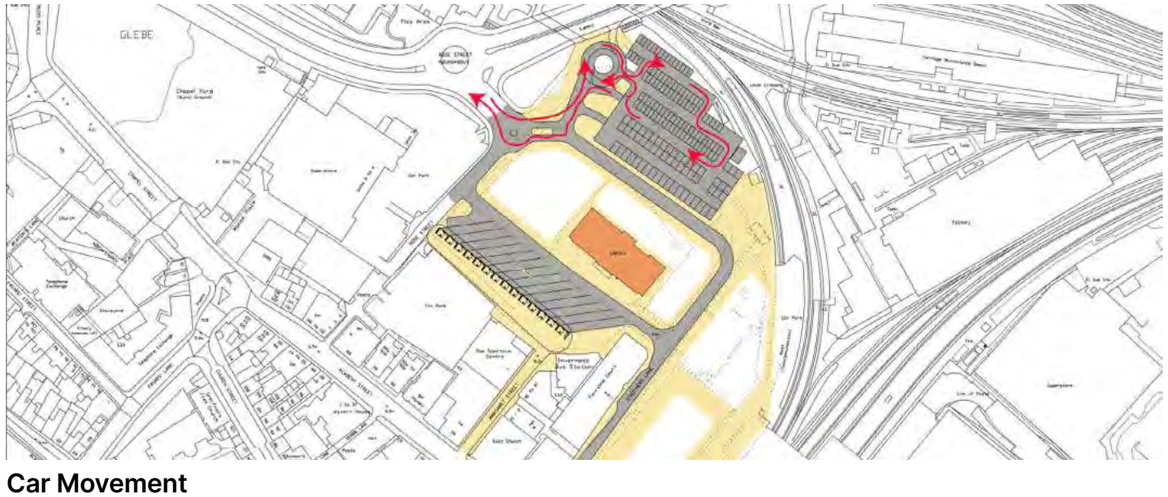
Option	OPTION A
Location / Description	14 Stand DIRO facility on the site of the existing Bus Station facility accessed via Strothers Lane/ Academy Street and A82.
People	This Option is essentially a reconfiguration and extension of the existing Bus Station facility. It improves on the current layout as it separates passengers from bus movements by eliminating island stances. Whilst proximity to City Centre and Railway Station is similar to the current situation this layout creates increased severance to north-south connectivity, reducing access to the Library / Listed Building from Academy Street and reducing connectivity to Longman. It also would discourage east-west connectivity due to the placement of the Bus Station.
Process	This is considered as close to a like for like option to the existing in a safe and designed format. DIRO layout best suited to mixed mode coach/bus operations.
Place	The Option is the only one reviewed that fails to create a traffic-free Civic Space / Urban Park at Farraline Park. It also fails to restore a positive setting for the Listed Building / Library. It does provide opportunity for mixed-use redevelopment between the Railway Station and Strothers Lane (including. TK Maxx site) and around the Library.
Bus / Coach Impacts	The addition of a Strothers Lane connection provides better operational flexibility but the facility is deemed too remote from the Railway Station
Rail Impacts	Poor connectivity and links to car parking make this option feel remote and could restrict access to some Railway Station operations
Urban Realm Impacts	There was concern that this option would diminish the setting of the Listed building, hiding it from the City Centre. In addition it failed to take the opportunity to create a traffic-free civic space in-front of the Listed building. Not significant improvement in interchange between Bus and Rail.
RAG Rating	**



Pedestrian Movement



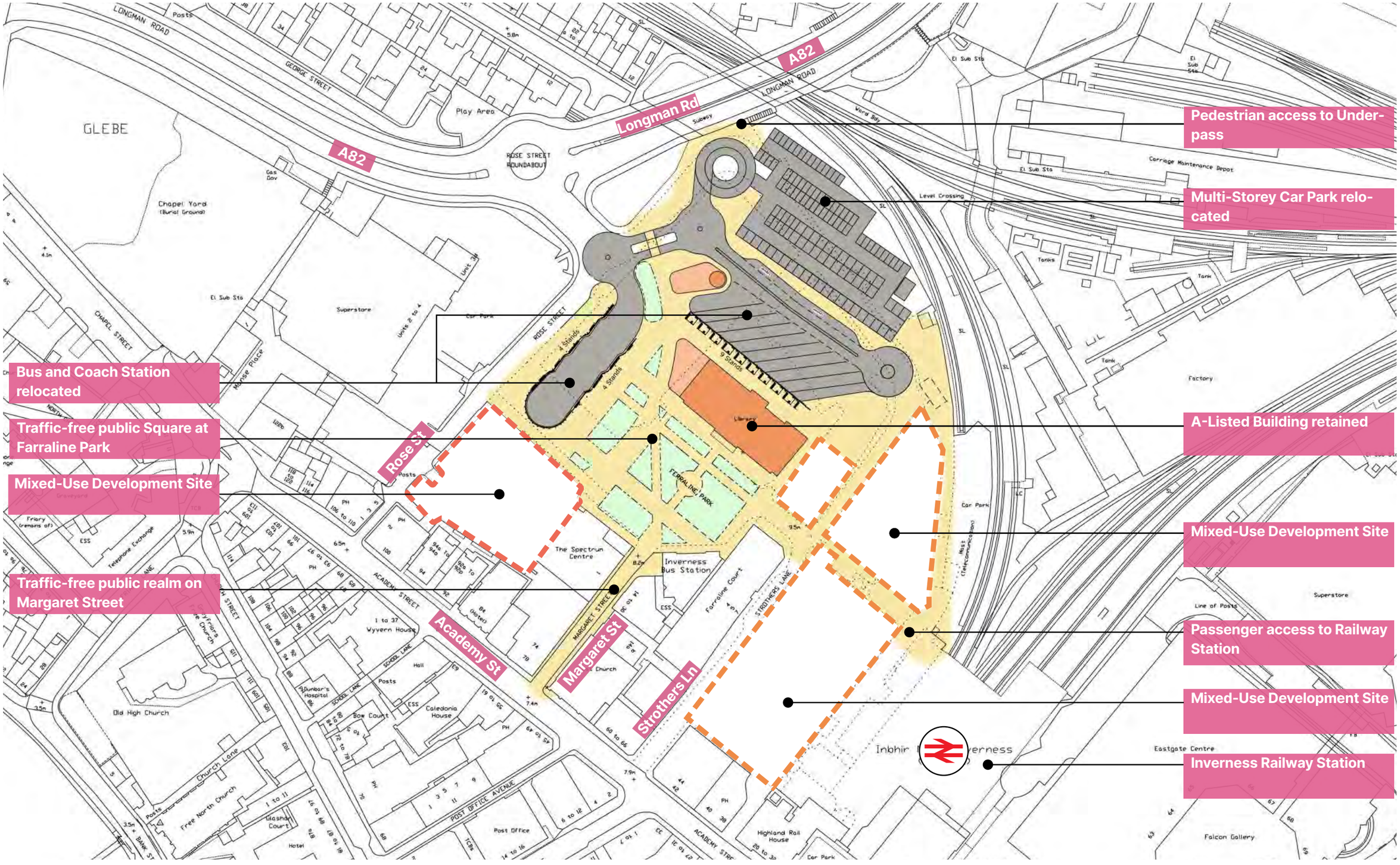
Bus Movement



Car Movement

Option B

Library DIRO and Rose St Hybrid 17 Stands- 878 Total CarParking 6 floors



Austin·Smith:Lord

Option B

Option	OPTION B
Location / Description	8 Bay Drive Through off Rose Street 9 Bay DIRO behind the Listed Building / Library with Carpark adjacent to Longman Road flyover.
People	Whilst the new civic space at Farraline Park helps to link the proposed Bus Station to the City Centre and Railway Station it feels remote and disconnected. Location of Bus Station and MSCP may further separate Longman and City Centre
Process	Efficient layout with a mix of bay types provides opportunities for quick departures or longer layovers and side coach loading. Access to MSCP very direct, albeit mix of car and bus / coaches initially.
Place	Relocating the Bus Station presents an opportunity to significantly improve the setting of the Listed building (currently the Library) and provide a new City Centre Urban Park is very attractive (and shared with most Options). Locating the Bus Station and MCSP to the west and north of the Listed Building provides a cluster of mixed-use redevelopment sites on Strothers Lane to the west of the Railway Station.
Bus / Coach Impacts	Additional Fleet Mileage generated for Buses currently using Academy Street will be considerable and without Strothers Lane access it would not be supported..
Rail Impacts	The distance of the proposed relocated Bus Station from the Railway Station does not provide a single Interchange and is deemed sub optimal.
Urban Realm Impacts	The creation of a civic space at Farraline Park was welcomed. Concern raised at the extended distance between Bus and Railway stations – undermining the interchange. Potential for passenger confusion between the two-part Bus Station noted.
RAG Rating	*

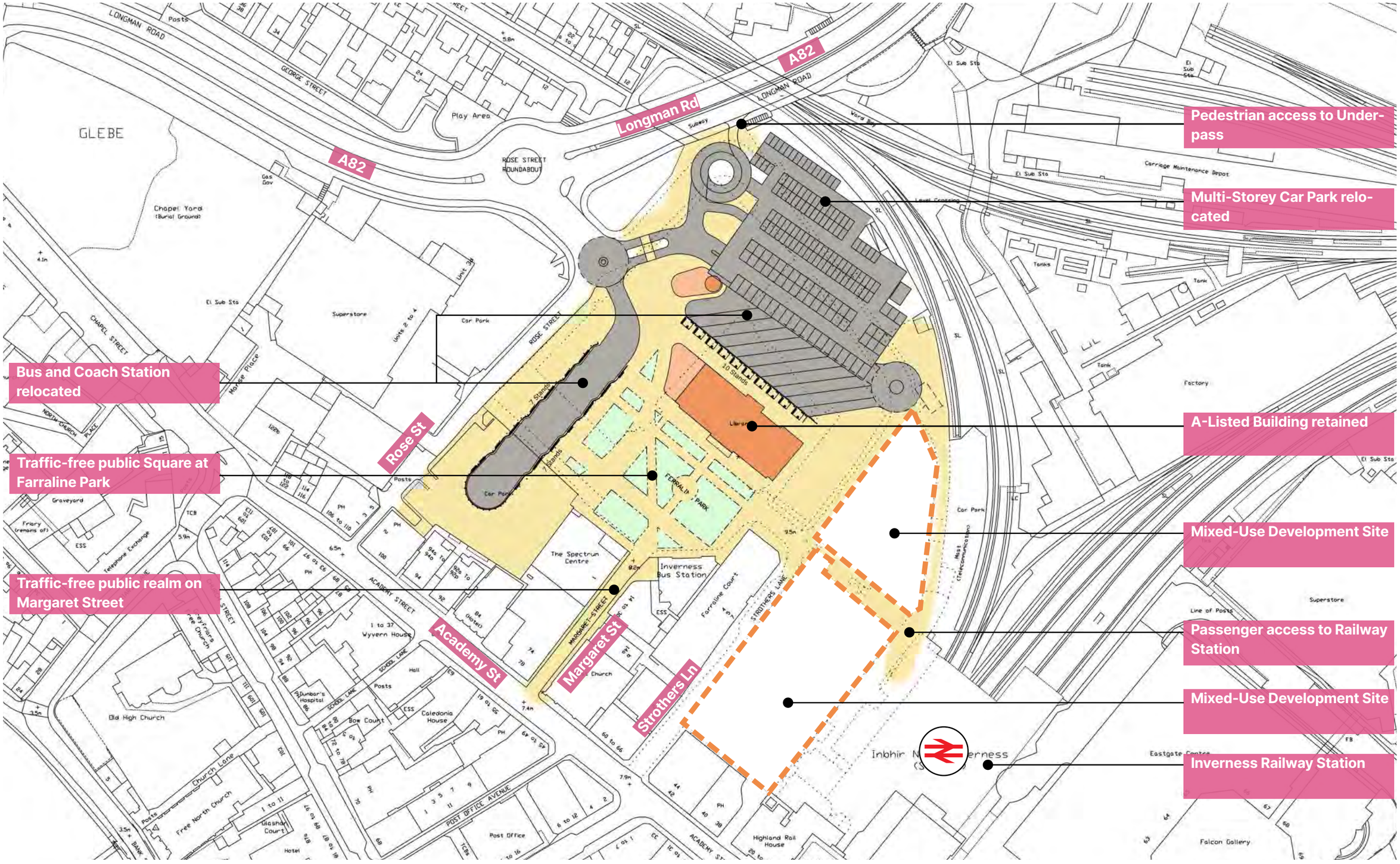
Pedestrian Movement

Bus Movement

Car Movement

Option C

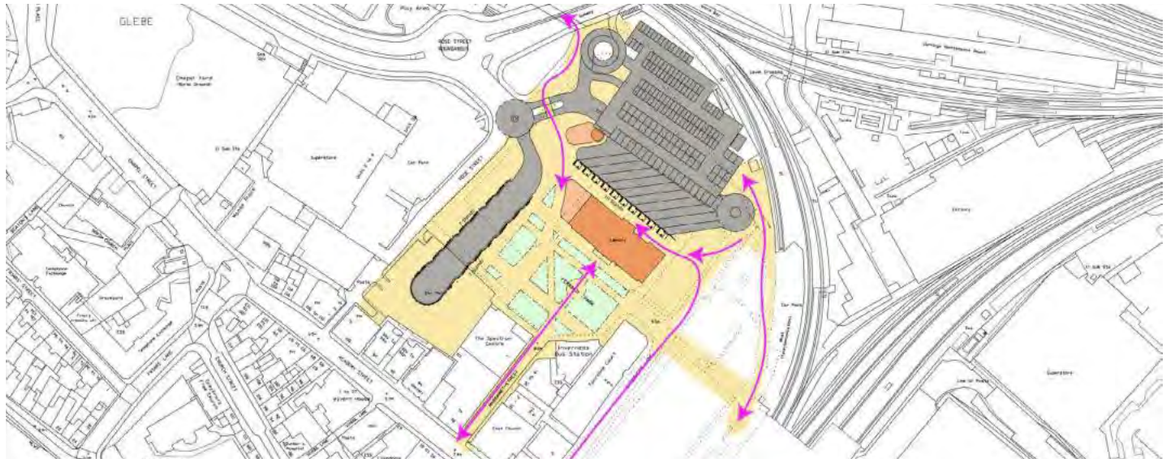
Library DIRO and Rose St Hybrid 24 Stands- 878 Total CarParking 6 floors



Austin·Smith:Lord

Option C

Option	OPTION C
Location / Description	14 Bay Drive Through off Rose Street 10 Bay DIRO behind the Listed Building / Library with Carpark adjacent to Longman Road flyover.
People	Whilst the new civic space at Farraline Park helps to link the proposed Bus Station to the City Centre and Railway Station it feels remote and disconnected. Location of Bus Station and MSCP may further separate Longman and City Centre. The extended Bus apron on Rose Street in Option A1 would exacerbate severance between Farraline Park and Rose Street.
Process	Efficient layout with a mix of bay types provides opportunities for quick departures or longer layovers and side coach loading. Access to MSCP very direct, albeit mix of car and bus / coaches initially.
Place	Relocating the Bus Station presents an opportunity to significantly improve the setting of the Listed building (currently the Library) and provide a new City Centre Urban Park is very. Locating the Bus Station and MCSP to the west and north of the Listed Building provides a cluster of mixed-use redevelopment sites on Strothers Lane to the west of the Railway Station.
Bus / Coach Impacts	Additional Fleet Mileage generated for Buses currently using Academy Street will be considerable and without Strothers Lane access it would not be supported.
Rail Impacts	The distance of the proposed relocated Bus Station from the Railway Station does not provide a single Interchange and is deemed sub optimal.
Urban Realm Impacts	Relies on land not in Public or Network Rail ownership (Rose Street Car Park site). The creation of a civic space at Farraline Park was welcomed. Concern raised at the extended distance between Bus and Railway stations – undermining the interchange. Potential for passenger confusion between the two-part Bus Station noted and greater than A due to a more dispersed Station.
RAG Rating	*



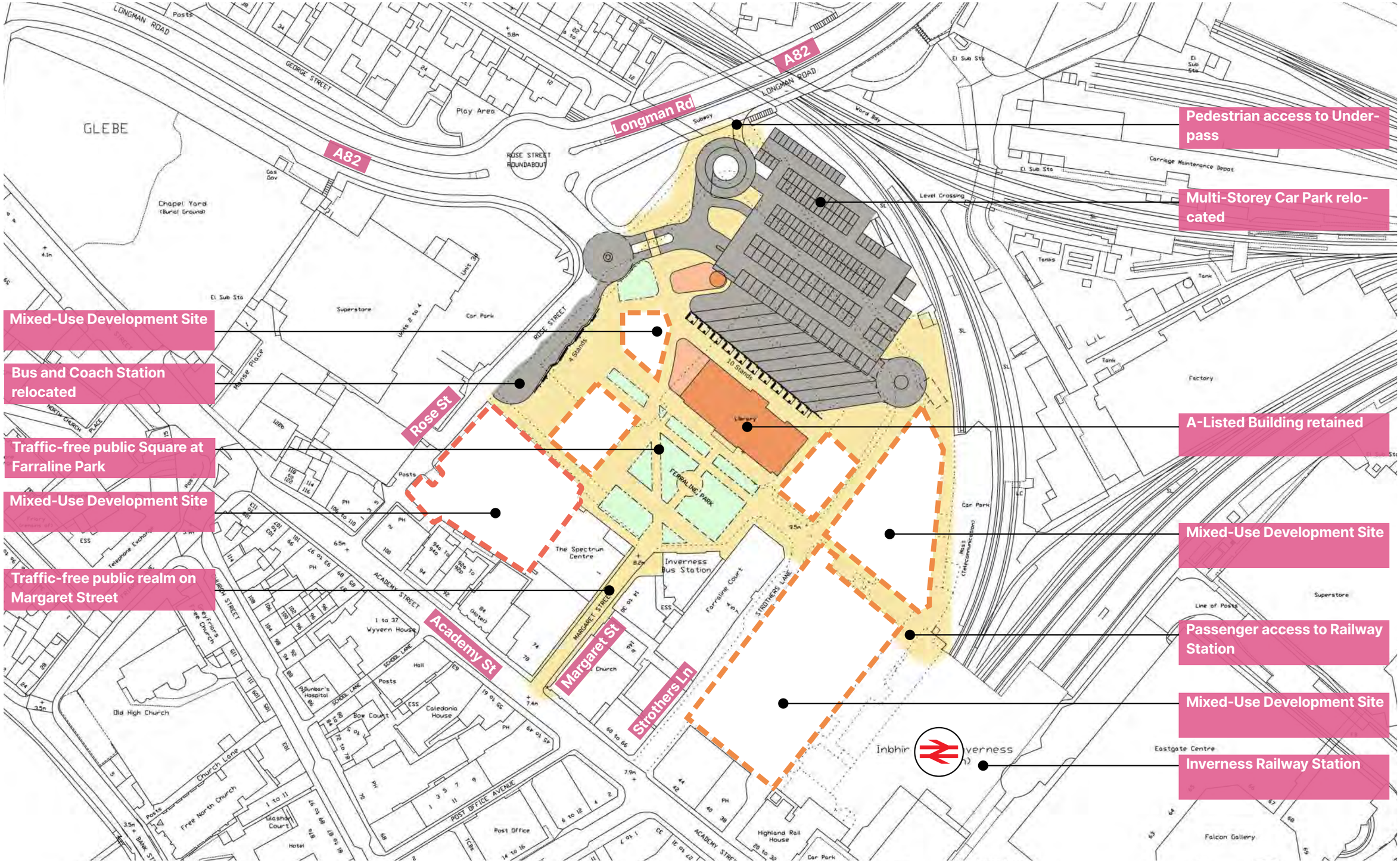
Pedestrian Movement

Bus Movement

Car Movement

Option D

Library DIRO and Rose St On Street 14 Stands- 878 Total CarParking 6 floors



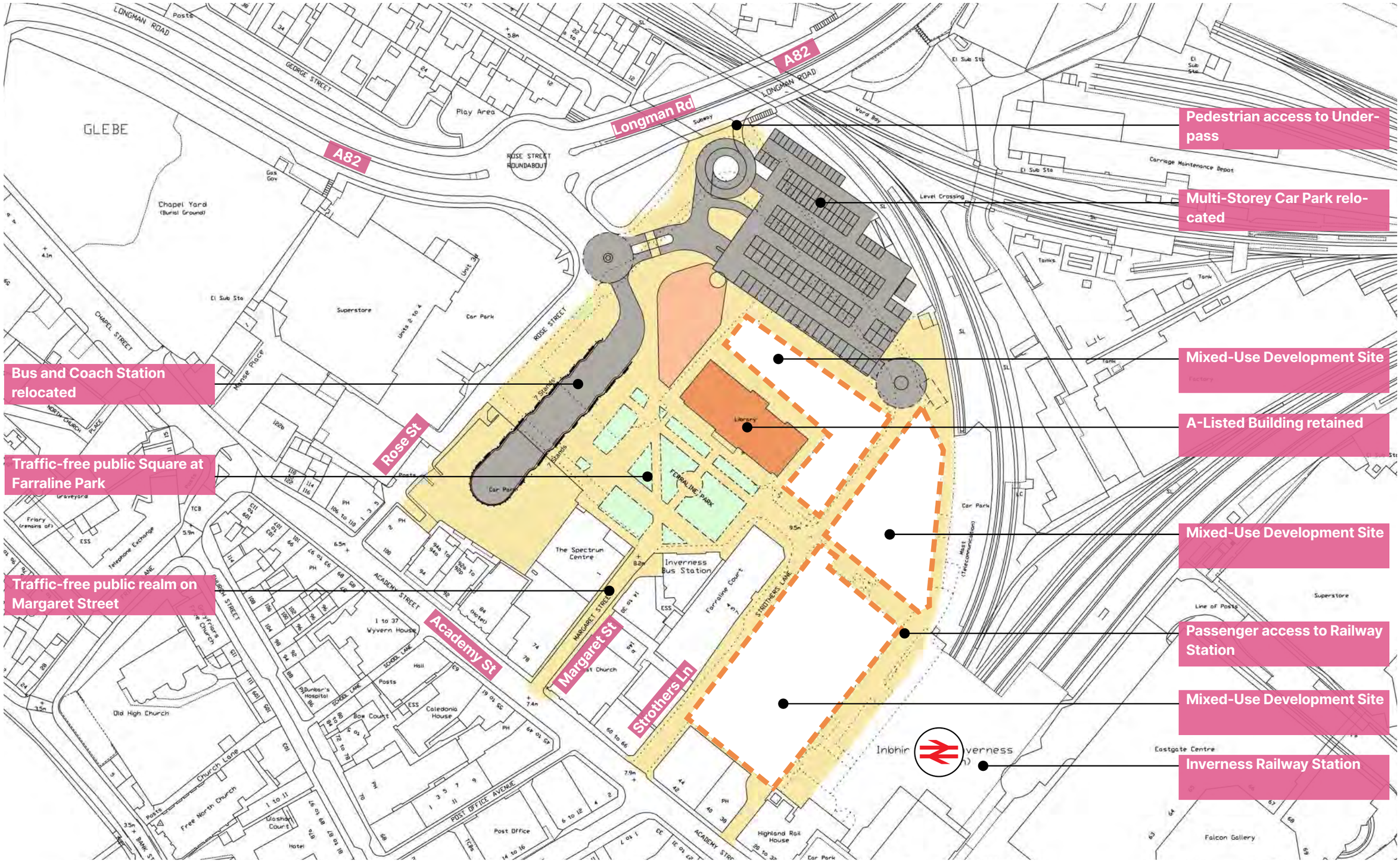
Option D

Option	OPTION D
Location / Description	4 Bay Drive Through on Rose Street 10 Bay DIRO behind the Library with Carpark adjacent to Longman Road flyover
People	Whilst the new civic space at Farraline Park helps to link the proposed Bus Station to the City Centre and Railway Station it feels remote and disconnected. Location of Bus Station and MSCP may further separate Longman and City Centre; albeit the reduced footprint of the Bus apron on Rose Street mitigates this somewhat.
Process	Efficient layout with a mix of bay types provides opportunities for quick departures or longer layovers and side coach loading. Turn back on Rose Street would be problematic. Access to MSCP very direct, albeit mix of car and bus / coaches initially.
Place	Relocating the Bus Station presents an opportunity to significantly improve the setting of the Listed building (currently the Library) and provide a new City Centre Urban Park is very attractive (and shared with most Options). Locating the Bus Station and MCSP to the west and north of the Listed Building provides a cluster of mixed-use redevelopment sites on Strothers Lane to the west of the Railway Station.
Bus / Coach Impacts	Additional Fleet Mileage generated for Buses currently using Academy Street will be considerable and without Strothers Lane access it would not be supported.
Rail Impacts	The distance of the proposed relocated Bus Station from the Railway Station does not provide a single Interchange and is deemed sub optimal.
Urban Realm Impacts	The creation of a civic space at Farraline Park was welcomed. Some also noted the possibility of the Listed Building being integrated into the Bus Station passenger experience. However concern raised at the extended distance between bus and railway stations – undermining the interchange. Potential for passenger confusion between the two part of the bus station. Concern at bus manoeuvres required on Rose Street to return to A82.
RAG Rating	*

Car Movement

Option E

Rose St Hybrid 14 Stands- 864 Total CarParking 5 floors



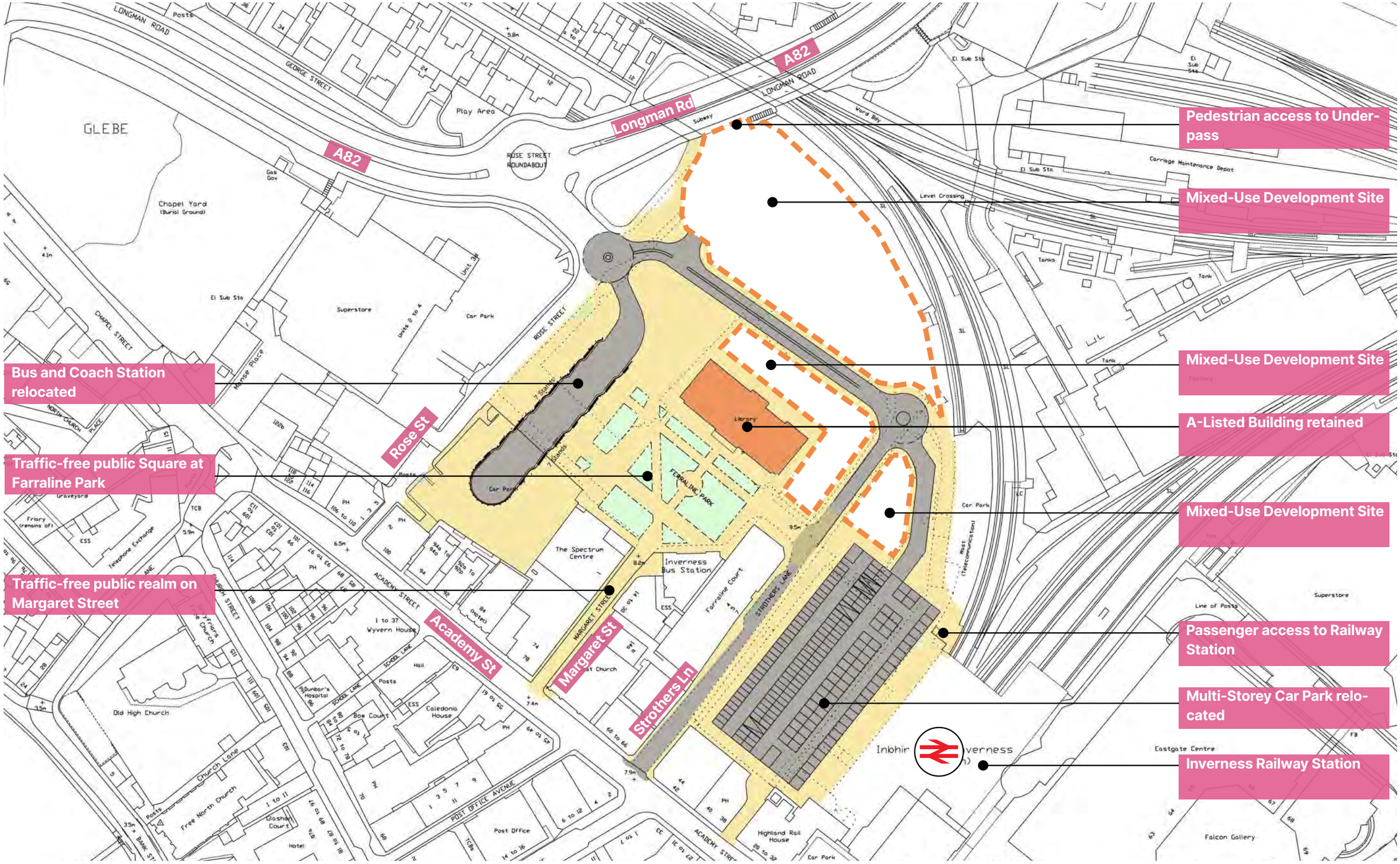
Austin·Smith:Lord

Option E

Option	OPTION E
Location / Description	14 Bay Drive Through off Rose Street with Carpark adjacent to Longman Road flyover.
People	Whilst the new civic space at Farraline Park helps to link the proposed Bus Station to the City Centre and Railway Station it feels remote and disconnected. Location of Bus Station and MSCP may affect link between Longman and City Centre albeit reduced severance due to separation of bus and car traffic.
Process	The location provides good connectivity to the Rose Street roundabout but the lack of easy side loading DIRO bays is a drawback in comparison to other Options. The location of the Bus Apron forms a pedestrian severance between Rose Street and Farraline Park. The separation of bus and car traffic accessing the MSCP is preferred.
Place	The relocated Bus Station relies on using the surface car park ('hotel') site on Rose Street which is outside the current ownership / study boundary. Per most Options the relocation of Bus Station enables Farraline to become a City Centre Urban Park. The Bus Station would form the western edge of Farraline Park; a gateway to the City Centre. Locating the Bus Station and MCSP to the west and north of the Listed Building provides a cluster of mixed-use redevelopment sites on Strothers Lane to the west of the Railway Station.
Bus / Coach Impacts	Additional Fleet Mileage generated for Buses currently using Academy Street will be considerable and without Strothers Lane access it would not be supported. An additional issue that the single entry and exit reduce operational flexibility in the event of a breakdown.
Rail Impacts	The distance of the proposed relocated Bus Station from the Railway Station does not provide a single Interchange and is deemed sub optimal.
Urban Realm Impacts	Concern at separation between Bus and Railway Stations. Welcome the creation of a civic space and development zones adjacent to Farraline Park and on Strothers Lane. Noted the possibility of a (long-term) future connection east linking to Millburn Road (if Railway Station relocates).
RAG Rating	*

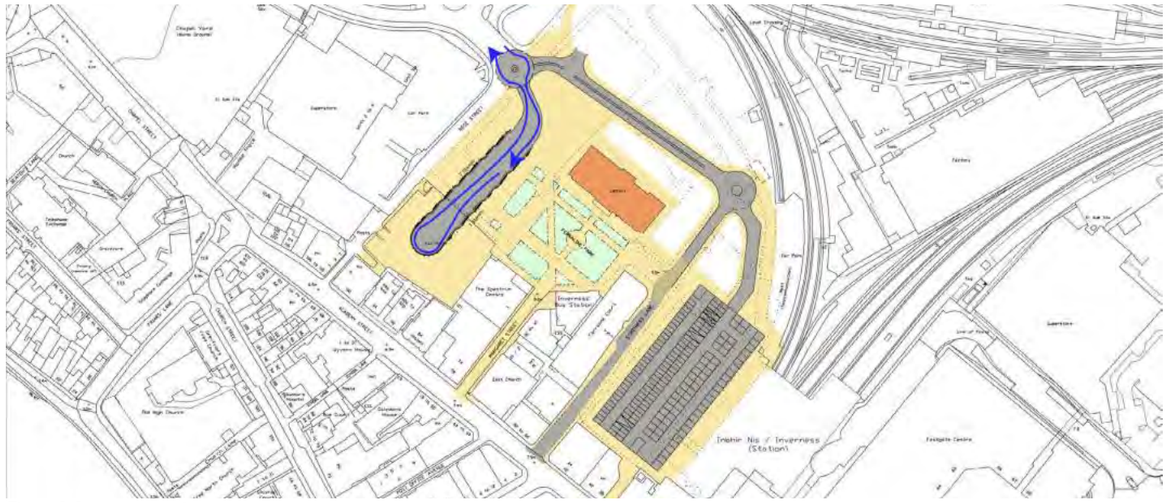
Option F

Rose St Hybrid 14 Stands - 864 Total CarParking 5 floors

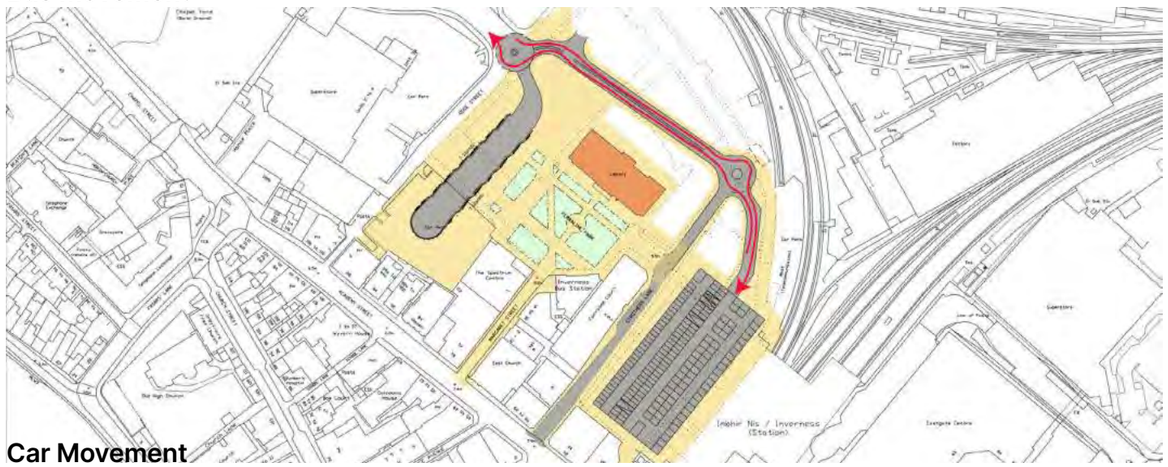


Option F

Option	OPTION F
Location / Description	14 Bay Drive through horseshoe layout accessed off Rose Street roundabout. MSCP adjacent to Longman Road flyover
People	This Option places access to the MSCP as a higher priority above the needs of pedestrians and passengers. More generally it draws private vehicles more deeply into the Station Quarter Study Area creating increased traffic and ped / traffic conflict. Similar to Option B - Whilst the new civic space at Farraline Park helps to link the proposed Bus Station to the City Centre it feels remote and disconnected. Location of Bus Station may affect link between Longman and City Centre.
Process	Single bay type and lack of dedicated DIRO coach bays limit the flexibility of this option. The scheme also requires land outside the current ownership.
Place	The Carpark and Bus Station apron provide significant barriers to east-west pedestrian movements and in place making terms the new Farraline Park would be of less benefit due to lost connectivity. Location of Bus Station and MSCP on higher value sites limits opportunities for regeneration on lower value sites adjacent to Railway and Longman Rd embankment.
Bus / Coach Impacts	The addition of a Strothers Lane connection provided better operational flexibility but the Bus Station is deemed too remote from the Railway Station
Rail Impacts	The distance of the proposed relocated Bus Station from the Railway Station does not provide a single Interchange and is deemed sub optimal.
Urban Realm Impacts	This option was deemed unfavourable by all participants – disregarding the hierarchy of modes and placing the private car higher priority than Bus. Also concern that MSCP would create severance between Bus and Railway Stations.
RAG Rating	*



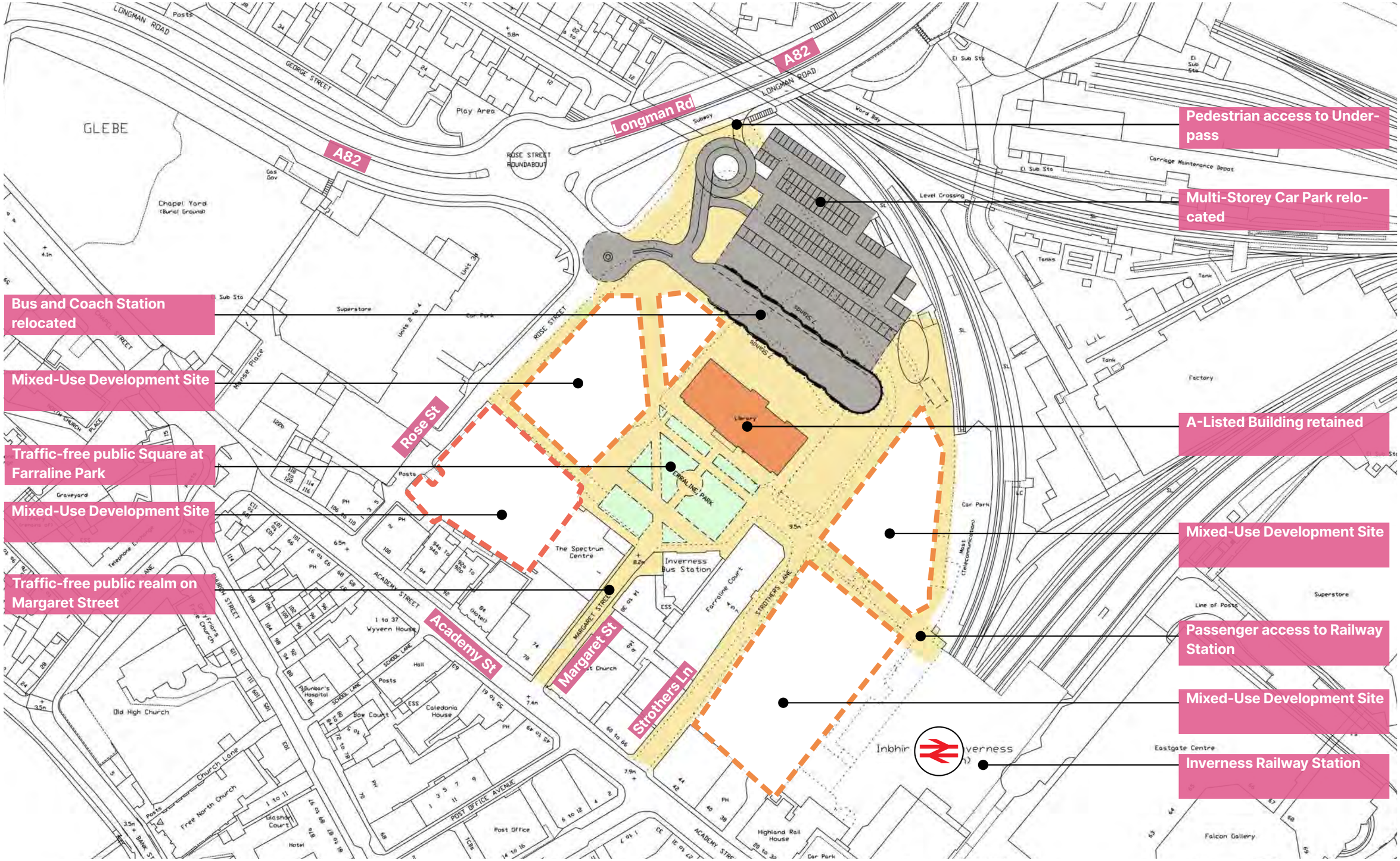
Bus Movement



Car Movement

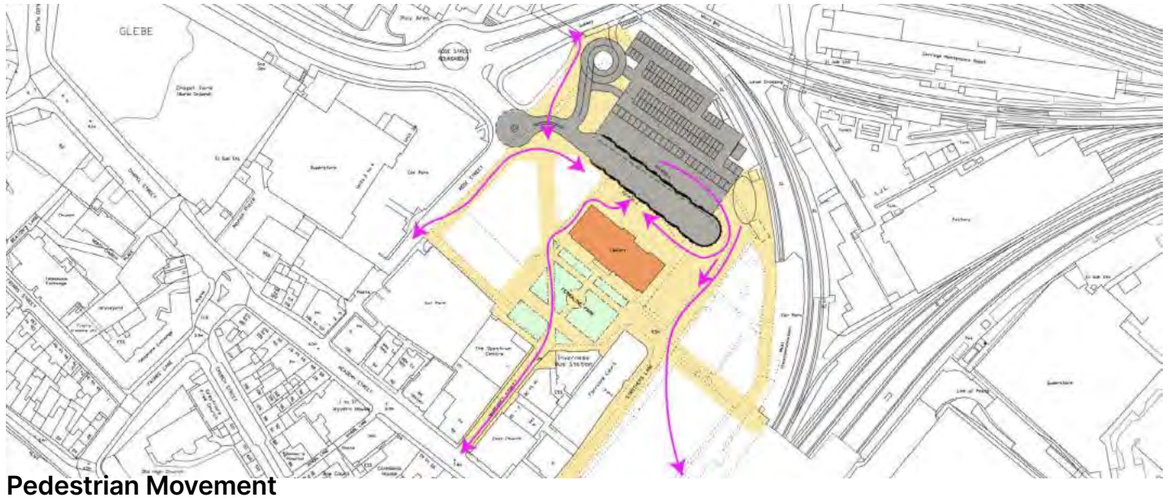
Option G

Depot Hybrid 14 Stands - 864 Total CarParking 6 floors

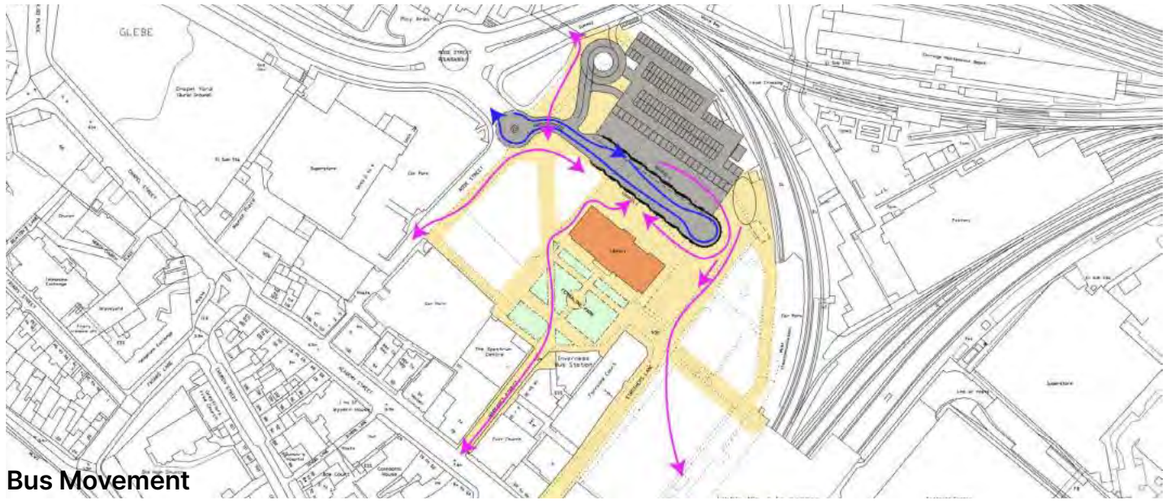


Option G

Option	OPTION G
Location / Description	14 Bay drive through horseshoe layout to the rear of the Library MSCP adjacent to Longman Road flyover
People	Location of Bus Station to north (rear) of Listed Building co-locates Bus and MSCPs in a location that can have an enhanced, traffic-free access to the Railway Station and a new Urban Square at Farraline Park. Whilst not immediately adjacent to the Railway Station (with a proximity similar to the current arrangement) the interchange would be enhanced given improved public realm. Relocating the Bus Station in this location is slightly farther away from City Centre destinations. Relocation of Bus Station away from Rose Street eases pedestrian access north to Longman and beyond.
Process	Single bay type and lack of dedicated DIRO coach bays limit the flexibility of this option.
Place	Relocating the Bus Station presents an opportunity to significantly improve the setting of the Listed building (currently the Library). Provision of a new City Centre Urban Park is very attractive (and shared with most Options). Locating the Bus Station and MCSP to the north of the Listed Building provides a cluster of mixed-use redevelopment sites on Strothers Lane and Rose Street. The Listed Building could become the Arrivals / Departures Hall for the Bus Station which, alongside Farraline Park, would create a new gateway to the City Centre.
Bus / Coach Impacts	Additional Fleet Mileage generated for Buses currently using Academy Street will be considerable with the additional issue that the single entry and exit reduce operational flexibility in the event of a breakdown. No access to Academy Street deemed to be an issue.
Rail Impacts	The distance of the proposed relocated Bus Station from the Railway Station is deemed sub optimal. The proximity between both Stations is similar to current arrangement.
Urban Realm Impacts	Concern at separation between Bus and Railway Station. Not clear on how taxis / private hire could serve the Bus Station. Some concern that Bus Station may be hidden / have low profile being behind the Listed Building / Library.
RAG Rating	**



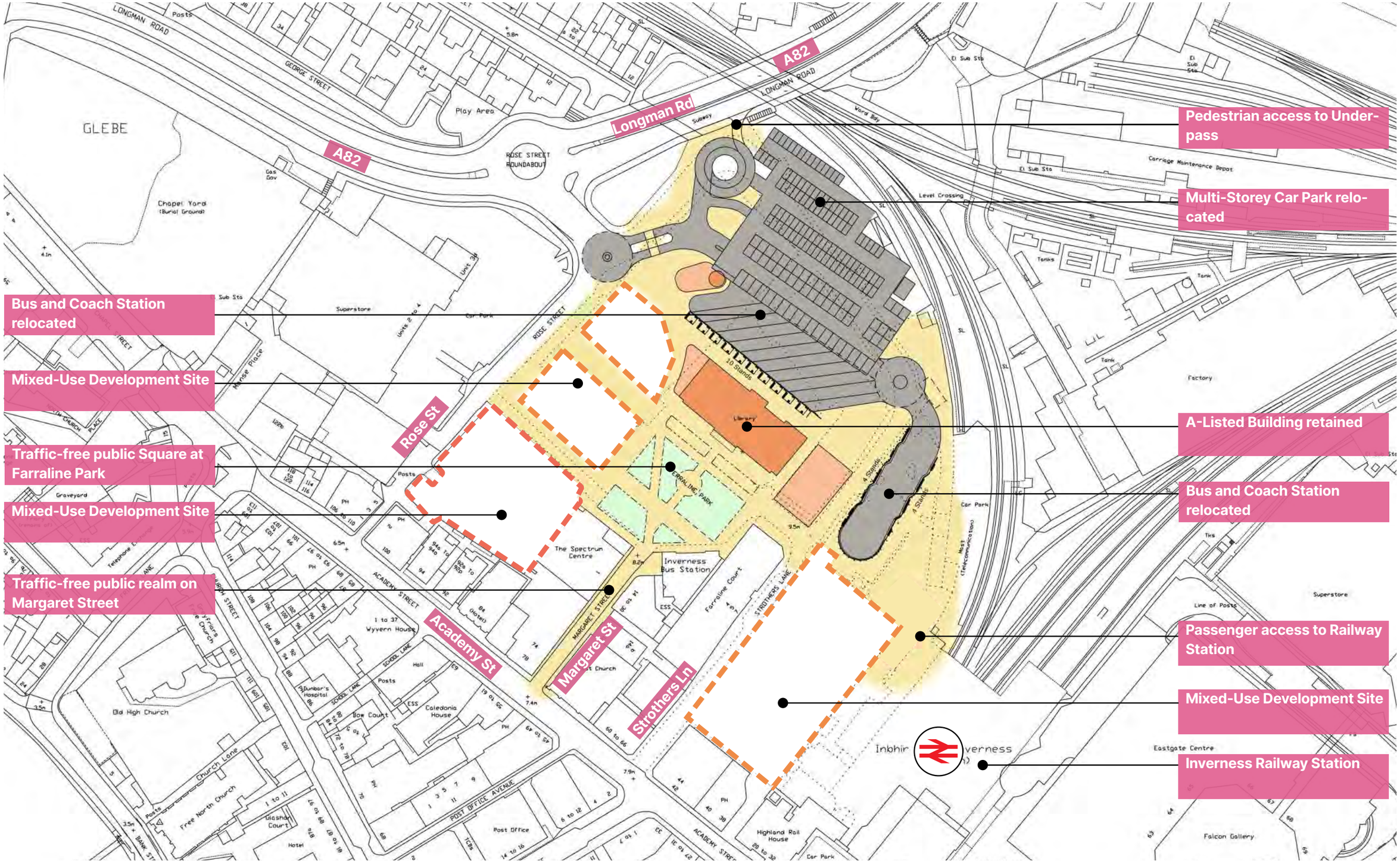
Pedestrian Movement



Bus Movement

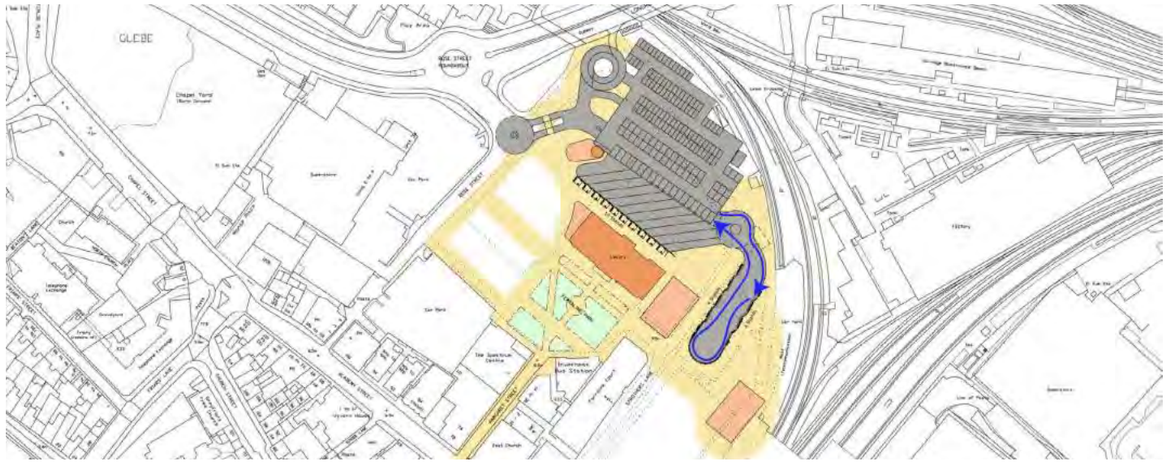
Option H

Library DIRO and TK Maxx Hybrid 18 Stands - 878 Total CarParking 6 floors



Option H

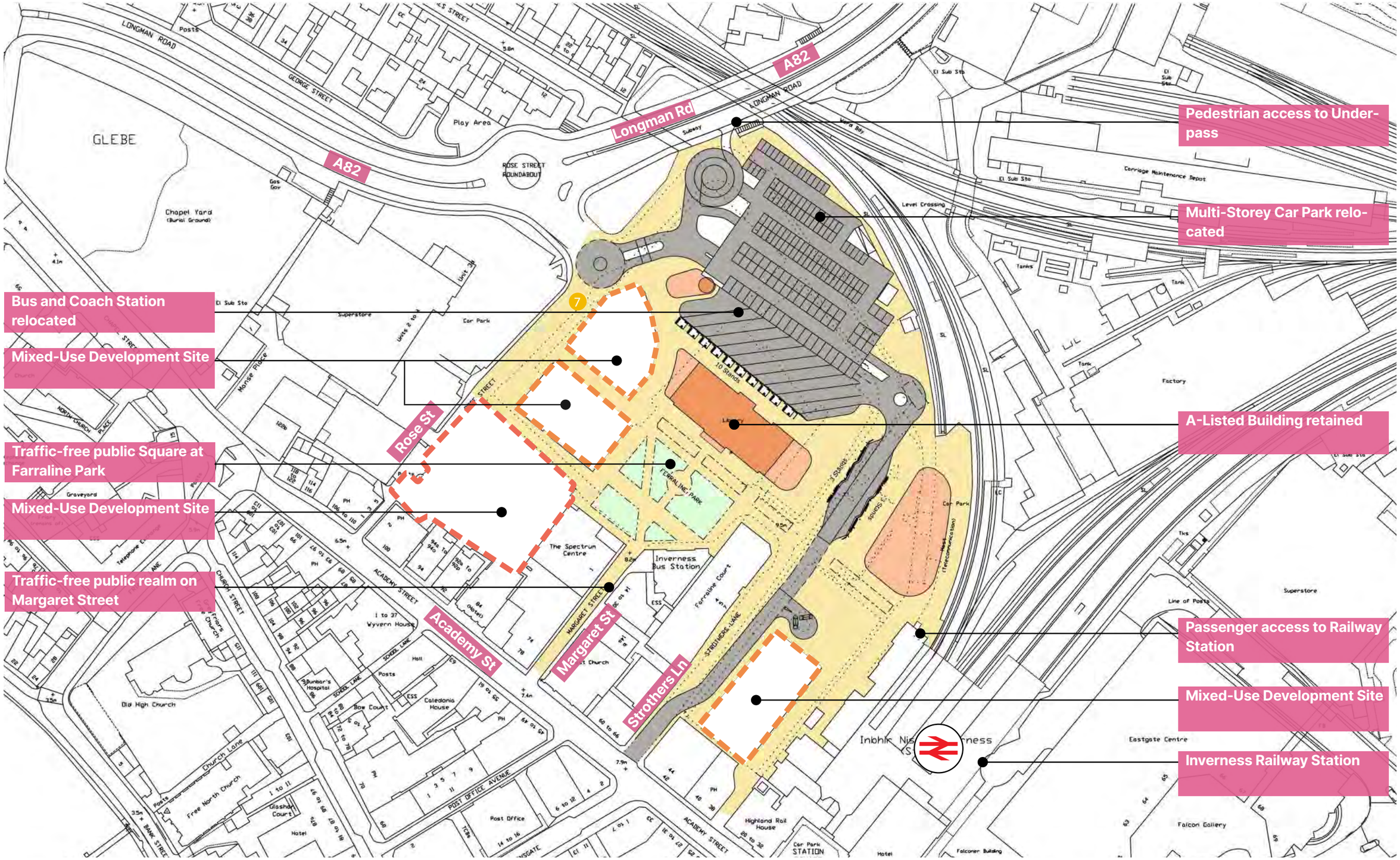
Option	OPTION H
Location / Description	10 Bay DIRO behind the library with an 8 bay Drive Through at the end of Strothers Lane in the current TK Maxx car park with Carpark adjacent to Longman Road flyover.
People	Location of Bus Station to north (rear) and east of Listed Building co-locates Bus, Railway and MSCP to create proximity and ease of interchange. Relocated Bus Station creates ease of access to City Centre and Falcon Square (thru Railway Station). Minimal severance issues between Railway and Bus Station and Farraline Park. Relocation of Bus Station away from Rose Street eases pedestrian access north to Longman and beyond.
Process	Efficient layout with a mix of bay types provides opportunities for quick departures or longer layovers and side coach loading. Access to MSCP very direct, albeit mix of car and bus / coaches initially.
Place	Relocating the Bus Station presents an opportunity to significantly improve the setting of the Listed building (currently the Library). Provision of a new City Centre Urban Park is very attractive (and shared with most Options). Locating the Bus Station and MCSP to the north of the Listed Building provides a cluster of mixed-use redevelopment sites on Strothers Lane and Rose Street. The Listed Building could become the Arrivals / Departures Hall for the Bus Station which, alongside Farraline Park, would create a new gateway to the City Centre.
Bus / Coach Impacts	As with previous Options - Additional Fleet Mileage generated for Buses currently using Academy Street will be considerable and without Strothers Lane access it would not be supported.
Rail Impacts	The distance of the proposed relocated Bus Station from the Railway Station is deemed sub optimal, albeit the proximity between both Stations is less than current arrangement.
Urban Realm Impacts	Close relationship between bus and railway station welcomed, especially the prospect of shared passenger / interchange facilities. Some concern at remoteness of DIRO stances from Railway Station and City Centre destinations. Link via, and 'extend-ability' on Strothers Lane noted and welcomed by some. Potential for passenger confusion between the two-part Bus Station noted – but scope to create a singe 'identity' and improved wayfinding to mitigate any issue.
RAG Rating	**



Bus Movement

Option I

Library DIRO and TK Maxx Hybrid 16 Stands - 878 Total Car Parking 6 floors



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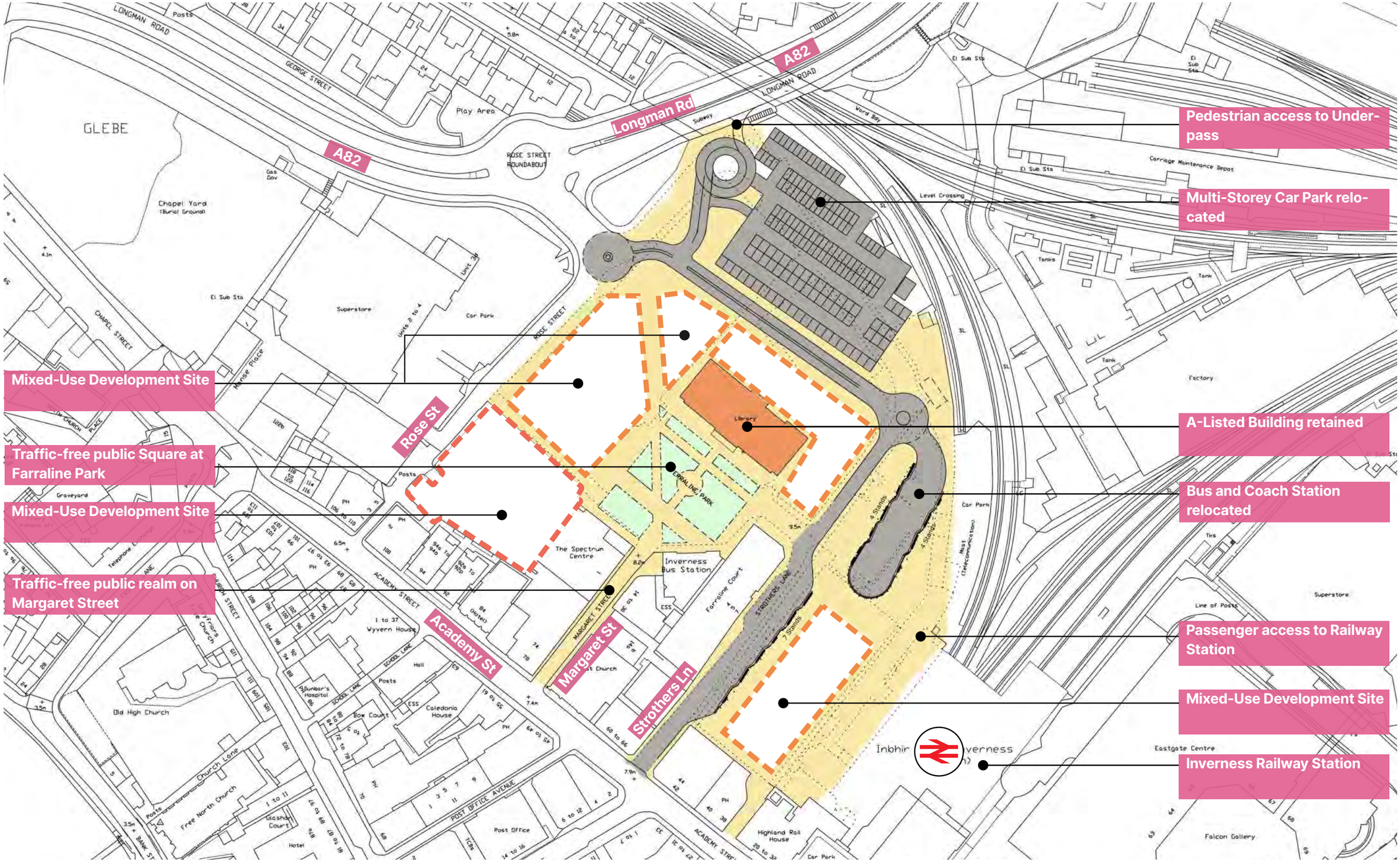
Option I

Option	OPTION I
Location / Description	6 Bay DIRO behind the library with an 8 bay Drive Through at the end of Strothers Lane in the current TK Maxx car park with Car park adjacent to Longman Road flyover.
People	Location of Bus Station to north (rear) and east of Listed Building co-locates Bus, Railway and MSCP to create proximity and ease of interchange. Relocated Bus Station creates ease of access to City Centre and Falcon Square (through Railway Station). Minimal severance issues between Railway and Bus Station and Farraline Park. Relocation of Bus Station away from Rose Street eases pedestrian access north to Longman and beyond.
Process	Efficient layout with a mix of bay types provides opportunities for quick departures or longer layovers and side coach loading. Access to MSCP very direct, albeit mix of car and bus / coaches initially. The addition of access via Strothers Lane solves the additional fleet mileage issue with an area to allow turning back of private and service vehicles that cannot access the bus station.
Place	Relocating the Bus Station presents an opportunity to significantly improve the setting of the Listed building (currently the Library). Provision of a new City Centre Urban Park is very attractive (and shared with most Options). Locating the Bus Station and MCSP to the north of the Listed Building provides a cluster of mixed-use redevelopment sites on Strothers Lane and Rose Street. The Listed Building could become the Arrivals / Departures Hall for the Bus Station which, alongside Farraline Park, would create a new gateway to the City Centre. The improved pedestrian connectivity from Farraline Park to the station via the area of tabled shared surface improves accessibility and connectivity.
Bus / Coach Impacts	No additional Fleet Mileage generated for Buses currently using Academy Street will access via Strothers Lane access it would be supported.
Rail Impacts	The distance of the proposed relocated Bus Station from the Railway Station is deemed sub optimal, albeit the proximity between both Stations is less than current arrangement. Close relationship between bus and railway station welcomed, especially the prospect of shared passenger / interchange facilities.
Urban Realm Impacts	Close relationship between bus and railway station welcomed, especially the prospect of shared passenger / interchange facilities. Some concern at remoteness of DIRO stances from Railway Station and City Centre destinations. Link via, and ‘extend-ability’ on Strothers Lane noted and welcomed by some. Potential for passenger confusion between the two-part Bus Station noted – but scope to create a singe ‘identity’ and improved wayfinding to mitigate any issue.
RAG Rating	***

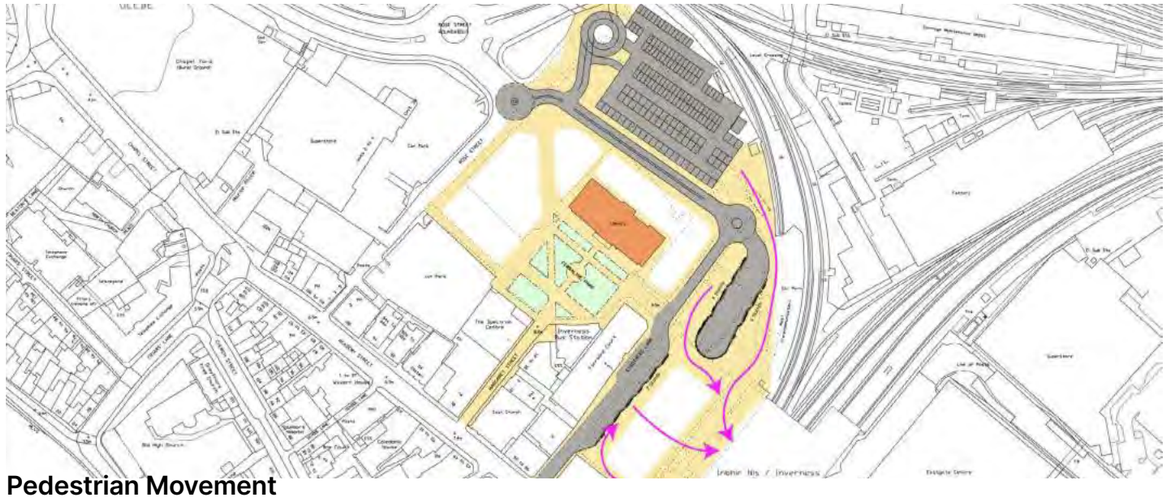
Option J

Strothers Lane Hybrid and Sawtooth 15 Stands - 780 Total CarParking 5 floors

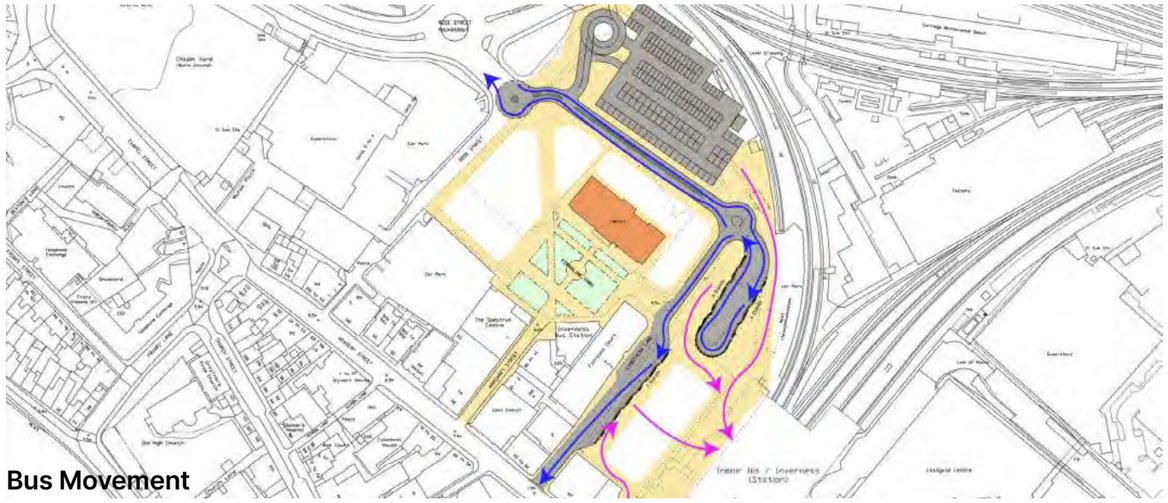


Option J

Option	OPTION J
Location / Description	7 bay drive through on Strothers Lane with an 8 bay horseshoe drive through at the end of Strothers Lane in the current TK Maxx car park with MSCP adjacent to Longman Road flyover.
People	Relocation of Bus Station to east of Listed Building gives close proximity to Railway Station for ease of interchange and opportunity for shared passenger facilities. Relocated Bus Station creates ease of access to City Centre and Falcon Square (through Railway Station). Provision of Bus Stances on Strothers Lane may create some severance between Railway Station and Farraline Park. Relocation of Bus Station away from Rose Street eases pedestrian access north to Longman and beyond.
Process	Efficient layout with a mix of bay types provides opportunities for quick departures or longer layovers and side coach loading.
Place	Relocating the Bus Station presents an opportunity to significantly improve the setting of the Listed building (currently the Library). Provision of a new City Centre Urban Park is very attractive (and shared with most Options). Co-locating the Bus Station with the Railway Station and to the east of the Listed Building provides a cluster of mixed-use redevelopment sites on Rose Street as well as on Strothers Lane.
Bus / Coach Impacts	Access to Academy Street from Strothers Lane partly addresses the additional mileage concerns raised for some Options but ideally it would allow for access and egress.
Rail Impacts	There are opportunities for increased links and shared facilities for Bus and Railway operators with shorter walking distances for interchange passengers.
Urban Realm Impacts	Close proximity of bus stances to Railway Station and Falcon Square / City Centre welcomed. This layout has potential for shared Bus / Railway passenger facilities. Scope for two way access to/from Stother's Lane noted. Development sites west of new civic space at Farraline Park welcomed.
RAG Rating	***



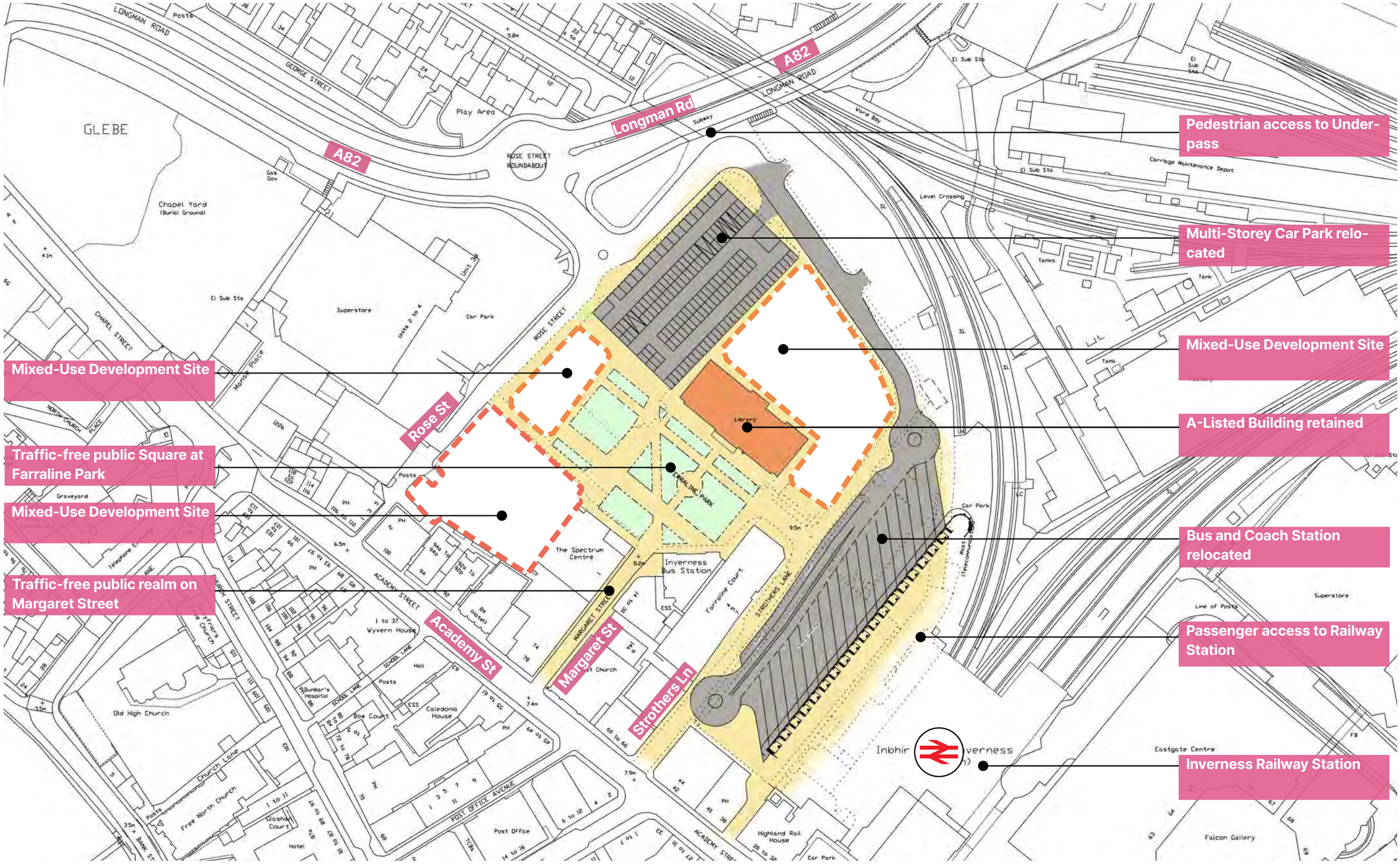
Pedestrian Movement



Bus Movement

Option K

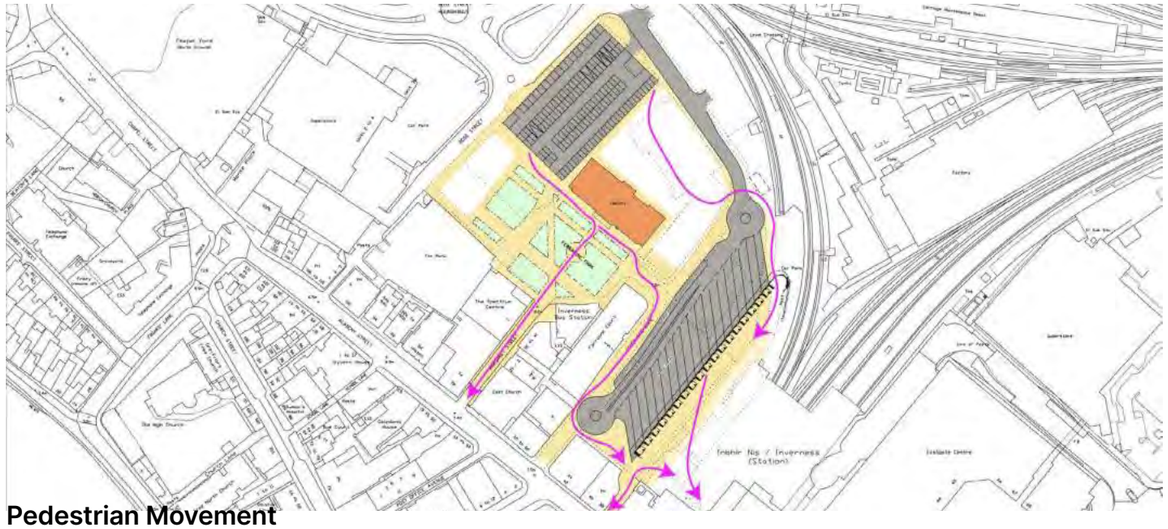
DIRO 18 Stands - 650 Total Car Parking 5 Floors



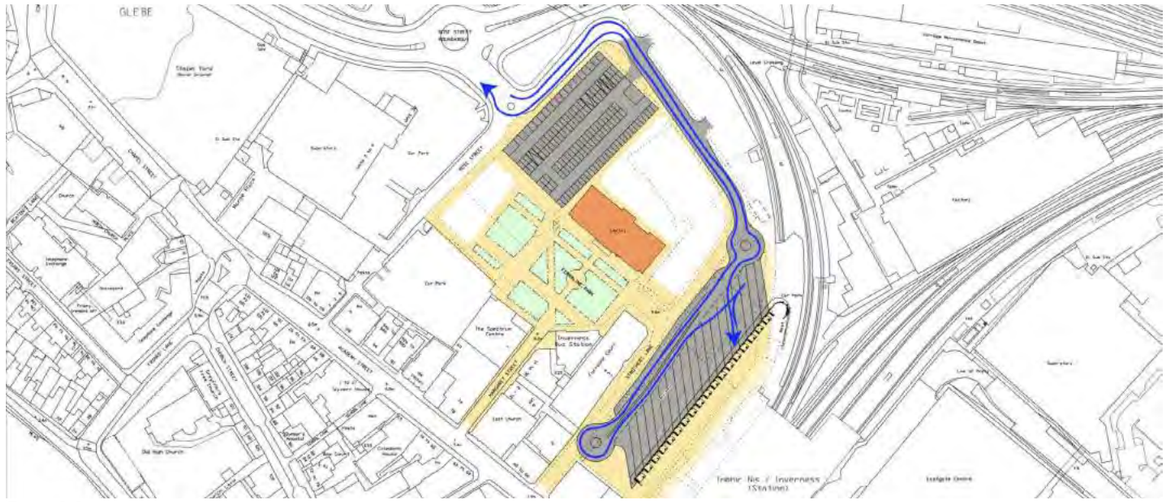
Austin·Smith:Lord

Option K

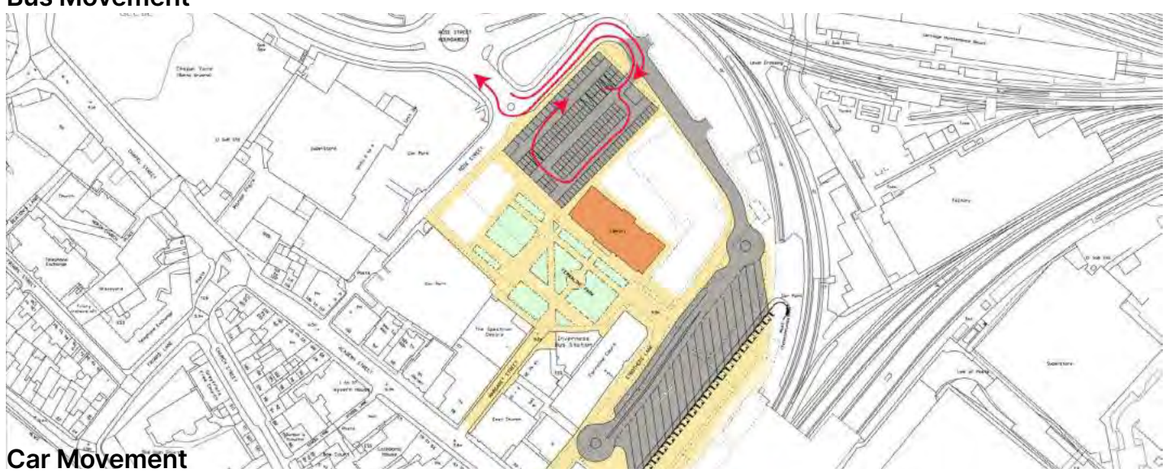
Option	OPTION K
Location / Description	18 Stand DIRO facility on the TK Maxx site accessed from Rose Street roundabout only. Replacement MSCP with a reduced capacity on the site of the existing MSCP.
People	New Bus Station directly adjacent to Railway Station provides direct interchange opportunity. New Bus Station located as close as possible to City Centre destination. Very good opportunities for shared Bus and Rail passenger facilities. The new Bus Station apron and MSCP limit the permeability of the area for pedestrians, especially the east-west connectivity between the Railway Station and Farraline Park.
Process	Excellent connectivity and opportunities for interchange between Rail and Bus modes. DIRO layout best suited to mixed mode coach/bus operations.
Place	Relocating the Bus Station presents an opportunity to significantly improve the setting of the Listed building (currently the Library). Provision of a new City Centre Urban Park is very attractive (and shared with most Options). Locating the Bus Station and MCSP to the east and west of the Listed Building restricts redevelopment options to the sites to the north / rear of the Listed Building / Library.
Bus / Coach Impacts	Additional Fleet Mileage generated for Buses currently using Academy Street will be considerable with the additional issue that the single entry and exit reduce operational flexibility in the event of a breakdown.
Rail Impacts	Phasing and delivery of the MSCP would be a challenge as provision of interim passenger and operational parking would need to be available in the area during works. Limited space and opportunity for shared services with bus and rail stations and relies upon affecting existing Railway Station buildings. ScotRail noted that they believe there are major critical buried services (gas main) which would be located under the southern stances of this proposed option.
Urban Realm Impacts	Whilst proximity between Bus and Railway Station interchange was positive (as was scope for shared passenger facilities) there was concern at the severance caused by Bus apron between Farraline Park and bus stances, Railway Station and Falcon Square. The relationship to the Bus Station and Platform 7 of the Railway Station was also flagged up as a potential issue.
RAG Rating	**



Pedestrian Movement



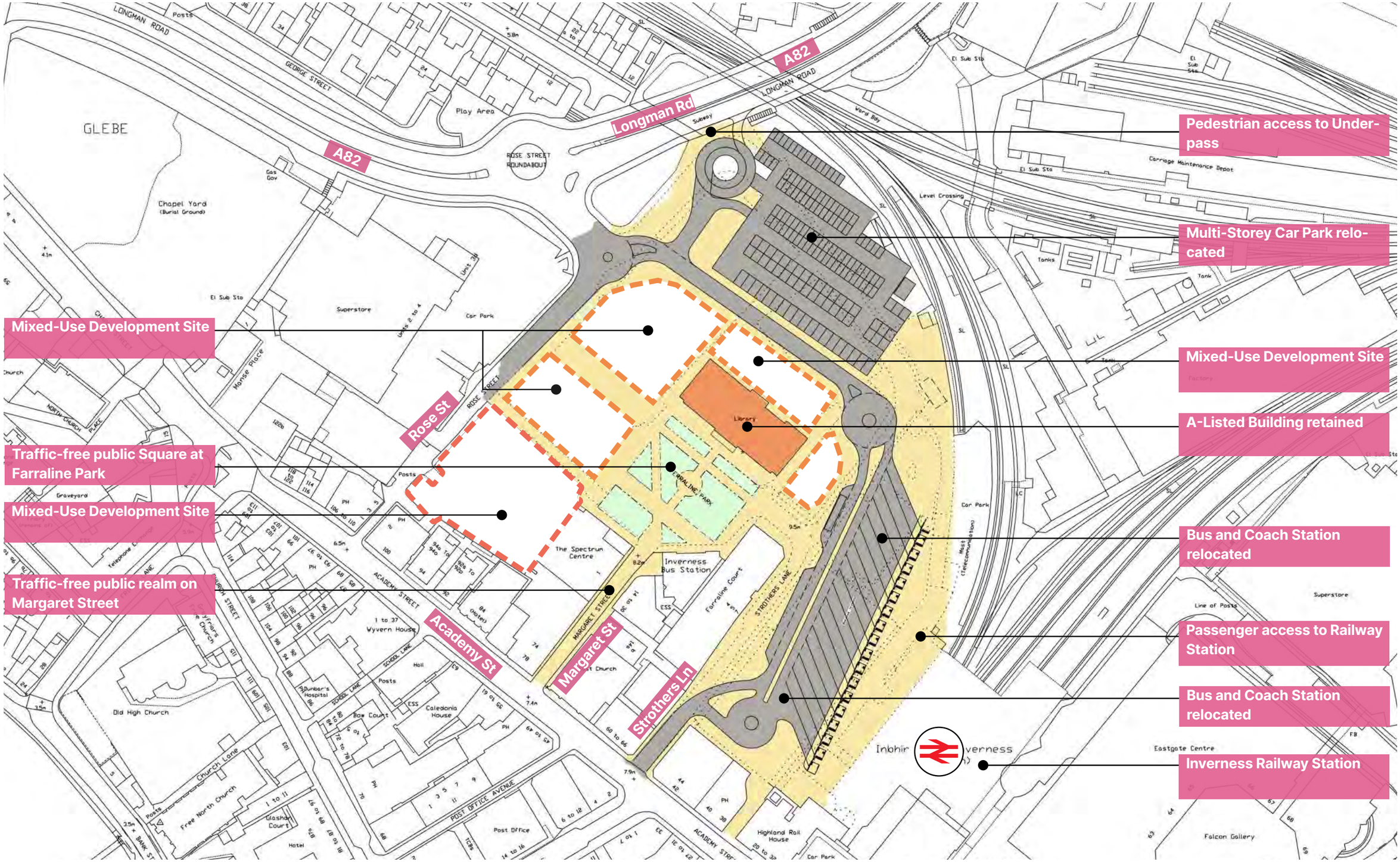
Bus Movement



Car Movement

Option L

Existing Site DIRO 16 Stands- 864 Total Car parking 5 floors



Option L

Option	OPTION L
Location / Description	16 Stand DIRO facility on the TK Maxx site with access via Strothers Lane / Academy Street and A82 / Rose Street Roundabout. New MSCP adjacent to Longman Road embankment.
People	New Bus Station directly adjacent to Railway Station provides direct interchange opportunity. New Bus Station located as close as possible to City Centre destination. Very good opportunities for shared Bus and Rail passenger facilities. The new Bus Station apron and MSCP limit the permeability of the area for pedestrians, especially the east-west connectivity between the Railway Station and Farraline Park.
Process	Efficient layout with a mix of bay types provides opportunities for quick departures or longer layovers and side coach loading.
Place	The Bus Station apron has been rotated to improve permeability of the area for pedestrians from Farraline Park to the Bus and Railway Stations offers opportunities to rethink Highland Rail House and station drop off in Station Square.
Bus / Coach Impacts	The addition of a Strothers Lane connection provides better operational flexibility with opportunities for shared passenger and operator facilities.
Rail Impacts	Limited space and opportunity for shared services with bus and rail stations and relies upon affecting existing Railway Station buildings. ScotRail noted that they believe there are major critical buried services (gas main) which would be located under the southern stances of this proposed option.
Urban Realm Impacts	Not presented to this Workshop – was prepared afterwards. Warrants further review.
RAG Rating	***

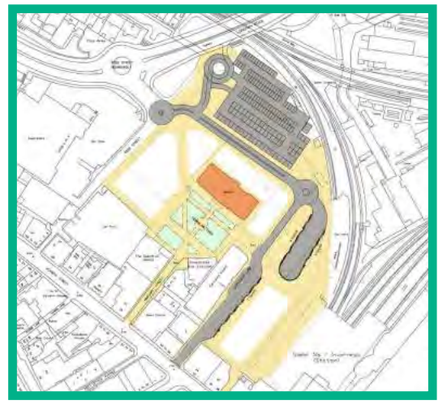
Options Summary

Option	Location	RAG Rating
OPTION A	14 Stand DIRO facility on the site of the existing Bus Station facility accessed via Strothers Lane/ Academy Street and A82. New MSCP adjacent to Longman Road embankment.	**
OPTION B	*8 Bay Drive Through off Rose Street 9 Bay DIRO behind the Listed Building / Library with Carpark adjacent to Longman Road flyover.*	*
OPTION C	*14 Bay Drive Through off Rose Street 10 Bay DIRO behind the Listed Building / Library with Carpark adjacent to Longman Road flyover.*	*
OPTION D	4 Bay Drive Through on Rose Street 10 Bay DIRO behind the Library with Carpark adjacent to Longman Road flyover	*
OPTION E	*14 Bay Drive Through off Rose Street with Carpark adjacent to Longman Road flyover.*	*
OPTION F	*14 Bay Drive through Horseshoe layout accessed off Rose Street roundabout. MSCP adjacent to Longman Road flyover*	*
OPTION G	*14 Bay drive through Horseshoe layout to the rear of the Library MSCP adjacent to Longman Road flyover*	**
OPTION H	*10 Bay DIRO behind the library with an 8 bay Drive Through at the end of Strothers Lane in the current TK Maxx car park with Carpark adjacent to Longman Road flyover.*	**
OPTION I	10 Bay DIRO behind the library with an 6 bay on street arrangement at the end of Strothers Lane in the current TK Maxx car park with Carpark adjacent to Longman Road flyover.	***
OPTION J	7 Bay drive through on Strothers Lane with an 8 bay Horseshoe drive through at the end of Strothers Lane in the current TK Maxx car park with MSCP adjacent to Longman Road flyover	***
OPTION K	18 Stand DIRO facility on the TK Maxx site accessed from Rose Street roundabout only. Replacement MSCP with a reduced capacity on the site of the existing MSCP	**
OPTION L	16 Stand DIRO facility on the TK Maxx site with access via Strothers Lane / Academy Street and A82 / Rose Street Roundabout. New MSCP adjacent to Longman Road embankment.	***

Options Summary

Recommended
Green = Viable and warrants Detailed Consideration

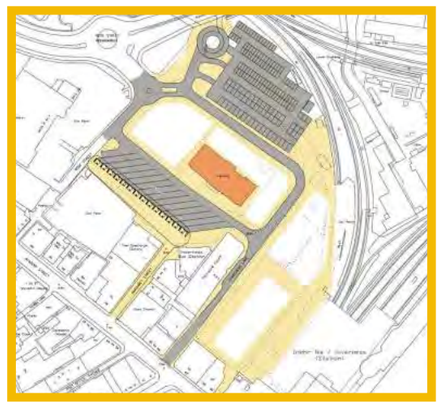
Option I



Option J

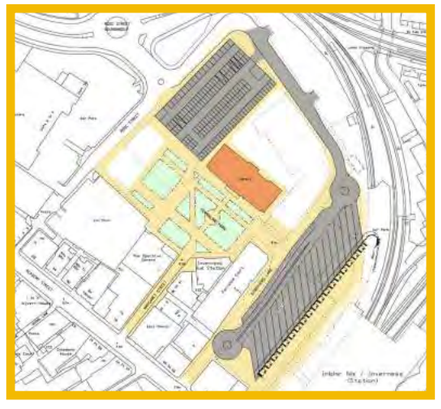
Option L

Amber = Viable but Not

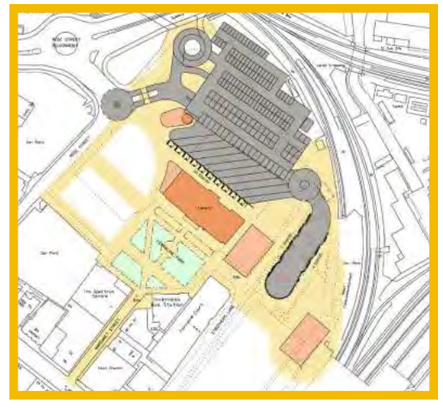


Option A

Option G



Option K



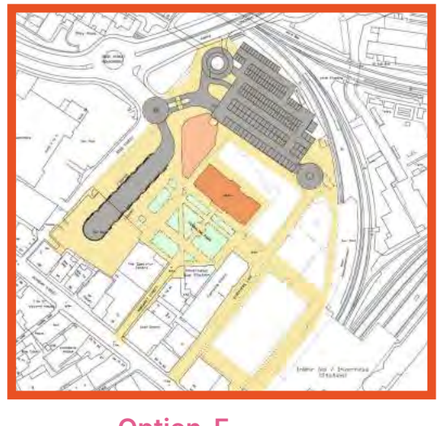
Option H

Red = Rejected / Set Aside

Option B

Option C

Option D



Option E

Option F

Part 04

Next Steps and Recommendations

Part 04 – Next Steps and Recommendations

Based on the findings from this Feasibility Study the following next steps emerge and warrant further consideration:

Confirm Partnership Working Arrangements : It is vital that the principal project partners (HITRANS, the Highland Council, Network Rail) supported by Transport Scotland alongside key stakeholders (ScotRail and Stagecoach – as Bus Station operators) continue to work in close partnership to progress the findings of this Feasibility Study and deliver in line with Recommendation 43 of STPR2 re Major Station Masterplans. Project Governance arrangements (perhaps in a joint venture or other formal structure), the appointment of a Project Champion and liaison with the Railway Station Masterplan needs to be clarified to ensure a coordinated and focused approach consistent with the Scottish Government's Place Principle.

Project Risk Register : To guide next steps the Project Partners should establish and regularly review and update a Project Risk Register to assess and proactively mitigate or eliminate project risks.

Landownership / Site Assembly Liaison : It is extremely advantageous that the Study Area and the land required to deliver the Brief is within the ownership of The Highland Council and Network Rail. It is vital that all parties / Project Partners commit to discussing any future plans regarding these sites with each other on the basis that coordination of project delivery will require both parties to work in close liaison. It may be anticipated that some form of pooling / equalisation of land values maybe explored to enable development and ensure the best option is developed, rather than the most commercially advantageous for either landowner. The identification of a development partner may also be desirable to enable the project to progress quickly.

Confirmation of the Status of the MSCP Structure and Parking Requirements : It is important that there is a clear position established vis-à-vis a realistic operational life of the Rose Street MSCP and that a contingency plan is established to provide a temporary and permanent solution to the car parking required in the Station Quarter during the phased redevelopment of the area. This may require the acquisition or leasing of adjacent sites as part of enabling works.

Confirmation of an Operational Brief for the Future Bus + Coach Station, MSCP and Active Travel Hub : Work to date suggests the number and format of stances and parking spaces recommended for the Bus + Coach Station and MSCP respectively. These operational requirements, alongside ancillary passenger, staff and associated facilities and the Active Travel Hub, will need to be developed to enable a whole-life cycle costed scheme, a phasing strategy and delivery programme / timeline to be prepared as the basis of a Business Case that takes account of build sequence, staged delivery, inflation, CapEx, OpEx (incl maintenance) and Carbon budgets.

Development of the Business Case and STAG Appraisal : The preparation of an Outline and Full Business Case that tests the ownership scenarios (public, private, shared ownership) and considers the revenue generation via departure charges, parking charges, commercial offer and cross funding the public transport facilities from land values, TIF or other innovative project finance models. In tandem with the OBC a STAG appraisal progress should be progressed to inform the Business Case.

Stakeholder and Public Engagement Plan : It is anticipated that ongoing and early engagement with Elected Members (Councillors, MSPs and MP), business community (Business Improvement District(BID), Chamber of Commerce etc.), project partner Boards and other key stakeholders needs to be progressed imminently, prior to public facing engagement. This requires careful stakeholder mapping, messaging and coordination of the Engagement Plan.

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