

Brechin Town Centre Charrette

Working Draft Report

April 2015

Austin-Smith:Lord



BRECHIN
charrette

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BRECHIN

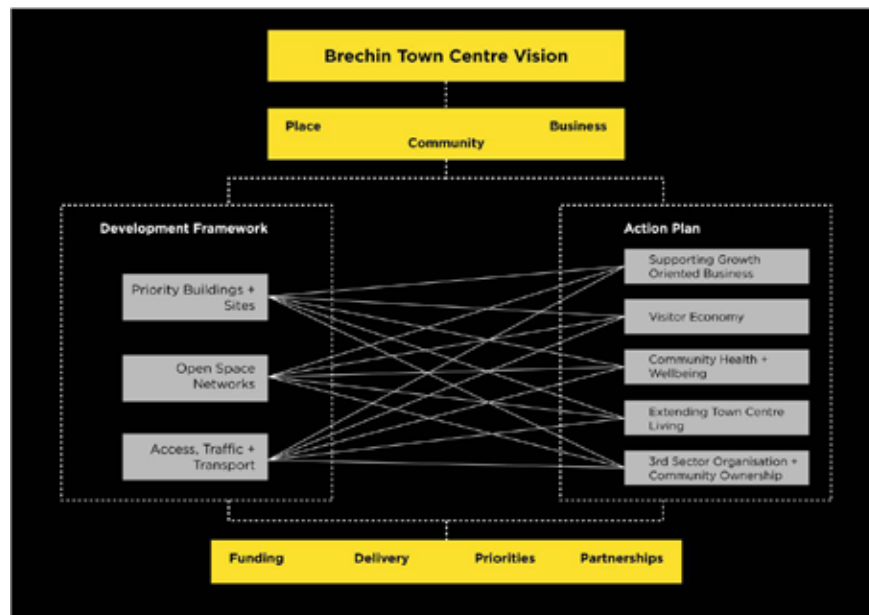
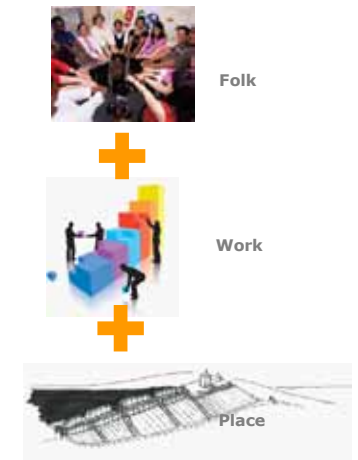
Purpose and Content of this Report

This report is a record of the Brechin Town Centre design Charrette that occurred over five days in February 2015. The report summarises survey and analysis of Brechin, outlines the Vision + agreed at the Charrette and sets out an Action Plan and Development Framework of mutually supportive priority projects. In the spirit of ‘whole place planning’ the Action Plan sets out non-physical initiatives supported by, and supportive of, a Development Framework of physical interventions. The report makes recommendations and suggests ways in which, through partnership working local authorities, agencies, communities, business and individuals may work together to improve Brechin, in line with the Vision +.

WHOLE PLACE PLANNING

The multidisciplinary Charrette team, augmented by an array of Council staff participants and the array, breadth and depth of local knowledge invested in the Charrette by the community enabled the process to be true to the stated intention to apply whole place planning principles for Brechin. Fundamentally the process sought to combine socio-economic and physical planning to consider the Folk-Work-Place matters affecting Brechin in the early 21st Century.

place =



1. INTRODUCTION

2. BRECHIN: PAST & PRESENT

3. BRECHIN: VISION + DESIGN CHARRETTE OUTCOMES

4. BRECHIN: ACTION PLAN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A design Charrette was commissioned by Angus Council to consider ways to regenerate and rejuvenate Brechin town centre. This Charrette occurred in February 2015 and involved an array of participants with a stake and interest in Brechin; Brechiners young and old, local businesses, community and civic groups, local and national agencies, the Council, elected representatives and various professional and technical specialists. This report records the Charrette process and the outcomes.

Brechin is at a pivotal moment. In the face of challenges common to many of Scotland's town centres Brechin is on the cusp of taking assertive action. The Charrette demonstrated that there is significant potential and scope for effective collaboration and partnership working involving the local authority, community, businesses and landowners to face into the challenges Brechin faces and lead the way in pioneering new ways to redefine and repair our town centres. Brechin and Brechiners could be leading exponents of community empowerment, participatory budgeting and whole-place planning in Scotland.

In the wake of a successful Townscape Heritage Initiative local businesses and community groups have formed an array of groups focussed on enlivening Brechin's town centre. There is significant potential for the abundant wealth of social capital to drive community-led action in addressing many of the issues, with the support of Brechiners, funders and the Council. Anxiety persists in the community about the impact of key facilities being relocated out-with the town centre at the Community Campus. However the Charrette focussed on pragmatic and realistic action to seek to retain activities in the heart of the town and to secure equality of access to services for all.

Following on from setting the Charrette context in Chapter 1, and a summary of analysis of Brechin Past and Present in Chapter 2 the Vision + developed in the Charrette is confirmed in Chapter 3. This is the term of reference for the Action Plan set out in Chapter 4 and the Development Framework in Chapter 5. The final Chapter 6 offers conclusions and suggests next steps.

Appendices provide a record of the design Charrette process (Appendix 1) and a record of participants (Appendix 2).

The Vision + developed in the Charrette envisages Brechin as a 'can-do' place, with an emphasis on health, wellbeing and sustainability. It is a compact, historic Cathedral City which is walkable and attractive. The town centre should be at the heart of the community, a service centre for the wider rural community and a hub for the visitor economy showcasing local culture, food and produce.

The Action Plan and Development Framework outline a range of short term, medium term and long term initiative. For reference;

- short term = within one year (2015/16);
- medium term = between 1 and 5 years (up to 2020)
- long term = 5 years + (beyond 2020)

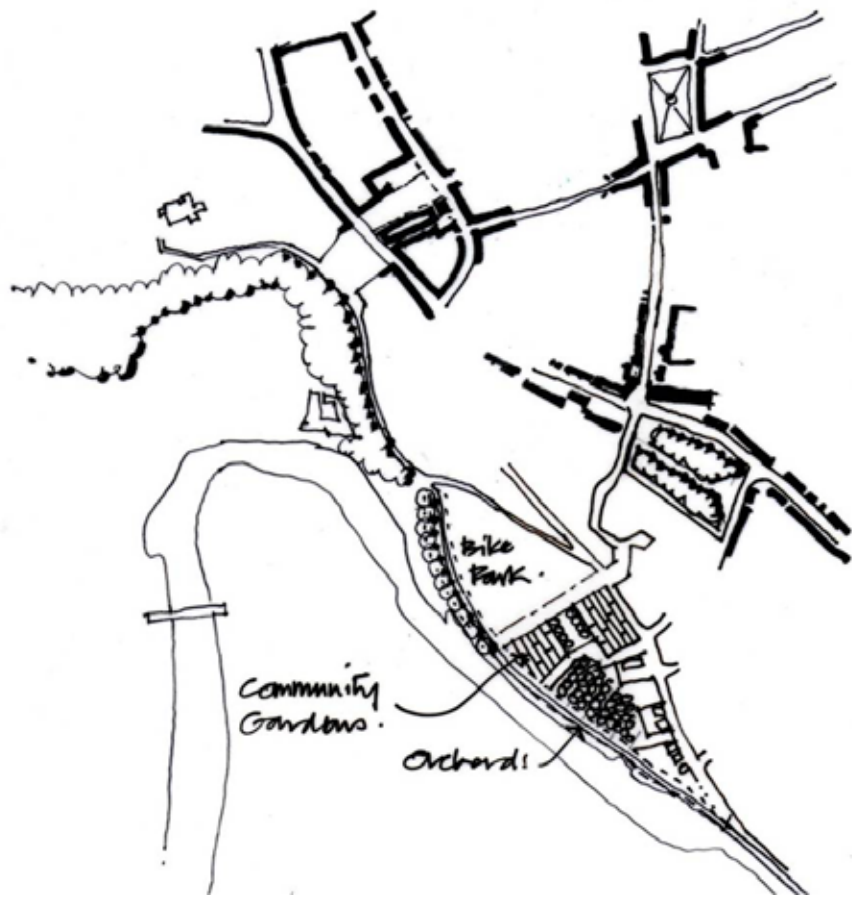
Support Growth Orientated Business

- Visitor Economy
- Community Health + Well-being
- Extending Town Centre Living
- Third Sector Organisations + Community Ownership

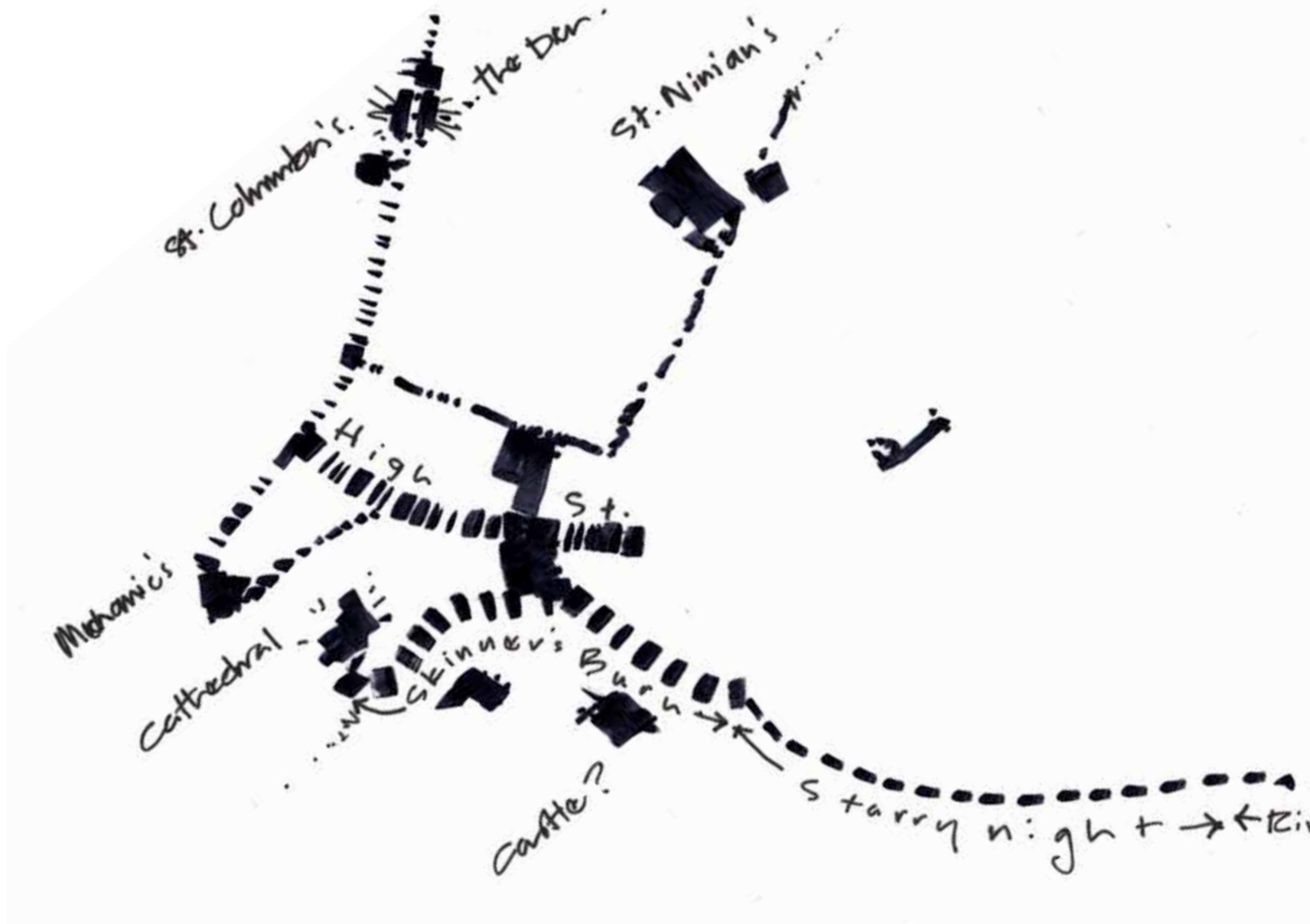
These themes inform, support and are supported by a Development Framework of physical interventions and place planning considering;

- Priority Buildings + Sites
- Open Space Networks
- Access, Traffic + Transport

The Development Framework and Action Plan fuse to support a delivery strategy for the Vision +. The design Charrette of February 2015 was challenged to imagine Brechin in 2025. This report outlines the overarching strategy that emerged and suggests areas of focus and priority action for those with an interest in a positive future for Brechin, and its town centre in particular, to reflect upon and take forward.



Sketches from the Design Charrette



1. INTRODUCTION



Angus Council Context

In late 2014, Angus Council selected Brechin as the focus for a major locally driven design Charrette to actively involve local people in planning the future of the town centre. A Charrette is an intensive consultation that engages local people in shaping the future of their community. In parallel and separately the Scottish Government Planning and Architecture Division has extended the Charrette Mainstreaming Programme for a fourth year and into 2014/15.

Angus Council commissioned a team led by Austin-Smith: Lord LLP (urban designers & architects) & Douglas Wheeler Associates Ltd (local regeneration specialists) with Ryden (property consultants) and Transport Planning Ltd in November 2014 to facilitate the Brechin Design Charrette. Planning and design workshops were held in the *Damacre Centre from the 4th- 7th February 2015*. Over the four day period the public, designers and specialists worked together, ‘hands on’, to prepare a long term vision, development framework and action plan for Brechin Town Centre, with the ideas translated into plans and drawings.

Angus Council Brief

Angus Council’s objective was that the Charrette would build wider stakeholder and community commitment and the Charrette delivered on behalf of a partnership of organisations, namely; Angus Council, City of Brechin & Area Partnership, Brechin Community Council, NHS Tayside and Inveresk Community Council. In particular the brief highlighted the following aims for the Charrette namely:

- Confirm the **boundaries, focus, challenges and priorities** for Brechin Town Centre through a dialogue with local people.
- Develop a **shared long-term vision** for the future of Brechin town centre which is set within the wider context of the town and its hinterland. The vision will take full account of the agreed assets and strengths of the town centre and the challenges and opportunities which it currently faces.
- Establish a **commitment from the local community, businesses and stakeholders** to delivering the changes required to achieve the vision.
- Establish a clear, agreed **development framework and action plan** for turning the out puts from the Charrette into a longer term delivery strategy.

The Charrette outputs will also help to inform future Angus Local Development Plans, Housing Plans and other significant local policies and investment plans.

The design Charrette was to take full account of recent work which has already been undertaken in the area to develop a vision and plan for Brechin and particularly work undertaken by the City of Brechin & Area Partnership over the last two years and the Brechin Townscape Heritage Initiative investment.

Whilst the brief was entitled a Town Centre design Charrette, given the size and compact nature of Brechin the Charrette considered issues of the wider settlement, albeit retaining a focus on the town centre.

BRECHIN DESIGN CHARRETTE: APPROACH: EVENTS & ATTENDANCE

Early discussions and briefings with Angus Council officers were undertaken during December/ January in preparation for the Charrette Events that were held in the Damacre Centre from the 4th- 7th February 2015. The Charrette was structured around the following events:

Event	Attendance
1. Schools Event:	21 pupils + 4 adults
2. Launch Events 1:	44
3. Launch Events 2:	37
4. Futurewalk:	21
5. Agencies Workshop:	25
6. Primary School Eco Warriors + Fair-trade	8
7. Businesses & Community Reps:	38
8. Landowners / Developer's Forum:	5
9. One to One Sessions	3
10. Traffic & Transport Walkabout: (including 8 pupils)	17
11. 'Sensecheck' Session with Angus Council:	19
12. Pin Up / Work in Progress:	31
Final Presentation: 19 February 1	23
Final Presentation: 19 February 2	30
+ Drop in Studio + Incidental Meetings in the Town	

PARTICIPANTS

The Design Team formally acknowledge and thank the individual Brechiners and groups who took time to get involved in the Charrette. The stakeholders involved in the Charrette are recorded in Appendix 1 (Sign-In Sheets) and included:

- Angus Council Councillors
- City of Brechin & District Community Council
- BRAVO: Businesses Retailers & Voluntary Organisations
- City of Brechin & Area Partnership
- Brechin High School
- Maisondieu Primary School
- Various community organisations & sport groups
- Individual business owners
- Transport Scotland
- Historic Scotland
- Scottish Wildlife Trust
- Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
- Dalhousie Estates
- Bright Red Triangle (BRT): Edinburgh Napier University
- Police Scotland;
- Angus Council officers (Communities, Town Centre Regeneration, Local Development Plans, Community Engagement, External Funding, Housing, Communications, Roads & Transportation, Estates, Property Assets)

PROJECT TEAM

Sarah Kettles: Communities Manager- Brechin & Montrose Angus Council

Graham Hewitson: Service Manager - Communities Angus Council

CONSULTANT DESIGN TEAM

Austin-Smith: Lord LLP

Urban Design, Architect & Landscape Architects

- **Graham Ross** - Project Director
- **Neil Chapman** - Landscape architecture / urban design
- **Roan Rutherford** - Conservation and architecture
- **Colin Miller** - Architect

Doug Wheeler - Douglas Wheeler Associates Ltd: Project Manager & Regeneration Strategy

Dr Mark Robertson - Ryden; Property Market

Alex Sneddon - Transport Planning Ltd: Transportation

Fergus Purdie - Architect

BRECHIN DESIGN Charrette FINAL REPORT

The Final Report is presented in the following five chapters:

- Brechin: Past & Present
- Brechin: Vision + Design Charrette Outcomes
- Brechin: Action Plan
- Brechin: Development Framework
- Overall Conclusions & Next Steps



2. BRECHIN PAST & PRESENT



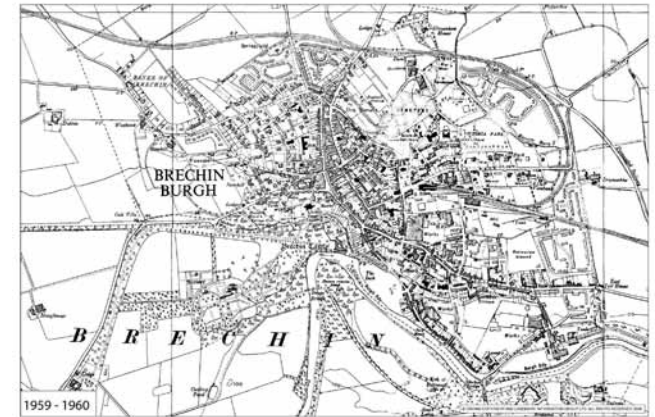
PLACE ANALYSIS

Historic Context

Brechin is an attractive Cathedral City; one of Scotland's former Royal Burghs blessed with a medieval street pattern and the architectural heritage and civic legacy of a 'county town'. Brechin's is situated amid the rolling, fertile agricultural landscape of Angus, located between the North Sea coast and the Angus Glens. Its historic significance as an ecclesiastical centre has been augmented by its role as a civic, commercial and cultural hub for the wider rural hinterland. Like many of the equivalent inland settlements of Angus its established function was as centre for local agricultural community, bolstered by industry. Brechin was a mill town and the legacy of industry and commerce is apparent in the contemporary urban form.



Brechin Urban Fabric Expansion 1843-1960



Regional Context

Brechin is located between Dundee and Aberdeen. It is within commuting distance of both cities, being 26.6 miles from Dundee and 40.3 miles from Aberdeen. It is very well served by the A90 dual carriageway which bypasses Brechin to the north-west. This connectivity also supports several Brechin based businesses who work with North Sea industries.

The nearest main line rail station is at Montrose (8.9 miles from Brechin) which is on the east coast mainline between Aberdeen and Edinburgh. The existing Caledonian railway is now privately operated as a seasonal tourist attraction leaving from the former station.

Angus has a rich and nationally significant history and natural heritage which thereby creates a network of local tourist attractions and recreational activities. Brechin is one of several attractive historic towns throughout Angus; some fishing ports along the coast the others inland centres for local agriculture and commerce.



Brechin Regional Context

Landscape Context

Brechin is located on south facing slopes on the northern banks of the South Esk River which runs in a steep valley as it passes Dalhousie Estate, Central Brechin and below the former mills located on culverted tributaries. One tributary, Skinner's Burn, winds its way to the South Esk in a deep glen that cuts beneath the historic core and between the Castle and Cathedral.

This topography creates some striking long, principally southerly vistas from within the town to the attractive agricultural landscape beyond. The topography also heightens the memorable character of the historic core, with steeply sloped medieval streets and pends winding along the hillside north and east of the Cathedral.

Brechin Conservation Area and Listed Buildings



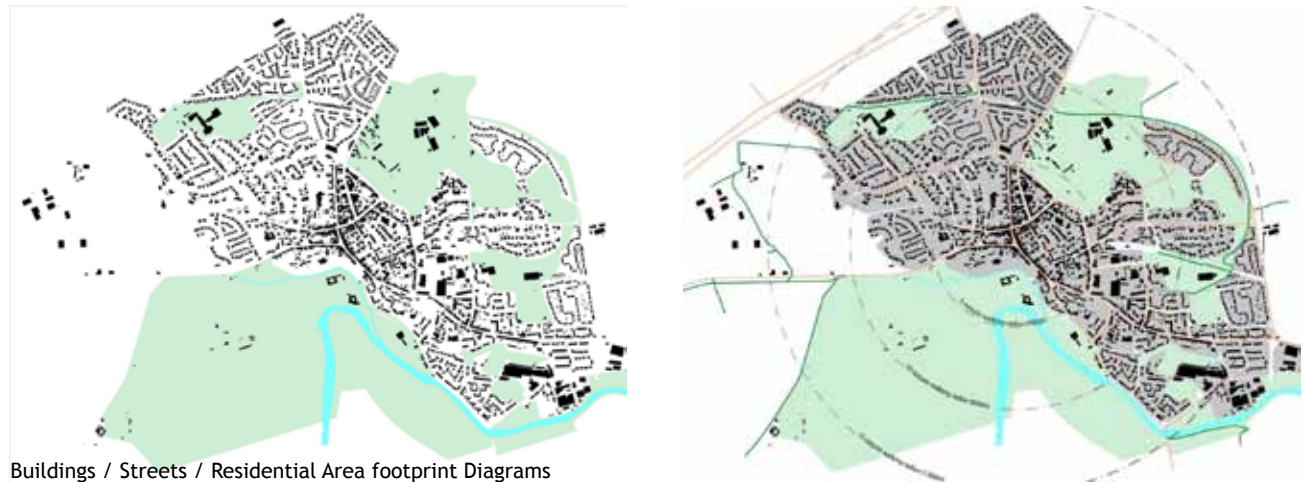
Brechin Townscape Analysis

Settlement Context

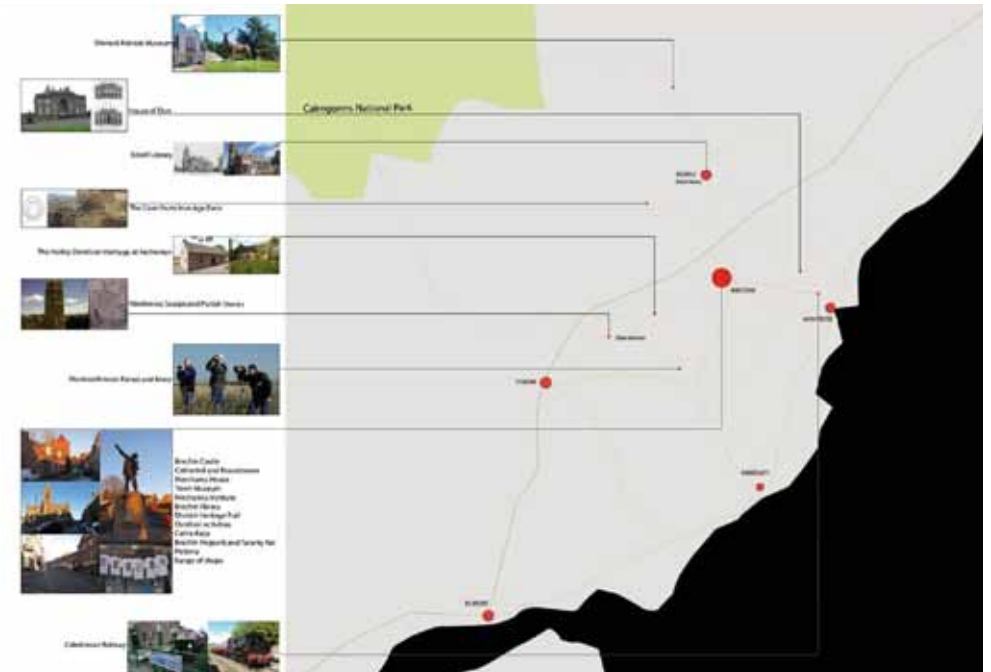
Brechin is a compact town of approximately 7,500 residents. The historic core of Brechin is still apparent, focussed on the High Street and clustered around the Cathedral and its historic precincts.

The South Esk still defines the southern boundary of Brechin, and a flood prevention scheme is being implemented after recurring inundation of the neighbourhoods along its banks. The east and north-east settlement boundaries are framed by established farmland, with landscape extending in to the north-east of the town centre with the public park and cemetery. Immediately north-west of Brechin is the A90 trunk road with farmland beyond.

Brechin is currently expanding to the west with new housing. Just beyond the western edge of Brechin there is Brechin Business Park and beyond that, at the A90 junction, Brechin Castle Centre with the former 'Pictavia' visitors centre. Immediately south-west of the town centre is Dalhousie Estate, an extensive private estate seasonally open to the public comprising Castle, designed landscapes and field sporting grounds.



Buildings / Streets / Residential Area footprint Diagrams

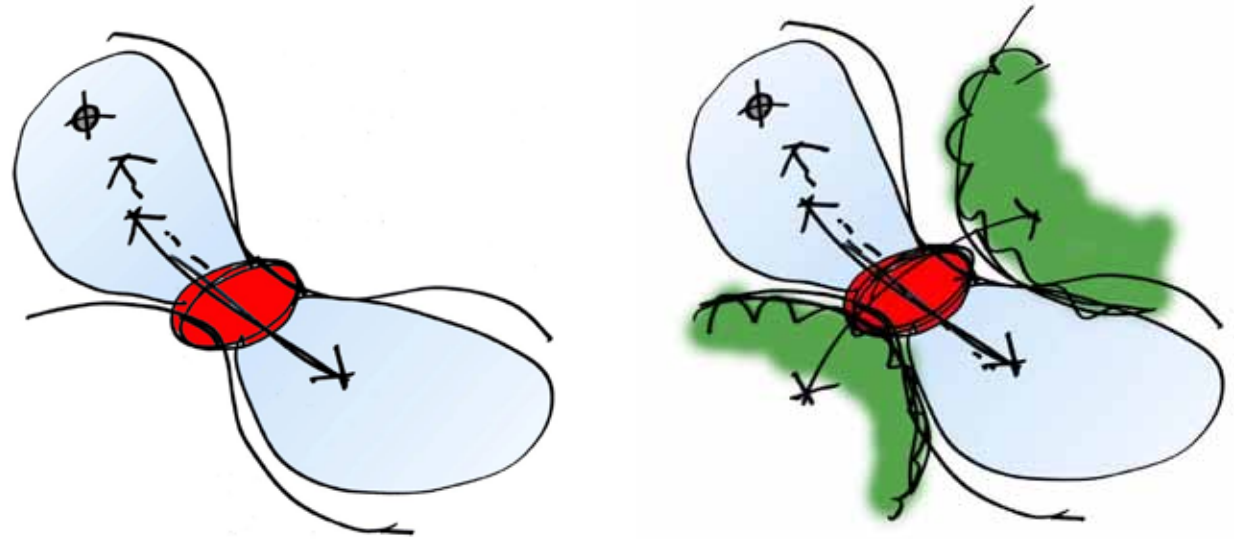


Brechin Facilities Context

Settlement Layout - the Brechin 'Bow-tie'

Brechin's layout is very distinctive. The historic core curves around the Cathedral and Skinner's Burn, extending to the Den Burn and St Ninian's Square to the east. Above the town centre to the north-west are handsome suburbs of stone villas and more recent suburban housing estates. Below the town centre, to the south-east, are pockets of industrial estates and housing schemes located either side of the long established, arterial route; Montrose Street.

This creates a 'bow-tie' shaped town settlement, with the knot the historic core. Between the neighbourhoods above and below the centre are open landscape spaces that physically interface with the historic core. To the south-west is the Dalhousie Estate to the north-east the Den Burn, cemetery and public park that extends to the edge of the settlement and interfaces with the agricultural land beyond Brechin.



Bowtie Diagram Build-up





Historic Core Analysis



Historic Core

Brechin's historic centre is a fine example of Scottish townscape. The compact city core of vennels and pends cluster north and east of the Cathedral, congregating around the tapering High Street that winds down the hillside above Skinner's Burn towards the South Esk. The High Street and Church Street form a 'Y' shaped street form that rises up to meet St David Street and Swan Street that run west-east across the top of the slope on which the bulk of the historic centre is located. These streets, and the pends and vennels that run between form the most densely packed and high quality townscape in Brechin.

Beyond the wider town centre has a discernible extent; to the eastern flank the planned streets and squares including Southesk Street, Panmure

Street and St Ninian's Square, the foot of the lower High Street at Union Street to the south and the northern fringes around Maisondieu and Clerk Street / Market Street.

There are a series of 'gateways' evident in the townscape; characterised by key open spaces or landmark buildings at key points of arrival in central Brechin. From the west the Mechanics Institute is a prominent landmark announcing arrival in the centre of Brechin. From the east, on Panmure Street, St Columba's Church spire marks the eastern edge of the town centre. From the south the convergence of Bridge Street and Union Street at the foot of the lower High Street is another entry into the historic core.

Brechin has two gathering places in the centre of town. The historic heart is on the High Street at

the cross, adjacent to the Town House Museum. The other, on the edge of the historic core, is St Ninian's Square; a handsome green space fronted by the library, Gardiner Memorial Church and the former Caledonian Railway Station and incorporating noteworthy public sculpture including a recent statue of Robert Watson-Watt, Brechiner and radar pioneer.

This historic core is typified by a concentration of scheduled monuments and listed buildings amid the conservation area. The wider benefits of the Heritage Lottery funded Townscape Heritage Initiative is apparent with several well conserved buildings and renewed public realm streetscapes. There are several gap sites and obvious vacant properties but the overall impression is of a very fine, noteworthy example of an historic Scottish town.

Brechin Compact City

Brechin is fortunate to have such an array of built heritage and rich historic townscape combining to create an attractive urban setting within a compact town with good access to surrounding countryside. Brechin has been blessed with a layout and size that encourages the notion of a 'compact city'; a walkable town where key amenities and services are accessible to all, provided within close proximity and within a town well connected and with excellent links to its rural hinterland. Moreover, despite Brechin sharing the national trend for town centres to be under severe challenges to thrive, the town has retained a range of local independent businesses. It can never reclaim the incredibly diverse array of goods and services recounted in the town directory of 1901 but the challenge should remain how best to enliven and enrich the town centre with a mix of retail, civic, community, cultural and leisure activities.



Brechin Cartie Race

Brechin Present

Brechin is at a pivotal point. Discussions throughout the Charrette confirmed a sense that the town has struggled to face up to some significant challenges in recent time. It's suffered, as have many equivalent sized towns, a diminished town centre where the repercussions of the 2008 banking crash compounded the impact of out-of-town and online retail trends, a shift away from traditional forms of commerce and business in the area and a sense of a less appealing town environment in contrast to other destinations in the region.

However the transformative success story of the Townscape Heritage Initiative, the early successes of Bravo Brechin in arranging an impressive programme of events in the town and the number of engaged community groups that seem as empowered, passionate and active as any place in Scotland suggests Brechin is well placed to tackle the challenges it faces head on. This community action, fused with numerous forward thinking local business and a spirit of openness and engagement from the Council in funding and enabling the Charrette augurs well for future partnership working that will be vital in taking forward the priority actions that emerged in this process.



Lower High Street Site



St. Columba's Church



Before THI



After THI

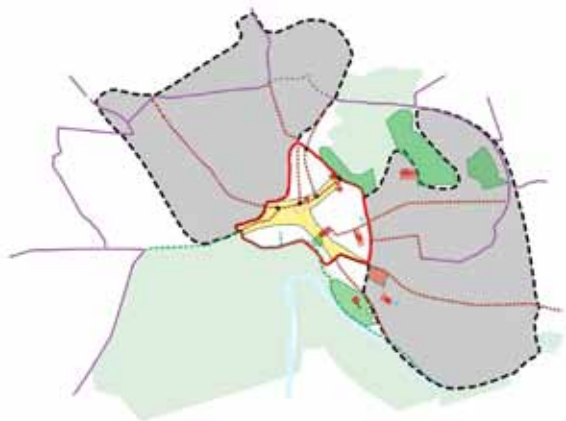


Significant Buildings and Green Spaces

Urban layout of the Town Centre with Significant Buildings, Green Spaces and Paths Network



Bowtie Diagram with Paths and Town Centre



Socio-Economic Profile

POPULATION

In the 2011 census the total population of Brechin was 7,481 compared with 7,199 in the 2001 census resulting in a 4% increase over the ten year period

By 2035 the population of Angus is projected to be 115,299, an increase of 4.3 % compared to the population in 2010. The population of Scotland is projected to increase by 10.2 % between 2010 and 2035. Over the 25 year period, the age group that is projected to increase the most in size in Angus is 75+ age group. This is the same as for Scotland as a whole. The population aged under 16 in Angus is projected to decline by 0.6% over the 25 year period. (Source Angus Community Planning Partnership Strategic Assessment - Phase 2 Planning for Place: May 2013)

Brechin Ward Socio-Economic Profiles

Table 2.1 below summarised the contrasting Socio-Economic profiles for Brechin East/ 'down the hill' and Brechin West/ 'up the hill' wards compared with Angus and Scotland.

Table 2.1 Brechin Ward Profiles: 2011 Estimates

Estimates	Brechin East	Brechin West	Angus	Scotland
Total	2,950	3,518	110,630	5,254,800
Child (0-15)	585 /19.8%	523 /14.9%	17.6%	17.4%
Working Age	1,704 /57.8%	1,979 /56.3%	58.3%	62.8%
Pension Age	661 /22.4%	1,061 /28.9%	24.1%	19.8%
Life Expectancy (F)	78.1	79.3	79.9	79.5
Life Expectancy (M)	73.3	75.0	76.0	74.5

Source: Angus Council Ward Profiles: Based On 2011 Census

Brechin East has a higher proportion of children (0-15) than Brechin West: 19.8% against 14.8% and a lower proportion of pension age population: 22.4% against 28.9%. The percentage of 16-64 age group claiming benefits in Brechin East was 22.0% against 12.2% in Brechin West (Q4/2012)

Table 2.1 also highlights that life expectancy is slightly lower in Brechin East than Brechin West Based on SIMD data; Brechin East has two datazones ranked within 20% most deprived areas in Scotland. The contrasting Socio-Economic profiles of the two wards reflect the economic history of Brechin, when by 1870 four major mills were located in the east of the town and close to the River South Esk and brewing and distilling assumed considerable importance in the local economy.

Discussion at the Charrette highlighted the need to focus on the 'whole town' particularly when the population is relatively small at 7,481, ensure that facilities were easily accessible both from the east and west of the town and that efforts were required to 'close the Socio-Economic gap' between east and west

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT POLICY CONTEXT

The three relevant community and economic development policy documents are:

1. National Review of Town Centres: SG Action Plan (2013) & One Year On (2014)

The main focus of the review is on *Community and Enterprise* and the main themes highlighted are:

- Town centre living
- Vibrant local economies
- Enterprising communities
- Accessible public services
- Digital towns
- Proactive planning

The Plan includes 44 Actions and sets an up to date context for Brechin town centre.

2. Angus Economic Strategy for 2013-2020

The four priorities identified in the strategy are:

- **Enterprise & Infrastructure:** growth within local enterprise, internationalisation
- **Pride in Place:** marketing and promoting the built, natural & cultural heritage, local events & festivals
- **Communities:** engagement, equalities, third sector in tackling inequalities
- **Skills:** needs of local business, employment opportunities, young people entering employment, education, training & volunteering

NATIONAL & ANGUS COUNCIL PLANNING CONTEXT

3. Angus Community Plan & Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016

The agreement highlights the Angus Community Planning Partnership Vision namely:

“Angus is a place where a first class quality of life can be enjoyed by all”.

Five priorities that will help achieve this vision are highlighted. They are communities that are:

- Prosperous and Fair
- Learning and Supportive
- Safe and Strong
- Caring and Healthy
- Sustainable

In summary the two most relevant development planning policy documents are:

TAYplan: Strategic Development Plan 2012- 2032

Brechin is identified as a:

- Smaller town centre (4th level in hierarchy)
- Tier 3 Settlement in North Angus Housing Market Area
- North Angus Housing Market Area: 75 houses pa to 2032/ 2036
- “*Smaller town centre*” aims:
 - Vital & diverse
 - Social & economic
 - Niche & visitors
 - Services, community facilities, local shops (LDP)

TAYplan provides a vision for regional development to 2032 and the context for new local development plans (LDPs). The plan is under review and proposed TAYplan to 2036 is due to be published in May 2015.

Brechin is noted in TAYplan as a ‘Principal Settlement’. No major strategic expansion in terms of business investment is proposed. Population projections require 75 houses to be built per year to 2036 in North Angus, which encompasses Brechin and Montrose.

Angus Local Development Plan: 2015 (2014-2024):

Main Issues identified include:

- Significant quantity of housing land allocated at 2014: Dubton Farm: 400 new homes
- Reuse of Brownfield sites are a priority
- Highest town centre vacancy rate
- Capacity of waste water treatment is a constraint
- New community campus & enhanced sports & leisure provision progressing
- Focus on sustainable development
- Tier 3 settlement land allocated for homes and business
- North Angus land allocation for 990 homes to 2026
- Development focus in Brechin is in the west and includes an initial phase of 250 houses at Dubton farm (29ha) and Brechin West business allocation of 27 ha
- Focus is on vacant and underused sites (e.g. Andover Primary School, Witchden Road Gas Works) and town centre development on account of high town centre property vacancies.

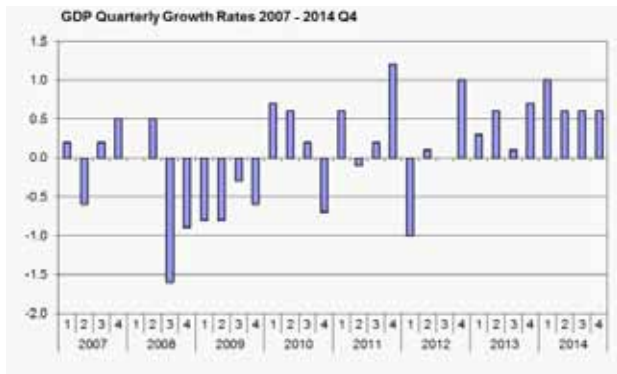
Property market context

ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Economy

The Scottish economy has now achieved nine quarters of sustained growth. GDP grew by 0.6% during the fourth quarter of 2014. Over the twelve month period since quarter 4 2013, total GDP growth was 2.8%. Steady economic growth, shown on Figure 1 from late 2012 onward, has re-kindled confidence and activity in Scotland's property markets.

Figure 1



Source : Scottish Government

The *Angus Economic Strategy 2013-2020* supports the development of local infrastructure and physical regeneration to meet the requirements of local businesses. Regeneration of town centres is a targeted area within this part of the economic strategy.

Development Plan

The town is denoted as having a 'Smaller Town Centre' where a mix of uses is encouraged to promote 'vitality and diversity of social and economic activity both in the day and night'. Niche markets and the visitor economy are encouraged. 'The Town Centres Action Plan' (2013) recommends a 'town centre first' approach.

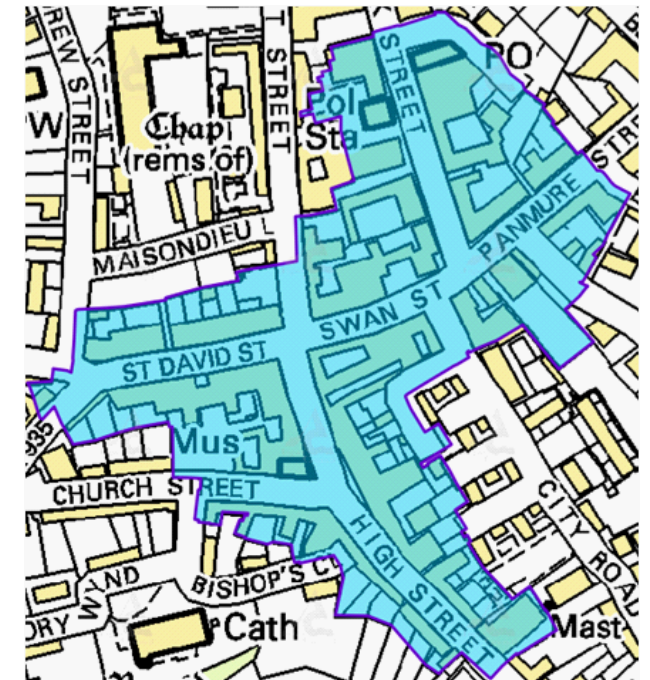
Brechin town centre is illustrated on Figure 2. The commercial core comprises the High Street, leading to the west along Church Street, at the northern end leading west into St David Street and east into Swan Street, continuing into Panmure Street and north into Clerk Street. Commercial uses in the town centre area can also be found on St James Place, City Road, Union Street, Market Street, Trinity Road and Damacre Road.

The new Angus Local Development Plan to be published for consultation in February 2015 will replace the 2009 Local Plan. Echoing national policy, it contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

As a Tier 3 settlement in Angus, Brechin is expected to be a focus for new homes and businesses during the ALDP commensurate with its role as a small centre of population and economic activity. North Angus 2016-26 has 990 new homes allocated, of which Dubton is allocated 250. Brechin West is to have a development brief for

employment use. Redevelopment of underused sites is supported (including Andover School, Scott Street Goods Yard and Witchden Road Gas Works site for residential and employment uses). New development is also encouraged where this will strengthen the town centre.

Figure 2: Brechin Town Centre



MARKET REVIEWS

Residential Property

House prices in Scotland increased by 3.4% over the 12 month period to Q4 2014, according Registers of Scotland, or 7.7% for Q1 2015 according to Lloyds Banking Group (Halifax). Nationwide suggest a lower annual rise of 1.3% (Q1 2015). Overall these show a broad trend of above-inflation annual price growth. Meanwhile, Q3 2014 saw the highest level of loans for house purchases since 2008.¹

The rate of new house building has increased only a little as the market has recovered (Figure 3). Both starts and completions are hovering around 15,000 per annum in Scotland, just over half the volume of activity at the most recent market peak 2005-2008. Angus sits in the lower half of the completion rates for 2014, in the 20-30 per 10,000 population band. The highest completion rates are in Aberdeen/ North-East and Lothian areas.

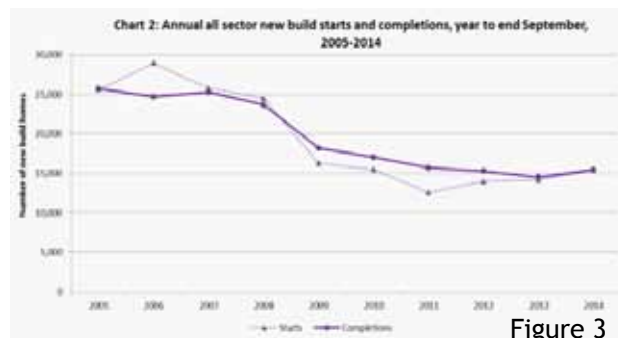


Figure 3

Source : Scottish Government

1 Council of Mortgage Lenders

Registers of Scotland reports that the average price of a residential property in Angus in Q4 2014 was £152,178, reflecting an annual rise of 1.7% which is below the national average. Detached and semi-detached house and flat prices rose, however terraced home prices fell (-0.2%).

The housing market is not particularly active in Brechin in 2015. Developer A&J Stephen is nearing completion at its Bearehill Brae development (pictured). The development comprises 95 detached 2-4 bedroom homes, with prices for the final phase ranging from £199,500 to £394,500.

Angus Council estimates that there are around 190 residential properties in Brechin town centre. This is broadly in proportion to Brechin's population when compared with other Angus towns.

There are currently 16 residential properties on the market in Brechin town centre. Six are houses, cottages or bungalows with 2-5 bedrooms priced in a broad range from £118,000 to £325,000. The other 10 are flats or maisonettes of 1-3 bedrooms priced from £50,000 to £140,000 (setting aside one auction property at £25,000). The market mid-point appears to be town centre flats around Montrose Street, Latch Road, Damacre Road and Park Road offered for prices in the range £50,000 - £69,000.

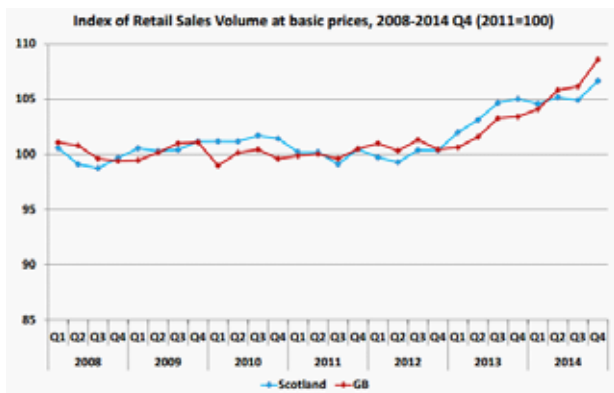
Current new development activity in the Brechin estate housing market is typical of the market recovery so far, as developers build mainly for existing home owners who are trading up, typically in well-established market locations. Conversion and development of town centre properties and sites for private sale/ rent or affordable housing is beginning to emerge in other Scottish town centres. The Brechin town centre residential market is characterised by re-sale of existing secondhand stock. There is one development site for six homes adjoining Nursery Lane currently on the market. A planning application has been submitted to convert a store at 42b City Road into 3 flats.

Commercial: Retail & Leisure

Retailing has long been the principal source of activity and economic viability in the town centres. However the retail hierarchy has changed in recent decades as more mobile and affluent consumers have sought a wider range of goods and services at larger destinations. This is a virtuous circle for cities and large centres as more customers attract more investment, and so on. It presents a major challenge for small, traditional town centres.

Retailing faced a period of very weak expenditure following the 2008/09 recession, with growth only resuming in 2013 (Figure 4). The recession was a watershed for retailers, with the loss of names such as Woolworth (including from Brechin) and continuing contraction by groups such as Arcadia (Burton, Dorothy Perkins, et cetera). Supermarkets initially flourished but are now retrenching, with Tesco announcing its first store closures. Convenience outlets and discounters Aldi and Lidl as well as brands such as B&M and Poundland are thriving.

Figure 4



Source : Scottish Government

On-line retailing has a growing market share, currently estimated at 12% of expenditure. While this is widely recognised as directly affecting town centre retailing, there is also a less visible effect as financial and business services such as banks and estate agents increasingly operate on-line and will, over time, gradually require fewer town centre premises.

Growth sectors taking up the slack from national retailers and filling town centre vacancies include local independent retailers and services, personal services such as hair, beauty and healthcare, and the leisure sector. Restaurants, bars and cafes are active across the market and in larger centres hotels, cinemas and clubs are also investing. Around half of occupier demand for town and shopping centres currently is for leisure use. The closest major commercial leisure destination to Brechin is Dundee (27 miles by trunk road).

A small range of national and independent retailers are present in Brechin town centre including Boots, Semi-Chem, Goodfellow & Steven, Envy hair salon, Treasures, Crystal Kitchens, Steven Whittaker Optometrist, Sweets and Treats, Backyard Games, and The Hardware Store.

The comparatively small scale of Brechin's retail centre can be seen in the (slightly historic 2007 figure) leakage of 54% of convenience (grocery) expenditure from the town. Towns typically retain most of this day-to-day expenditure. Comparison (non-food) goods trade lost to other centres would typically be expected to be much higher, meaning that overall a notable majority of trade from Brechin is lost to shopping destinations elsewhere.

At the last full audit in 2010, Brechin actually had more comparison goods floorspace (60%) than convenience (40%), although this gap was closing. Montrose is the closest larger town for shopping (9 miles by road) and Dundee is the closest city with a full range of shops, malls and retail parks.

The 2010 audit recorded a high vacancy rate of 18% in Brechin town centre. Of this vacancy 7.6% was accounted for by vacant shops and 10.4% was other commercial premises. It was noted that the core town centre area exhibited a lower vacancy rate than peripheral streets. More recent data from a 2012 floorspace audit continued to show high vacancy of 21% based upon 28 unoccupied units from a total of 130 (both retail and non-retail services).

The town centre has benefitted from capital investment which helped it to re-position during a very difficult market period in the aftermath of the recession. The City of Brechin Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) invested £2.9 million 2008-13 topped up by town centre regeneration funding in 2009. Four priority projects brought buildings back into use and two involved repair of buildings already in use. During the project further repairs and re-use of vacant floorspace was funded. The town centre benefitted from the THI in arresting a previous slow decline in activity and investment (both local and incoming).

In line with other UK town centres there have been recent store closures, including Blockbuster and McKays Bakery. However, Brechin has also attracted new investment from local retailers Robertson's the Baker (in former McKays Bakery)

and Red Tattoo Rooms (59 Clerk Street). Diabetes Aide reportedly opened a charity shop at 17 High Street in January 2015.

Brechin Castle Garden Centre lies on the A935 on the way into Brechin, alongside the traditional garden centre element it has a foodhall, coffee shop and sells gifts, accessories and clothes.

Supermarkets in Brechin are: Lidl (Commerce Street), Farmfoods (Clerk Street), Scotmid (Montrose Street) and Tesco Express (at the Esso station on Clerk Street). A proposal by Dalhousie Estates for land to the west of Brechin Business Park includes a potential supermarket as well as a hotel and restaurant; a PAN was approved for this proposal in August 2013.

Three multiple retailers have requirements to open in Brechin. This current demand comprises a sandwich shop chain (Baguette Express), bargain store (Yorkshire Trading Co), and chain pub/restaurant (Marstons). Although a small location, Brechin just falls within the market requirements of some national commercial operators and can attract this mobile demand from occupiers.

There is only one retail property currently being formally marketed by property agents in the town centre, a hot food take-away at 1 St Ninian's Place totalling 64 sq.m. The Scottish Assessors Association reports 19 vacant retail premises in the town (giving a vacancy rate of 15%). This level of vacancy was verified by site visit during the Charrette.

There have been four recorded retail and one leisure deals in Brechin since January 2013, Table 1 shows these transactions. These are a mix of small local retail and service investments. This does not include Robertson's the Baker who reportedly opened in the former McKay's Bakery premises, nor Diabetes Aide at 17 High Street.

The limited number of recent transactions makes it difficult to establish prime rents for the town centre. For TAYplan in 2013, Ryden noted a historic peak of £21 per sq.ft. for shop premises in Brechin town centre which had been recorded in 2008, and suggested a maximum of £20 per sq.ft. Valuation experts suggest that £15 per sq.ft. and above would be more realistic at the moment.

In addition to retailing and local services, Brechin has a modest amount of visitor accommodation including the Northern Hotel, Gramarcy House and Liscara B&B. No evidence of recent significant transactions or investment has been identified, although the approved 2013 PAN by Dalhousie Estates on the west side of Brechin does contain an allocation for a hotel.

Table 1: Brechin Retail / Commercial Deals (January 2013 - April 2015)

Address	Size (sq.m.)	Comments
13 St Ninian's Place	30	Retail unit in traditional building. Let to Maureen Shaw in November 2013 on a 5 year lease at £2,500 pa (£7.72 per sq.ft.) subject to an option to break in year two.
15 St David Street	107	Let to Backyard Games Ltd in August 2013. Part of former Woolworths building which had been sub-divided into 3 retail units.
27 High Street	76	Let in June 2013 to an undisclosed tenant on a three-year lease at £6,000 pa. One-month rent-free period was agreed.
5 Market Street	24	Sold in January 2013 to Susan Annabel Brymer for £16,000. t/a Eclipse Hairdressers (expanded salon).
Dalhousie Bar, 1 Market Street	91	Public house over ground and basement floors of a stone built tenement with residential accommodation above. Sold to Kevin Mackie in May 2014 for £58,500.

Employment property

Demand for office property across Scotland increased to record levels in 2014, as markets recovered in line with wider economic growth. Industrial property is also experiencing high occupancy levels. New development is however very limited aside from core city centres, Aberdeen and motorway/ airport corridors.

Offices in Brechin are on upper floors along the High Street and around the town centre, and within retail units with office frontage. Brechin Business Centre at Southesk Street is a two storey building with office space (5 suites) on the upper floors and workshops (6 units) on the ground floor, it is owned by Angus Council, office occupiers here include PWSK Ltd.

There are currently two offices formally marketed in Brechin, however one of these (134 sq.m.) is the former Registrar's office which is available for potential alternative commercial use. Table 2 below shows available offices.

Since January 2013 there have been three recorded office transactions recorded totalling 921 sq.m. in the town. These deals are shown in Table 3. Two concern small lettings in Brechin Business Centre and the other was the notable sale of a stand-alone building.

Table 2 : Brechin Office Availability (April 2015)

Address	Size (sq.m.)	Comments
1b Clerk Street	99	Ground floor and attic space in traditional 2-storey building available to let at £6,002 pa.
Former Registrar's Office, 32 Panmure Street	134	Stone built C listed former Registrar's office. Comprises two offices, meeting room, strong room store and disabled toilet facilities. Suitable for office use however alternative commercial use. For sale o/o £60,000

Table 3 : Brechin Office Deals (January 2013 - April 2015)

Address	Size (sq.m.)	Comments
Suite 8, Brechin Business Centre, 10 Southesk Street	33	Let to The City of Brechin & District Community Council in January 2015. First-floor office space on a one-year lease at £2,485 pa (£75 per sq.m.), with an option to break after month four.
Suite 6, Brechin Business Centre, 10 Southesk Street	36	First floor office let in February 2014 to PWSK Ltd on a new lease at £2,709 pa. (£75 per sq.m.) with a yearly option to break.
Former Nursery School, Townhead St Andrew Street	852	Category "C" Listed former villa of 2 storey and basement traditional stone construction under a pitched and slate roof. Sold in November 2013 to Mr & Mrs Atkinson by Angus Council for £105,000

Table 4 : Brechin Industrial Availability (April 2015)

Table 4 identifies industrial properties formally on the market in Brechin. These two new-build premises are indicated as being available at Brechin Business Park.

Since 2013 there have been four recorded industrial transactions. These are shown in Table 5. Two transactions were on Brechin Industrial Estate, one in Brechin Business Centre and one on Southesk Street. Industrial accommodation is also provided nearby in Edzell (not shown).

Angus Council notes that its investment in land and buildings for employment purposes has attracted market activity, notable from companies related to the oil and gas sector (particularly around Montrose). One reported disinvestment recently is Journeycall's consolidation at Arbroath leading to closures in Brechin and Laurencekirk.

In terms of new owner-occupied investment, The Hydrus Group is building a new 2,787 sq.m. technology centre at Brechin Business Park, Phase 1 opened in March 2015, it will create more than 100 jobs over the next 5 years. Continental Alloys opened a new build 1,533 sq.m. facility at Brechin Business Park in April 2014. In November 2014 Carnegie Fuels submitted a planning application for a fuel storage and distribution depot with office accommodation on Plot 7a, also at Brechin Business Park.

Address	Size (sq.m.)	Comments
Brechin Business Park	690	Two newly constructed workshop / warehouse units which could be let as a single unit. North unit 364 sq.m., south unit 325 sq.m.

Table 5 : Brechin Industrial Deals (January 2013 - April 2015)

Address	Size (sq.m.)	Comments
Former Fire Station, Southesk Street	55	Let to an undisclosed tenant in April 2015. Ground-floor accommodation on a one-year lease at £3,600 pa (£66 per sq.m.)
Units 1-4 Brechin Industrial Estate	863	Industrial terrace of steel portal frame construction. Sold in April 2014. Asking price £160,000. Leased to Watt the Butcher late 2014.
Unit 1 Brechin Industrial Estate	216	Let to The Garage in March 2013 on a five year lease at £5,200 pa (£24 per sq.m.)
Unit 10 Brechin Business Centre, Southesk Street	36	Let to A C T Landworks in March 2013 on a three-year lease at £1,548 pa (£43 per sq.m.) Two week rent-free period was agreed.

Market Change and Brechin

A combination of private sector and public sector divestment across town centres is changing the landscape of these central places. Competition from larger centres is exacerbating these challenges. Brechin has benefitted from stabilising investment in the form of its THI and the public sector is re-focusing rather than removing investment from the town. Re-investment is in the form of the new £26.5 million Brechin Community Campus (Angus Council and hub East Central Scotland) and planned community health and emergency services facility. However the availability (and lack of immediate solutions) for important civic assets such as the City Hall and Maisondieu and St Columba's churches, as well as the sustained retail vacancy rates, highlights the continuing challenge.

Emerging policy and market trends are now aligning around the need to diversify town centres beyond shopping, into leisure, residential, employment and community uses. Many larger centres are struggling to adapt to this more diverse and less corporate market, where 25-year leases to national retailers able to fully fit-out, maintain and insure premises are simply not available. Smaller towns such as Brechin have a greater inherent adaptability of their built form and market allowing them to consider accommodating more varied and local town centre uses.

A large number of projects emerged from the Brechin town centre Charrette, around critical themes including community uses, leisure, niche retail and residential uses.

Table 6 highlights some of the projects with the most significant property / physical development elements. The list is not exhaustive and will be developed as Angus Council targets specific projects and funding streams using the full body of work which emerged from the Charrette.

Table 6: Brechin Town Centre Charrette Property Market Potential

Land Use	Market rationale	Site(s) / location(s)	Delivery
Housing	Town centre regeneration and diversification, growing local customer base for facilities.	Lower High Street Maisondieu Church Housing Revenue Account land St Columba's Church	Angus Council leading site discussions/ assembly for multi-ownership derelict sites. Recently acquired by developer understood to be preparing residential proposals. Trawl for self-build opportunities. Angus Council reviewing for Empty Homes Fund (to date has required public sector lead).
Retail	Promote and support niche retail for local and visitors.	Vacant shops in town centre.	Actions from Charrette ?
Leisure	Diversify town centre beyond retail and attract new custom	Brechin City Hall Damacre Centre	Community Cinema Group Possible cultural use
Business	Diversify and expand small business base in Brechin	Site to be confirmed	Angus Council / Intereg business incubator funding application

RECENT DECISIONS & INVESTMENT IN BRECHIN

The Brechin community has invested considerable work on strengthening local partnership and developing its vision for the town through the work undertaken by the City of Brechin and Area Partnership over the last two years and this includes the Brechin and Edzell Community Plan that includes a vision statement for Brechin (see Chapter 3)

There is a very strong base of community organisations (42+ have been identified in the Brechin Design Charrette Database). BRAVO Brechin (businesses, resident & voluntary organisations) have enjoyed significant recent success in staging major community events like the water slide, Christmas in the City, Harley Davidson in the City. A successful Townscape Heritage Initiative/Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme that ran from 2010-2014 resulted in more than £2.9M with significant improvements to the historic town centre.

Significant capital investment for Brechin are already agreed or under consideration including a new community campus at Brechin High School that is due to open in early 2016. A feasibility study for a new health and social care hub to accommodate integrated services has also been completed but is not currently being progressed.



Robert Watson-Watt



3. BRECHIN 2025 VISION: Design Charrette Outputs



BUILDING ON EARLIER DISCUSSIONS

The key Socio-Economic assumptions that were used in the Brechin Design Charrette are summarised in Chapter 2: Socio-Economic Profile, Economic & Community Development and Planning Policy Context and Property Market Context. The starting point on the first day of the Charrette was the Vision for Brechin that had been prepared over a two year period through discussions in Brechin partly led by the Local Community Planning Team. The resulting vision statement was:

‘The people of Brechin want the community in which they live to be a place of which they are proud.

They want Brechin to be a place which is vibrant, happy, progressive, peaceful, harmonious and sustainable; a small City famous for its warmth of welcome to all.’

VISION PLUS: BRECHIN 2025

The Charrette highlighted the opportunity to embellish the vision to take account of Brechin as a:

- “Can do” place emphasising proactive approach based on strategic forward planning; new & growing business providing local jobs
- Great place for visitors (+ therefore residents): importance of the visitor economy
- Healthy place that promotes active living with good sports facilities, open space, walking / cycling provision

- Service centre for rural area with high quality local sourced food and produce
- Place that uses a wide definition of ‘sustainability to include: walkable City, low-carbon place, resilient and thriving local economy that uses its wealth of social capital effectively.

As a result of the Charrette discussions the 2025 vision that was presented on the final day of the Charrette was: (in an illustrated text box)

In 2025 Brechin is:

“a place which is vibrant, happy, peaceful, harmonious and sustainable with very well used, distinctive heritage buildings. A small City famous for its warmth of welcome to visitors and diverse choice of attractions and events, renowned for a progressive and inclusive ‘can-do’ attitude towards business and community. Brechin is a resilient service centre for the surrounding rural area

A ‘braw’ place to live for young and old - a family friendly, walkable place with active, healthy and proud communities.”

BRECHIN DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK & ACTION PLAN

The 2025 vision for Brechin aims to inspire, shape and direct the identification of projects and priorities across the overarching themes of place, business and community. The vision has helped shape the integrated Development Framework and Action Plan that were the main outputs from the Charrette and are summarised in Chapters 4 and 5. The diagram below illustrates the integrated structure and ‘joined up’ approach.

The five main **Action Plan themes** are:

- Supporting Growth Orientated Business
- Visitor Economy
- Community Health + Wellbeing
- Extending Town Centre Living
- Third Sector Organisations + Community Ownership

The main foci of the Development Framework are:

- Priority Buildings & Sites
- Open space Networks
- Access Traffic & Transport

The Development Framework and Action Plan are for all partners across the public, private/business community and third sectors.



Aerial Image of Brechin



4. BRECHIN: ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan focuses on local economic and community regeneration projects that will complement the proposed physical development framework investment. The Action Plan provides clear guidance in relation to prioritisation of initiatives, timescale and likely impact, who should lead/support delivery and funding sources.

The Action Plan includes **twenty projects** organised in **five integrated programmes**:

1. Supporting Growth Orientated Businesses
2. Developing The Visitor Economy
3. Focussing On Community Health + Wellbeing
4. Extending Town Centre Living
5. Building Third Sector Organisations + Community Ownership

The Action Plan and Development Framework outline a range of short term, medium term and long term initiative. For reference;

- short term = within one year (2015/16);
- medium term = between 1 and 5 years (up to 2020)
- long term = 5 years + (beyond 2020)



1. SUPPORTING GROWTH ORIENTATED BUSINESSES

In Brechin and the surrounding rural area many local businesses are micro-businesses that are not necessarily growth oriented and will not provide higher value jobs in the future or increase Brechin's prosperity. In contrast local companies like Hydrus who is specialist oil and gas manufacturer are continuing to expand at their

new facility.

In the future, an unfocused approach to business engagement risks spreading resources too thinly and may mean that some businesses fail to grow to their full potential. Growth oriented businesses are not confined to particular sectors, but they need the right business accommodation in the right locations and high quality, up-to-date digital and physical infrastructure. The aim is to support networks in key sectors like high value specialist manufacturing (e.g. Hydrus), artisan food and drink (e.g. Bouvarage/Ella Drinks, Carlotta's Chocolates), high value tourism (e.g. Caledonian Railway, House of Dun) and creative and digital &

(e.g. Pop-Up Creatives).

This programme also aims to use Business Gateway to deliver a programme of specialist business development, social media marketing and training targeted specifically at independent retail and service businesses in Brechin. Evidence from the consultations and the Charrette showed particular interest in social media, shared marketing and events based marketing.

Priority Projects:

The priority projects in the Action Plan under this programme are:

Project	Principles & Justification	Potential Project Delivery Partner	Timescale Likely Impact	Next Steps
1.1 Focus On Supporting Growth Orientated Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Target support to & strengthen local business supply chains to drive economic and business growth -Focus on higher value jobs: specialist manufacturing, artisan food and drink, high value tourism and & creative digital -Develop a clearly articulated inward investment offer for high growth potential sectors, including food and drink, health & social care and tourism - Provide the right working conditions, office accommodation and infrastructure to support digital &creative enterprises -Target 'footloose' digital & creative enterprises -Encourage innovation and enterprise with the growth and development of new start-up companies: Support business planning by new business entrants 	<p>Angus Council</p> <p>BRAVO</p> <p>Business Gateway</p>	<p>Long Term: 5 years</p> <p>High Impact</p>	<p>Agree principles with key partners</p>
1.2.Young Enterprise Incubator: Housed Existing Vacant Space	<p>Establish an 'enterprise incubator' to provide ready-to-move-into retail space in an existing vacant unit in Brechin Town Centre. The aim would be to offer opportunities to a 3/4 retail/service businesses for up to a twelve-month period as an opportunity for start-up businesses to test-trade their business idea in a supportive environment.</p> <p>This will enhance the potential for entrepreneurship in Brechin Town Centre and encourage new innovative entrants to the retail/service mix.</p>	<p>Angus Council</p> <p>Brechin High School</p> <p>Business Gateway</p> <p>Capital Grant Fund</p> <p>Dundee & Angus College</p> <p>SG Regeneration</p>	<p>Medium Term</p> <p>High Impact</p>	<p>Work up a project plan with key agencies; identify potential sites/ buildings.</p>

Project	Principles & Justification	Potential Project Delivery Partner	Timescale Likely Impact	Next Steps
1.3 Existing Independent Business Masterclass & 1-1 Visits Promote Internet/ & Facebook / Social Media Marketing	<p>Motivational and informative retail masterclass workshops targeted at existing businesses to raise awareness of the need for continuous improvement and overcome apathy and complacency.</p> <p>Issues to be covered in the master class would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making the most of good customer service; - using social media to market more effectively; - Increasing customer spend; - Maximising display space and layout. <p>This would be followed by 'one to one' visits, businesses will also receive a comprehensive report in the form of a business action plan with a clear set of detailed recommendations focused on helping re-energise each of the individual businesses taking part. Aim is help independent traders increase turnover, advertise and market their business more effectively and to work collaboratively to improve the Brechin offer</p>	Angus Council Business Gateway	Short Term High Impact	<p>Agree in principle</p> <p>Draw up a brief</p> <p>Invite tenders/ interview from specialists like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shop Doctor: Bill Smith - Real Retail Solutions: John Cowan - The Retailer: Gordon Bell - Retail Mentors Ltd
1.4 'Ladder' of Creative Workspace	<p>Workspace targeted at the creative industries (e.g. Pop-Up Creatives) to include low rentals, fast broadband/WiFi, flexible rental terms, supportive shared services, rooms with good natural light.</p> <p>WASPS (Workshop and Artists' Studio Provision Scotland Ltd) is charity that provides affordable studios to support artists and arts organisations. WASPS currently house 800 artists and 23 arts organisations at 17 buildings across Scotland.</p> <p>http://www.waspsstudios.org.uk/about-us</p>	<p>Angus Council/ BRAVO&WASPS to explore the possibilities of a partnership to deliver a network & ladder of affordable space to support artists in Brechin.</p> <p>Private owners</p>	Short Term Moderate Impact	Contact WASPS and identify potential sites & buildings in Brechin.
1.5 Proactive Planning Initiative	<p>In Brechin this could involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contacting landowners and encouraging them to bring their property back into use - Helping them to source grants and loans and to navigate through the consents that they need, particularly for historic buildings. - If landlords and leaseholders do not behave responsibly, using statutory powers such as Planning Section 179 notices, the Power to Advance Well-Being, repairs notices and Compulsory Purchase Orders. - Angus Council can also submit planning applications for key sites to gain planning consents for speculative proposals which can then be used to market sites. 	<p>Angus Council</p> <p>Private Owners</p>	Short Term Moderate Impact	Agree & formalise principles

PROGRAMME 2. DEVELOPING THE VISITOR ECONOMY

There is also an opportunity in Brechin and the surrounding rural area to work even more closely with the existing tourist businesses, local cultural and creative industries sector and to use them to drive the visitor economy. The aim is to build on Brechin's emerging growing reputation for visitors in events, festivals food and the creative industries. The aim would be to increase income generation and improve the resilience of tourism businesses.

Priority Projects:

The priority projects in the Action Plan under this programme are:

Project	Principles & Justification	Potential Project Delivery Partner	Timescale Likely Impact	Next Steps
2.1. Investing Collectively: Developing & Delivering A Tourism Business Improvement District	<p>Aims to deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increase visitor numbers -Increase length of stay -Increase visitor spend -Help sustainability of tourism businesses -Create jobs - Improve the visitor experience <p>BID to be developed & managed by businesses to provide additional services activities and projects to make Brechin and the surrounding area more of destination and to benefit the local economy.</p> <p>Projects would be partly funded through a compulsory levy. Levy calculated on non-domestic rates or agreed fee</p> <p>The BID would provide a sustainable financial model to deliver the agreed key Action Plan programmes and priority projects.</p> <p>Good practice example: Uniqueness: Inverness and Loch Ness Tourism Business Improvement District</p>	<p>Angus Council</p> <p>BIDS Scotland</p> <p>BRAVO</p> <p>Businesses</p> <p>Establish BID Steering Group</p> <p>VisitScotland</p>	<p>Medium Term</p>	<p>Businesses would vote to invest collectively in local improvements. BID voting governed by legislation: can go ahead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - if minimum turnout of 25% of eligible voters -more than 50% of businesses vote in favour -must represent more than 50% of the rateable value of businesses that vote.

Project	Principles & Justification	Potential Project Delivery Partner	Timescale Likely Impact	Next Steps
<p>2.2. Invest in Skills & WorldHost™ Programme: Businesses in retail, hospitality, leisure and transport</p>	<p>To help businesses gain a competitive edge, Skills Development Scotland/Visit Scotland are working in close partnership with People 1st to provide WorldHost customer service training in Scotland.</p> <p>Funding is available to individual businesses/employees from Flexible Training Opportunities and ILA Scotland.</p> <p>Aim for Brechin businesses to be WorldHost™ accredited.</p> <p>WorldHost™ recognised business status is awarded to businesses which have trained 50% or more of their front-line staff using any of the WorldHost training programmes and signed a commitment to delivering excellent customer service.</p>	<p>Angus Council</p> <p>Business Gateway Skills</p> <p>Development Scotland</p> <p>Visit Scotland</p>	<p>Medium Term</p>	<p>Initiate discussions</p>
<p>2.3. Further Strengthen Education- Agri-Business Networks & Links</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen education-business networks and the links between Brechin’s schools, local agri-businesses and training providers - Maximise local internship and apprenticeship opportunities - Encourage employer investment in education/training - Maximise the training and employment opportunities afforded by new investment in local agri/food & drink businesses to include employability services & apprenticeships - Deliver an expanded higher education curriculum locally in Brechin. - Develop young people’s business and entrepreneurial skills. 	<p>Angus Council</p> <p>Brechin Schools</p> <p>Dundee & Angus College</p> <p>Training providers Employees</p>	<p>Medium Term: 1-3 years</p> <p>High Impact</p>	<p>Agree principles</p>
<p>2.4 Brechin Festivals: Strategic Development Coordinator</p>	<p>Work with BRAVO to unlock support to establish an even stronger Festivals co-ordinating ‘organisation’ to lead on joint strategic development, unlock longer term corporate sponsorship and maintain the festivals/events competitive edge. Key objectives would include to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Act on behalf of and represent the collective strengths of the different events/festivals - Explore the possibilities for longer term corporate sponsorship and more secure funding - Develop and deliver collaborative projects and initiatives which support creative industries growth, evening economy, product development, leadership and audiences - Help sustain events/festivals in Brechin and its role as a leading ‘creative events’ destination. 	<p>Angus Council</p> <p>BRAVO</p> <p>VisitScotland</p>	<p>Medium Term: 1-2 years</p> <p>High Impact</p>	<p>Agree principles</p>
<p>2.5 Improving Choice of Visitor Accommodation & High Value Visitor Packages: International Markets</p>	<p>Opportunity to review the existing provision of visitor accommodation In Brechin to ensure sufficient choice of accommodation of the right quality appropriate for today’s markets. Depending on the outcome of the review actively promote town centre and other opportunities.</p> <p>Work with tourism & cultural organisations, local accommodation providers, restaurants and key local venues to develop co-ordinated, high value visitor packages and to increase the value of tourism and culture to the Brechin economy. E.g. targeting the growth markets identified in <i>Tourism Scotland 2020</i> namely ‘home turf, near neighbours, distant cousins & emerging markets’.</p>	<p>Angus Council</p> <p>Accommodation providers, BRAVO</p> <p>Restaurants & key local venues.</p> <p>VisitScotland</p>	<p>Medium / Long Term: 1-5 years</p> <p>High Impact</p>	<p>Agree principles</p>

PROGRAMME 3: FOCUSING ON COMMUNITY HEALTH + WELLBEING

There are some clear gaps between the health and wellbeing of people living in Brechin and other areas of Angus. The need is to continue to improve local access to health services, better co-ordinate existing services and improve awareness/provision of information. Good health in mind, body and spirit and well-being are fundamental.

This programme is also designed to build more awareness of, and celebrate, the skills, creativity

and rich heritage and 'backstory' of the people of Brechin. This is not an inward-looking approach rather it recognises that Brechin has a series of 'tight knit' communities, including an Eastern European community, some of whom face greater barriers to participation in than others. The programme is also based on the concept of hospitality - that Brechin welcomes those from outside who may be visitors/tourists, businesses or artists. The barriers to engagement need to be

tackled, by among other interventions, developing local venues in the town centre which local people feel comfortable attending and are financially affordable. Engaging children and young people in participative activities arts and sports activity will be essential.

Priority Projects:

The priority projects in the Action Plan under this programme are:

Project	Principles & Justification	Potential Project Delivery Partner	Timescale Likely Impact	Next Steps
3.1 Health & Wellbeing: Key Component Of Economic Growth	<p>Health and well-being are fundamental components in a competitive Brechin economic growth offer for existing and new business, residents and visitors. Actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote successful health and wellbeing outcomes including increasing physical activity levels to increase life expectancy and decreasing health inequalities - Support further investment and improved facilities at for example the Community Campus 	<p>Angus Council</p> <p>Community Organisations</p> <p>Community Planning Partnership</p>	<p>Medium Term</p> <p>High Impact</p>	<p>Agree principles</p>
3.2 Explore Providing Youth Space: Indoor Skatepark& Community Sports Hub	<p>Explore the opportunity to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a safe place for young people to participate in a range of activities, gain access to advice and support and encourages them to become actively involved in their communities targeted at the S2-S5 age group and additional to the Attic. - Indoor skatepark: See Development Framework Project X.Y - Community Sports Hub: to accommodate the Rugby & Cricket and other Clubs to grow sports participation, wider and deepen engagement in the local community and promoting community leadership, strengthen individual clubs, widen membership and provide clear pathways: offering more opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity in Brechin. 	<p>Angus Council</p> <p>BLF Investing in Communities</p> <p>SG</p> <p>Sports Organisations</p> <p>Sportscotland Facilities Fund</p> <p>Strengthening Communities Programme</p>	<p>Medium Term: 1-3 years</p> <p>High Impact</p>	<p>Prepare a business case & identify premises</p>
3.3. Arts & Heritage: Social Enterprises & Third Sector Opportunities	<p>Promote establishing social economy organisations and increase the level of social entrepreneurship in Brechin and the surrounding rural area and support individuals to adopt an enterprising approach to social opportunities.</p> <p>E.g. Community cinema: childcare: bicycle hire/maintenance: Eastern European community opportunities: locally sourced food: energy reduction/tackling fuel poverty.</p> <p>The initiative could include the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interpretation: signage & trail; - Activities Events & Festivals; - Marketing programme; - Digital infrastructure to make industrial/cultural heritage more accessible; - Activities to ensure wider community involvement & engagement. 	<p>Angus Council</p> <p>BLF Investing in Communities</p> <p>Community Organisations</p> <p>Just Enterprise</p> <p>SG</p> <p>Strengthening Communities Programme</p>	<p>Medium Term</p> <p>Moderate Impact</p>	<p>Identify specific opportunities</p> <p>Provide start-up and business support advice through the SG Just Enterprise initiative with potential to access Enterprise Growth Fund</p> <p>Aim to retain income and spending in the very local economy</p>

PROGRAMME 4: EXTENDING TOWN CENTRE LIVING

The population of Brechin is around 7,480 and is **projected to increase** and clearly there are opportunities to consolidate and extend town centre living so as to increase the residential population. New homes for affordable rent, mid-market rent (MMR), Low Cost Home Ownership and sale should be possible subject to SG funding and accessing private finance.

Demand for quality properties is good and Improving the housing offer (including MMR) may help to increase the attractiveness of Brechin

Town Centre for in-commuters, migrants and those with a former connection to the area and to retain reluctant leavers (e.g. young graduates). Brechin could also benefit from improved demand, especially from the 'young professional' and 'first-time buyer' markets seeking affordable rents and sustainable mortgage packages.

The Scottish Government's recently announced a Town Centre Empty Homes Fund to regenerate empty commercial spaces and convert them into affordable residential accommodation either for rent or sale. The fund is a mix of £2m grant and a

£2m no interest loan and targets 'problem' empty commercial spaces. Initial eligible criteria stated are: town centre commercial properties must have been vacant for six months or more be in a state of repair not suitable for letting, with an expectation that the space would remain empty long-term if support not available. Angus Council should explore this new funding opportunity in Brechin.

Priority Projects:

The priority projects in the Action Plan under this programme are:

Project	Principles & Justification	Potential Project Delivery Partner	Timescale Likley Impact	Next Steps
4.1. Affordable Housing	Initial assessments identify a continued demand for quality properties.	Angus Council Housing Associations Owners Private Sector	High Impact	Actively market sites & buildings. Use 'ghost planning permissions'. Approach potential developers and look to secure partnership arrangements.
4.2. Self-build/self-design & build	To raise the awareness and promote self-build and custom build sector as a means of delivering an alternative to 'volume housing' in Brechin Self-build projects are where someone directly organises with a group of like-minded individuals the design and construction of their new home. Custom build homes tend to be those where the individual works with a specialist developer to help deliver a specific type and specification of home.	Angus Council Owners Private Sector	High Impact	Angus Council to assess the local interest by test marketing. Actively target particular sites.
4.3. Older peoples accommodation	Potential demand from an ageing population and 'downsizers' who would prefer a town centre location close to community and other facilities.	Angus Council Housing Associations Owners Private Sector	Moderate Impact	Actively market particular sites & buildings
4.4. Target Vacant Space: Ground & Upper Floors: Demonstration Project	To provide housing in vacant or underused floorspace at both ground floor level and above shops and commercial premises.	Angus Council Housing Associations Private Sector Owners SG Town centre Empty Homes Fund	Moderate Impact	Undertake design feasibility to identify a 'pilot' and promote the initiative with building owners. See project 1.5: Proactive Planning

PROGRAMME 5: BUILDING THIRD SECTOR ORGANISATIONS + COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

The proposed Scottish Government Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill is designed to: strengthen community participation, unlock enterprising community development; and renew communities. In Angus there is already a commitment to devolution of delivery to communities, and third sector organisations. The current public sector financial constraints place significant responsibility on local authorities to find new, more innovative ways of working; to be clear about what they can and cannot do; and to develop strong partnerships communities, and third sector organisations so that effective local interventions are made by the right organisations. The database that was assembled to publicise the Charrette identified more than **70 community**

and sports groups in Brechin and the surrounding area. Therefore Brechin's **extensive social capital and civic infrastructure** means that third sector organisations in the town could be well placed to develop innovative approaches to providing local services and facilities. This will require a focus on empowering and building further capacity within communities in Brechin to enable them to do more themselves and by working in partnership with each other.

This new context raises a number of opportunities for third sector organisations in Brechin to actively contribute to the local economy and unlock funding from sources like the Big Lottery (Investing in Ideas/Awards for All) and Heritage Lottery Fund

(Heritage Enterprise). The early success of the community cinema pilot is an excellent example. The Third Sector has a crucial role to play in delivering the Brechin Development Framework and Action Plan.

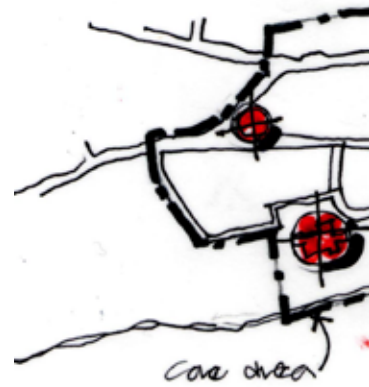
Angus Council should also look to continue to introduce a sustainable procurement duty that consider how the procurement process can facilitate the involvement of third-sector bodies and supported businesses with the aim of making it easier for them to tender for public contracts.

Priority Projects:

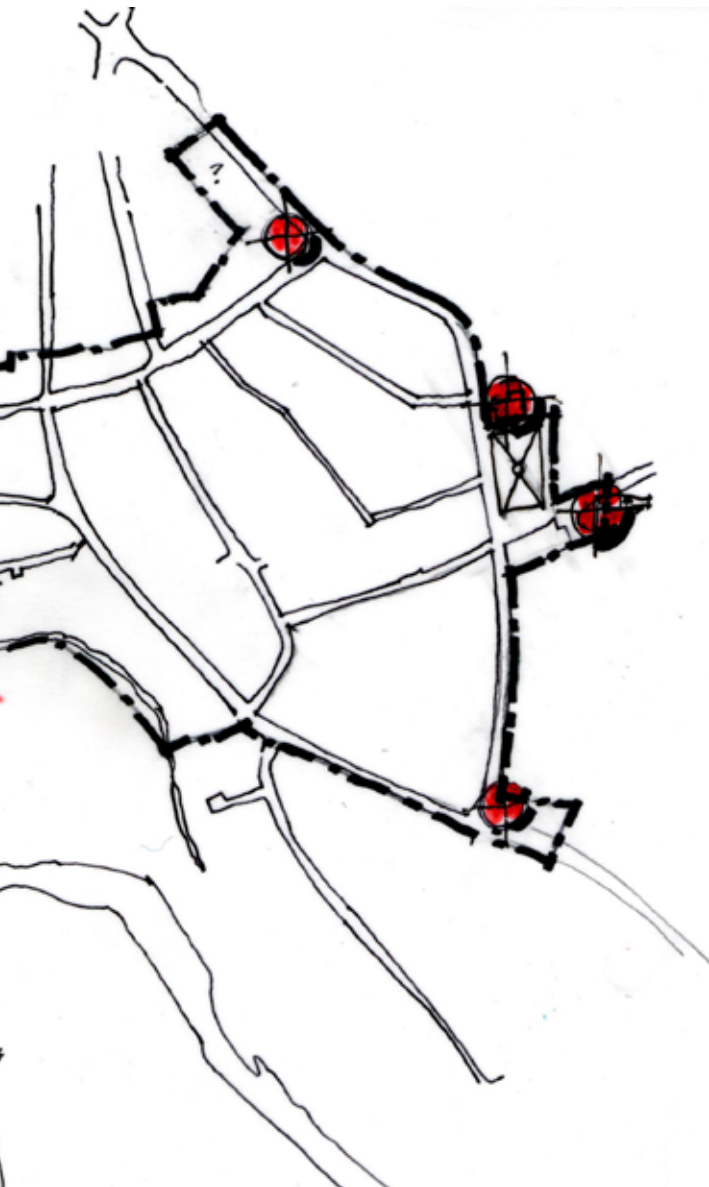
The priority projects in the Action Plan under this programme are:

Project	Principles & Justification	Potential Project Delivery Partner	Timescale Likely Impact	Next Steps
5.1. Audit Third Sector Organisations: Opportunities & Information Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify specific opportunities where the Third Sector could have a role in Brechin's economic future during a period of reduced public funding. - Increase capability and the capacity of the third sector in Brechin to bid for and win public sector contracts. - Promote more volunteering in Brechin to include an initial audit/database of skills in the local community. - Focus on improving the capability & sustainability of third sector organisations & widening membership among young people. - Explore establishing an Information Hub as a virtual facility and/or physical space to act as the focal point for community action, helping to share information and knowledge 	<p>Angus Council</p> <p>BLF Awards for All/Investing In Ideas</p> <p>BRAVO</p> <p>Voluntary sector</p>	<p>Short Term: 1-3 years</p> <p>High Impact</p>	<p>Agree principles</p> <p>Make business case for funding</p>
5.2. Community 'Ownership' of Brechin's Community Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore establishing a Development Trust to acquire/develop vacant public buildings like City Hall & Leisure Centre as community 'owned' assets and partnership opportunities for funding: e.g. Heritage Enterprise/HLF. - A special purpose vehicle could unlock additional funding opportunities 	<p>BLF Investing in Communities</p> <p>BRAVO</p> <p>Just Enterprise</p> <p>SG</p> <p>Strengthening Communities Programme</p>	<p>Medium Term</p> <p>High Impact</p>	<p>Establish principles & outline business case</p>
5.3 Underused & Vacant Heritage Buildings & Buildings at Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify public and other 'buildings at risk' and establish a register focussed on the Brechin Town Centre. - Explore establishing special purpose vehicle to facilitate investment into priority buildings - Explore retrofitting of 'buildings at risk' to improve energy efficiency - Explore partnership opportunities for funding 	<p>Angus Council</p> <p>BRAVO</p> <p>HLF/ Heritage Enterprise</p> <p>SG</p> <p>Strengthening Communities Programme</p> <p>BLF Investing in Communities</p>	<p>Medium Term</p> <p>High Impact</p>	<p>Establish principles & outline business case</p>

- Stoney path - Skinner's Barn.
- Lower High st.
- The Pan.



5. DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN



The Action Plan and Development Framework outline a range of short term, medium term and long term initiative. For reference;

- short term = within one year (2015/16);
- medium term = between 1 and 5 years (up to 2020)
- long term = 5 years + (beyond 2020)



Emerging Fundamental Issues - Physical Planning Pragmatic and Transformational Themes

Through some candid discussions in the early stages of the Charrette a series of recurring, fundamental issues arose. These were defined and reviewed in the course of the Charrette, and are addressed in the emerging Development Framework.

These can be characterised as;

Strengthening Brechin's Regional Role

Early discussions suggested that Brechin's role and profile in Angus is lower than is used to be and should be. There was a widely held desire that Brechin strengthens its role as one of a network of significant places in Angus and that there should be increased awareness and promotion of what Angus, and by extension, Brechin has to offer. In some instance Charrette participants bemoaned certain facilities only being available elsewhere, but in the main there was a recognition that Brechin has many facilities some larger towns would be pleased to have.

Brechin is, and can be, a great place with an excellent quality of life. This needs restating beyond Brechin, but most especially to Brechiners themselves.

Sustaining Brechin's Prized Assets: maximise the benefit of what you have

Time and again Brechiners spoke with pride and passion about several of the prized heritage assets in Brechin, most especially the City Hall, but also the Public Park, the former Registrar's building, the adjacent former Court Buildings, the Damacre Centre, the former Andover School, St. Columba's Church and Maisondieu Church - the last three being in private ownership.

The Charrette focussed on several of the buildings in public ownership or in common good, recognising that there was a lengthy list of under used key buildings. It was agreed that to be most effective it was important to place early emphasis on sustaining buildings currently in operation, albeit underused, whilst seeking new uses for vacant buildings in the meantime.

Given the overwhelming weight of responses regarding the City Hall it was clear that its future was the highest priority for participants.

Tackle Blight

Second only to Brechin City Hall was a desire amongst participants that the area around the former Flicks nightclub on lower High Street be addressed. There was a recurring and strongly held view that blight, such as that around the lower High Street, was holding the recovery heralded by the THI investment back.

There were other 'dirty sites' and gaps sites identified in and around the historic core that have proven difficult to redevelop in the past. These gap sites and vacant buildings present a significant challenge for Brechin and ways to remove barriers to their appropriate and positive reuse were considered in the course of the Charrette.

Proactive Planning

One initiative to help tackle urban blight was to initiate proactive planning in Brechin, testing scenarios for difficult sites and locations to help enable development to occur in alignment with the urban renewal ethos emerging from the Charrette.

This would involve brokering discussions across Council and relevant national and local agencies to seek to identify and resolve matters that have thwarted earlier attempts for adaptive reuse of built heritage (including some of the buildings and site listed above). This enabling, proactive approach to planning would have to ensure design quality and avoid the diminution of the high quality of Brechin's historic urban fabric. It would be expected that any development briefs or framework for sites would assist in de-risking sites and allow for more buildings to be brought back into positive use again, supporting a convivial and vibrant town centre.

It was suggested that one or two priority sites be the focus of a proactive planning trial, with lower High Street being an obvious, priority candidate location.

Community Capital and Equality of Access

One aspect that was apparent in the brief and reinforce in early pre-Charrette and Charrette discussions was the long list of Community facilities throughout Brechin, and the anxiety amongst many groups about the impact the new Community Campus may have on existing facilities and the town centre more generally.

A key action was the need to audit, in partnership with community groups, what Brechiners have, what they need and what should go where and why, recognising that the new Campus will be a significant asset, but understanding the need for 'equality of access' as it was passionately described during the Charrette. Assessing 'supply and demand' (of both existing and proposed facilities) is vital when considering the future role of City Hall, Damacre Centre and other facilities in relation to established facilities such as the Mechanics Institute and new and proposed facilities at the Community Campus and Gardiner Memorial Church, to name two.

Information Hub

It was apparent that, whilst there is a formidable level of activity amid Brechin's many community groups, there is a need for greater communication and raising of awareness of initiatives and activities. An Information Hub, at least virtual and perhaps also physical, could act as the focal point for this action, helping to share information and knowledge.

This issue was bolstered by recurring comments about the need to enhance Brechin's visitor economy and the pressing need for a greater sense of focus and coordination. This could suggest an orientation / information centre providing comprehensive advice to visitors and residents alike. It may also help provide business advice. The desire was for an Information Hub to communicate and share community initiatives, promote visitor destinations, and offer local business support. What's good for the visitor will be good for the local.

Enhanced Sense of Arrival - gateways and public realm

An Information Hub could be part of a focus on improving the visitor's 'sense of arrival' via physical projects as well as online promotion and awareness raising. As noted elsewhere Brechin already has several 'gateways' within its current urban form. Opportunities to enhance and reinforce these gateways to give a stronger sense of arrival should be investigated.

Brechin Town Centre - where people come together

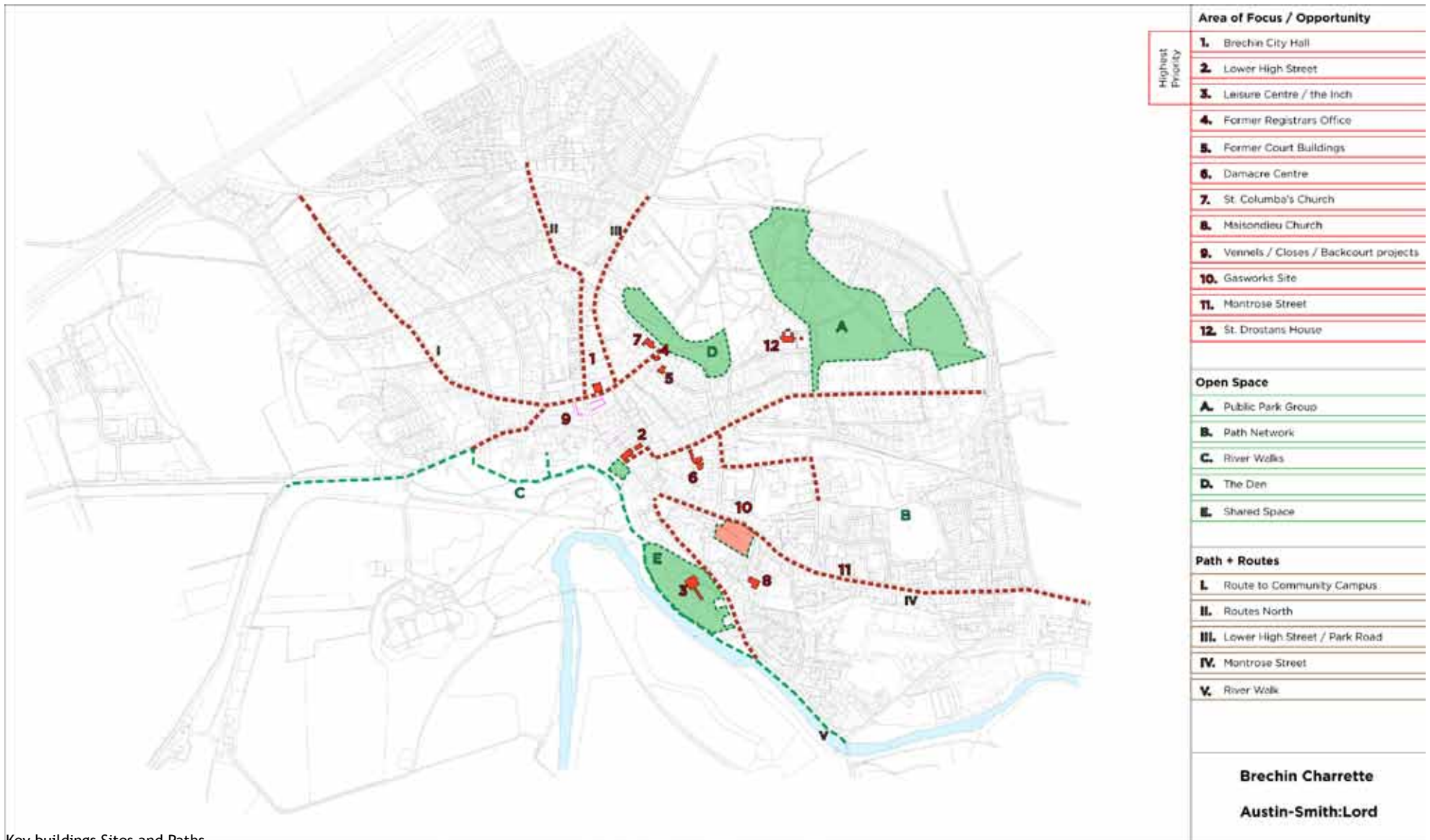
As noted in the townscape survey and analysis Brechin's layout places great emphasis on the historic core. It is the link between the neighbourhoods to the north, 'up the hill' at the 'top of the town' and those to the south, 'down the hill' next to the River at the 'bottom of the town'. As observed the town has developed in a 'bow-tie' layout with the town centre the knot binding the whole thing together.

Town centres are always vital to the success of a place but Brechin's layout reinforces the importance of its historic core. It is literally where Brechin comes together. This becomes even more important when one considers the disparate nature of communities up and down the hill. Brechin is a compact town so it needs to maintain its community cohesion by connecting all the parts to the centre; a place for all Brechiners and visitors to share and enjoy.

Repair, Reuse and Renew - Tactical Interventions Delivering Strategic Objectives

Unlike some other places there is no one large scale physical intervention suggested for Brechin to act as the catalyst for urban regeneration. In Brechin it is about working with the assets the town already has, making them work together better and making discreet interventions to achieve incremental transformative change over time. There are some higher profile priorities, such as City Hall and lower High Street, that are significant challenges that should become emblematic of this next stage in Brechin's recovery. However many of the emerging interventions will be smaller, opportunistic and tactical; but all working to deliver the vision and the strategic objectives of the Development Framework.

This array of adjustments and interventions are well suited to utilising Brechin's formidable social capital to drive change; community-led initiatives undertaken in partnership with others to repair, reuse and renew Brechin's urban fabric. The combination of many smaller projects (with a few aforementioned larger, high profile challenges) will have a significant cumulative benefit.



Key buildings Sites and Paths

Emerging Strategic Objectives

Therefore there are several overarching strategic objectives that underpin the physical Development Framework plan;

- **Focus on the Town Centre:** apply a vociferous ‘town centre first’ principle, accepting with the advent of the Community Campus that some services and community activities are schedule to migrate to the top of the town in the coming months. Facing in to this by auditing existing facilities, assessing future need and mapping out what is therefore required and where, taking account of the Community Campus and associated consequences.
- **Connect all parts to the Town Centre:** connect all of Brechin’s neighbourhood and greenspace infrastructure together. As noted above the urban settlement of Brechin resembles a ‘bow-tie’. Between the wings of the bow-tie are significant greenspaces. Each of these components need to be bound together, and to the town centre. So, at the risk of mixing visual analogies, the bow-tie becomes a four blade propeller with the neighbourhoods and greenspaces all linked to the hub.
- **Contemporary Place-mending:** the historic urban fabric of Brechin demands high quality, sensitive repair. The various interventions referred to elsewhere require to be undertaken in a manner that empathises with the historic townscape but is contemporary and confident in its execution. This approach seeks to enable high quality architecture conservation and contemporary design when implementing the various building and public realm interventions envisaged in this report.

- **Mix Things Up:** seek to create a convivial town centre with an array of uses, providing scope for town centre living, increased visitor bedspaces, a ladder of business accommodation all supporting a vibrant evening economy and seasonal events. Bravo Brechin and others have demonstrated the impact of high profile, successful set-piece events however, in addition to a season programme of events, every effort should be made to create a blend of uses in the town centre that increases footfall, encourages incidentally activity and generates and supports local business, enterprise, culture and community action.
- **Collaborating to Deliver Success:** this Development Framework, as with the Action Plan which it supports and is supported by, presupposes that the optimum chance for success is through fostering collaborative working. Many of the emerging projects will only succeed if the Council, community and others come together with a shared vision and clear objectives. It is hoped that the Charrette process can help enable the next chapter of Brechin's recovery and that relationships established or reinforced through the Charrette can be the basis for effective leadership and pioneering new ways of working to deliver shared outcomes.

Key Spatial Moves

The principal Development Framework moves include;

Re-connecting and Extending the Path Network:

connecting greenspaces, community and visitor facilities.

Even a cursory review of the core footpath and cyclepath networks indicates that they don't appear to join up. Moreover, many participants in the Charrette, notably the youth and schoolchildren, highlighted the need to enhance the quality, safety and connectedness of the path network in Brechin. Critically dedicated paths do not appear to penetrate into the town centre. Mapping out and auditing the path network to identify missing links, areas of concern and scope for improvement needs to be undertaken. Establishing a comprehensive, well connected path network would encourage safe, car-free routes to and from schools and community facilities, support healthy, active lifestyles and tourism, bind Brechin into a wider network of visitor destinations throughout the local area and capitalise on Brechin's compact nature to encourage a walkable town not dependent on the car.

Reuse Brechin's Built Heritage and Key Buildings:

prioritise action to retain and reuse the most significant historic buildings in the town. The brief for the design Charrette listed five important underutilised or vacant buildings, most of them listed, that should be focussed upon in the Charrette. This list of 'areas of focus' and priority was extended in the course of pre-Charrette survey work and reconfirmed at the Launch Events on Day 1.

This list of key buildings and sites, many of which are listed or within the conservation area, included;

- Brechin City Hall
- Lower High Street (including former Flicks)
- Leisure Centre / the Inch
- St Columba's Church
- Maisondieu Church
- Damacre Centre
- Former Registrar's Office
- Former Court Buildings

In addition other sites / 'areas of focus' that were raised in the Charrette included;

- Former Gasworks site
- St Drostan's House
- Former Andover School (site under refurbishment - noted and not considered further)
- Vennels / Closes / Backcourts in the Historic Core
- Montrose Street corridor

The combined list of sites and buildings was reviewed in the course of the Charrette and are considered in greater detail later in this chapter. The sites were mapped, with many located in the heart of the town or tending to be 'down the hill'; south and east of the town centre. This sets a challenge to ensure that that the town centre and 'down the hill' is not burdened with numerous underutilised key sites. However it also presents an opportunity to redress any real or perceived imbalance and ensure some of these sites are retained in community use ensuring a distributed spread of facilities at the top and bottom of town, but with a primary focus on retaining and maximising activity in the town centre. In considering new uses for these various sites an audit of the 'supply and demand' for community facilities and event venues is required and will have to consider the above list in addition to other existing or planned facilities including, but not limited to;

- New Community Campus (under construction)
- The Mechanics Institute
- Cathedral Hall
- Gardiner Memorial Church Hall (proposed)
- Town Buildings Museum
- Existing Sports and Social Clubs
- Town Band Practice Hall
- Library
- Others....?

The constellation of existing and planned facilities (and potential priority buildings) presents a daunting, long list of buildings at risk of being underutilised and/or difficult to adapt. The Charrette's focus was on prioritising those buildings with the best chance of making maximum impact and starting to consider ways to adapt and reuse them, to secure their long-term future and foster a vibrant, compact town centre.

Intelligent Infill: investigate scope to carefully redevelop key gap sites and underused buildings within the town centre.

As a discreet, parallel initiative with the reuse of existing buildings is the identification of new ways to tackle what was termed in the Charrette 'dirty sites'; namely those difficult to develop, often long-term stalled sites throughout the town centre (and beyond).

Whilst the most regularly cited example, the former Flicks site on lower High Street (listed above) emerged as a priority in the Charrette other sites, such as the former Printworks and other similar, discreet sites warrant a comprehensive review and discussion (via a 'proactive planning' approach) to develop viable, quality outcomes for these important gap sites.

Enhance the Quality of Open Spaces: notably significant greenspaces such as the Public Park and River corridor and streetscapes in and around the historic core.

Many participants in the Charrette highlighted the need to improve the quality and functionality of a range of open spaces within Brechin. These ranged from the High Street to path network extending beyond the settlement boundary and into rural Angus.

Brechin's greenspaces tend to be either south-west or north-east of the historic core. To the south-west is Skinner's Burn leading to the South Esk river corridor. To the north-east is 'the Den', the cemetery and the Public Park. There are several core paths and nature trails on established routes (eg. former railways) that, as observed elsewhere, fail to connect the principal greenspaces. Central Brechin has benefitted from good quality public realm in the historic core. There is scope to enhance and extend this streetscape work to enhance the setting of the fine townscape, to encourage additional footfall and dwell time in an attractive town centre and to be flexible, enabling events as well as providing a well functioning, serviced town centre.

In the Charrette there were three interconnected themes that emerged that interrelate to the quality and connectedness of open spaces in Brechin, namely;

- Health and Well-being : scope for access to nature, agri-business and community growing
- Active Living and Active Tourism: enabling walking and cycling and other outdoor pursuits for residents and visitors
- Sports and Play: providing formal (and informal) opportunities to engage in sport and play, recognising the numerous sports provision (principally in east Brechin) for football, rugby and cricket and exciting initiatives that arose in the Charrette for a Brechin Skatepark.

Maintaining Appropriate Vehicular Access to the Town Centre

Whilst there has to be, in line with the national policy relating to the hierarchy of travel modes, a focus on the pedestrian and cyclists (as noted above) the Charrette also reflected on the most appropriate means of enhancing public transport service provision (principally by bus as at present but perhaps rail, again, in future?), managing car access, parking provision, service access and seeking an effective and enforceable plan for reducing heavy goods vehicle traffic through Brechin.

Detailed consideration on these matters is outlined later on in this chapter.

Priority Buildings and Sites

This sections considers a sample range of sites that were considered in the course of the design Charrette. The findings and observations included here are based on initial discussions and in the absence of detailed site survey information. The short studies are suggestive and indicative, giving a sense of the scope and potential of these buildings and sites, with a view to identifying priorities for early action. Some of the sites are in private ownership, others in public or common good.

The 12 studies included here are representative of the wider array of possible buildings and sites capable of reuse within Brechin, particularly in the town centre. Of the 12 studies three are featured as high priority buildings / sites that should be considered for early action; Brechin City Hall, Lower High Street and the Leisure Centre. In each instance further exploratory feasibility work would be required to test and refine options for each of the sites considered here.

	Growth Oriented Business	Visitor Economy	Community Health & Wellbeing	Extended Town Centre Living	3rd Sector organisations & Community ownership	
Brechin City Hall						High Priority Medium Term
Lower High Street						High Priority Medium Term
Leisure Centre / the Inch						High Priority Short Term to Long Term
Former Registrar's Office						Medium Priority Short Term - available on market
Former Court Buildings						Medium Priority Short Term - vacant
Damacre Centre						Medium Priority Medium Term - occupied until community campus complete

	Growth Oriented Business	Visitor Economy	Community Health & Wellbeing	Extended Town Centre Living	3rd Sector organisations & Community ownership	
St. Columba's Church						High Priority Medium Term
Maisondieu Church						High Priority Medium Term
Vennels / Closes / Back-court Projects						Medium Priority Medium Term
Gasworks Site						Stalled Space = Medium Priority/ Short Term Development Site = Low Priority Long Term
Montrose Street						Medium Priority Short to Long Term
St Drostan's						Medium Priority Short to Long Term

BRECHIN CITY HALL

The City Hall was the most recurring issue that arose throughout the Charrette. It was immediately apparent that it is a cherished and well loved venue by the local community. Anxiety about its future viability as a civic and community venue was restated throughout the Charrette, especially once the Community Campus is operational.

The City Hall is C Listed sandstone building. It has a prominent location in the heart of Brechin, positioned hard on to Swan Street. The Main and Lesser Halls are both at first floor level (relative to Swan Street) albeit virtually at grade if accessed from the pends and vennels to the rear on the north of the building.

Issues

The entrance foyer is constrained, with a single door access off Swan Street nestled between retail units beneath the Lesser Hall. There is no lift access to the principal hall spaces, nor step free access off street to the entrance foyer. The building fabric, whilst apparently sound, requires internal modernisation with below standard back of house facilities. Front of house audience facilities, staging, sound and lighting are also dated and require improvement.

Whilst understood to be in common good the City Hall is currently managed by the Council's Culture and Leisure services. Various Charrette participants reported having difficulty in booking venue hire, and the pricing regime was raised as an issue. However there were initiatives ongoing at the time of the Charrette to host community organised digital cinema screenings and equivalent initiatives were being considered in the future.

Opportunities

The strength of feeling and passion amid the local community demonstrate a desire to sustain City Hall as a quality venue in central Brechin. There is evidently the potential for the community to establish a vehicle for the management and operation of the facility as one of a network of venues throughout Brechin.

City Hall has an historic charm and sense of occasion that should be retained and enhanced. The Charrette started to sketch out ways to provide lift access from street level to the principal levels, and options for short and longer term modifications to enable step free access and improved foyer provision.

A feasibility study should be undertaken to establish the constraints of adapting the listed building to enable a town centre venue that meets contemporary audience and performer expectations. The Charrette study would suggest that City Hall can be adapted to become the set piece 21st Century venue for Brechin.

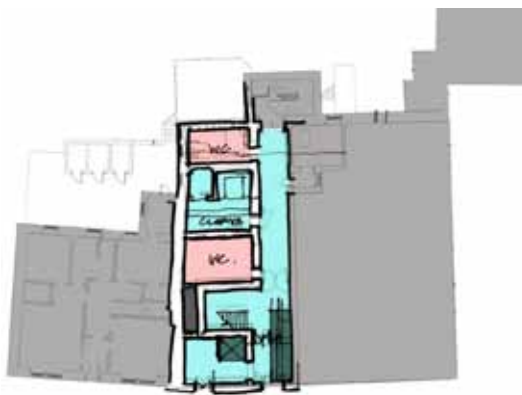
Town Hall Exterior



		Priority	High Priority
Growth Oriented Business	✓	Timescale	Short Term
Visitor Economy	✓	Possible Uses	High Priority
Health + Wellbeing	✓	Action	Investigate scope for Development Trust role. Develop business plan. Explore funding opportunities Establish scope to relax standards (eg. parking standards) and provide funding advice for prospective occupants to encourage suitable adaptive use.
Extended Town Centre Living	✗	Delivery	Angus Council "City Hall Development Trust" Existing occupiers Heritage funding sources: HLF & HS Community funding sources: BLF, LEADER 2015& Trusts Arts &creatives funding sources: CreativeScotland
3rd Sector Organisations + Community Ownership	✓		



Proposed longer term modifications



LOWER HIGH STREET AND FLICKS SITE

The lower high street could be strategically identified as a critical 'cross roads' location within the town centre, both as a continuation of the upper high street north to south, and potential for achieving a desired connectivity route east to west. The Flicks site in particular is located at a pivotal point between the dense built up high street pattern with clearly defined street edges and building frontages facing the open park land 'wilderness' opposite. This green space is also a key area for establishing connections, pathways and walks with the landscape areas beyond the town centre. In response the streetscape at this threshold between the built environment and open landscape should be more clearly acknowledged as a transitional space between the high street and park land. Its value as an important public place in Brechin's town centre should be celebrated by introducing a series of landscape interventions to encourage positive experiences by locals and visitors alike.



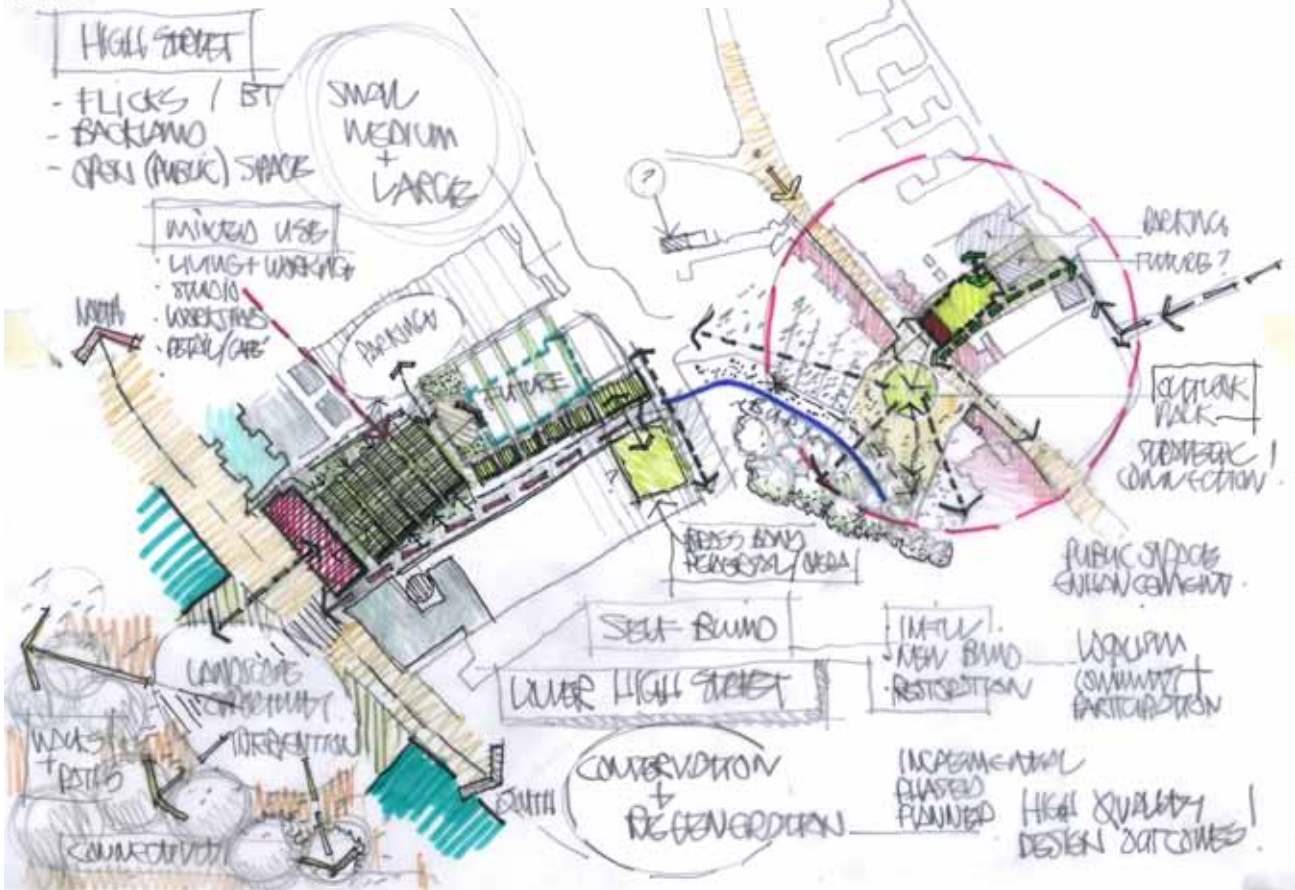
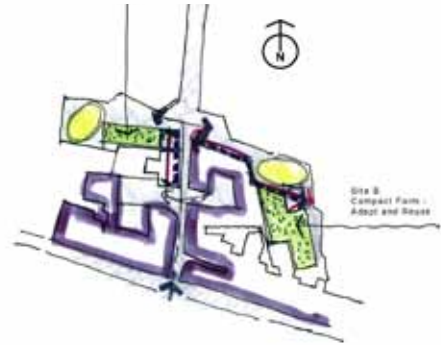
Flicks dilapidated condition, vacant back land including other adjacent properties consolidates a general perception of the area as neglected and of low quality townscape value. However, a closer look at what first appears in a poor condition with restrictive physical constraints actually has the potential to make a significant contribution towards the development potential within both public and private partnerships. The conservation and regeneration process could include combinations of live/work units, studio workshops, retail and business uses. A development process focusing on a range of self-build procurement approaches would encourage localism and community participation in realising a series of small, medium and potentially large built outcomes on an incremental basis in line with a design and construction plan of action. High quality design outcomes should be a priority.



Case Studies



East Elevation

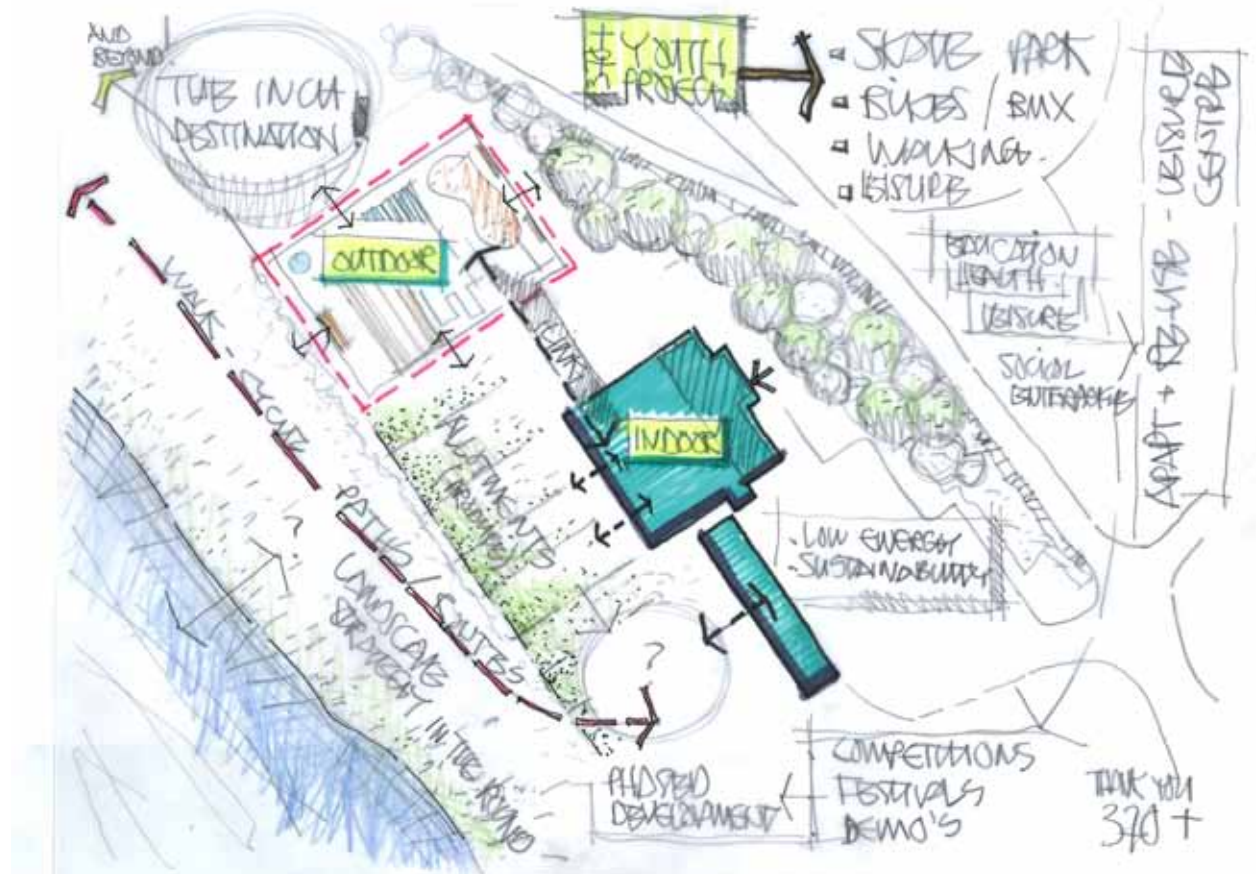


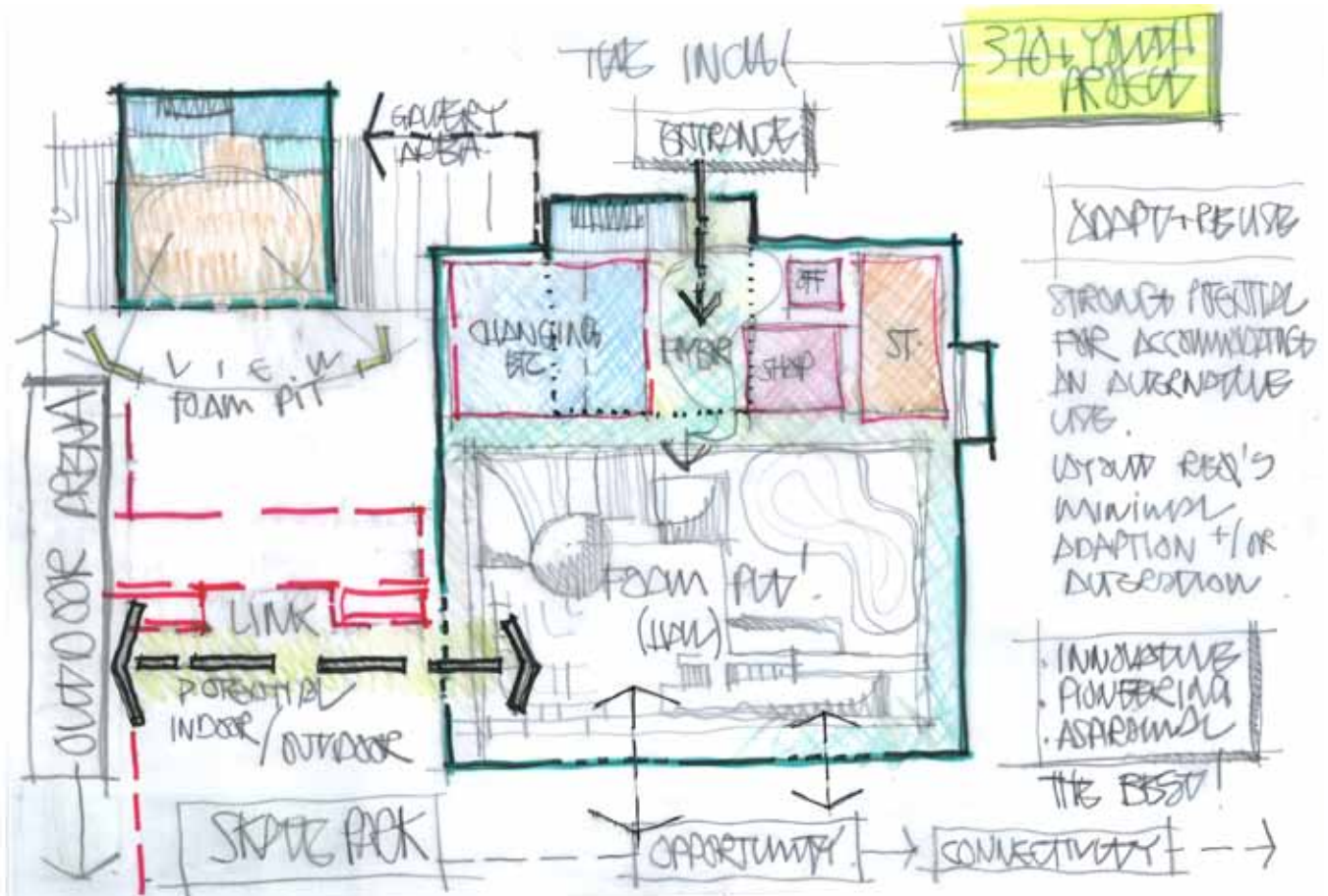
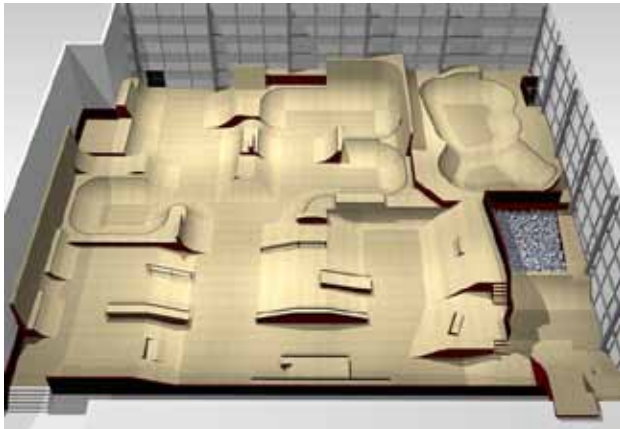
LEISURE CENTRE / THE INCH

In response to a strong youth group representation during the Charrette we examined the existing sports hall as an opportunity to provide leisure and recreational facilities in the form of a combined indoor and outdoor skate + bike park. In addition the project would also encourage a range of social enterprise initiatives associated with the projects overall aims and objectives.

The Charrette workshop explored the capacity of the existing building and surrounding landscape framework to provide a 'comfortable fit' with respect to it being adapted and re-used as a youth project. From a preliminary study it appeared the proposed new uses could be accommodated within the existing building layout and conditions. For example the introduction of indoor foam pits being implemented as a 'fitting out' process requiring minimal alterations to the building. Externally there are existing areas that could also offer the outdoor facilities a suitable location in relationship to the building with potential pathway connections to the surrounding townscape, parklands and areas beyond. The workshop also identified other compatible community related initiatives such as allotments and market gardens to encourage and support other local community interests beyond the skate park project.

The Charrette process concluded with an interest from the youth group in visiting other similar projects in Scotland as a fact finding exercise and continuing the study with other interested participants at the Charrette as means to develop the proposals in more detail.





RESIDUAL SPACES

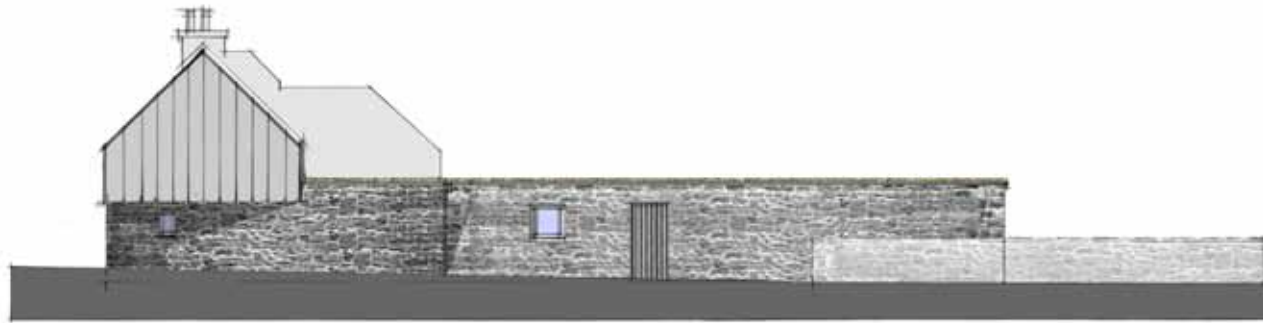
The use of small independent areas of forgotten 'left over' land and redundant properties can be a means to facilitate affordable conservation and regeneration on a manageable and incremental scale of development. The impact of such micro scale projects should not be underestimated in the contribution they can make economically, socially and environmentally. It is about achieving a 'critical mass' of often overlooked sites and buildings that collectively contribute to a renewal of neglected spaces and townscape in general. Encouraging and supporting innovative ways to develop proposals with high quality design outcomes should be made a priority and aspiration.

The location and choice of such projects will involve infill, new build, restoration or a combination of each approach depending on the type of intervention and its use. In addition it will provide challenges that will require co-operation between land owners, statutory bodies and end users. However, the potential for individuals or groups to directly engage with such an open development process of planning and regeneration would clearly encourage an emerging 'can do' attitude to 'written off' back land areas requiring urgent attention. The nature and scale of this type of project is well within the self-build ethos of affordability, sustainability, accessibility and empowerment.

Notwithstanding the widely recognised benefits that adapt and re-use approaches can achieve there would be obvious improvements to the management and upkeep of external spaces between properties; spaces that are currently in a state of disrepair, neglect and subject to antisocial behaviour. The potential exists within the back land areas to rediscover and reinterpret some of the original paths and connections behind the mains streets and side streets that form an integral part of Brechin's townscape history and future.



Case Studies



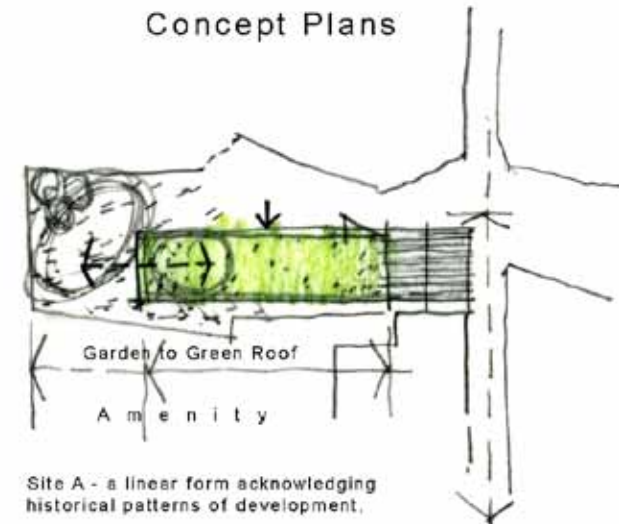
North Elevation



West Elevation

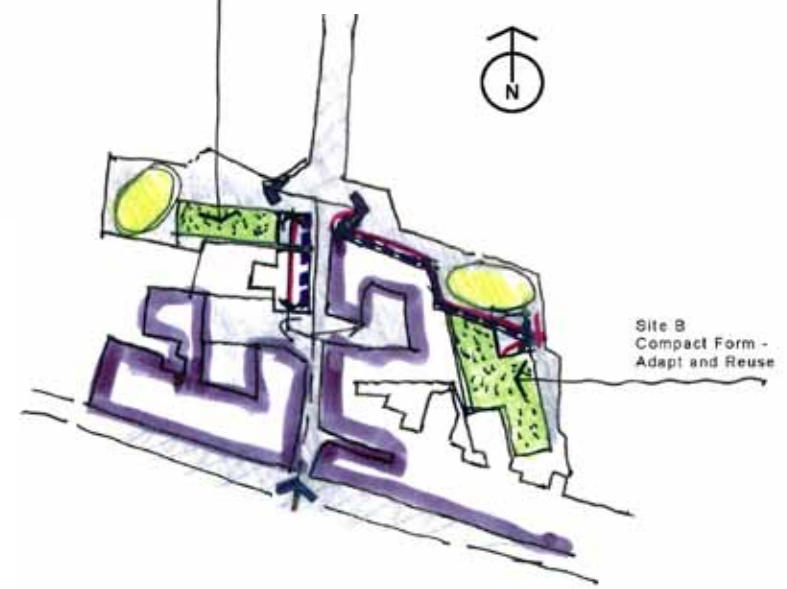


Concept Plans



Site A
Linear Form -
Intervention

Site A - a linear form acknowledging historical patterns of development,



Site B
Compact Form -
Adapt and Reuse

FORMER REGISTRAR'S OFFICE

The very attractive, listed, single story red sandstone Arts + Crafts former Registrar's Office is currently vacant and being marketed for sale or community asset transfer. Located on the edge of the town centre, on Panmure Street, the building retains many of its original interior design details with a fine reception room and adjoining administrative clerk's office space with intricate fixtures and fittings.

Issues

Whilst on initial observation the building fabric seems in reasonable order it is clear that some exterior and interior conservation work would be required to attend to some maintenance issues. Enhancing the building fabric to have better thermal insulation performance without diminishing the quality of the original building is a perennial challenge for historic buildings. Depending on future use a means of providing step free public access may require further consideration.

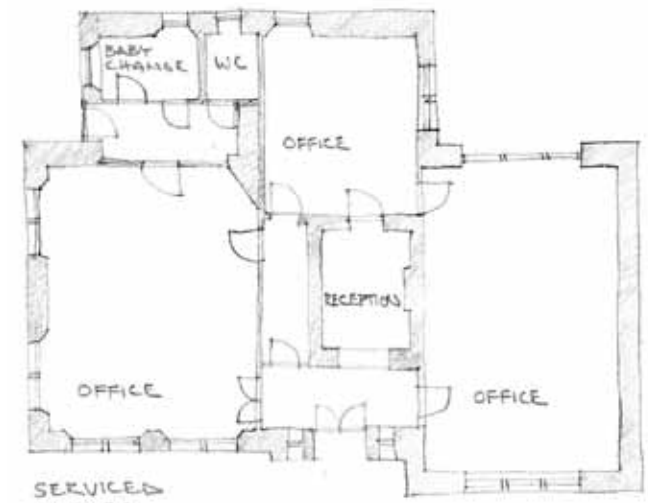
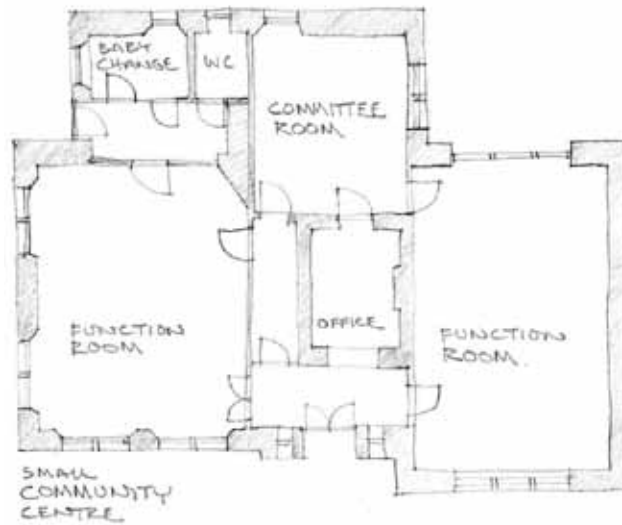
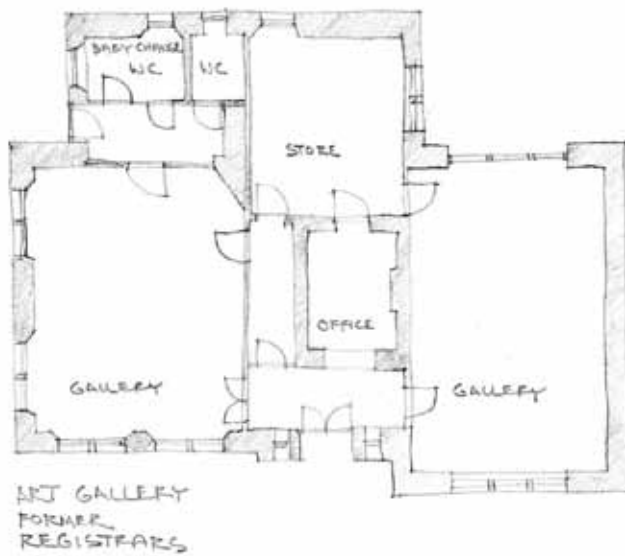
Opportunities

In the course of the Charrette the 'Futurewalk' event enabled participants access to the Registrar's Office. All were struck or reminded of its quality as one of Brechin's 'civic gems' and it's obvious potential for adaptation. The Charrette team sketched out a range of some options envisaging the building could host a boutique office, art gallery, restaurant, small community facility or even a single dwelling house. It could be expected that the building will attract interest. Any potential interested party should commission further investigation into the building's careful conservation and adaptation. It is one of many fine historic buildings in central Brechin and finding appropriate 'meanwhile' activity (such as providing studio space for the flood defence artist in residence as was being discussed at the Charrette) should be explored.

		Priority	High Priority
Growth Oriented Business	✓	Timescale	Short Term - Available on Market
Visitor Economy	✓	Possible Uses	Wide range of uses including community facility, office space, boutique retail, restaurant, gallery space
Health + Wellbeing	?	Action	Establish Scope to relax standards (eg. parking standards) and provide funding advice for prospective occupants to encourage suitable adaptive use
Extended Town Centre Living	?	Delivery	Willing purchaser and potential occupants required, if can be demonstrated commercially viable
3rd Sector Organisations + Community Ownership	✓		Angus Council Heritage funding sources: HLF & HS Arts & Creative funding Sources: CreativeScotland

Registrar's Office Interior





Proposed refurbishment sketches

Registrar's Office Exterior



FORMER COURT BUILDINGS






Located on Bank Street, a low profile location on the edge of the town centre that belies its previous prominent civic role the listed three storey Court Buildings is another of Brechin's historic 'civic gems'. Vacant, and with scaffolding at the time of the Charrette, participants were given an opportunity on the 'Futurewalk' to access the building's principal spaces, notably the former Council Chambers and fine 19th Century Court Room.

Issues

As with other heritage buildings considered in the Charrette the former Court Buildings warrant detail building conditions and conservation survey as part of a feasibility study into building reuse and adaptation. Aside from the wonderful Court Room, which retains not only original fixtures and fittings but contemporaneous furniture, the remainder of the building would appear to lend itself to adaptive reuse. Adapting former custodial police cells can prove awkward, depending on building structure, but these matters would require further consideration. The Court Room should be retained and accessible to the public, perhaps by arrangement.

Opportunities

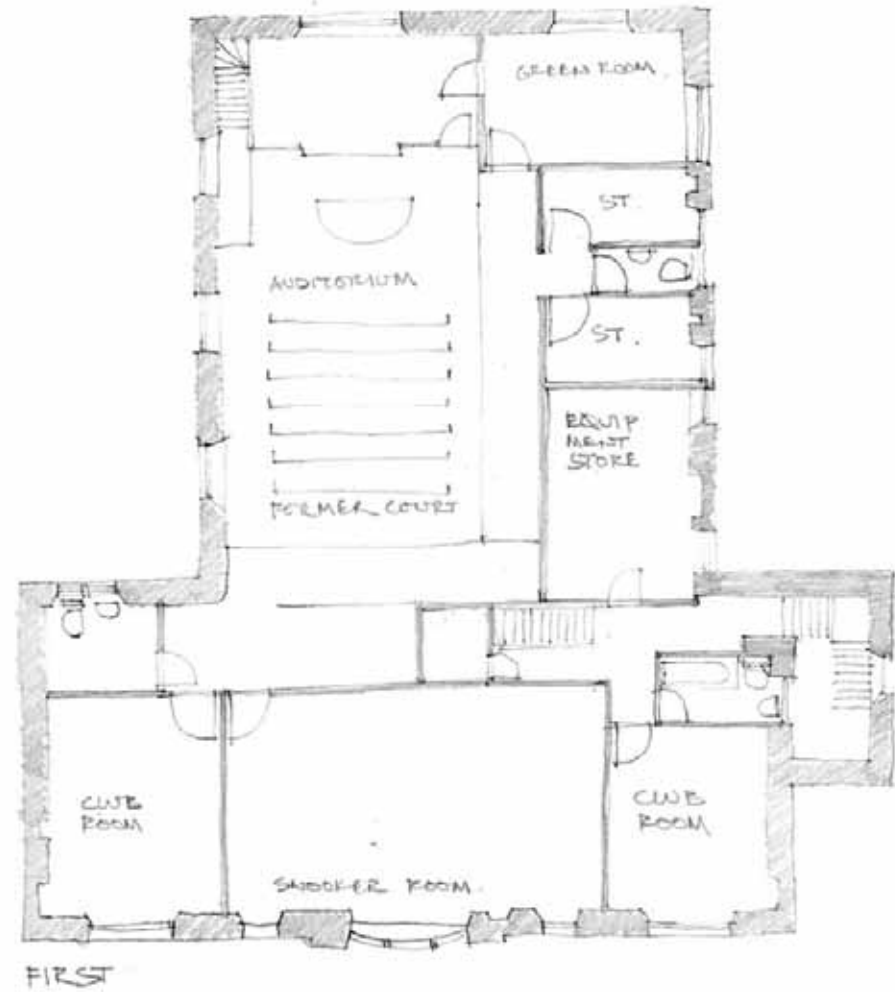
As with the nearby Registrar's Office the former Court Buildings could accommodate a range of uses. The building would appear to lend itself to conversion to flats, a small hotel or hostel, a community or youth centre. Some of these options were sketched out in the course of the Charrette and warrant further development as part of a feasibility study to determine the constraints and options for adaptation.

		Priority	Medium Priority
Growth Oriented Business		Timescale	Short Term - Vacant
Visitor Economy		Possible Uses	Could accommodate small hotel, flats or community facility. Scope to demolish 'Access Office' new build component for off street parking. Maintain visitor access to set-piece 'Courtroom' space
Health + Wellbeing		Action	Establish scope to relax standards (eg. parking standards) and provide funding advice for prospective occupants to encourage suitable adaptive use.
Extended Town Centre Living		Delivery	Willing purchaser and potential occupants required, if can be demonstrated commercially viable
3rd Sector Organisations + Community Ownership			Angus Council Heritage funding sources: HLF & HS Arts & culture funding sources: CreativeScotland



Former Court Buildings Interior

Former Court Buildings Exterior



Proposed plan

VENNELS / CLOSES / BACKGROUND PROJECTS

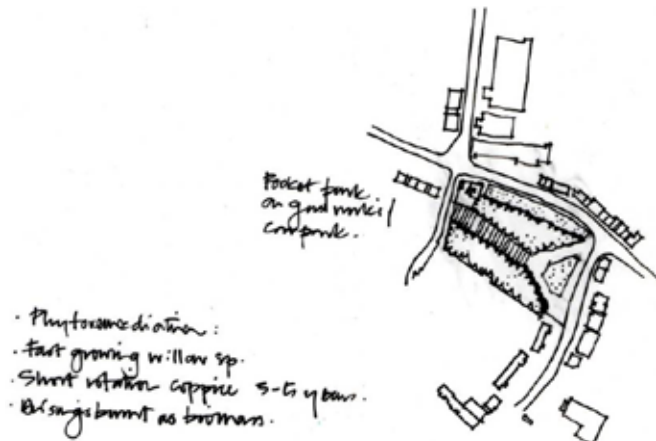
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		Priority	Medium Priority
Growth Oriented Business	✓ ?	Timescale	Medium Term
Visitor Economy	? ✓	Possible Uses	Adaptive reuse of old buildings or replacement / infill with new development (residential, studios / offices) etc.
Health + Wellbeing	✗	Action	Review policies (including conservation area) to streamline and simplify to encourage redevelopment within tight urban form.
Extended Town Centre Living	✓	Delivery	Angus Council Owners in partnership with developer if can be demonstrated to be commercially viable. SG town centre funding sources: RCGF, Town Centre Empty Homes
3rd Sector Organisations + Community Ownership	?		

GASWORKS SITE

Text to follow



		Priority	Low Priority / long term (redevelopment)
Growth Oriented Business	?	Timescale	Medium Priority / short term (meanwhile environmental improvements)
Visitor Economy	X	Possible Uses	Scope for stalled spaces type approach in the meantime? Housing or community facility - subject to remediation / site constraints
Health + Wellbeing	? ✓	Action	AC Masterplan Framework Proactive Planning 'testbed'? - contact owners
Extended Town Centre Living	✓	Delivery	Angus Council
3rd Sector Organisations + Community Ownership	X		Developer or community in long term subject to planning potential, site abnormalities and viability

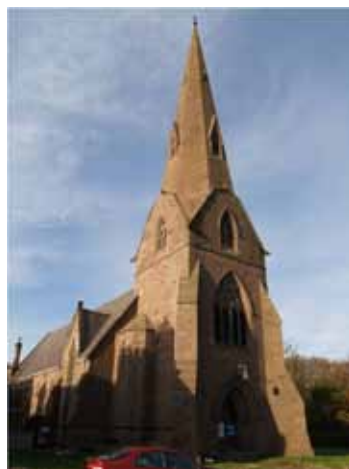
DAMACRE CENTRE

Text to follow



ST. COLUMBA'S CHURCH

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MAISONDIEU CHURCH

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MONTROSE STREET

Text to follow

ST. DROSTANS HOUSE


























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Open Space Networks

In parallel with the Priority Buildings and Sites the Charrette identified and recommends action on five interrelated open space projects / initiatives. As with the Priority Buildings and Sites studies, observations and suggestions outlined with respect to Open Space Networks are only indicative; based solely on early discussions and initial fieldwork. Further investigation, consultation and feasibility work would be required to scope out and develop ideas in each instance.

Open spaces Network Proposal



	Growth Oriented Business	Visitor Economy	Community Health & Wellbeing	Extended Town Centre Living	3rd Sector organisations & Community ownership	
Public Park						High Priority Short to Long Term
Path Network (walking Cycling)						High Priority Short to Long Term
River Walks						High Priority Short Term
The Den						Medium Priority Medium Term
Shared Space						Medium Priority Short Term - vacant

BRECHIN PUBLIC PARK

The Public Park has been the focus of recent initiatives by the Council and a Public Park Group, associated with the Community Council, considering small interventions in the park to provide improved landscape and play facilities. These are clearly laudable and demonstrate the enthusiasm for the Park amid the wider community; interest borne out by discussions throughout the Charrette.

As the principal public greenspace in Brechin the Park warrants an overarching vision and landscape framework to ensure that future efforts work incrementally towards delivering that vision. This approach could enable funding application and benchmark the park against best practice elsewhere via, say, the Green Flag scheme. The Public Park should clearly tie in with the extended footpath and cycle network, support the health and wellbeing agenda and encourage active pursuits. There is likely to be scope for the park facilities to be supported and part maintained by interested community groups and this should be scoped out in discussion with possible interested parties.



PATH NETWORK

One of the key findings from the Charrette was the scope and desire to enhance, extend and better connect the existing path network. This issue was consistently raised throughout the Charrette. A map based review of the existing, promoted path network is that is disjointed. This is liable to be, in large part, due to the lack of opportunities for car-free paths penetrating into the centre of Brechin. However many cited scope for the enhancement of existing paths, including their quality, extend of lighting, way-finding and their connectivity to encourage increased patronage and functional benefit to those getting about compact Brechin but foot or on bike.

An early action that is required is to conduct an audit of the footpath and cycle path network in and around Brechin and to establish the scope for community and interest group support in managing, maintaining and extending the path networks and aligning this with available sources of funding.



RIVER WALKS

Brechin enjoys a riverside location and benefited from this and its topography with numerous mills and industries. However the recurring threat of inundation and flooding on the Inch and along River Street has demanded significant flood alleviation works that are currently being implemented to defend these areas from increased levels of the River South Esk.

The advent of the flood defence has prompted further consideration of how the redefined riverside walks and open spaces could be in the future, including proposals for a 'Starry Path' of luminescence creating an attractive and intriguing evening spectacle.

In line with wider enhancements to the path network the River Walks can redefine Brechin's new relationship to the River South Esk, and Skinner's Burn, with new routes up the Miller's Steps to Lower High Street and through the following Close to Damacre Road and St. Ninian's Square.

THE DEN

Text to follow

SHARED SPACE

Text to follow

Access, Traffic & Transport

Reference	Name / Site	Existing Situation	Masterplan Proposal	Justification / Additional Comments	Priority
AC1S (S = Short Term / M = Med / L = Long)	Signage review to include directional signage for those on foot / parking locations / look into A90 HGV signage etc.	Signage in town aged and poor. Parking signage disjointed. A90 signage could help divert HGVs around the perimeter of the town.	Carry out local signage review and replace signage to help wayfinding to and between town attractions including names / distances / times. Review parking directional signage to give better definition of town car parks. Discuss with Transport Scotland whether northbound HGV traffic can be signed to divert this traffic to the northmost (Edzell) A90 junction.	Transport Scotland will need to understand the rationale behind requests for signage (to assist in keeping HGVs from the historic core and to complement local traffic control initiatives as per AC3S).	High
AC2S	Parking Decriminalisation	Parking Decriminalisation - AC are taking this forwards - enforcement is a recurring issue	N/A	AC are considering this in the context of the County.	Medium
AC3S	Examine possibilities around environmental weight limits	Many concerns about HGV traffic in historic centre, particularly where it meets and has difficulty in passing.	Examine possibilities around environmental weight limits - possible approach using Panmure Street / Clerk Street	Replicating existing environmental weight limits could (in combination with a simple one way on one or two streets) divert southbound HGV traffic to the north (A90) Edzell junction.	High
AC4S	Brechin City Car Park	Event revealed concerns regarding the amount of parking to serve the town (particularly if more visitor parking is required)	Discuss with football club their apparent offer in relation to surfacing and use of the Brechin City FC car park (and if pursued tie into signage proposals at AC1S.		High

Reference	Name / Site	Existing Situation	Masterplan Proposal	Justification / Additional Comments	Priority
AC5S	Review of key bus stop locations	Some issues revealed at Charrette around focal point for bus services.	Review of key bus stop locations required with focus on Panmure Street?	Panmure Street could accommodate all service passing through the historic centre.	Medium
AC6S	Streetscape business case	North part of High Street has had works carried out	Develop business case to examine further works in historic centre and on south High Street.	Streetscape business case could be developed around creation of an 'arrival' point in Brechin to emphasise the historic core.	High
AC7M	Streetscape works	North part of High Street has had works carried out - short term (AC6S) business case can be worked up with a view to works being carried out in medium term.	Illustrate streetscape intervention locations.	Could north end of High Street be shared / pedestrianised?	High
AC8M	Development of information / attraction in town linked with public transport	Event revealed some issues around co-location of a central tourist facility (e.g. café/ information) with public transport 'gateway'.	Examine opportunities to co-locate a (tourism?) information resource with a public transport node?		Medium
□AC9L	Rail case	Heritage railway already present with running to House of Dun. Some attempts already made at local level to examine main line reconnection.	Examine possible national level case to connect rail back to the mainline. Protect possibility in the Development Plan	Rail presents major travel opportunity for the town in the mid to longer term and should be explored at national level.	High



6. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS & NEXT STEPS



OVERALL CONCLUSIONS & NEXT STEPS

BRECHIN DESIGN CHARRETTE: OVERARCHING THEMES: SUMMARY

The overarching themes of the Brechin Design Charrette are summarised in Chapter 3 and include highlighting Brechin as a:

- “Can do” place that promotes proactive forward planning and opportunities for new and growing business to create local jobs
- Great place for visitors (+ therefore residents) and therefore importance of growing the visitor economy in Brechin and the surrounding rural area is crucial
- Healthy, active living place with good sport facilities, open space, walking / cycling provision
- Service centre for rural area emphasising quality local sourced food and produce and the rural economy
- Place that uses a wide definition of ‘sustainability’ to include: walkable City, low-carbon place, resilient and thriving local economy that uses its wealth of social capital effectively.

Throughout the Charrette discussions there was a clear interest and growing commitment to exploring the opportunity for community ‘ownership’ of Brechin’s community assets like City Hall & Leisure Centre)

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The External Funding Team at Angus Council produce a monthly funding bulletin and can assist voluntary groups with funding from a variety of sources, including European Structural Funds, Lottery distributors and Trusts.

Table 6.1 below summarises possible sources of funding for the Brechin Development Framework and Action Plan priority projects.

Table 6.1: Brechin Development Framework & Action Plan: Potential Funding Sources

Funding Source	Specific Opportunitiest
PUBLIC	
1. Scottish Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Regeneration Capital Grant Fund <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - deprivation & disadvantage - transformational change - private sector investment ii. Town Centre Action Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e.g. Digital Towns, simplified planning iii. Town Centre Empty Homes Fund iv. People & Communities Fund: Strengthening Communities
2. Heritage Lottery Fund	Heritage Enterprise Parks for People
3. Nesta, HLF, BLF	Rethinking Parks Investing In Ideas Awards for All
4. Community Empowerment	Awards for All Scottish Land Fund Investing in Communities: Growing Community Assets
5. Next European Funding programme (2014 - 2020) InterregAltena LEADER 2015+	European Structural & Investment Funds (ESIF) Themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Competiveness Innovation Jobs - Environment Resource Efficiency Low Carbon - Social Inclusion Local Development
6. Creative Scotland:	Cultural Economy Programme Public Art Sited & Youth Arts Hub Creative Place Awards
7. Sportscotland	Facilities Fund

Funding Source	Specific Opportunitiest
PRIVATE	
1. Local business & investors: owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Angus Council to be proactive: de-risking & packaging discrete market ready opportunities includes using 'ghost planning applications'. See project 1.5: Proactive Planning - Offer smaller development packages that sit within the Development Framework to Brechin based businesses and investors
2. Local Asset Backed Vehicle: Development Agreements: Property Leases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local Asset-Backed Vehicle (LABVs) could combine private investment with public sector assets; - Development agreements are a simpler approach where the private sector builds on public sector land. - Property leases as a security for investors may suit specific uses
3. Town Centre Investment Zone	Opportunity use the Development Framework to agree an approach that would be endorsed by Scottish Government
4. Local Benefactors & Opportunistic Sources	Approach local benefactors on particular projects
COMMUNITY LOCAL SOURCES	
1. Self-build	Establish sites & interest database
2. Custom build	Establish sites & interest database
3. Community ownership of 'community' assets	Development Trust or Community Interest Company
4. Tridos Bank:	Offer loans to organisations working to bring positive & lasting change.
5. Robertson/Gannochy Trusts	Focus on innovative approach to arts/sport provision particularly targeting young people
6. Opportunistic:	Eg crowd sourcing

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS: RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

A particularly strong characteristic of the Brechin Design Charrette was the emergence of 5/6 individual ‘ambassadors’ representing groups promoting particular projects who embraced the Charrette approach, gave short presentations at key events and used the Charrette to progress proposals. Examples include BRAVO, skatepark, community cinema, Maisondieu pupils, rural agri-business network). As a result particular priority projects that have emerged include:

- City Hall: piloting the community cinema
- Lower High Street: opportunity to pilot a proactive planning approach
- Leisure Centre: reuse for skatepark & other community facilities

Other projects like the Registrar’s Office that has now been let on a short term lease to the artists group who are designing the mosaics as part of the flood prevention scheme have progressed and interest is being shown in other town centre heritage and other properties.

The Brechin Action Plan and Development Framework recommendations are categorised into short, medium and long term objectives. In order to follow up and progress these actions it is essential that structures are established to drive forward implementation. Clearly the Client Group (Angus Council, BRAVO, City of Brechin and Area Partnership, Community Council) need to move quickly and decisively so as to keep the momentum that has been built up over the Charrette period.

It is proposed that the Angus Council Communities team is tasked with a **project coordination** role to ensure effective communication between stakeholders and coordinate delivery of the Brechin Action Plan and Development Framework. This role needs to be fulfilled quickly and with a visible presence in Brechin town centre.

Groups should be brought together as required, or use existing delivery vehicles to coordinate the implementation of the Brechin Town Centre Charrette Development Framework and Action Plan Outcomes. This would comprise relevant members of the community/organisations, individual project ‘ambassadors’, council officers, and representatives from partner agencies dependent and appropriate to specific actions

A **Project Champion**, who is well known and respected, should be identified within the community. The Project Champion’s role will be to advocate and promote the wider benefits of the Brechin Action Plan and Development Framework and continue to build support among public, private and third sector partners.

The officers involved should be of sufficient seniority to take decisions, lead on projects and influence work programmes within their own services. An early task will be to **agree lead responsibilities and supporting contributions, set timescales and agree reporting mechanisms** for the actions in the Brechin Action Plan and Development Framework.

The majority of actions will involve shared responsibility and a collective effort to ensure that there is coordinated positive progress, particularly where physical improvements are involved and external funding required. Where no individual partner or ‘ambassador’ has primary responsibility for an action the ‘Project Coordinator’ should progress these matters.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Angus Council is invited to endorse the **Brechin Development Framework and Action Plan**: longer term vision, development principles, strategic programmes and projects as the basis for wider consultation so as to guide future investment decisions in Brechin over the next ten years.

NEXT STEPS

The immediate next steps are as follows:

- Agree lead responsibilities, supporting contributions, set timescales and agree reporting mechanisms for the actions arising from the charrette and the Brechin Action Plan and Development Framework.
- Identify project coordinator/lead and project champion to promote, advocate and implement the Charrette actions.
- Angus Council to formally endorse the Brechin Charrette Development Framework and Action Plan: vision, strategic programmes and projects as the basis for wider consultation, so as to guide future investment decisions in Brechin over the next ten years.
- Angus Council to acknowledge the ‘fit’ between the Brechin Charrette Development Framework and Action Plan and the Angus Local Development Plan that is likely adopted in late 2015 and to identify sites in Brechin for Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- Angus Council to undertake wider business and community dissemination of the Brechin Development Framework and Action Plan and publish an on line Executive Summary.
- Angus Council and partners to review progress on delivery of the Brechin Development Framework and Action Plan at ‘Brechin Talks & Listens’ event to encourage public, private and third sector partners to review progress and discuss new ways of responding to emerging challenges and opportunities in Brechin.



7. APPENDICES



Appendix 1 - DESIGN CHARRETTE: DESIGN PROCESS

Pre-Charrette Animation & Brechin High School & Maisondieu Primary School

In the two weeks running up to the Charrette, briefings were arranged with Pupil Voice (Pupil's Council) at Brechin High School, Head Teacher at Maisondieu Primary School and the Youth Art Group (see poster image) based at the Damacre Centre. In this way, in preparation for discussions at the Charrette, young people were invited to look ahead to the year 2025 and share ideas as to how they imagined Brechin may have altered and what changes they would like to see ten years from now.



Students Participating in the Charrette Process



Publicity

The charette was publicised with articles in the Brechin Advertiser in the weeks prior to the events and the Angus Council web site and Whatsoninbrechin Facebook page. Posters and flyers were distributed to local shops and community buildings. A Facebook page was set up and had 76 'likes' up to Closing Event and a Twitter account (@brechintalks) was set up that had 344 followers. Two briefings were also e-mailed to more than 180 contacts on a database that was compiled by the Design Team.



Activity on Twitter

Brechin Design Charrette: Day by Day Summary & Overview of Relevant Meetings

The Design Studio was set up in the Damacre Centre and was operational from Wednesday afternoon: 4 February. Public presentations were the 'milestone' events at the launch on the Wednesday, Work in Progress on Saturday 7 February and the final presentation on 19 February and included small exhibitions. Five targeted working sessions were organised through the four days. The Charrette also offered opportunities for the public and interested parties to 'drop in' to the Design Studio to have their say about the future development of Brechin. At the end of the process the Design Team presented a comprehensive Development Framework and Regeneration Action Plan that included a series of development option plans for the main opportunity sites that had been agreed.

A particular characteristic of the Brechin Design Charrette was the emergence of 5/6 individuals ('ambassadors') representing groups promoting particular projects who embraced the Charrette approach, gave short presentations at key events and used the Charrette to progress proposals. Examples include BRAVO, skatepark, community cinema, Maisondieu pupils, rural agri-business network)

BRECHIN Events

charrette 4-7 February 2015

@ the Damacre Centre, 26 Damacre Rd, Brechin



Launch Events **Wed 4 Feb: 4.30pm + 7.30pm**
Set the agenda and share your views on Brechin's future Vision

Design Studio **Thur 5 Feb + Fri 6 Feb: 9am til late**
Drop-in to the Design Studio to discuss your ideas for Brechin

Futurewalk **Thur 5 Feb: 9.30am – 12 noon**
A walk and talk tour considering Brechin Past, Present, Possible.....

Business/Community Workshop **Thur 5 Feb: 7.30pm – 9pm**
Opportunity to discuss achievements, challenges + opportunities

Weekend Pin-Up **Sat 7 Feb: 10.00am – 12 noon**
Presentation of work in progress towards a Brechin Vision + Action Plan

Have Your Say

[@brechintalks](#) [#brechintalks](#) [www.facebook.com/WhatsOnInBrechin](#) **web** [www.angus.gov.uk/brechincharrette](#)

For further information, contact Sarah Kettle, Communities Manager: Brechin & Montrose, Angus Council. Tel 01336 627460 or email cd@brechin@angus.gov.uk

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Drop-in to the Design Studio to discuss your ideas for Brechin

Futurewalk **Thur 5 Feb: 9.30am – 12 noon**
A walk and talk tour considering Brechin Past, Present, Possible.....

Key Stakeholders + Interested Parties Workshop **Thur 5 Feb: 1.30pm – 4pm**
Review of local, regional and national initiatives + policies

Business + Community Workshop **Thur 5 Feb: 7.30pm – 9pm**
Opportunity to discuss achievements, challenges + opportunities

Land/Building Owners + Developer's Forum **Fri 6 Feb: 10.30am – 12 noon**
Opportunity for interested parties to discuss development opportunities

Traffic + Transport Walkabout + Workshop **Fri 6 Feb: 10.00am – 12 noon**
Opportunity to review challenges, opportunities and a way forward

Weekend Pin-Up **Sat 7 Feb: 10.00am – 12 noon**
Presentation of work in progress towards a Brechin Vision + Action Plan

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Charrette Activities Poster



Discussion with Students

Wednesday 4 February

Prior to the Launch events an interactive discussion was held with pupils from **Brechin High School & Maisondieu Primary School**. The young people highlighted opportunities to:

- promote family facilities/events like the community cinema
- make improvements to the nature trail
- provide space for young people starting a business
- gap in provision for space for S2-S5 age group to 'hang out' (Attic is popular for P5-S1 age group)
- improve 'safe routes to school' and cycle routes/access to the new community campus.

The **Launch Events** were held at 4.30pm & 7.00pm. Around 80 people attended the events. A brief welcome was made by Angus Council Councillor Jim Houston. After a short presentation from the Design Team, the plenary session focussed on a **2025 Vision for Brechin** and based on the initial work of the City of Brechin & Area Partnership. The outcomes of then discussion are presented in Chapter 3

After the plenary sessions the attendees went into four smaller groups who helped set the Charrette agenda by discussing and identifying in turn the main issues facing Brechin around the following topic groups:

- Community + Business
- Town Centre Uses + Property
- Key Buildings + Sites / Open Space + Landscape
- Transport, Access + Traffic Management

A separate discussion group of young people interested in promoting a skatepark in Brechin was also convened. The main issues that were identified are summarised in the following Table:

Community + Business	Town Centre Uses + Property
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on quality & niche markets: spectrum of business • Internet & social media & ‘Shop Doctor’ advice: “My High Street” • Potential of the visitor economy: collaboration across network • Business incubator: space terms mentoring • Encourage new business: fresh blood • Enterprise: start-up & ‘growth’ accommodation • Community groups/activities (42): database/mapping/audit: open day • Audit community skills: young, families, older people • Young people involved in community: connections e.g BRAVO • Space for young people: 14-18 Attic+ • Schools business links: awareness/promotion, skills, local jobs • Existing independent businesses: encourage more diversity • Broader mix of uses in town centre • World Host accreditation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enthusiasm for third sector: community business / social enterprise approach • Lots of ideas: coalescence of sites/buildings uses: test robustness • Interest in quality niche retail: arts/creative industries & local food • More “Pop Up Creatives” • More varied visitor accommodation: self-catering: families: bunk house • Positive response to Community Campus: Leisure Centre & Damacre • Arts/cultural venues: City Hall’s role? • Residential Opportunities: affordable town centre living & self/custom build • DEMAND V SUPPLY: pricing: assets/liabilities/planning/building regs barriers • Absent landlords
Key Buildings + Sites / Open Space + Landscape	Transport, Access + Traffic
<p>Buildings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Hall • Lower High Street (incl. Flicks) • The Inch / Leisure Centre • St Columba’s Church • Maisondieu Church • Former Andover School (under redevelopment?) • Damacre Centre • Registrar’s Office • Court Buildings • Closes / Vennels project • Gasworks Site - stalled space? • Need a Visitor ‘Hub’ <p>Open Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Park Group • Path Network (walking/cycling) • River Walks • The Den • Shared Space? • Routes + Gateways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking - provision, location, signing, enforcement • Pedestrianisation? Shared Space? • Cyclepath / Footpath Network • HGVs • Railway?

Thursday 5 February

The morning of the second full day of the Charrette involved a **Futurewalk** led by Brain Mitchell from Brechin Civic Trust. This was an ideal opportunity for the 21 attendees to go on a walk and talk tour of Brechin past, present and possible with access to some of the important building including the Registrar's Office, Court Buildings and City Hall.



Futurewalk



25 people attended the early afternoon **Technical Stakeholders' Workshop** held at the Design Studio. This included the various statutory, voluntary, community organisations that have an interest in Brechin. 8 pupils and two staff for Masiondieu Primary School including the school's Eco Warriors + Fair-trade Group attended the Workshop.

The focus for the Workshop was a series of technical briefings and detailed discussion to refine some of the implications of the emerging development framework and action plan structuring principles including in particular:

Economic Regeneration

- New starts
- Growing indigenous
- Inward investing

Proactive Planning

- Test initiatives through Charrette / post-Charrette
- Development Frameworks Brief / Site Masterplans
- Involve roads + others

Visitor Economy

- Activity tourism / agri-tourism
- Hub + spoke networks / destinations (Brechin +)
- Awareness / promotion (sea to Angus glens)

Community Facilities

- Audit of existing facilities - hierarchy
- Equality of access

Community Development Opportunities

- Aligning initiatives

Parking + Access

Reality v perceived issues



Charrette Discussions



38 people attended the **Businesses & Community Representatives Workshop** on Thursday evening at the Damacre Centre. A wide range of issues were discussed particularly around the need to focus on local economic and community regeneration projects that will complement the physical development framework investment. The emerging four integrated programmes were discussed in groups namely:

1. Supporting Growth Orientated Businesses
2. Developing the Visitor Economy
3. Focussing On Community Health + Wellbeing
4. Extending Town Centre Living
5. Building Third Sector Organisations + Community Ownership

The outcomes from the discussion were used to refine the Action Plan that is presented in Chapter 4. The strong overarching themes included:

- Promote more enterprise & entrepreneurship: use meanwhile uses like TestTown.
- Responding to higher expectations: ensure town centre provides value service entertainment.
- Invest in built and cultural heritage: creative industries/arts & digital: visitors.
- Opportunities for community ownership of heritage buildings: Community Development Trust.

The Design Team continued to prepare plans, drawings and illustrations based on the emerging structuring principles that would be presented at the Interim Public Review on Thursday.



Friday 6 March

The third full day of the Charrette included a **Traffic + Transport walkabout** led by TPL and attended by 17 people including 8 pupils from Masiondiou Primary School. Among the issues discussed was routing of HGVs, safe routes to school and the footpath and cycle network.

A **Land/ Owners&Developers Forum** was also held in the morning held at the Damacre Centre and attended by 5 people. This was an ideal opportunity to engage directly with individual owners and a housing specialist and to hear first-hand their view of Brechin and the emerging recovering property market. It was clear from the discussions that there would be support for a 'proactive planning' initiative with a focus on a more flexible approach to assist in sites assembly, on planning and parking particularly to tackle more difficult town centre sites.

A **'Sense Check' Meeting** was held with 19 Angus Council Technical Officers and stakeholders at the Damacre Centre. This was an opportunity to review the strategic principles driving the Development Framework and Regeneration Action Plan and some of the detailed emerging layouts. The result was that there was an opportunity for the Design Team to revise and refine the proposals to take on board some of the technical issues that had been identified. Meanwhile the Design Team continued to progress the Development Framework and the final presentational material.

Saturday 7 March

31 people attended the **Interim 'Pin-Up' Presentation and Exhibition** on Saturday morning at the Damacre Centre. Three individual Brechiners representing particular groups (BRAVO, skatepark, agri-business network) gave short presentations. The discussion focussed on fundamental strategic interventions including:

- Maximise the potential of what Brechin already has and devise an integrated 'whole town' plan which would allow each organisation to coordinate initiatives towards achieving the vision
- Identify new opportunities which are sustainable and which will also increase economic activity in the area with the potential for new and niche businesses
- Ensure that key infrastructure is in place
- Identify best future uses for key buildings (eg. City Hall, Damacre Centre, Leisure Centre, Registrar's Office, Town Council + Court Buildings),
- Prepare a traffic management plan
- Action Plan should include economic and community development projects.

Early studies for the potential development sites were shown. A number of people stayed on to hold one to one discussions with the Design Team.

Thursday 19 February

54 people attended the two Final Presentations and Exhibition at the Damacre Centre. The events included an exhibition of the Design Team's work and a final opportunity for one to one discussions with the Design Team and this was followed by a presentation of the emerging final Regeneration Action Plan and Development Framework that is summarised and illustrated in Chapter 4 and 5. Three individual Brechiners representing particular groups (BRAVO, skatepark, community cinema) again gave short presentations. The Design Team's presentation included town centre context analysis and fundamental issues, spatial strategy, illustrated key strategic moves, schematic and layouts and diagrams that highlighted proposals to improve connectivity in particular the foot/cycle path network and proposals to develop key sites. Closing remarks were made by Angus Council Councillor Jim Houston.

DWA/Brechin Design Charrette/DFR Text 200415





LUNCH EVENT

Wednesday 4 February: 7.30pm

ATTENDANCE

Name	Resident / Organisation
JIM HOUSTON	ANGUS COUNCIL
JENNY & ROBERT MARTIN	RESIDENTS
AI MACRIE	BRECHIN BUS BY
STEVE BEMPSEY	VOLUNTEER
P GEORGE	GARDNER, ALDWORTH, CHURCH
DOON DALE	GARDNER, ALDWORTH, CHURCH
KEVIN GRAYES	CATHEDRAL
IAN ANDREWS	EUROPE ANDERSON TRAILERS
STEWART FERGUSON	34 TRINITY RD, RESIDENT
SPRINGGATE LOCK HART	COMMUNITY COUNCIL
TCBA P BRIGLE	BRECHIN BRIG
KARL SAETH	190 TAYLOR
KRISTINA LEBMAN	RESIDENT
MARK TAYLOR	BRUG
MARK ARBUTHNOT	COMMUNITY CINEMA
BEIL JANICE	SEATEPARK
DERAH JASON	SEATEPARK
PAUL CLARK	SEATEPARK
GARET HARRIS	SEATEPARK
CORRY LLOYD	SEATEPARK
TAYLOR SIMPSON	SEATEPARK
SLEWICK YOUNG	SEATEPARK
ADAM BIRCH	SEATEPARK
NATHAN CHRISTIE	SEATEPARK
SCOTT LAWSON	SEATEPARK
CON NOR MAGGIE	SEATEPARK
CON NOR NOEL	SEATEPARK



BUSINESS & COMMUNITY WORKSHOP
Thursday 5 February: 7.30pm
ATTENDANCE

Name	Resident / Organisation
AN MACDOE	BRECHIN READERS
P STEVENS	CHARRETTE
B MURPHY	
CONNOR MURPHY	SKATEPARK
K DONALD	RESIDENT
C LLOYD	
ADAM BISHOP	
BRENDA McLENNAN	RESIDENT
CALLUM McLENNAN	RESIDENT
MIKE SHERITT	TAIYDIE CYCLES
TOMMY HENDERSON	CALEDONIAN RAILWAY
EDN JOY	CALEDONIAN RAILWAY
SUZY WALKERDASH	DAVIDSON LEGACY
STEVE WILSON	ANGUS COUNCIL
MAURICE CROSSIE	MOSAIC ARTIST
GAVIS BRYNER	BRYNER BUTCHERS
NATHAN CHRISTIE	
BOBBY BLACK	BLACKS OF BRECHIN
YVONNE BISHOP	BRECHIN CASTLE CENTRE
BILL STURROCK	BRANDYCLAMP
CHALLET CAMERON	RESIDENT
ANNE THORNTON	SPRING COTT SALTWATERfalls
BRIAN HALL	CCDC
NICK FANNIN	EDINBURGH NAPEER
ROBERT HEALY	HARPER UNIVERSITY
SANDRA THOMPSON	RESIDENT
PETER MURPHY	EDINBURGH NAPEER
DAVID MEDAL	DVP
FRANCES KEATS	C. COUNCIL



BUSINESS & COMMUNITY WORKSHOP
Thursday 5 February: 7.30pm
ATTENDANCE

Name	Resident / Organisation
FREESTYLE AND WEST	
DAVID & WENDY WALKER	BRECHIN
GRAHAM FARQUHAR	BRECHIN
EEN ROBINSON	BRECHIN CITY FC



DESIGN STUDIO
Thursday and Friday 5 & 6 February:
ATTENDANCE

Name	Resident / Organisation
ADAM RYNDYCE	N/A
DIANA BURGE	WEL
JAMIE ARBUTHNOTT	CHIRK/JDD
BOB BERRY	N/A
BOB ROBINSON	ANGUS COUNCIL - ROADS
P FRASER	POLICE SCOTLAND DRPS
JAMIE DEWSON	ANGUS COUNCIL - COMMUNITIES
WALCOLM MITCHELL	EDINBURGH NAPEER UNIVERSITY
MARK HARPER	CCDC
MARK BLACKLEY	GARDNER MEMORIAL



SENSE CHECK

Friday 6 February: 9.00pm

ATTENDANCE

Name	Resident / Organisation
DAVE SMITH	ANGUS COUNCIL
IAN LOHMAN	ANGUS COUNCIL
MARK ARMSTRONG	ANGUS COUNCIL
BON JOHNSON	ANGUS COUNCIL
KEVIN ROBERTSON	ANGUS COUNCIL
BOB ROBINSON	ANGUS COUNCIL
EATE COWIE	ANGUS COUNCIL
SANDRA SPRINGSTON	ANGUS COUNCIL
JILL ROSE	ANGUS COUNCIL
CAROLINE SPINK	ANGUS COUNCIL
DOUGLAS HILL	ANGUS COUNCIL
LISA ROSE	ANGUS COUNCIL
STEVE WILSON	ANGUS COUNCIL
WILL MACKENZIE	ANGUS COUNCIL
ALISON SMITH	ANGUS COUNCIL



WORK IN PROGRESS: REVIEW WORKSHOPS: EXHIBITION

Saturday 7 February: 10.00am

ATTENDANCE

Name	Resident / Organisation
DEBBE KUMPER	JACOBINES INSTITUTE
ANNE MITCHELL	ADORN CLUB / FLORAL ART
GEORGE MITCHELL	CALEDONIAN RAILWAY
KEVIN CLARK	STEPPING OUT
GAIL ROBERTSON	
WENDY WALKER	MERCHANT HOUSE
PETER GEORGE	GARBER MEMORIAL
NORMAN MACKENZIE	MERCHANTS HOUSE
S FERGUSON	34 TRINITY ROAD
FRANKIE KAYE	CHURCH
WALE SHERRILL	TAINSIDE CYCLES
AMANDA TAYLOR	BRECHIN ADVERTISER
CORNEL NAGHE	BRECHIN SKATEPARK
SCOTT LAWRENCE	BRECHIN SKATEPARK
TAVERNA SIMPSON	BRECHIN SKATEPARK
DOLLY CLARK	COMMUNITY COUNCIL
DOUGLAS MURRAY	BUSINESS
JACOB MITCHELL	ANGUS COUNCIL
BARCY J STERNHOLT	BRIDGE STREET
ANNIE THOMSON	CLLA DRINKS
COUNCILLOR EWANS	
COUNCILLOR HOUSTON	
EATIE LOHMAN	
FARE BLACKLEY	GARBER MEMORIAL
C BAINBRIDGE	CHURCH / COMMUNITY WORKER

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