

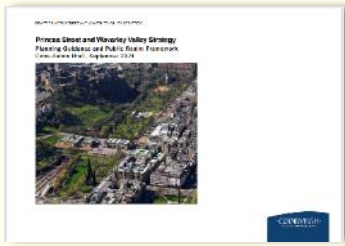
# Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy

## Large print summary

Consultation Draft

January 2025





The Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy helps to deliver **City Plan 2030** and the Council's **City Centre Transformation**.



This accompanying “Large print summary” document is provided in a 16-point Arial font with bold text to highlight important information.

The document has additional images to help communicate the main points from the full Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy document but does not include all the detail.

It is intended to be easier to read for people that benefit from this style of presentation.

The full strategy document is available **here**.



A **public consultation on the Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy** is open until 21st February 2025.

# Contents

**This document has six chapters:**

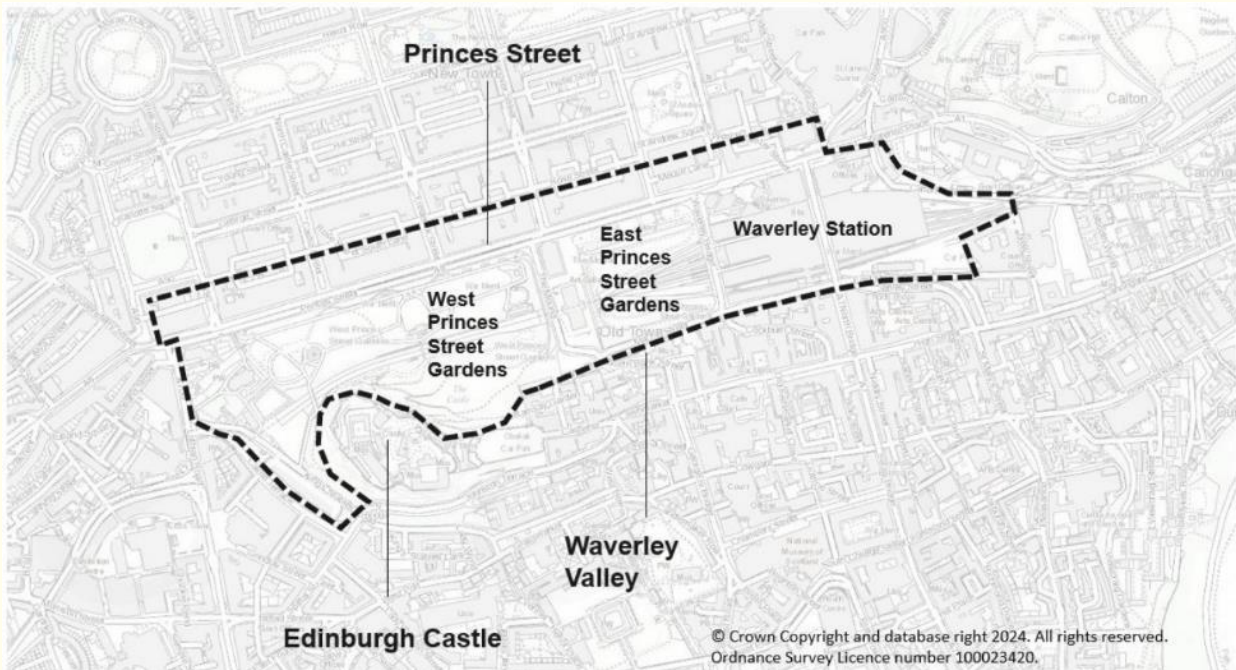
1. Introduction and summary	page 4-6
2. Vision and Objectives	6-9
3. Policy Context	10-12
4. Princes Street's Uses, Blocks and Buildings	13
5. Princes Street's Public Realm and Mobility	14-18
6. The Waverley Valley	19-22

# 1. Introduction and summary

The Princes Street and Waverley Valley area includes:

- Princes Street
- East and West Princes Street Gardens
- Waverley Station
- Waverley Market
- East Market Street

## Map of strategy area



View of Princes Street looking east

**In summary, the strategy aims to:**



### **Create a more welcoming and accessible, high quality city centre**

The strategy includes suggestions for:

- public space improvements on Castle Street, the Mound and Waverley Bridge
- new ramp access to Princes Street Gardens
- pavement and pedestrian crossing improvements along Princes Street.



### **Protect and improve green spaces**

The strategy looks to:

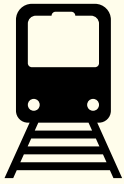
- develop a separate improvement plan for Princes Street Gardens
- enhance the experience for all people coming to the Gardens
- protect the existing Waverley Valley and Gardens from flooding and climate change
- improve the Ross Bandstand.



### **Improve buildings and facilities on Princes Street**

Working with developers, the strategy suggests:

- encouraging more mixed uses in buildings, such as restaurants, hotels and offices
- preserving and improving shopfronts
- making historic buildings more environmentally friendly.



## Influence the future design of Waverley Station

Network Rail and the Council have identified the need to improve the rail station. The Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy will make sure that future station designs work well for everyone.

## 2. Vision and Objectives



The **Vision** for Princes Street and the Waverley Valley:

“By 2040, Princes Street and the Waverley Valley will be a more welcoming place designed for people and nature with **sustainable mobility**, **liveability**, and **biodiversity** at its heart.

It will support a **thriving economy** with a quality shopping, leisure and cultural experience and enable **inclusive access** to enhanced Gardens.

As part of a **rejuvenated First New Town public realm**, the status of one of Scotland’s most iconic streets will be restored to offer a fitting and **climate resilient** setting for our World-renowned heritage.”

<b>Vision</b>	A written statement about a desired future.
<b>Sustainable mobility</b>	Transport options for people and goods that are better for the environment than private motorcars.
<b>Liveability</b>	Features of a location that make it good to live in, such as being safe, clean and with good facilities.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	Having different kinds of natural life in an area including a variety of plants and animal life.
<b>Thriving economy</b>	A successful place that offers a range of jobs and education opportunities.
<b>Inclusive access</b>	A place that enables everyone to be able to get to where they would like to go easily and safely.
<b>Rejuvenated</b>	An improved situation compared to the present day.
<b>First New Town</b>	The area of wide streets and squares between Princes Street and Queen Street in Edinburgh.
<b>Public realm</b>	The space between buildings where anyone is allowed to go.
<b>Climate resilient</b>	A way of getting ready for problems such as heavy rainfall or hot weather.

## The key objectives of the draft strategy:

### Placemaking



Ensure Princes Street and the Waverley Valley is a safe, attractive and welcoming place for residents, workers and visitors to experience as a destination for leisure, shopping, culture and wellbeing.

### Heritage



Protect, promote and enhance the street and Valley's unique heritage and archaeology, including its Outstanding Universal Value as part of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS).

### Economy



Through a high-quality public realm, continue to attract investment in the city centre, providing employment and supporting local services.

### Mobility



Enhance conditions for walking and wheeling and optimise the efficiency of the public transport network. Continue to enable safer cycling linked to the strategic cycle network.

### Climate



Adapt buildings, streetscape and greenspaces to our changing climate, and strengthen the appeal of the city centre to meet a range of needs by sustainable travel.



## Nature



Strengthen the role of the Princes Street and First New Town gardens as part of Edinburgh's nature network and promote nature-based solutions where possible.

## Safe & inclusive



Provide an environment which is as safe, accessible and inclusive as possible for everyone at all times of day.

### 3. Policy context

There are several other documents that are important for the Princes Street and Waverley Valley area. These include:

#### City Plan 2030



National Planning Framework 4 and City Plan 2030 form the Development Plan, which guides future growth for the area.

City Plan 2030 sets out the requirement for this strategy to:

- guide regeneration of the street and its buildings
- establish a place-making vision for its public realm
- manage the outstanding urban landscape of the Waverley Valley.

#### Planning guidance



There are several relevant guidance documents including:

- Edinburgh Design Guidance and related Street Design Guidance
- Guidance for Businesses
- Guidance on Listed Building and Conservation Areas
- City Centre Retail Core Supplementary Guidance.

## City Mobility Plan



The City Mobility Plan (CMP), approved in 2021 and updated in 2024, sets the Council's strategic approach to sustainable, safe and effective movement of people and goods around Edinburgh.

## Edinburgh City Centre Transformation



Edinburgh's City Centre Transformation Strategy (ECCT) approved in 2019, promotes a vibrant and people focused capital city centre which seeks to improve community, economic and cultural life.

## Future Streets



Future Streets 2024 is a citywide framework against which the Council will deliver street projects to support sustainable travel and placemaking.

It includes a City Centre Circulation Plan which defines Princes Street as a priority for place, for walking/wheeling and public transport, with access for cycles and operational considerations.

## **Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Plan**



The Plan highlights the area's important qualities and sets actions to protect and manage it through the work of partners Historic Environment Scotland (HES), and Edinburgh World Heritage (EWH).

## **Green Blue Network, Open Space Strategy, Water Vision, and Biodiversity Action Plan**



These documents set out the Council's commitment to:

- improving open spaces and access
- managing flood risk
- protecting and expanding biodiversity.

## 4. Princes Street's Uses, Blocks and Buildings

The Strategy provides businesses and developers with planning guidance for Princes Street. It highlights the street's historic design and suggests ways to improve the street's buildings, and the mix of land uses allowed.



New development should align with the area's historic design principles. It should be of the highest design quality and contribute to the World Heritage Site.



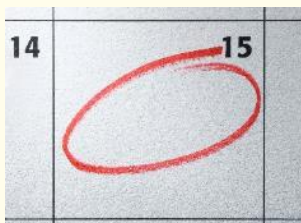
Improved pedestrian access between Princes Street and Rose Street will be considered through changes to buildings.



Shopfronts will be improved with better materials and signs. There were changes to planning rules in 2020 that allow cafes and restaurants on the ground floor of Princes Street.



Greater use of upper floors in large buildings will be encouraged, such as for food and drink, offices or hotels.



'Pop-up' businesses which only last for a short amount of time, could be appropriate for some locations.



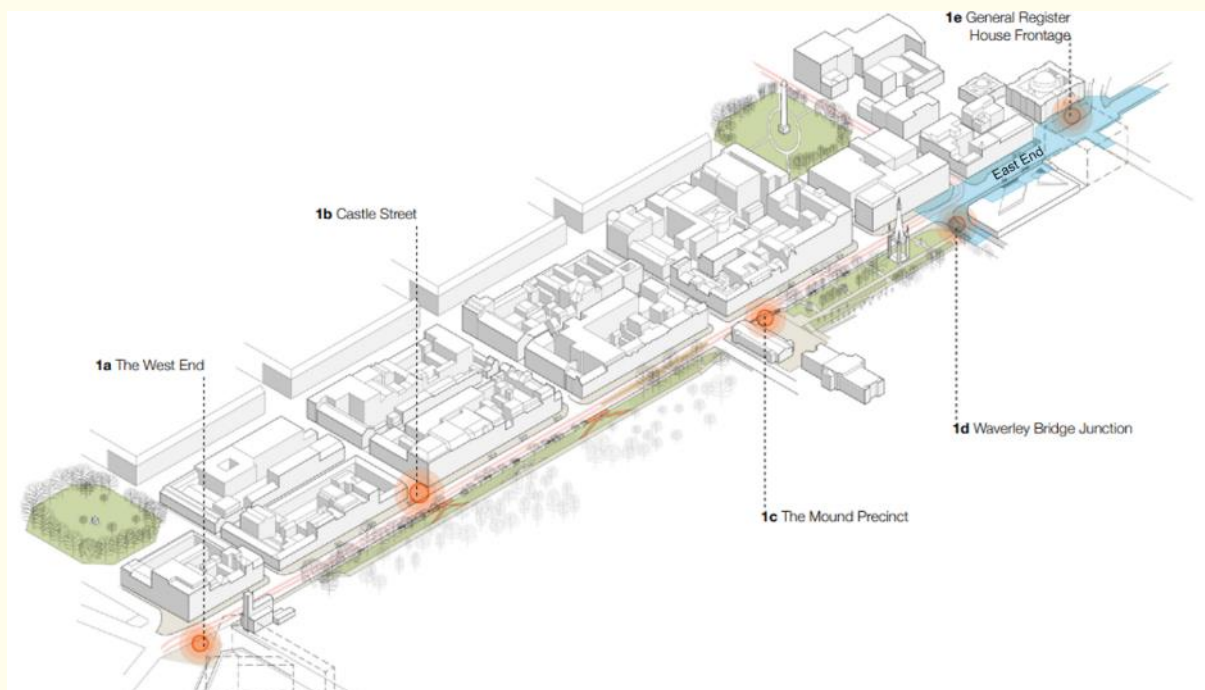
Historic lanes at the back of Princes Street's buildings are to be improved.

# 5. Princes Street's Public Realm and Mobility

The Strategy sets out how we could deliver improved pavements and public spaces with rest places at:

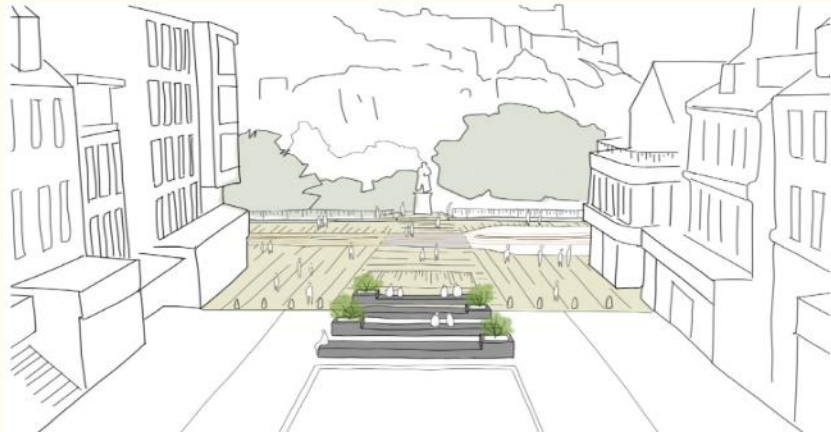
- The West End
- Castle Street
- The Mound Precinct
- Waverley Bridge junction
- General Register House frontage

## Princes Street diagram showing focus locations



It should be noted, at the time of this Strategy being written, funding has not been identified to deliver these ideas.

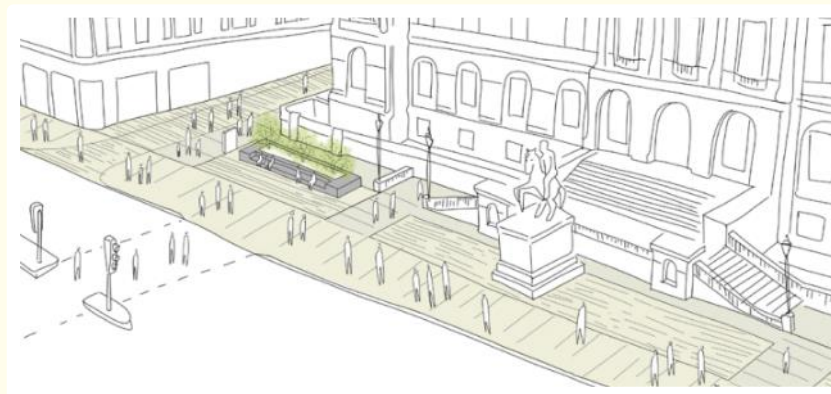
## Ideas for new seating



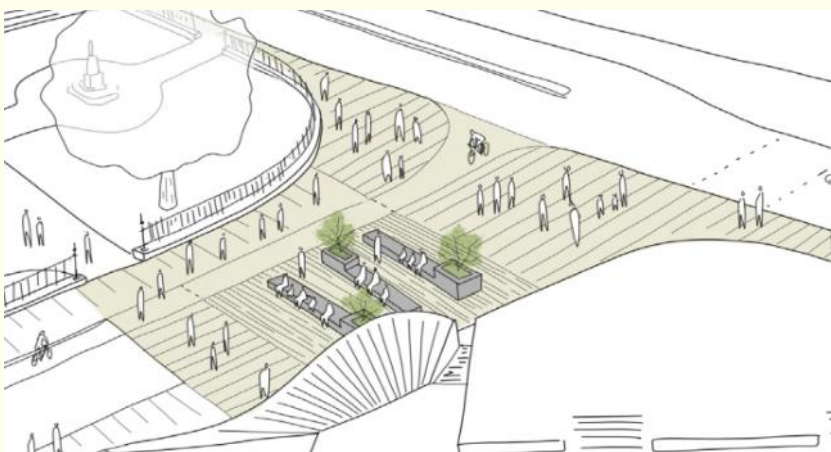
Castle Street



Mound precinct



General Register House

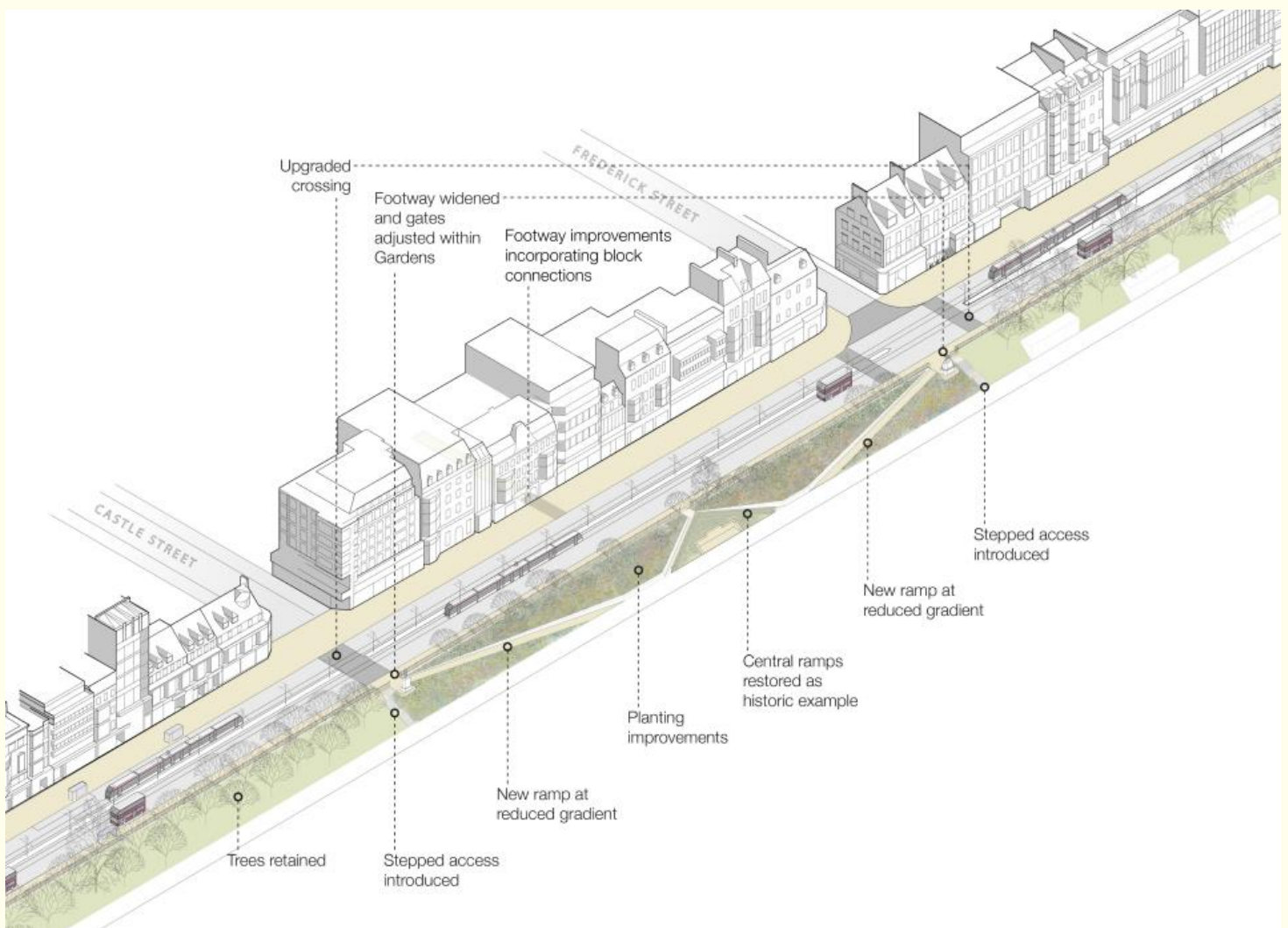


Waverley Bridge junction

## West Princes Street Gardens accessibility improvements

The Strategy proposes improving access for all to West Princes Street Gardens by replacing two steep ramped paths with new accessible ramps and steps.

### Princes Street diagram showing new ramp access



Current access with steep, cobbled ramps



## Improved footways on Princes Street



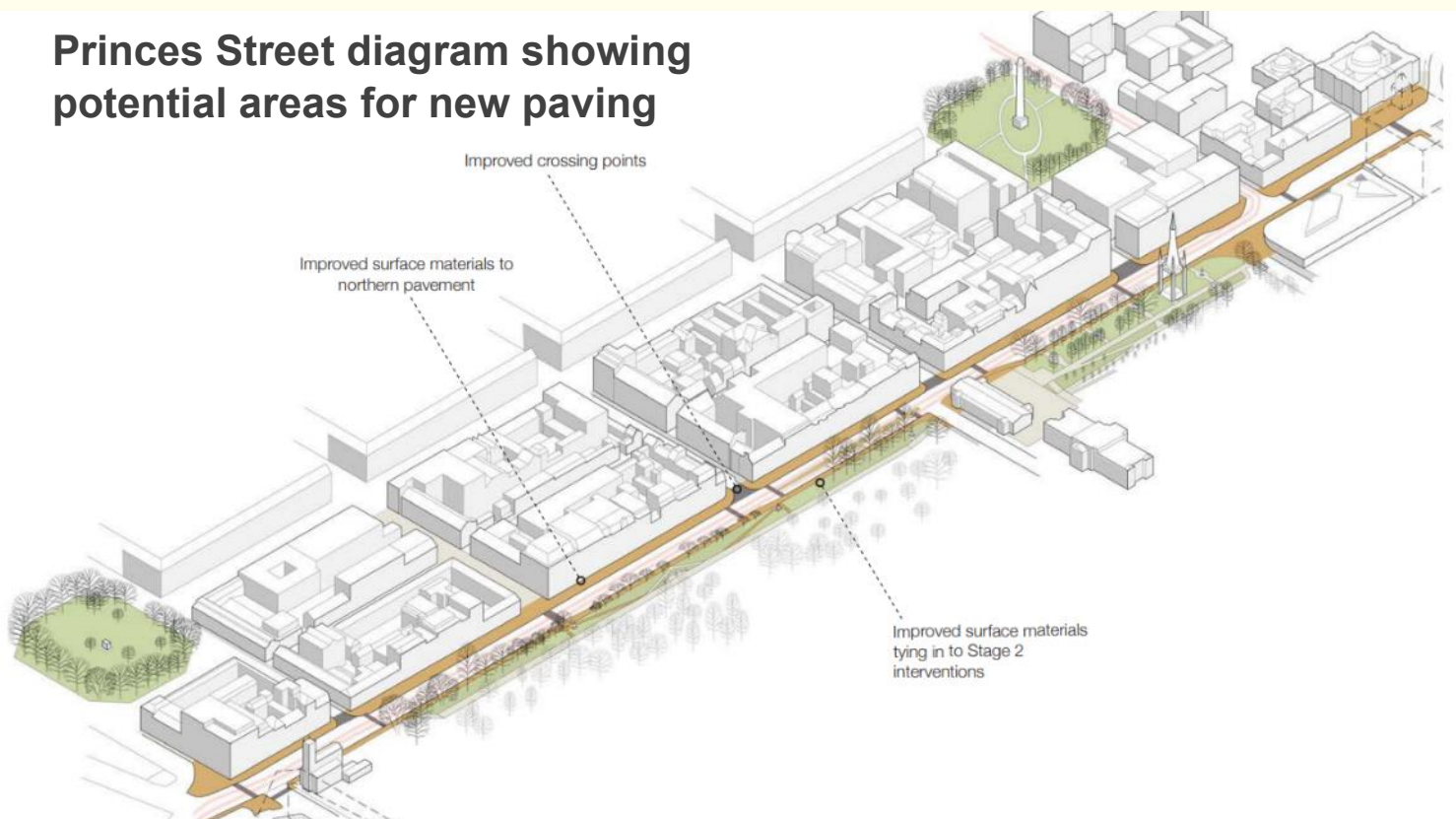
The Strategy proposes to improve pavements by replacing concrete paving with high quality sandstone.



At the east end of Princes Street, we are proposing a redesign of the street, its public spaces and transport services. This area is also reserved for expansion of the tram network to the southeast of the city and forms part of the Council's Primary Cycle Network.

The spaces at the West End will be improved as part of the redesign of Lothian Road.

### Princes Street diagram showing potential areas for new paving



## Cycling facilities on Princes Street



The Strategy follows principles agreed in the **Future Streets** framework. At present, it does not propose segregated cycle lanes on Princes Street, with the exception of the east and west ends of Princes Street to join up the primary cycle network.



Before developing the Princes Street proposals further, the public consultation on this Strategy asks whether it would be appropriate to add segregated cycle lanes on Princes Street.



To do this we would expect to need to reduce the amount of pavement space provided for walking and wheeling.

## 6. The Waverley Valley



The Waverley Valley sits between the Old and New Towns and includes:

- Princes Street Gardens
- The Ross Bandstand
- Waverley Station

**The Princes Street Gardens Improvement Plan** will consider:



- **Access and Inclusion** - ensuring the Gardens provide an accessible, healthy and welcoming space for all the city's communities



- **Children and Young People** – offering a social and playful space in the city centre for all ages



- **Community** – establishing a Friends Group to represent the Gardens, support voluntary and fund-raising activities



- **Climate and Nature Emergencies** – managing stormwater, adapting planting, connecting habitats



- **Facilities** – creating a quality visitor experience, toilets, café offer and exploring the role of the Gardener's Cottage and shelters



- **Heritage** – conserving and raising awareness about our historic landscape whilst meeting modern-day needs



- **Safety** – ensuring the Gardens address safety considerations, including feedback from Women's Safety consultations.



**The Ross Bandstand** is a well-used facility but one that needs to be upgraded.

- **Short Term** - there will be continued use of the facility, with some minor upgrades.

- **Longer Term** - there is potential to replace the facility, depending on funding.

## Waverley Station

Network Rail's Waverley Station Masterplan shows there is a need to improve the rail station. The Princes Street and Waverley Valley Strategy describes the Place Principles that will make sure that future station designs work well for everyone.

### Place Principles



These are the important considerations needed to make a location successful.

For the Waverley Station area this includes:

- Making future designs work well with the Edinburgh City Centre Transformation
- Improving connections with public transport and other sustainable transport options
- Improving pedestrian connections with the Old and New Towns
- Improving access to the station entrances
- Respecting the station's historic buildings and setting.

# Waverley Station Place Principles map

