



Glasgow City Council

City Administration Committee

Item 5

19th June 2025

Report by Councillor Ruairi Kelly, City Convener for Housing, Development, Built Heritage and Land Use

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TALL BUILDING DESIGN GUIDE (TBDG)

Purpose of Report:

- To update the Committee on the development of the final version of the Guide and
- To seek approval from the Committee to use the Tall Building Design Guide as material consideration in the development and assessment of planning applications for tall buildings in Glasgow.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Committee is asked to:

Approve the adoption of the Tall Building Design Guide as material consideration in the development and assessment of planning applications for tall buildings in Glasgow.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: n/a

consulted: n/a

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The [City Centre Strategic Development Framework](#) adopted in 2021, supports the re-densification and re-population of the City Centre, supporting the City Centre Living Strategy. This approach was reiterated by the [Central District Regeneration Framework and](#) also the [River Clyde Strategic Development Framework](#) which identified opportunities for increased density and increased height along the river. The [Glasgow Central Conservation Area Appraisal](#) also contains important assessment criteria for new development including tall buildings in the [Conservation Area](#).
- 1.2 As a result of the above policy commitments, the [Council Plan 2022-2027](#) identifies the production of Tall Buildings Planning Guidance (Strategic Plan Grand Challenge 3 Mission 2 Commitment 23). This guidance would elaborate on the design guidance contained in the [City Development Plan](#) Policy CDP1 and Supplementary Guidance SG1.
- 1.3 The resultant design guidance will, once approved, have material weight in consideration of relevant development applications. This report provides an update on the progress made on the commitment, including the results of the public consultation and the action taken to address the relevant consultation outcomes.

2. Tall Buildings Design Guide

- 2.1 The Tall Buildings Design Guide has been prepared by NRS Planning. The guidance consists initially of locational guidance together with design principles. It also includes guidance on the statutory planning process associated with the design and planning of tall buildings. This guidance has taken the opportunity to learn from the experience of other cities as well as Glasgow's own experience, to help to generate a coherent city form.
- 2.2 In addition, the guidance includes a series of technical addenda produced by ARUP which cover four topics; whole life carbon, smart buildings, daylight and sunlight conditions within the building and its context, and wind microclimate assessment. Each topic introduces the subject and specific nuances associated with tall buildings, outlines the industry best-practice for undertaking assessments, describes how results should be presented to enable improved consistency for GCC, and cross-references relevant existing guidance and literature on the subject matter to aid with the assessment. These technical addenda are to be used as an example of current best practice.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 The draft Tall Building Design Guide has been subject to internal consultation including two specially convened gatherings hosted by the Glasgow Urban Design Panel. This included representatives of a number of Glasgow architects, designers and amenity bodies as well as a strong representation of the development industry provided via the Developers Forum of the Chamber of Commerce. Both sessions were well attended and received and have informed thinking on the locational guidance approach and also on the subsequent stage of the design guidance.
- 3.2 On the 14th of November 2023 a Progress Report was submitted to the Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration City Policy Committee to update on the progress made on the production of this guidance. The report is available [here](#).
- 3.3 On 8th February 2024, the draft guidance (Phase 1) was also presented to the Joint Action Group of Ward 10 community councils.
- 3.4 On the 4th of June 2024 a Progress Report was submitted to the EHTR Committee to update on the progress made on the production of this guide. The report is available [here](#).
- 3.5 A digital round table workshop took place on the 23rd May 2024 to facilitate a discussion among UK and international professional and academic experts with previous expertise in producing tall buildings design guidance for similar scale cities to Glasgow. This session sought constructive criticism, widening the debate and assessed new perspectives. It was used to gain advice on the approach other cities have taken and understand some of the implications, both foreseen and unforeseen, that have emerged from similar published tall buildings guidance.
- 3.6 The draft Tall Building Design Guide was issued for public consultation and published on the Council's Consultation Hub between June 2024 until September 2024, supported by a specific media campaign. The consultation survey, structured around three sections: Locational Guidance, Design Parameters and Technical Guidance. It was designed to gain direct feedback on every aspect of the draft guidance, and to reach the widest possible demographic. Of the 271 responses, 242 were from members of the public, with the remaining 29 split between community group organisation, key agencies, developers/landowners/agencies and others. In total, respondents left around 700 open comments for the first two sections and 99 respondents left comments on the last section, the Technical Guidance. Overall the draft guidance has been well received with 73% of respondents 'agree in full' and 'tend to agree', 5.6 % 'neutral' and 20 % 'disagree in full' and 'tend to disagree'. A coordinated response was also separately submitted by a group of representatives of the development industry nominated by the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce.

3.7 Following consultation, the responses as received were collated and analysed and categorised between October 2024 and February 2025. These responses were used to inform the production of the final version of the Tall Building Design Guide and fall under the following topic areas, however this list is not exhaustive:

- Document length and information accessibility,
- diagrams and simplification of scenarios,
- the degree of prescription of the guidance,
- tall buildings within the Conservation Area,
- ground floor uses narrative,
- views, and space between buildings,
- mapping information
- details of the technical addenda.

3.8 The modified version implements changes in both format and content in response to the public comments which are summarised under the topics mentioned above with more detailed content available in the [handling report](#) here, together with the [results of the consultation](#).

3.9 The modified and final version of the document was submitted to the EHTR committee for update and scrutiny on the 3rd of June 2025. The report is available [here](#).

4. Next Steps

4.1 Following the approval of the City Administration Committee of the Tall Building Design Guide, this will be published on the council's website and can then be utilised as a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications.

5. Document Links

5.1 The Tall Building Design Guide May 2025 as finalised for approval can be viewed here:

[Tall Building Design Guide May 2025 \(PDF\)](#)

[Tall Building Design Guide May 2025 - Appendix A \(PDF\)](#)

[Tall Building Design Guide May 2025 - Appendix B \(PDF\)](#)

6. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	Funding for this study from Planning City Centre funding.
<i>Legal:</i>	None
<i>Personnel:</i>	None
<i>Procurement:</i>	GCC Property and Consultancy Services have been procured to produce this guidance

Council Strategic Plan:	GC3 Fight the climate emergency in a just transition to a net zero; Glasgow M2 become a net zero carbon city by 2030; Commitment 23 Refine Tall Buildings Planning guidance.
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Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

<i>Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.</i>	Yes. The Guidance seeks to promote an ethos of placemaking that improves the lives of all citizens in line with the aims of the City Development Plan. An EQIA Screening Report was prepared for the City Development Plan in 2017 and no significant negative impacts were identified.
<i>What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?</i>	No significant impact
<i>Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.</i>	No significant impact.

Climate Impacts:

<i>Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:</i>	Yes: become a net zero City by 2030
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<i>What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?</i>	Tall buildings can be sustainable if they are designed and built with care and innovation, and if they are part of a holistic urban planning strategy that balances environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects. They can contribute positively to climate impacts of development if well designed.
<i>Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?</i>	Sustainability is part of the consideration of whether a tall building is acceptable through NPF4 Policy 1.

**Privacy and Data
Protection Impacts:**

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report
No

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out	n/a
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7. Recommendations

7.1 It is recommended that Committee is asked to:

Approve the adoption of the Tall Building Design Guide as material consideration in the development and assessment of planning applications for tall buildings in Glasgow.