



Glasgow City Council

Economy, Housing, Transport and  
Regeneration City Policy Committee

Report by George Gillespie, Executive Director of  
Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability

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**Item 5**

15th August 2023

## A VISION AND PLAN FOR THE GOLDEN Z

### Purpose of Report:

To inform Elected Members of the full draft document for the new Vision and Plan for the Golden Z, for their consideration.

### Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to:

1. Consider the content of the document, and
2. Note the intention to report the draft Vision and Plan for the Golden Z to City Administration Committee.

Ward No(s): 10

Citywide: ✓

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

### PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On [30<sup>th</sup> May 2023](#) Members considered a report on the project to produce a new Vision and Plan for the Golden Z. Members also considered an accompanying [Summary Document](#) of the draft new Vision and Plan, pending production of the full document. This report presents the full [draft Vision and Plan for the Golden Z](#) document and highlights some key recommendations.
- 1.2 The report of [30<sup>th</sup> May 2023](#) to Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration Policy Committee, outlined the background to the project to produce the new Vision and Plan for the Golden Z. It highlighted that the new Vision and Plan progressed actions in the [City Centre Strategic Development Framework](#) (adopted by the Council in May 2021), the [City Centre Recovery Plan](#) and the City Centre Property Repurposing Action Plan (PRAP). The latter (PRAP) was considered by Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration Policy Committee on [7<sup>th</sup> March 2023](#) and approved by City Administration Committee on [23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023](#).

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The new Vision and Plan was funded by Scottish Government City Centre Recovery Funding and is part of a package of projects targeted to stimulate post pandemic recovery that were progressed by the City Centre Task Force.
- 2.2 The Vision and Plan for the Golden Z is a strategic planning project that seeks to explore the specific post pandemic challenges and opportunities of the centre's key iconic streets. As the Vision and Plan reminds us, the "Golden Z" is a term coined in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to describe the main shopping streets of Glasgow's City Centre: Sauchiehall Street, Buchanan Street and Argyle Street. These streets have been most affected by the changes in retail shopping which have taken place across the UK. The Vision and Plan aims to define a renewed development direction to re-energise the retail core and manage its transition to become more diverse, green and resilient in future.
- 2.3 The Vision and Plan responds to the need for city centres to refocus in a post pandemic and climate and nature emergency context. Lingering post-pandemic behaviour changes in the way we live, work and shop, combined with changing investor and occupier demands and digital/technological advances is influencing changes in traditional retail centres to become more diverse in their offer and functions. In addition, there is a critical need to overhaul urban environments to achieve net zero goals, enhance biodiversity and make city centre more liveable to attract a greater resident population and support sustainable '20 minute neighbourhood' patterns of living.
- 2.4 The new Vision and Plan outlines a responsive development trajectory for the Golden Z, that will provide clarity and confidence to investors, developers, residents and businesses. It considers key issues, such as retail space contraction, repurposing of vacant land/buildings, growing city centre living and the contribution of significant regeneration proposals for St Enoch and

Buchanan Galleries in a coordinated and integrated manner. It identifies areas for intervention and investment, by public and private sectors, that will support recovery and longer term resilience.

### **3. PROJECT TEAM & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

- 3.1. A Glasgow based consultant team were appointed in November 2022 comprising Stantec (UK), Threesixty Architecture and Kevin Murray Associates.
- 3.2 Working with the Council, the team engaged a range of stakeholders in reimagining the future of the Golden Z. Landowners, residents, businesses, institutions, agencies, visitors, developers and investors collectively explored opportunities for change and how they could be delivered.
- 3.3 The report to Members on [30<sup>th</sup> May 2023](#) on the Summary Document outlined the stakeholder events undertaken and some of the key issues and ideas contributed. Reports of the Stakeholder workshops are available on the Council webpages at [www.glasgow.gov.uk/goldenZ](http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/goldenZ).
- 3.4 A concluding Stakeholder event is scheduled to take place on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2023 to allow stakeholders to reflect on the new Vision and Plan. The session will continue the collaborative working with those who have already been engaged with the project and explore the role all stakeholders can play in delivering the recommendations of the draft new Vision and Plan for the Golden Z.

### **4. THE DRAFT NEW VISION AND PLAN KEY MESSAGES**

- 4.1 The [draft new Vision and Plan for the Golden Z](#) asserts the importance of the Golden Z as a place. In addition to being a key driver of a successful city and regional economy, it is a core part of the communal identity, and so wellbeing, of Glasgow's citizens. The Vision and Plan also highlights the importance of this opportunity in defining the next phase in the evolution of the heart of the city to become more sustainable, resilient and inclusive of all in future.
- 4.2 The Vision and Plan provides recommendations for how the Golden Z and environs could and should look, feel and be like in future. It also explores a series of repurposing and redevelopment options for three 'areas of focus' on Sauchiehall and Argyle Streets that suffer from a concentration of vacant property and poor environmental quality. Drawing on discussions with stakeholders, the Vision and Plan explores how to unlock repurposing opportunities and overcome barriers to delivery.
- 4.3 As previously outlined for the Summary Document, the main body of the Vision and Plan is structured around six themes:
  - (i) **Balanced** - considers how and where to diversify the range uses across the Z. The importance of good quality retail premises and their concentration on the prime spine of Buchanan Street is highlighted, complemented by a greater mix of restaurant, café, bar and leisure uses to activate key routes and adjoining streets. The need for more homes,

workspaces and cultural attractions to enliven the Z through different times of the day and evening is outlined.

- (ii) **Legible** – explores how the Golden Z, as the recognised spine of how we navigate the centre, can contribute to more sustainable travel, be made more accessible, permeable and benefit from better connected movement networks and urban spaces.
- (iii) **Living** - explores opportunities to create new homes of various tenures and formats, (including affordable, family, student and later living homes) within new and repurposed buildings and upper floors. The need to provide centrally located community facilities and services to enable their development is highlighted.
- (iv) **Working** - highlights the opportunities around the Z to create new agile workspace, building on recent successes such as McLellan Works. Nurturing links with educational institutions is also explored.
- (v) **Vibrant** - reinforces the strong cultural offer in and around the Golden Z and explores how cultural attractions and institutions can be better integrated to enhance cultural participation and boost the leisure economy, particularly the Sauchiehall Street cluster. The importance of ensuring a vibrant and safe city centre providing culture, music, bars and restaurants which enhance the city's economy and destination appeal is highlighted, as is the contribution of meanwhile uses.
- (vi) **Responsible** –outlines how the Golden Z can progress the city's response to the climate emergency; in progressing carbon neutrality, increasing density, property repurposing, greening the grey and in ensuring the city core is accessible, safe and welcoming for all.

4.4 The Vision and Plan goes on to outline future redevelopment options to address the needs of the three 'areas of focus', namely; the former ABC/Jumpin Jacks site adjoining the GSA, the area on Sauchiehall Street around the former BHS, Watt Bros, and former Victoria's nightclub gap site, and the locale of the vacant TJ Hughes site near Trongate. The various options seek to repurpose the vacant land and buildings and demonstrate the positive impact the redevelopment of each area could have locally, and combined, on the whole Golden Z.

4.5 The Areas of Focus and the preceding six thematic sections contain a wealth of analysis, ideas and recommendations. They include a number of rich and relevant case studies that illuminate best practice from cities around the world to help raise our ambition and understanding as we seek to implement similar ideas. The key moves and priorities for intervention from the preceding sections are synthesised in the concluding 'Vision' section.

4.6 The final section is the Delivery Plan, which summarises the key actions required to deliver the Vision. Importantly, many of the recommendations of the Vision for the Golden Z will be progressed by other Council strategies and

actions plans; such as the Housing Strategy (incorporating the City Centre Living Strategy), City Centre Transport Plan, City Centre SDF, District Regeneration Frameworks and, notably, the Property Repurposing Action Plan. Therefore, the Delivery Plan seeks to complement and not restate, actions contained in other strategies.

- 4.7 The delivery narrative highlights the urgency in tackling poor stewardship and issues of blight, including vacant land and buildings and those in a poor state of repair. As such, it recommends the Council explore the use of its statutory enforcement powers to lead the way in resolving such issues.
- 4.8 In addition, the Delivery Plan emphasises the need for ongoing collaboration across the sectors and with all stakeholders, to collectively realise the potential for the Golden Z. The Council cannot tackle all of the issues alone, but has a key role in enabling and coordinating action and leveraging efforts for joined up regeneration. Further consideration of City Centre governance issues to enable greater stakeholder collaboration will feed in to the preparation of the new City Centre Strategy.

## 5. NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 The recommendations and actions of the new Vision and Plan for the Golden Z will inform the next City Centre Strategy, currently in production. It is envisaged that ongoing dialogue with stakeholders around collaborative delivery of the recommendations will continue under any new City Centre governance structures established to progress the new City Centre Strategy.
- 5.2 The new Vision and Plan will also inform the review of the City Development Plan (CDP). Planning Services will consider how best to enshrine the aims the Vision and Plan in supporting planning policy in advance of the CDP's full review.
- 5.3 It is proposed to report the draft new Vision and Plan to the City Administration Committee on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 for their consideration.

## 6 Policy and Resource Implications

### Resource Implications:

*Financial: There are no immediate financial implications from this Vision and Plan for the Golden Z. However, the action programme will give rise to future projects that will cost and will seek external funding where they contribute to strategic objectives. The Vision and Plan*

*highlights that public sector finance should lever additional private sector investment.*

*Legal:* There are no immediate requirements associated with the production of the Vision and Plan document. Legal resources will be required to progress individual projects in the action plan and requirements will be assessed as these projects are developed.

*Personnel:* None

*Procurement:* Procurement requirements will be assessed as individual projects are developed.

**Council Strategic Plan:** The Vision and Plan for the Golden Z sets out priorities and actions in support of the following Grand Challenges and Missions:

**Grand Challenge 1 – Reduce poverty and inequality in our communities:**

Mission 3 – Improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities.

Mission 4 - Support Glasgow to be a city that is active and culturally vibrant

**Grand Challenge 2 – Increase opportunity and prosperity for all our citizens:**

Mission 1 – Support Glasgow residents into sustainable and fair work.

Mission 2 – Support the growth of an innovative, resilient and net zero carbon economy.

**Grand Challenge 3 – Fight the climate emergency in a just transition to a net zero Glasgow:**

Mission 1 - Deliver sustainable transport and travel aligned with the city region

Mission 2 - Become a net zero carbon city by 2030

**Grand Challenge 4 – Deliver**

**essential services in a sustainable, innovative and efficient way for our communities:**

Mission 1 – Create safe, clean and thriving neighbourhoods.

Mission 2 - Run an open, well governed council in partnership with all our communities

**Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:**

*Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.*

Yes. The new Vision and Plan for the Golden Z promotes an ethos of inclusive placemaking that seeks to improve 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 for which no significant negative impacts were identified.

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

It is envisaged that the Vision and Plan for the Golden Z will have a positive impact on equality, in seeing to make the city centre a more inclusive place. This can be addressed in more detail as the Action Plan is taken forward.

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

The Vision and Plan for the Golden Z seeks to deliver inclusive economic growth, improving access to opportunities for all citizens.

**Climate Impacts:**

*Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:*

The Vision and Plan for the Golden Z promotes the concept of sustainable urban development, promoting opportunities for building reuse and repurposing, active travel, increased biodiversity and urban greening, and is being developed to take cognisance of furthering the city's response to the climate and ecological emergency. The following actions are supported: 9, 10, 29, 36, 37, 39, 40, 51, 56 & 59.

*What are the potential climate*

The potential positive impacts of projects emerging from the Vision and Plan are on

*impacts as a result of this proposal?* carbon reduction, increases in active travel, biodiversity, and green spaces and support for circular economy.

*Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?* The Vision and Plan for the Golden Z has the potential to contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target by supporting a sustainable urban form that includes 20-minute neighbourhoods, promoting active travel, building repurposing and sustainable densification.

**Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:**

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report  
Y/N

There are no immediate data protection impacts as a result of this report. Consultation processes were carried out in accordance with data protection policies and legislation. Further DPIAs will be completed as required for individual projects.

**8 Recommendations**

8.1 It is recommended that Members:

- (i) Consider the content of the document, and
- (ii) Note the intention to report the draft Vision and Plan for the Golden Z to City Administration Committee