

# 9.0

## CONCLUSIONS



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# CONCLUSION

## 9.1 Background

The decline of Bridge Street can be seen to begin with the upgrade of the A98 road which diverted a large amount of traffic away from the area resulting in many local shops relocating to Low Street and High Street.

The challenges created by connectivity, orientation and parking assisted in the decline of the Street due to the impact on the pedestrian environment within the Street.

In recent times, flooding has become a serious issue which needs to be considered as part of the regeneration of Bridge Street. SEPA have provided indicative flood maps, however, flood risk assessments confirm that the extent of flood risk is greater than suggested by SEPA's flood maps. The flooding information states that the worst case scenario would see the flood water reach a level that would inundate a large area of Old Market Place, Bridge Street and Deveronside.

The North East Regional Flood Strategy generated a reasonable doubt that the study area would flood as a result of the A98 embankment. Fairhurst were therefore appointed to confirm if the water level could breach the embankment and enter into Old Market Place and Bridge Street.

Fairhurst's report advised that the level of the A98 embankment is 0.25m lower than the anticipated flood level. Consequently, fluvial flooding will occur as inundation which initially transfers from the golf course and will cover the low lying area north of the A98.

Fairhurst, however, advised that if the A98 road embankment is raised to around a level of 4.5 m AOD, over a length of approximately 90 m, the fluvial flooding from the River Deveron would not enter the proposed regeneration area.

It was recommended that this would be a complicated procedure due to the requirements for compensatory flood storage. In a 1 in 200 year flood event, a flood water volume in excess of 10000 m<sup>3</sup> was determined, and from such a significant volume it is concluded that a compensatory flood storage scheme is completely impracticable in the context of a regeneration project. It was advised that both the study and any work arising would need to be considered as a separate piece of work.

SEPA also advise against building a flood scheme to facilitate development in areas that would otherwise be at risk of flooding as the cornerstone of sustainable flood risk management is avoidance of flood risk in the first instance. However, in the absence of a detailed flood risk assessment, any implications to the wider area is unknown (see appendix C, para 1.6 for details).

As part of this study, an exercise was completed to indicate the additional accommodation that would be possible if such flood remediation works were to be accepted by SEPA and adopted (as seen in appendix A). However, as strategic flood studies and alleviation methods were not part of this regeneration study, it was accepted that the proposals would be designed around the possibility that the area may flood.

The proposals therefore had to consider the guidelines enforced by Scottish and local planning policies, and SEPA.

However, these proposals portray a positive approach to dealing with the confines imposed by the flood risk area.



View of Bridge Street looking east towards Old Market Place

# CONCLUSION

## 9.2 Proposals

Planning policies state that development in a floodplain area should be avoided in order to minimise the impact on the floodplain storage, however the proposed masterplan had been developed in order to utilise existing building footprints and propose uses that do not increase the vulnerability ensuring the impact on the flood plain area is minimal.

Following a consultation with SEPA (appendix C) any new buildings and redevelopments within the 1 in 200 year flood risk area should consider the following principles:

- **New residential buildings and other uses with high vulnerability are unlikely to be acceptable within the 1 in 200 year flood risk area.**
- **Residential uses may be acceptable if it does not involve a change of use, and vulnerability is not increased.**
- **Offices, retail, leisure and other uses with low vulnerability are likely to be accepted within the flood risk area.**
- **New buildings and redevelopments in the flood risk area should have a finished floor level +5mAOD.**
- **Flood resilient construction methods and materials should be used for any new buildings and redevelopments in the flood risk area.**
- **Any new buildings should utilise existing building footprints to minimise the impact on available flood storage.**

Please note, SEPA are likely to accept developments - in principle - based on the above, however it is recommended that any detailed applications consult with SEPA and the planning authority at an early stage. A flood risk assessment may also be required.

The proposed masterplan has been developed based on these principles and creates a new destination point at Old Market Place. It recognised that many of the challenges identified on Bridge Street cannot be tackled in isolation, and the optimal approach for the regeneration area is increasing footfall and pedestrian activity.

The success of Bridge Street relies heavily on creating a new focal point to re-establish the street as a key link to the town centre and reverse the trend of people using the A98 to bypass the area. Introducing new buildings, uses and areas of landscaping to Old Market Place will:

- **Act as catalyst for regeneration.**
- **Attract more visitors and increase footfall.**
- **Improve the amenity of the areas for the benefit of the existing businesses.**
- **Re-establish Bridge Street as a key link to the town centre.**

Footfall will also be increased on Bridge Street by improving, and introducing new lateral connections which will be fronted onto by new cafes and small scale commercial units. The public realm on Bridge Street will also be improved by reducing the dominance of cars and creating an informal road that gives priority to pedestrians.

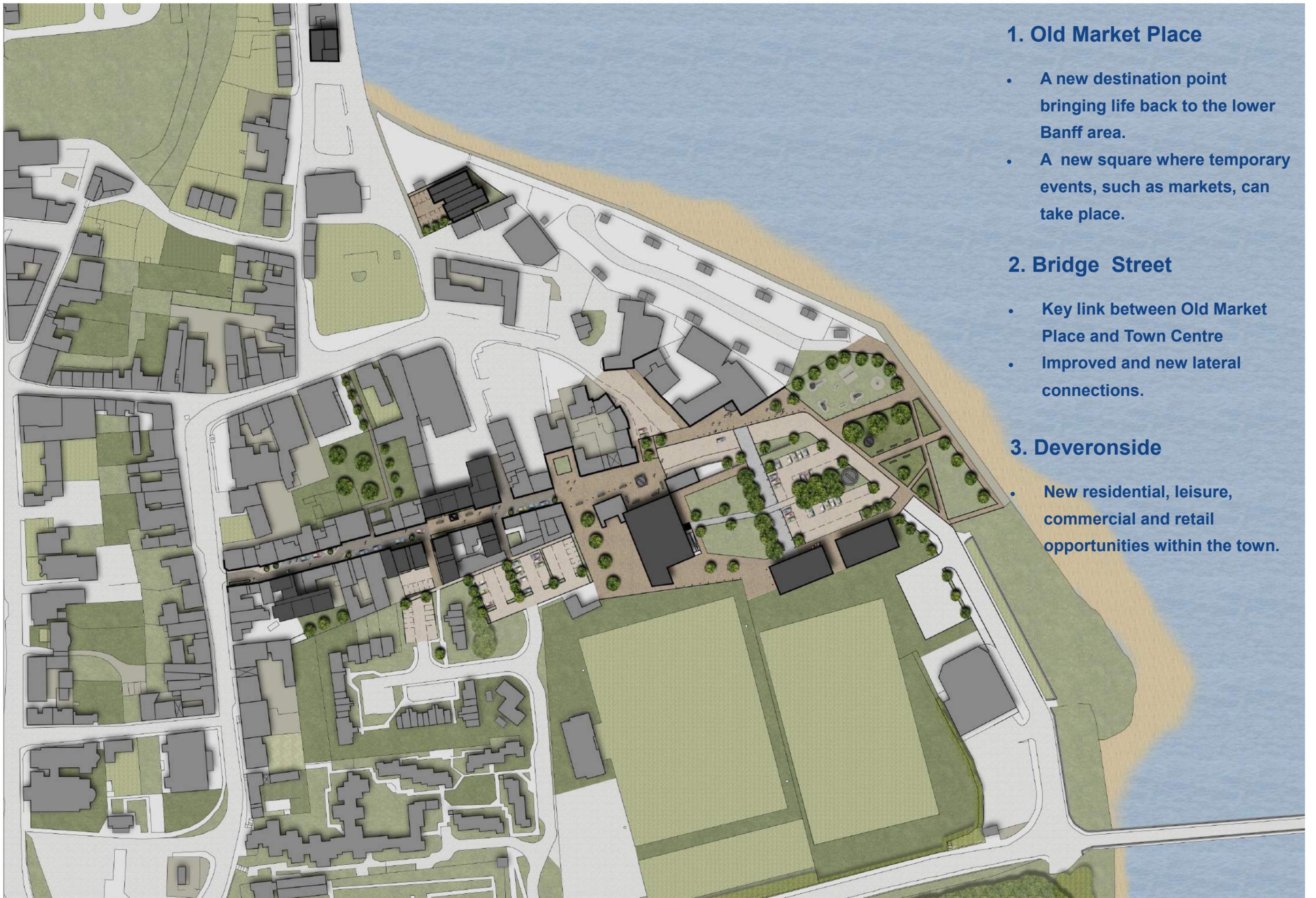
Using hard and soft landscaping to control and limit the amount of car parking will provide the opportunity for new feature lighting which will improve the attractiveness of Bridge Street and encourage life within the street.



St Catherine's Hill, Frome



Frome Market



## 1. Old Market Place

- A new destination point bringing life back to the lower Banff area.
- A new square where temporary events, such as markets, can take place.

## 2. Bridge Street

- Key link between Old Market Place and Town Centre
- Improved and new lateral connections.

## 3. Deveronside

- New residential, leisure, commercial and retail opportunities within the town.



# 10.0

RECOMMENDATIONS

## 10.0 Recommendations

This appraisal has analysed the environment of Bridge Street and Deveronside, and recommends that crucial to the revitalisation of Bridge Street, is the improved connectivity to the street. The report recommends that fundamental to this is the creation of a destination at Old Market Place, drawing people through the street. Lateral connections across Bridge Street are also vitally important.

In addition to the design proposals, the risk of flooding is an overriding factor affecting the future of Bridge Street. One of the key recommendations is that a Strategic flood risk study is undertaken at the earliest opportunity and consideration given to mitigation options. This would remove serious constraints on potential development in the area.

The table opposite lists the recommendations arising from the options appraisal report. The timescale identified is the optimum but this is dependant on the resource available.

**Short Term = 0-1 years**

**Medium Term = 1-3 years**

**Long Term = +3 years**

Recommendation	Responsible	Phasing / Timescales
1. Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, including remediation strategy.	Aberdeenshire Council / SEPA / North East Local Flood Risk Management Plan	Short term
2. Market analysis of retail /commercial / business need in lower Banff.	Aberdeenshire Council lead. May involve external consultants to advise / prepare.	Short term
3. Engagement with local landowners to agree programme.	Led by Aberdeenshire Council	Short term
4A. Preparation of guidance on flood resistant buildings for owners of properties in the study area.	Aberdeenshire Council. May involve external consultants to advise / prepare.	Short term
4B. Design Guide for Bridge Street developed. - Guidance to allow building owners to take forward improvements to buildings (shop frontages, rainwater goods etc.) - This document could also include the flood guidance referred to above (4 A)	Aberdeenshire Council lead. May involve external consultants to advise / prepare.	Short term.
5 A. Preparation of plans for securing planning permission in principle for the following opportunities: - Medium scale retail unit at Old Market Place. - New commercial & service sector accommodation at Old Market Place. - Infill opportunities on Bridge Street - Residential development at Deveronside - Commercial development at Deveronside.	Led by Aberdeenshire. May involve external consultants to advise / prepare.	Short term
5 B. Preparation of plans for securing planning permission in principle for the following opportunities: - Infill opportunities on Bridge Street - Residential development at Deveronside - Commercial development at Deveronside.	Landowner Led. Aberdeenshire Council to assist. Infill development on Bridge Street to allow for north/south linkages.	Short term

6A. Parking improvements to rear of Bridge Street. - Prepare plans to secure planning permission / RCC - Delivery of new car park	Aberdeenshire Council	Short term (commence design imminently).
6B. Public Realm improvements on Bridge Street: - Improved street lighting - Coordinated improvement of rainwater goods - Re-alignment of road and implementation of shared surface (Secure listed building consent and planning permission where required.)	Aberdeenshire Council	Short term (commence design imminently).
6C. North / South pedestrian links - Improve existing links (i.e. Reid Street) - Investigate landownership for proposed new links - Investigate listed building implications (liaison with owners / Built Conservation Officers and Historic Scotland). - Prepare strategy for delivery - Prepare plans to secure planning permission if required. - Delivery of improved pedestrian links	Aberdeenshire Council	Could be commenced immediately. Delivery in medium to long term.
6D. Refurbishment of derelict / existing buildings - Listed building consents may be required - Note: funding potentially available through CARS	Property Owners in conjunction with Aberdeenshire Council.	Ongoing
7 Public Realm Improvements at Old Market Place: - realignment of road and shared surface - Provision shared use at Old Market Square, including car parking	Aberdeenshire Council	Short term (commence design imminently).
8. Provision of improved open space at Greenbanks including removal of car park	Aberdeenshire Council	Short/medium Term
9. Promotion of significant / strategic development opportunities identified through this appraisal, including Old Market Place, Bridge Street and Deveronside.  Aberdeenshire Council could consider preparation of Development brief for former Granite Works.	Aberdeenshire Council	Medium Term.
10. Programme of shop front improvements	Property Owners in conjunction with Aberdeenshire Council.	Ongoing
11. Detailed planning applications	Led by Aberdeenshire. May involve external consultants to advise / prepare.	Medium to long term

