

# Dundee Central Waterfront



## Development Masterplan 2001-2031



# Historical Background

Dundee's history is closely interlinked with its location on the north shore of the Firth of Tay. The city was important from the earliest of times and it gained its Charter in 1191 as one of King David I's new towns created to encourage trade and civilise the Scottish countryside. The site was strategically positioned, controlling the entry into the heart of Scotland, and was consequently the victim of numerous sieges and sackings. By the medieval period, however, Dundee was second only to Edinburgh in terms of commercial prosperity. Most early trade was by sea and Dundee was ideally located on shipping routes to and from the Baltic and North European ports due to it being closer than Edinburgh by two days sailing.

Although the earliest harbour is thought to have been to the east of the Castle Rock (adjacent to the existing Gellatly Street/Seagate junction), the port had moved westwards by the 16th Century to a point close to the current High Street at Whitehall Crescent. From here the harbour developed during the 17th and 18th Centuries, but still remained modest in scale. There were only a few buildings on the adjacent peninsula which protruded into the estuary (from the site of the existing railway station) towards St. Nicholas' Craig (at modern day Discovery Point).

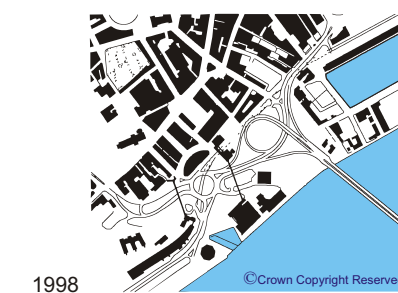
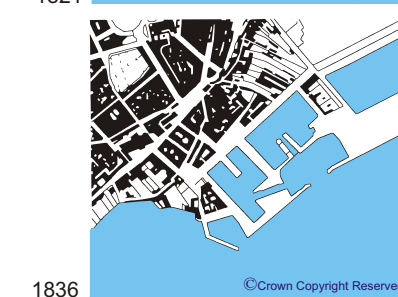
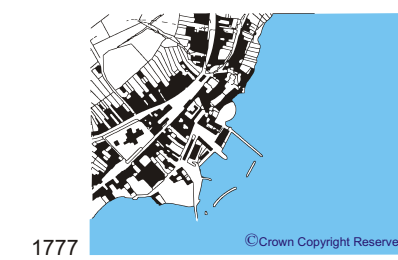
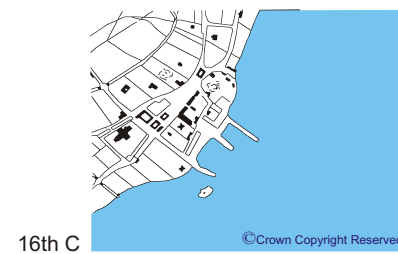
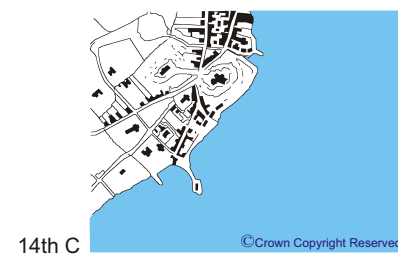
In 1793 Dundee's first commercial flax mills were built. By the 1830s, when flax gave way to jute, Dundee changed from a trading port to the world centre for the jute processing industry and the city rapidly expanded. Due to this trade being dependant on sea and rail transport, the result was the total transformation of its historic waterfront and harbour which, until then, had been tidal and inadequate for major shipping.

Thomas Telford was appointed to improve the harbour facilities and he built the King William IV Dock and the West Graving Dock, on the site of the old tidal harbour, between 1812 and 1825, plus a new tidal harbour to the south. The development of the docks then continued for the next 100 years, with Earl Grey Dock formed from the Graving Dock and Victoria and Camperdown Docks added to the east. Gradually the city was moving further and further away from the waterfront.

The railways followed soon after with the West Station, Goods Station and Tay Bridge Station all built to the west of the harbour. To the west of St. Nicholas' Craig, the estuary was in-filled to create a Goods Yard with the rail tracks lining the new shore and their retaining wall forming the Esplanade.

By the end of the 19th Century, the first signs of industrial decline were apparent and the docks were no longer being so heavily used. In 1911 the City Architect (James Thompson) prepared designs for a massive new Civic Centre on the site of the Central Waterfront, but the commencement of the World Wars meant that these ambitious proposals were never implemented.

In the 20th Century, the most significant factor which determined Dundee's relationship with its Waterfront was the siting of the northern landfall of the Tay Road Bridge. Although the engineer, Ove Arup, actually preferred a site further east at Stannergate in order that the bridge could join directly into the Kingsway, the city chose to land the bridge right into the heart of the city centre. As a result, the historic central dock complex was in-filled in the 1960s to accommodate the necessary ramps and road system. The Olympia Leisure Centre and Tayside House were then built in the 1970s as the only completed elements of an intended multi-level, modernist, civic and commercial centre. The resultant effect was the loss of the harbour and the severance of the waterfront from the city.



# The Masterplanning Process

In 1998, the Dundee Partnership decided to look at potential options for re-integrating the Central Waterfront with the City Centre. We wanted to think 30 years ahead with a Masterplan which aimed to realise the exceptional opportunity provided by the Central Waterfront and prepare a shared vision for the area that can create not only a distinctive identity and sense of place, but also provides a robust framework for investment & decision making.

An initial Consultants Report by EDAW in January 2000 identified a number of visionary development options for the Central Waterfront which;



- ▶ Ranged from modest to more radical proposals
- ▶ Were all capable of phased implementation over 30 years
- ▶ Had identifiable core and optional components
- ▶ Allowed the integration of the city centre grid with the waterfront
- ▶ Maximised connectivity to all adjacent areas
- ▶ Ameliorated the barrier effect of the road bridge and inner ring road
- ▶ Built on the waterfront's current attributes and location

These options were then the subject of a wide consultation exercise involving a public exhibition and symposium in DCA, a community road show around Dundee and a joint seminar with the Dundee Civic Trust and the local branches of the relevant professional institutes. From this a consensus view emerged; in particular, there was general agreement that the Project needed to happen, on what it should contain and on its physical form.

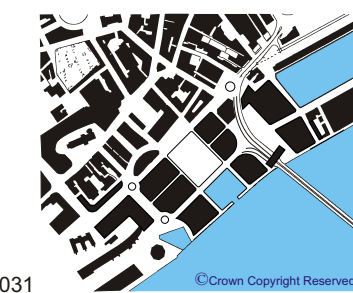
Following a further consultation exercise with key parties during 2001, the Dundee Partnership approved a final Masterplan for the area and this document outlines its main components;



- ▶ the extension of the city centre down to the waterfront
- ▶ the creation of a new grid iron street pattern
- ▶ improved provision for walking, cycling and buses
- ▶ the reduction of the effect of cars and parking
- ▶ the removal of some of the Tay Road Bridge ramps
- ▶ the creation of a pair of east/west tree lined boulevards
- ▶ provision of sites for a variety of mixed use developments
- ▶ the formation of a major new civic space and re-opened dock

- ▶ the provision of a new rail station and arrival square

The next important step is to ensure the successful implementation of the project. The Masterplan is now built into the review of the Dundee Local Plan which gives it formal status as a planning document. Cities Growth Fund money has been awarded to the project by the Scottish Executive to assist with the infrastructure costs and a project partnership has been established between Dundee City Council and Scottish Enterprise Tayside to drive the project forward.



There is now real belief in the city that the creation of a quality new waterfront is possible; a window of opportunity is currently available and the Dundee Partnership is committed to taking action. There is public support in favour of the key principles and Dundee now intends to capitalise on this general consensus in order to realise its ambitions for one of the most forward thinking and important projects in the city.

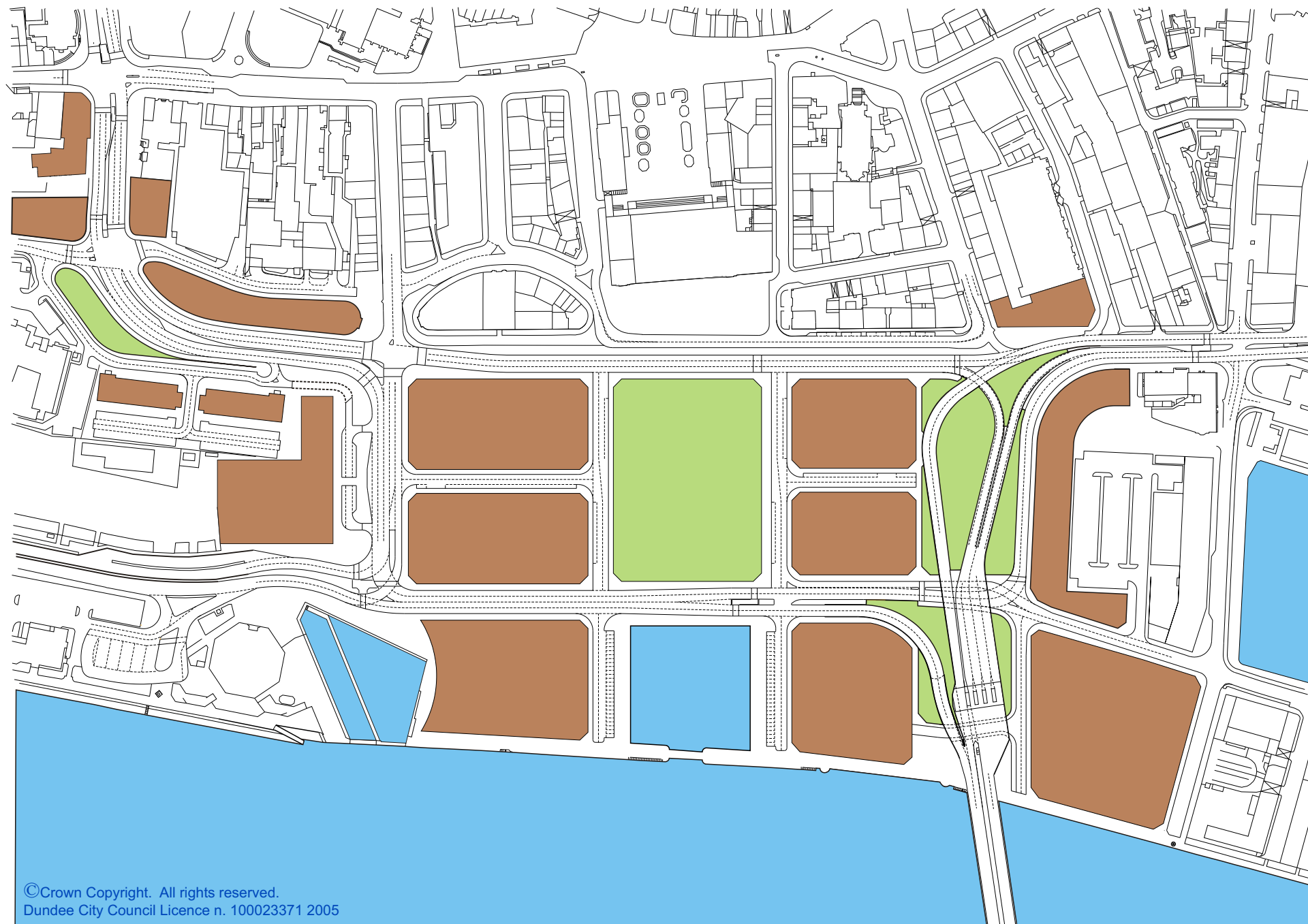




# Dundee Central Waterfront Masterplan 2001 - 2031

The Development Masterplan for the Central Waterfront area includes certain key components;

- ▶ the extension of the city centre's built form down to the waterfront;
- ▶ the creation of a new grid iron street pattern based on the historical routes to the north;
- ▶ improved provision of facilities for walking, cycling & buses;
- ▶ the reduction of the existing environmental effect of cars & parking;
- ▶ the removal and replacement of some of the Tay Road Bridge vehicle ramps;
- ▶ the creation of a pair of east/west tree lined boulevards to replace the existing inner ring road;
- ▶ the formation of attractive sites for a variety of new mixed use developments;
- ▶ the creation of a major new civic space & re-opened dock stretching from the Caird Hall to the river;
- ▶ the provision of a new rail station & arrival space at the western edge of the area.



The masterplan's objective is to tame the negative environmental effects that the existing roads and ramps have on the area, but at the same time to properly allow for necessary vehicular access and through traffic.

The proposed way of doing this will be to create a pair of matched east/west boulevards which will carry external traffic through the area and channel the bridge traffic in and out of the City Centre. The bridge ramps themselves will be reconstructed to create a more compact and direct connection with the new road pattern.

Within this basic pattern, smaller access streets will be formed to service the area and its associated new uses. Together this hierarchy of roads will create a much more understandable street pattern for residents and visitors alike

Pedestrian movement will be facilitated by the provision of light controlled crossing points at each junction in order to cater for the key desire lines from the city centre to the waterfront.

A dedicated public transport corridor has been retained along the line of the existing route along Dock Street. This will ensure that easy bus access is maintained within the city centre while also easily serving the new Central Waterfront developments.



The Masterplan aims to achieve a good balance between buildings and open space; it is right that sizeable new public spaces are re-incorporated into the area, but these will only function properly if they are framed and enclosed by quality new buildings of appropriate scale and height. There will also be a healthy balance between hard and soft landscaping in these spaces so that they can accommodate a variety of different uses.

Although a grid iron pattern of streets is proposed for the Waterfront, a considerable amount of visual variety has been sought by making that grid respond to the characteristics of the area. The overall effect is that no one street or space will be identical to any other, thus encouraging diversity and local identity while also forming viable development sites.

A number of new landmark features are proposed at prominent locations which will both bring added visual interest to the area and create a series of dramatic views and vistas through and within the waterfront. The cumulative effect will create a real sense of dramatic arrival for travellers entering the city from all directions and modes of transport.





# The Process of Implementing the Plan

The long-term development framework that has been prepared for the Central Waterfront permits a phased and progressive approach to its implementation over a flexible timescale. Some developments, such as the new hotel at City Quay, have already been heavily influenced by the Masterplan, while others are envisaged as being more long term. Dundee City Council have adopted this Masterplan for the purposes of controlling future development in the Central Waterfront area; all applications for planning permission will be expected to be in conformance with the Masterplan in order to protect the long term development potential of the area.

The plan will not, however, be implemented solely by guiding the form and nature of future developments. There a massive range of new infrastructure which will require to be constructed if the area is to realise its full potential within the period of the plan. An Implementation Plan has been prepared which contains details of the management, funding and phasing of these infrastructure works and the associated development of new buildings.



One of the most significant construction issues for the project will undoubtedly be the management of vehicular and pedestrian movement during the extensive engineering works which will be necessary. Careful management procedures will be developed to ensure that any disruption is kept to the absolute minimum and that public safety is placed at the forefront of this work.

A Partnership has already been formed to manage and implement what is effectively one of the largest and most important long term projects in the City. To ensure success the partners will require to ensure the following tasks are successfully achieved;

- ▶ Ongoing consultation with citizens and interested bodies
- ▶ Negotiating agreement with key parties
- ▶ Detailed design of major infrastructure and environmental improvements
- ▶ Funding and implementation of these major works
- ▶ Marketing of development sites to prospective developers
- ▶ Improving the image of the Waterfront and the City
- ▶ Ensuring the long term management and maintenance of the area



Our vision for Dundee's Central Waterfront is crucial to the achievement of the city's broader strategic aims. Not only will the project remove one of the last remaining major blights on the city's image and townscape, it will create a high-quality, mixed-use, riverside urban-quarter right in the heart of the city which will come to signify the extent of Dundee's renaissance as a post-industrial city.

The central waterfront project will therefore make a major contribution to retaining and enhancing Dundee's role as one of Scotland's dynamic cities, thereby ensuring its continued contribution to the long-term growth of the regional and national economy.



Central Waterfront 1999



Central Waterfront 2031





### STATEMENT OF THE PUBLICATION'S PURPOSE

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