

# George Street Experimental Road Layout

Public Stakeholder Group

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Meeting 15 June, 10am  
Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh

All are welcome

# What has happened so far

- Experimental road layout, for one year only
- Increase space for pedestrians, cyclists, activity
- Initiate design discussion, all views welcome – **how can we (as stakeholders) help George Street to reach its potential?**
- We tested out what works & what doesn't
- Test out how seasonal the use of the street is
- Develop an empirical baseline of information
- Results – more footfall, on every block, than ever before, returning, lingering, good concept but would prefer different, flexible execution

# Grassroots – putting people first

- The way your Council works is changing
- A trial only works with robust, credible testing
- Stakeholders put in charge of research package
- ‘Stakeholders’ includes anyone with an interest in George Street, inc. members of the public, as well as expertise (heritage/business/transport) & key groups (disability/tourism/local residents)
- There is no universally-agreeable solution
- Independent designer won public contract

# What a trial approach created (design)

- Trial never a blueprint; removed 'binary' choice
- Not : "this or that"      Not : "prefer old or new"
- Broad agreement (even if not universal) that previous layout was not Geo.St at full potential
- Consensus : trial layout not full potential either
- As neither of these bring Geo.St to its potential, we need to dream the 3<sup>rd</sup> dream...use learning...
- How we'll help George Street reach its potential

# Design Programme

- Continuity : All input to date will be influential
- Summer 2015 - develop design principles (DP's)
  - Independent designer appointed
  - Group discussions / Charettes
  - Report DP's to committee Oct'15
  - Helps 'score' a wide list of options
- Winter 2015/16 – apply DP's to detailed options
- Spring 2016 – present preferred option to C'ttee
- 2016 - Promote a TRO, consultation, hearing
- 2017 – new layout 3 years ahead of St James

# Summary of outcomes from trial...

- Symmetry of the street layout is paramount, as is celebrating (not blocking) world class built heritage
- Any activity should incorporate/design removable temporary coverage (ie large umbrellas at Italian Centre) to allow unhindered civic use of civic space; and to provide a public sense of buzz, not private.
- Cycle facilities to be included in long run design, but not on present layout (strong support for segregated cycle lane on a conventional layout ie Westbound on South carriage, Eastbound North)

# Summary of outcomes (con'd)...

- **George St. to be accessible to all** : Views of locals, disabled groups, transport, businesses all heard
- **Car Parking** : the most clearly divided issue. Some want no parking, others want 100% retained, but majority view is 'retain some' comparable to high end retail streets , New Bond Street, Buchanan St.
- **Consider flexibility, to adapt to 3 identifiable “seasons”** in the George Street calendar:
  - i. August & December – huge footfall, events
  - ii. April to October (excl Aug) – busy, extra ped
  - iii. Oct-Mar (excl Dec)– need traffic, parking, buzz

# Other learning from trial

- More resources long term than trial = clutter-free access to loading/maintain./emergency services
- Trial attempted a 'no barriers' approach; illegal driver behaviour saw reluctant re-introduction
- Access for public transport – half of George St open during trial but bus operators not using it; taxi trade reported pre-existing stance locations did not match where desire lines are ie West End
- Facilitate cross-town traffic, esp. Hanover Street, Note: pedestrian desire line / simplified crossings
- Other cities more excited about us than we are?