

Summary of Overall Costs for Options A&B and Impact on HQ&AC Business Case

BUDGET IMPLICATION OF SITE APPRAISAL 2 PROCESS				

## Appendix 3

### Scottish Government – Simplified Compulsory Purchase Order Process

CPO Period	CPO Stage/Action	Timescale (if specified)
CPO Preparation Period	Acquiring Authority prepares project proposal and identifies land required	
	AA engages and negotiates with landowners about purchase	
	AA resolves to use powers and prepares draft CPO	
	AA submits draft CPO to Scottish Government for Technical Check (recommended)	
	Scottish Government provides feedback on draft CPO	1 month
	AA finalises the Order, advertises it and serves notices on affected parties	Adverts must be placed in local paper for 2 successive weeks
CPO Objection and Hearing Period	AA submits Order and accompanying paperwork to Scottish Government	
	Scottish Government receives objections to the Order	21 days minimum from date notices are advertised
	If no objections are received Scottish Government move to determination of the Order	
	If objections received Scottish Government sends them to Acquiring Authority and invites response	
	Scottish Government passes Acquiring Authority response to objector and asks whether they wish to maintain their objection	
	If any objection is maintained Scottish Government passes case to DPEA for consideration	
	DPEA hears evidence for the case via Public Local Inquiry, Hearing or Written Submissions	
	DPEA submits report and recommendations to Scottish Government	
CPO Determination Period	Scottish Government considers Order and decides whether to: - confirm order - confirm order with modifications - not confirm order	
	And then advises the AA of this decision.	
	AA advertises decision and notifies landowners	Adverts must be placed in local paper for 2 successive weeks
	Period of legal challenge to Order	6 weeks
CPO Implementation Period	If no legal challenge AA is empowered to implement order and to take title to the land	
	AA takes title to land and possession via GVD or Notice to Treat	Up to 3 years from date confirmed order advertised
	AA offers compensation to landowners	
	If compensation agreed AA pays landowners	
	If compensation not agreed case may be referred to the Lands Tribunal Scotland	Up to 6 years

## CPO Indicative Timescales for CPO Preparatory Process

CPO Period	CPO Stage/Action	Timescale (if specified)
CPO Preparation Period	Acquiring Authority prepares project proposal and identifies land required	Jun – Sept 21
	AA engages and negotiates with landowners about purchase	Jun – Sept 21
	AA resolves to use powers and prepares draft CPO	29 Sept 21
	AA submits draft CPO to Scottish Government for Technical Check (recommended)	Oct 21
	Scottish Government provides feedback on draft CPO	1 Nov 21
	AA finalises the Order, advertises it and serves notices on affected parties	Dec 21- Jan 22 10 weeks
	AA submits Order and accompanying paperwork to Scottish Government	Jan 22





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Falkirk Council

# FALKIRK COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS

## Accessibility & Parking Review





Falkirk Council

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# FALKIRK COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS

## Accessibility & Parking Review

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**OUR REF. NO. 003**

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## Executive Summary

This study has been commissioned by Falkirk Council as a means of providing an independent, evidence based review comparing the following sites:

- Existing Municipal Buildings site; and
- Cockburn Street / High Street Site.

The study seeks to address concerns raised at a recent Council Committee meeting with regards to the location chosen for the new HQ site broadly reflective of the following:

- The environmental impacts associated with increased traffic centrally within the Town centre, principally the air quality impacts; and
- The availability, convenience and cost of parking.

A review has been undertaken to assess the accessibility of each site as this relates to the opportunity for travel afforded by each site's location, recognising constraints such as parking supply. The study utilises empirical data to inform forecasts of travel mode and footfall for each site as it relates to Falkirk's vision to revitalise its town centre. Consideration has also been given to the existing and anticipated travel habits of council staff through a travel demand assessment.

To respond to concerns relating to parking and air quality, the study has also included a travel capacity analysis to assess the existing local network capacity in terms of both arterial routes into the town centre and in relation to town centre car parking. Consideration has also been given to the sustainability of each site in terms of likely staff travel habits and the impacts of each.

Several findings have emerged from this approach, as summarised below:



Historically the predominant travel mode for Council staff is the private car, with single car occupancy representing close to 80% of all trips to and from the workplace.



The central location of either HQ site, recognising the functional needs of Council staff highlights the need for some level of parking to be available, to accommodate Falkirk's fleet of electric vehicles.



Active and sustainable transport modes are anticipated to have a relatively low mode share for journeys should the existing Municipal Buildings Site be progressed as a consequence of parking provisions.



Staff travel survey data indicates that if the existing Municipal Buildings Site was selected, staff travel patterns and mode choice would remain similar to the levels currently observed.



The town centre location of the Cockburn Street / High Street Site is likely to result in a higher increase in town centre commuter footfall compared to the existing Municipal Buildings Site.

The two sites have been scored against 7 criteria:



Each criteria has been scored on a 5-point scale (0 to 5). It should be noted that no weightings have been applied to the criteria, however WSP has included reference against each score to support and justify, alongside recommendations.

On the basis of the findings of this study, the Cockburn Street / High Street Site scores most positively, particularly in relation to alignment with policy, town centre footfall and modal shift, given Falkirk Council's commitment to net zero following the declaration of a climate emergency in 2019. It is recommended that this option be progressed. The reasons for this outcome are as follows:

- Access by bus: The existing Municipal Buildings Site lacks a formal pedestrian crossing on Camelon Road to connect westbound bus services;
- Access by private car: The location of the Cockburn Street / High Street Site is likely to influence travel choice, thus demonstrating significant potential to reduce private car use;
- Policy alignment: The location and proposed on-site parking supply at the existing Municipal Buildings Site is unlikely to contribute towards modal shift and will be unlikely to contribute towards tackling climate change;
- Town centre footfall: the footfall associated with the Cockburn Street / High Street Site forecast to be higher than existing Municipal Buildings Site; and
- Modal shift: Constrained parking on-site at the Cockburn Street / High Street Site would introduce a need for staff to consider alternative travel modes, stimulating a modal shift away from the private car.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1.1. Falkirk Council has committed to a programme to regenerate its town centres in the face of increasing pressures being experienced through economic decline and changing retail patterns. This commitment to invest in town centres reflects concerns over the drop in footfall and increasing town centre vacancy rates, which Falkirk Council's *Town centre Health Check* report (2019) demonstrated are proportionately higher in Falkirk, Grangemouth and Bo'ness.
- 1.1.2. As part of the vision for the town centre, Falkirk Council are seeking to relocate their headquarters (HQ) into a multipurpose building on the Cockburn Street / High Street site, which would also accommodate an Arts Centre. An appraisal of various options for the HQ site has been undertaken previously and formed the basis of Item 7 of a Committee Report ahead of a 23 June 2021 Committee Meeting. The principle of the central location for the HQ is that it would increase footfall within the town centre, and aid in the repurposing of existing redundant retail space.
- 1.1.3. Elected members have expressed a range of concerns with the proposed HQ relocation to Cockburn Street / High Street, including:
- The environmental impacts associated with increased traffic centrally within the town centre, principally the air quality impacts; and
  - The availability, convenience and cost of parking.
- 1.1.4. As a consequence of these concerns, elected members have sought an amendment to split the proposed elements of the new building, that would see the Office HQ located on the site of the existing Municipal Buildings north of West Bridge Street, with only the Arts Centre located centrally on the Cockburn Street / High Street site.

## 1.2 PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

- 1.2.1. This study has been commissioned by Falkirk Council as a means of providing an independent, evidence based review comparing the following sites:
- Existing Municipal Buildings site; and
  - Cockburn Street / High Street Site.
- 1.2.2. WSP have proposed a methodology for this study, within which the focus is on the accessibility of each site, as this relates to the opportunity for travel afforded by each sites location recognising constraints such as parking supply. This study firmly aligns with Falkirk Council's own travel mode hierarchy and also Scotland's *National Transport Strategy 2* and seeks to utilise empirical data to inform forecasts of travel mode and footfall for each site as it relates to Falkirk's vision to revitalise its town centre.
- 1.2.3. This report documents the outcomes of the study and covers the following elements:
- A review of the accessibility of each site, considering all travel modes, the existing infrastructure and its ability to accommodate development;
  - A review of current transport policy and an assessment of each sites alignment and fit with these policies;
  - A summary of the development options, including known scale, content and facilities;



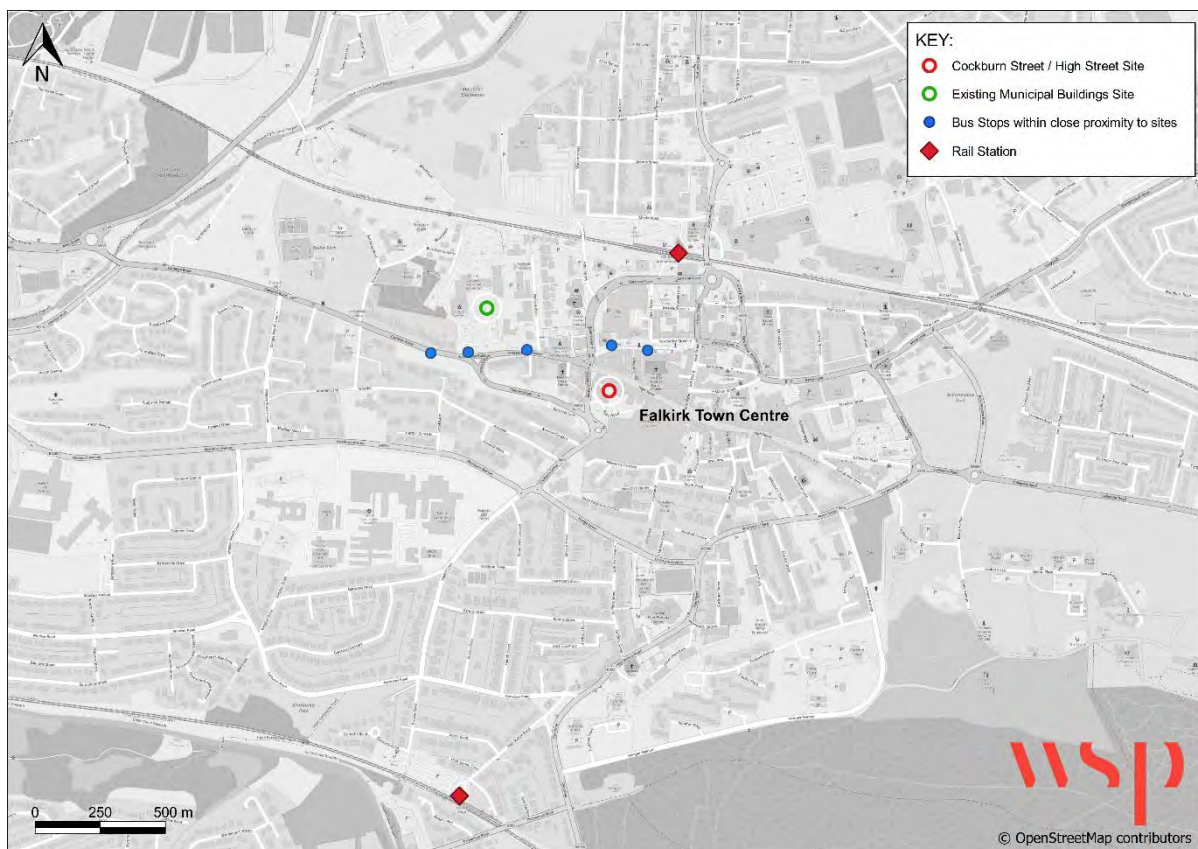
- A travel demand assessment, taking account of both locally specific data and that of comparable sites throughout the UK, together with a review of forecast travel mode share that could be achieved;
- Trip distribution and vehicle trip assignment as it relates to the local transport system and origin of staff and users;
- Capacity analysis accounting for both road network threshold impacts and parking supply;
- A review of the sustainability impacts of each development option; and
- Scoring based on criteria and metrics considered within the study to consolidate comparisons for each site in the context of transport, accessibility and town centre footfall.

1.2.4. The outcomes of the analysis are summarised and concluded within the final chapter of this report.

## 1.3 STUDY LOCATION

1.3.1. The study location centres around two sites for the proposed Council HQ, which are illustrated within Figure 1-1. The two sites are situated centrally within Falkirk, with the Cockburn Street / High Street Site located in the heart of the town centre and the existing Municipal Buildings Site to the west of the town centre.

**Figure 1-1 - Study Location**



## 2 ACCESSIBILITY

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### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1.1. This chapter documents the outcome of a review of the existing accessibility of the existing Municipal Buildings Site and the Cockburn Street / High Street Site. The review considers accessibility by all available travel modes and has been developed based on both a desktop and on-site review conducted during August 2021.

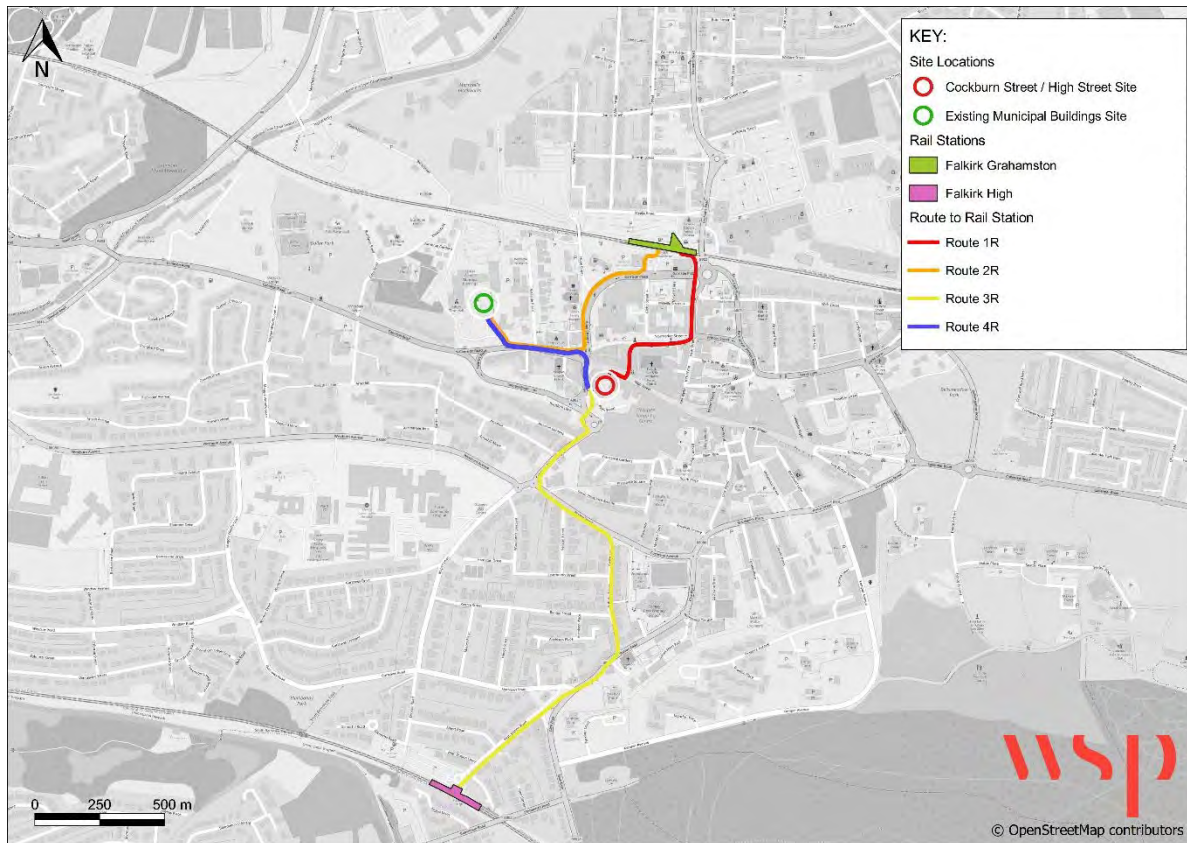
### 2.2 WALKING AND CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACCESS

- 2.2.1. The accessibility on foot has been reviewed by first identifying available walking routes and assessing the distance and time for pedestrians to travel from a specific point of origin to destination site. This has been considered in the context of access on foot from rail and bus interchange points alongside parking locations as a means of documenting the baseline situation for future travel to each site.
- 2.2.2. Routes between each site and the surrounding transport network have been named using the following naming convention:
- R: rail access route;
  - B: bus access route; and
  - C: car park access route.

#### RAIL ACCESS

- 2.2.3. Figure 2-1 illustrates the fastest walking routes from both Falkirk Grahamston and Falkirk High rail stations to each site.

**Figure 2-1 - Pedestrian Access to Rail**



2.2.4. Table 2-1 represents the details of the derived pedestrian routes for rail access.

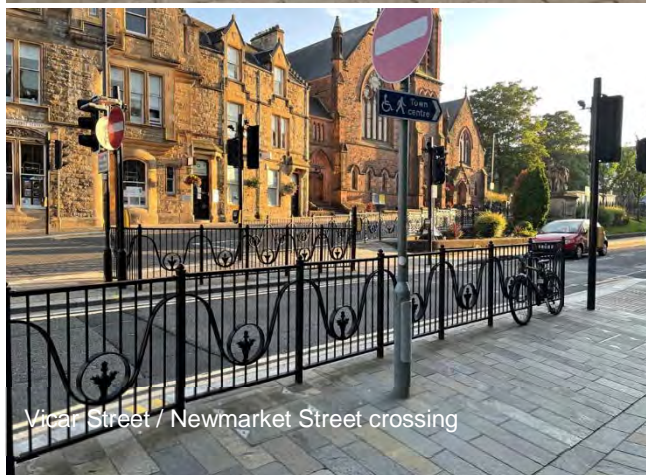
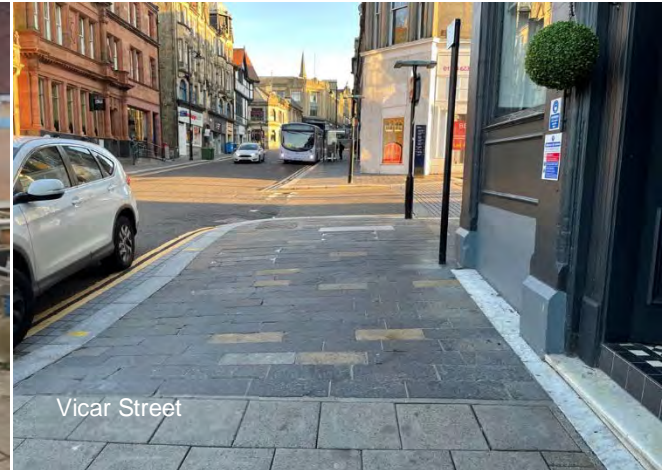
**Table 2-1 – Pedestrian Rail Access Route**

Route	Destination	Distance	Time
1R	Cockburn Street / High Street Site	480 m	7 min
2R	Existing Municipal Buildings Site	580 m	8 min
3R	Cockburn Street / High Street Site	1,280 m	16 min
4R	Existing Municipal Buildings Site	320 m	4 min



## ROUTE 1R

- 2.2.5. **Description:** The route travels from Falkirk Grahamston Station southwards for a distance of 480 metres and is primarily made up of footways running adjacent to the carriageway.



- 2.2.6. **Surface Quality:** Starting at Vicar Street, the paving consists of large slabs in good condition. This level of provision is continued at the anti-slip protected stairs and ramp through the underpass where adequate handrails are provided.
- 2.2.7. Along Vicar Street, the paving transitions into a smaller tiled high-quality surface. The pavement is free from obstructions, except for one bus stop cage where the usable pedestrian space is temporarily narrowed and where waiting bus users and signage/plants outside the North Star Cafe appear to block parts of the footway.
- 2.2.8. At the Vicar Street / Newmarket Street junction, the high-quality smooth surface continues across the staggered crossing onto the south side of Newmarket Street. Along Newmarket Street, the footway widens, and surface type changes back to large slabs past the St. Andrews bus stop.
- 2.2.9. The paving continues onto Lint Riggs with the addition of finer brick paving separated by bollards and shallow drainage gutters. From here, the full width of the pedestrian area can be utilised with the exception of outdoors café/restaurant seating and bike stands.



- 2.2.10. **Lighting:** Lighting is provided by streetlights along Vicar Street while the north entrance to the underpass does not have dedicated lighting. The underpass itself has lighting installed.
- 2.2.11. On Vicar street past the underpass, the lights in combination with the light grey colour of the paving aids with visibility.
- 2.2.12. **Crossings:** Dropped kerbs are provided when crossing Melville Street going south and when crossing Vicar Street itself at certain locations however, no formal crossing provision is provided.
- 2.2.13. The Vicar Street / Newmarket Street staggered signalised crossing does force pedestrians to deviate and the pedestrian island is relatively narrow and so does not enable many pedestrians to wait.
- 2.2.14. **Directness:** The route takes a direct path from the train station to the Cockburn Street / High Street Site.

## ROUTE 2R

- 2.2.15. **Description:** The route travels south-west from Falkirk Grahamston Station for a distance of 580 metres and primarily consists of footways running adjacent to the carriageway.



- 2.2.16. **Surface Quality:** From the A803, the surface quality and type of paving differs with smooth paved slabs, bricks and asphalt freely mixed. The paving is intact with little damage or cracks present.



Nearby vegetation appears to be well maintained and at the time of audit, did not obstruct pedestrian movement.

- 2.2.17. At the access roads into the Party Rocks (retail outlet) parking, dropped kerbs with tactile paving are provided however, uneven surfaces on the road allows for dust and gravel to collect which could cause problems for pedestrians utilising the dropped kerbs. The width of the A803 footway is approximately 1.5 metres allowing for two people to pass each other.
- 2.2.18. Going onto Hope Street, a small section of faded red colourised asphalt indicates an informal crossing complimented by tactile paving. Going south along A803, uneven surfaces outside the vehicle access to properties appears to cause the build-up of gravel and dirt on the footway. The footway in places is partially obstructed by electrical cabinets, lighting columns and a short section of raised kerb that narrows the footway by approximately 30 centimetres.
- 2.2.19. On West Bridge Street, the footway widens, and the surface material alters to paving slabs which are present for the remainder of the route. Occasional cracks and obvious prior replacement of slabs is visible along with several service hatches of various sizes. At the pedestrian crossing on Wellside Place, there is uneven surfacing materials which is contributing to the collection of dirt.
- 2.2.20. The access road from West Bridge Street to the existing Municipal Buildings Site has an asphalt surface and pedestrian guardrail provides segregation from general traffic.
- 2.2.21. **Lighting:** The route encompasses street lighting along its entire length. The parking area connecting Grahamston station and the A803 at the start of the route does not appear to be lit to the same level as the rest of the route. A similar situation where the standard of lighting appears reduced is at the pedestrian crossing on Hope Street.
- 2.2.22. Some of the vegetation outside Saint Francis Xavier's Catholic Church could restrict levels of lighting for the footway. The route along West Bridge Street is well lit in its entirety as well as the current access to the existing Municipal Buildings Site.
- 2.2.23. **Crossings:** There are three crossings on the route including Garrison Place, Hope Street and Xavier's Church.
- 2.2.24. The uncontrolled crossing at Garrison Place requires pedestrians to cross three lanes of traffic with only a small unprotected refuge island to aid crossing. The crossing does not have tactile paving or associated signage.
- 2.2.25. The Hope Street junction hosts traffic signal control and is staggered with tactile paving and dropped kerbs present. The pedestrian island could accommodate larger groups of waiting pedestrians or cyclists.
- 2.2.26. The crossing at Xavier's Church consists of red coloured surface treatment with associated dropped kerbs and tactile paving.
- 2.2.27. **Directness:** The route takes a direct path from the train station to existing Municipal Buildings Site.

## ROUTE 3R

- 2.2.28. **Description:** The route travels northwards from Falkirk High Station for a distance of 1,280m, with the route predominantly running adjacent to the carriageway.



- 2.2.29. **Surface Quality:** The route starts with asphalt paved footway along High Station Road. Overhanging vegetation from properties, electrical cabinets, bus stops and public bins occasionally obstructs and limit the available space for pedestrians. Cracks and damage in the pavement can be observed at entrances to properties, crossings and dropped kerbs. This all contributes to the uneven surface of the approximately 1.5 metre wide footway.
- 2.2.30. The paving at the Gartcows Road crossing has tactile paving and dropped kerbs. Continuing down High Station Road to Griffiths Street asphalt paving is continued, no vegetation is present, and the pavement widens outside the business establishments.
- 2.2.31. The footway on Griffiths Street is narrower than on High Station Road and vegetation from residential properties was seen to frequently overhang the footway during the audit. The dropped kerbs are uneven and prone to dirt and gravel collection. The footway is also occasionally obstructed by lighting columns.
- 2.2.32. On the B803 Hodge Street, the pedestrian provision is similar to that on High Station Road albeit with less cracking and wear and tear present.



- 2.2.33. The footways onwards from the Cockburn Street crossing are asphalt surfaced with a width in excess of 1.5 metres allowing for increased pedestrian flow. This continues on to the Tanners Road underpass, where high quality stairs and ramps enables access onto Bells Wynd and the Cockburn Street / High Street Site.
- 2.2.34. **Lighting:** street lighting on alternating sides of the road is provided along High Station Road, Griffiths Street, Hodge Street and Arnothill Bank. Lighting is absent at the south entrance of the Tanners Road underpass.
- 2.2.35. **Crossings:** There are several side streets with uncontrolled crossings and dropped kerbs along the route. The crossing at Gartcows Road is signal controlled and includes tactile paving and dropped kerbs. Further along the route there are two uncontrolled crossing points with refuge islands and tactile paving, to take pedestrians across the junction onto the west side of Cockburn Street.
- 2.2.36. **Directness:** The route takes a direct path from the train station to the Cockburn Street / High Street Site.

## ROUTE 4R

- 2.2.37. **Description:** The route is a continuation from Route 3R connecting to existing Municipal Buildings Site heading north-east for a distance of 320m. The route runs adjacent to the carriageway.

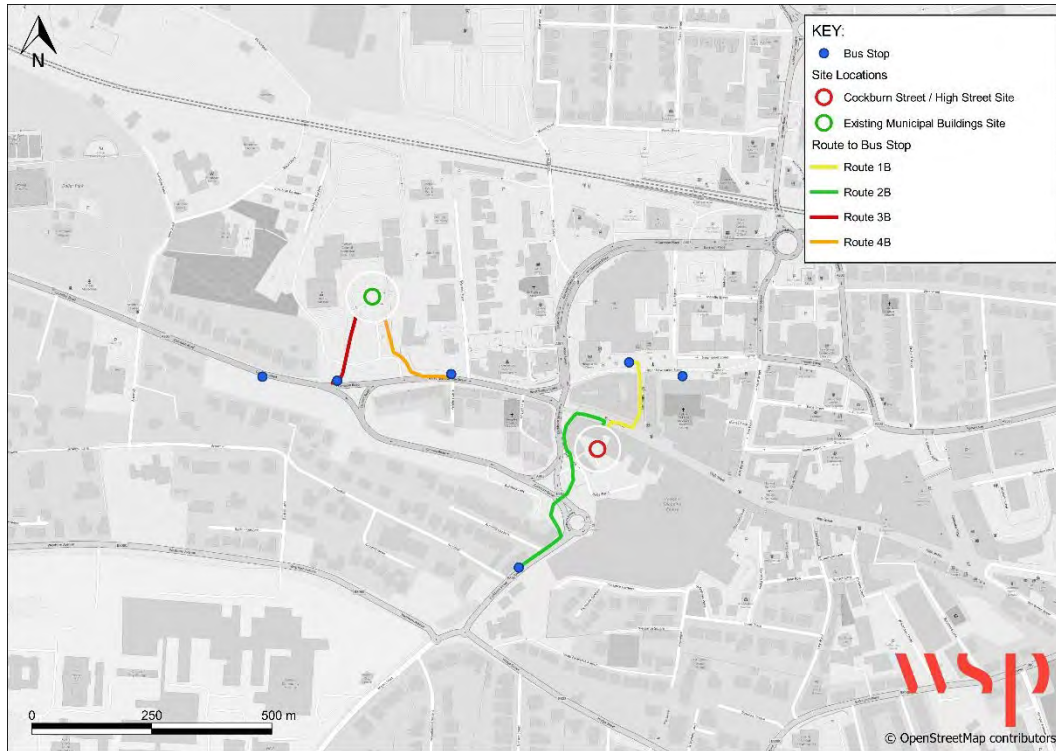


- 2.2.38. **Surface Quality:** After following Route 3R to Bell's Wynd, an asphalt paved surface takes pedestrians to the Upper Newmarket Street / A803 junction where multiple crossing options are available.
- 2.2.39. A trail of red tactile paving clearly indicates the pedestrian routes between the connecting roads and central pedestrian island. The island itself does have visible damage and cracking which appears prone to collecting dirt and the surfaces are not as smooth as the tiles on the adjacent West Bridge Street and High Street.
- 2.2.40. Along West Bridge Street, the footway widens, and high quality light coloured tiles provide a high quality surface route to the existing Municipal Buildings Site.
- 2.2.41. **Lighting:** The route is lit by streetlights with addition of a light on the pedestrian island which provides good wayfinding at the junction.
- 2.2.42. **Crossings:** There is one crossing on the route, a staggered signalised crossing with tactile paving and dropped kerbs at the Upper Newmarket Street / A803 junction.
- 2.2.43. **Directness:** The route takes a direct path from the end of route 3R to existing Municipal Buildings Site.

## BUS ACCESS

2.2.44. Figure 2-2 illustrates the fastest walking routes to the closest bus service access points in Falkirk to both the Cockburn Street / High Street Site and the existing Municipal Buildings Site.

**Figure 2-2 - Pedestrian Access to Bus**



2.2.45. Table 2-2 represents the details of the derived pedestrian routes for bus access.

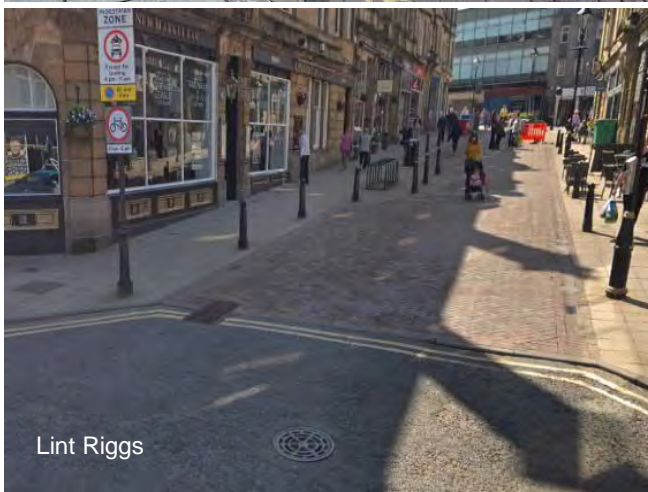
**Table 2-2 – Pedestrian Bus Access Routes**

Route	Destination	Distance	Time
1B	Cockburn Street / High Street Site	140 m	2 min
2B	Cockburn Street / High Street Site	320 m	4 min
3B	Existing Municipal Buildings Site	50 m	1 min
4B	Existing Municipal Buildings Site	50 m	1 min



## ROUTE 1B

- 2.2.46. **Description:** The route travels from the bus stops on Upper Newmarket Street southwards for a distance of 140 metres and is predominantly traffic free.



- 2.2.47. **Surface Quality:** The surface materials on Upper Newmarket Street consist mainly of a mix of smooth paved slabs, tiles and asphalt. It is of good quality with no obvious trip hazards due to dropped kerbs. Space is provided for pedestrian movements in all directions in and around the bus stops, Asda and onto Lint Riggs. No obvious obstructions other than occasional bike stands and outdoor serving seating were noted.
- 2.2.48. **Lighting:** The route is well lit in its entirety with a mix of lighting being provided along Upper Newmarket Street, Lint Riggs and High Street.
- 2.2.49. **Crossings:** There is one uncontrolled crossing with dropped kerbs to connect the eastbound bus stop to Lint Riggs. The crossing is also temporarily narrowed to minimise pedestrian activity on the carriageway.
- 2.2.50. **Directness:** The route takes a direct path from the bus stop to the Cockburn Street / High Street Site.



## ROUTE 2B

- 2.2.51. **Description:** The route travels from the bus stop on Cockburn Street northwards for a distance of 320m, with the route predominantly running adjacent to the carriageway.



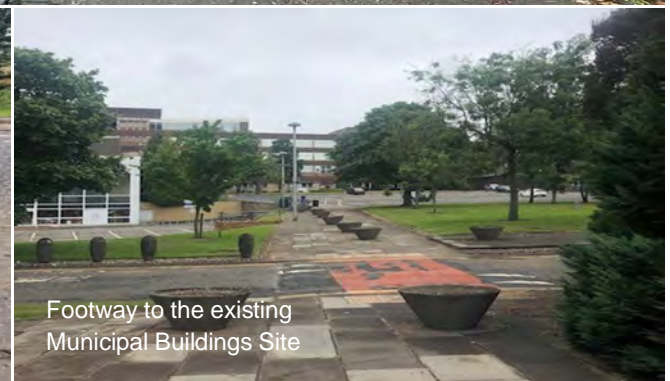
- 2.2.52. **Surface Quality:** The footways along Arnothill Bank has an asphalt surface and width in excess of 1.5 metres. The crossings at Arnothill and Arnothill Gardens appears to be of poor quality where uneven surfaces and asphalt damage allows for dirt and potential water collection at the dropped kerbs.
- 2.2.53. The footway outside of Blush Hair and Beauty is patched and partially blocked by wheelie bins which could pose tripping hazards. The corner at Blush Hair and Beauty appears to be a pinch point prone to leaves, water and dirt collection. This paving at the Tanners Road underpass consists of smooth high-quality bricked stairs and ramps allows for access onto Bells Wynd and the site. The footway along the A803 is wide and in good condition and offers a smooth transition onto High Street.
- 2.2.54. **Lighting:** The route is predominately well lit with streetlights, with the exception of the entrances to the underpass, where lighting appears to be less prominent.
- 2.2.55. **Crossings:** The route includes two uncontrolled crossings at Arnothill Gardens and Bell's Wynd, both with dropped kerbs.



- 2.2.56. **Directness:** The route takes a direct path to the Cockburn Street / High Street Site, only diverting slightly to access the Tanner Road underpass.

### ROUTE 3B

- 2.2.57. **Description:** The route travels from the bus stops on Camelon Road northwards for a distance of 50 metres and is predominantly traffic free.



- 2.2.58. **Surface Quality:** The surface quality is mixed, consisting mainly of smooth paved slabs. Footway width on Camelon Road appears less than 2 metres and overhanging foliage were observed to impede pedestrians during the audit.
- 2.2.59. **Lighting:** The route is well lit by streetlights however the overhanging vegetation could impact visibility during summer months in the hours of darkness.
- 2.2.60. **Crossings:** The route includes two uncontrolled crossing at Camelon Road and Ferguson Drive, both with dropped kerbs. The lack of formal crossing on Camelon Road to connect the westbound bus services is a gap in provision, should footfall intensify.
- 2.2.61. **Directness:** The route takes a very direct path from the eastbound bus stops on Camelon Road to the existing Municipal Buildings Site however the westbound bus stop could benefit from improved crossings.