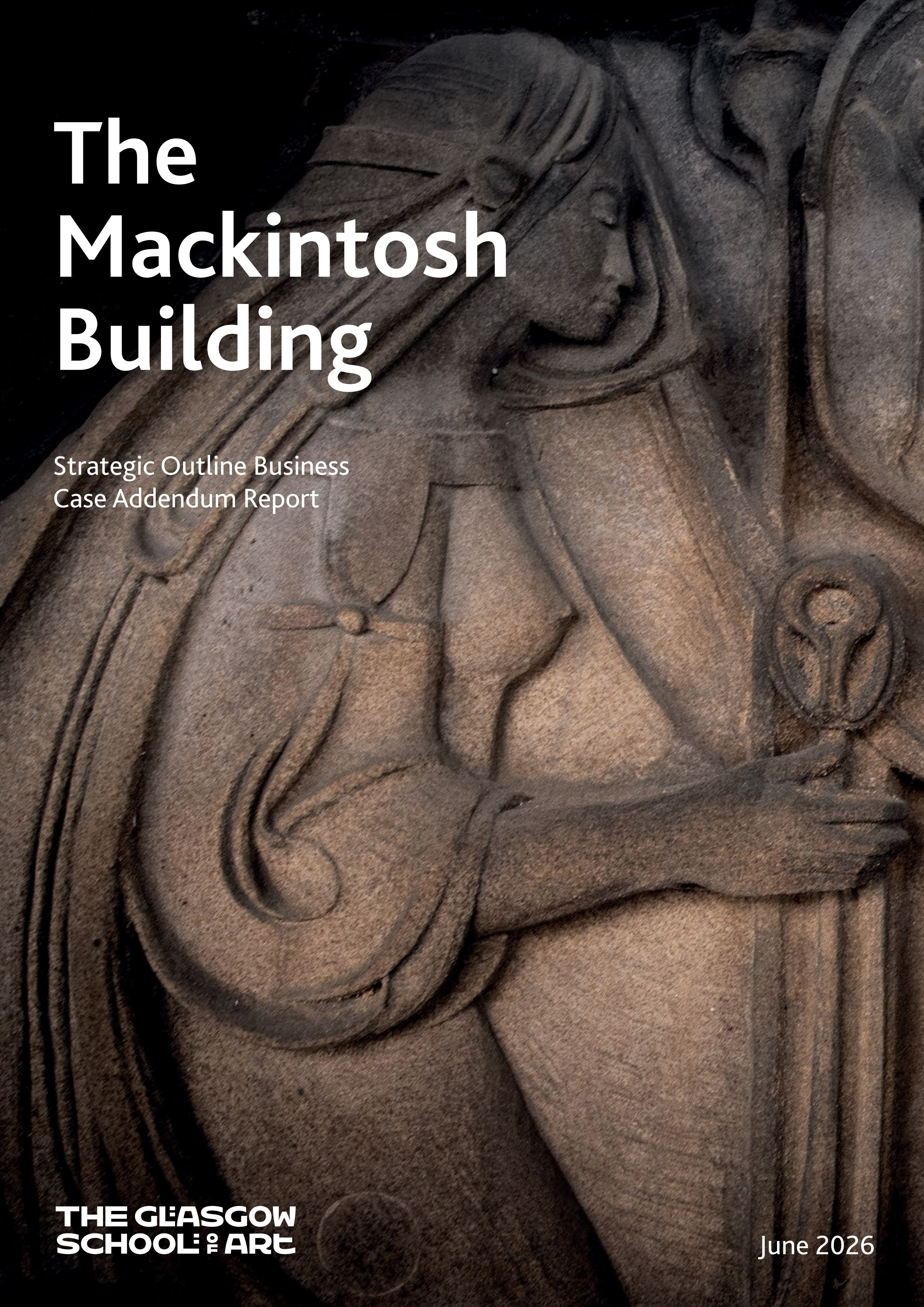


The Mackintosh Building

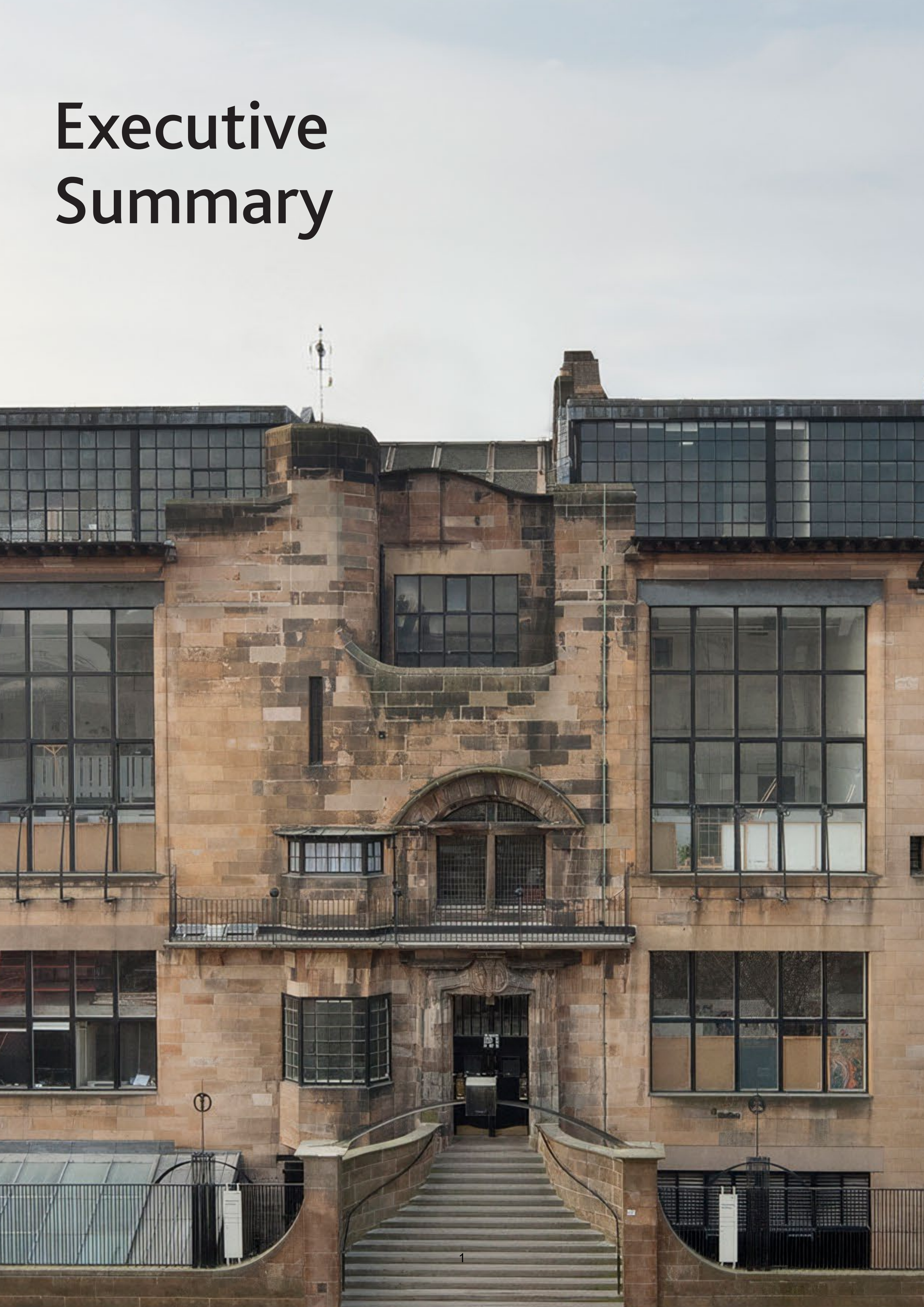
Strategic Outline Business Case Addendum Report

THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

June 2026

Contents

Executive Summary



Executive Summary

Background

The Mackintosh Building is one of the UK's most significant buildings. During a restoration project following a fire in May 2014, a second, more severe fire occurred in June 2018. This Strategic Outline Business Case Addendum (SOBCA) sets out the preferred strategic approach for the future of the Mackintosh Building, reflecting the significant changes in societal, financial, economic and delivery conditions since approval of the original SOBC in 2021.

The Mackintosh Building remains a heritage asset of national and international significance, and The Glasgow School of Art (GSA), alongside many others, wishes to see it fully reinstated.

The GSA has continued to deliver against its strategic objectives, grown student numbers, expanded its academic portfolio and maintained its international standing during the period in which the Mackintosh Building has been non-operational. The need for intervention is not driven by institutional capacity requirements, but by the GSA's responsibilities as custodian of a Category A listed building.

The purpose of this SOBCA is to identify the most appropriate next steps in the reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building, balancing affordability, deliverability, and long-term strategic ambition. Building on the 2021 SOBC, which identified faithful reinstatement as the preferred long-term strategic outcome, this SOBCA examines the scenarios for progressing that objective in the context of significantly changed financial and delivery conditions.

The SOBCA considered a range of scenarios[1], including full reinstatement scenarios, alternative stabilisation and repair approaches, and continuation of the Business as Usual (BAU) position.

Scenarios

- The BAU position is not considered sustainable. The retained structure remains dependent upon extensive leased scaffolding and shoring arrangements that require ongoing management and expenditure while providing no usable space and no meaningful progress towards reinstatement. Continuation of the BAU position places pressure on institutional resources, prolongs uncertainty, and fails to create long-term value for the GSA, the Mackintosh Building, or the wider city.

- Full reinstatement scenarios are not affordable without substantial external funding and partnership support.

- By contrast, the stabilisation and repair scenarios provide a viable and deliverable route forward within current affordability assumptions.

[1] See the 2021 Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC), prepared by Avison Young, for details of the scenarios appraised in 2021 and the rationale for selecting faithful reinstatement as the preferred long-term strategic outcome.

Following detailed appraisal, the preferred scenario is **Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention System plus Selected Permanent Steelwork.** This delivers a revised stabilisation arrangement that mitigates the ongoing cost of BAU, stabilises the structure, and prepares it for the main works to be undertaken. The stabilisation project represents a positive step towards mitigating project risks and improving confidence among contractors and funders.

The Economic Case demonstrates that continuation of the BAU position is financially unsustainable and delivers no meaningful progress towards reinstatement. The preferred scenario achieved the highest overall appraisal score, providing the strongest balance between strategic fit, affordability, deliverability, and future investment readiness, while preserving future opportunities for investment and redevelopment.

Analysis

Since publication of the original SOBC in 2021, a range of factors - including construction inflation, market volatility, economic pressures, and changes in the financial position of the higher education sector and the institution - have significantly affected the affordability and deliverability of a standalone reinstatement project. The analysis undertaken through the SOBCA highlights the potential for the Mackintosh Building to act as an anchor investment within a wider city-led and government-supported, multi-partnered regeneration programme.

In addition to addressing the immediate challenges facing the building, the preferred scenario strengthens the future investment proposition of the Mackintosh Building. By reducing risk, improving certainty and securing the retained structure, it creates a more resilient and investment-ready platform for future phases of reinstatement, while enhancing opportunities for partnership and participation in wider city-centre regeneration initiatives.

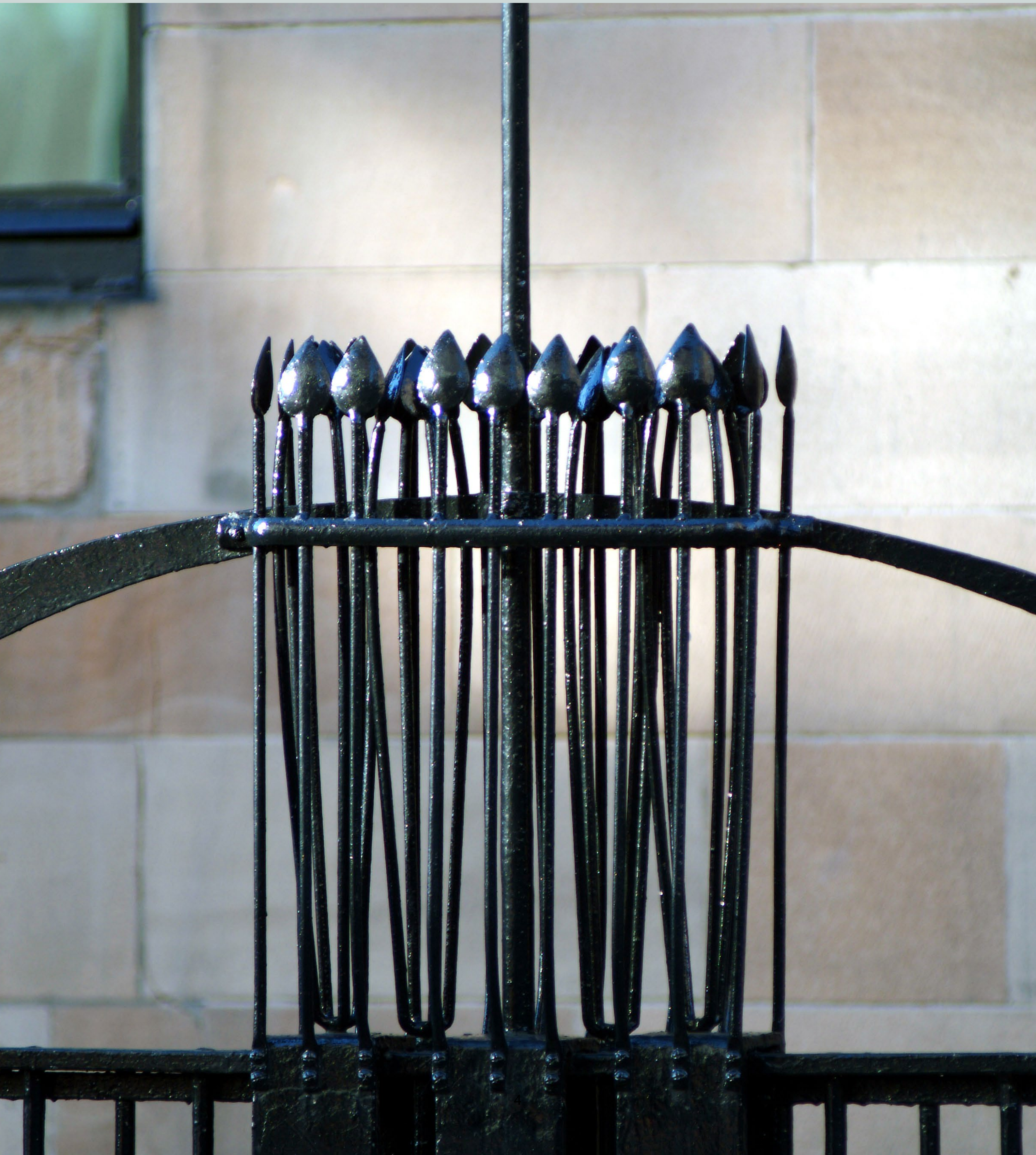
Although the preferred scenario does not return the building to operational use, it will deliver wider public benefit by improving the building's presentation and visibility, helping to reconnect an internationally significant heritage asset with the local community and the wider city, and preserving its potential to act as a catalyst for cultural, creative and economic regeneration.

The Commercial, Financial and Management Cases demonstrate that the preferred scenario is capable of being procured, funded and delivered through an appropriate governance and project management framework, with no material barriers identified that would prevent progression to the next stage.

The SOBCA concludes that **Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention System plus Selected Permanent Steelwork** represents the most sustainable and strategic intervention currently available to the GSA: an affordable and deliverable gateway project that secures the Mackintosh Building, protects its heritage significance, reduces ongoing risk and costs, and creates the conditions necessary for future phases.

Section 1.0

Strategic Case



1. Strategic Case

Executive Summary

The Strategic Case demonstrates that, while the Mackintosh Building remains an important heritage, cultural and economic asset, The Glasgow School of Art (GSA) has continued to deliver against its strategic objectives, grow student numbers, expand its academic portfolio and maintain its international standing without the building being operational.

Since the publication of the 2021 Strategic Outline Business Case, significant changes in the higher education, economic and construction environments have materially affected the affordability and deliverability of the project. The analysis undertaken through the Strategic Outline Business Case Addendum (SOBCA) demonstrates that the Mackintosh Faithful and Mackintosh Studio scenarios are not affordable without substantial external investment and partnership. The current Business as Usual position is also unsustainable, as continued reliance on extensive temporary scaffolding and protective measures presents ongoing financial, operational and conservation risks.

The Strategic Case identifies Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 as the appropriate next step. This provides an affordable and deliverable gateway that secures the building, reduces ongoing risk and cost, protects the heritage asset, and creates the conditions for future phases of reinstatement. Within Scenario 3, the Economic and Financial Cases identify the Temporary Retention System with selected Permanent Steelwork as the preferred implementation option. This option provides the strongest balance of affordability, deliverability, long-term value and future readiness, while remaining consistent with the strategic objectives established in this Strategic Case.

1.0. Introduction and Purpose of the Strategic Case

The GSA's core purpose and responsibility is education and research in the visual and creative disciplines. It is also the owner and custodian of the Mackintosh Building, a Category A listed building. The purpose of this Strategic Case is to articulate the strategic need for the Mackintosh Building in relation to the GSA's core purpose of education and research.

The GSA is committed to its custodianship and responsibilities to the Mackintosh Building. In the period since the 2018 fire, and importantly since 2021 when the GSA published the first Strategic Outline Business Case for the Mackintosh Building, the world has experienced a period of rapid change, persistent instability and inflationary pressures. Higher education has not been immune from this. The current operating model, which relies primarily on growth in on-campus international student enrolment, alongside a plateauing of government funding, is increasingly being challenged and is widely considered unsustainable.

In the immediate aftermath of the 2018 fire, the GSA publicly stated its continued commitment to the faithful reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building. This commitment was restated with the publication of the Strategic Outline Business Case in 2021. In the Architectural and Technical Analysis undertaken by Reiach and Hall with Purcell (2024), faithful reinstatement was the agreed starting point of their assessment.

The SOBC 2021[1] demonstrated that the best option was to:

> *Undertake a faithful reinstatement within the practical constraints of the regulatory environment, while innovating to make sure that digital technology and sustainability are at the building's heart. The preferred option addresses the key success factors in each of the areas of the business case and will benefit the nation, students, the community, academia and the economy by delivering the GSA's academic objectives:*

- *Enhancing the student experience and consolidating the world-class reputation of a national institution through a purpose-built Art School;*
- *Protecting the nation's heritage;*
- *Creating a landmark sustainable building that can act as a catalyst for the regeneration of Garnethill and Sauchiehall Street;*
- *Building community wealth - for example, by developing new apprenticeships in traditional and heritage crafts;*
- *Growing the GSA's special contribution to the cultural, creative and economic fortunes of Glasgow, and extending the GSA's relationships with industry and academia.*

However, the pace of change in the external operating environment since approval of the SOBC requires a different approach to the reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building. This is necessary to ensure the GSA's long-term financial sustainability and its ability to deliver its core purpose of education and research while maintaining its international standing.

This SOBCA[2] addresses these challenges by considering the GSA's core purpose, its responsibilities as custodian of the Mackintosh Building, the need to maintain long-term institutional sustainability, and the wider socio-economic contribution of the institution.

The SOBCA provides a robust assessment of the available options and their implications. Its conclusions require strategic decisions regarding the future approach to reinstatement. These decisions will help secure the long-term sustainability of both the GSA and the Mackintosh Building, ensuring their continued contribution, impact and value.

1.1. The Glasgow School of Art

The Glasgow School of Art is internationally recognised as one of Europe's leading independent university-level institutions for education and research in the visual creative disciplines. In the QS World University Rankings 2026, it is ranked 8th in the world and 5th in Europe, and is one of only three UK art schools represented in the rankings[3]. Studio-based, specialist, practice-led teaching, learning and research draw talented individuals from around the world with a shared passion for visual culture and creative production.

Alongside the GSA's international standing, it makes a significant contribution to Glasgow and the UK's creative and cultural economy and wider ecosystem which is recognised at civic and governmental level[4].

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[1] SOBC 2021 Avison Young.

[2] SOBCA comprises a suite of documents including the architectural routes, Financial Analysis, Economic Impact, and Conservation Management Plan, all of which are publicly available via the GSA Mackintosh Building website.

[3] QS World Subject Rankings.

[4] GSA Socio-Economic Impact Report.

Originally founded in 1845 as one of the first Government Schools of Design, the GSA's history can be traced back to 1753 and the establishment of the Foulis Academy, which delivered a European-style art education. Since 1869, the GSA has been located in the Garnethill area of Glasgow City Centre, initially in the Corporation Galleries (McLellan Galleries) on Sauchiehall Street prior to the development of the Mackintosh Building, a purpose-designed art school constructed between 1897 and 1909. Since then, the GSA has expanded its campus within Garnethill to accommodate growth in disciplines and student numbers. Recent developments include the £50m SFC-funded Reid Building (2009-2013) and the £26m Stow Building purchase (2016) and refurbishment (2016-2025).

1.2. The GSA's Strategic Plan and Future Ambitions

The GSA's Strategic Plan 2022-2027 commits the School to:

- Transform its distinct models of creative education.
- Impact through creative research, innovation and partnership.
- Being a sustainable, independent art school.

The current Strategic Plan will be extended and refreshed to 2030, building on the foundations of excellence, consolidation, transformation and growth established since its adoption. It will take cognisance of the current structural changes impacting higher education alongside the importance of creativity and creative professionals to economic growth and addressing major societal issues and challenges. To academic year 2030-2031, the GSA will strengthen existing academic expertise and realise the potential of its disciplines and graduates to effect positive socio-economic change through emergent technologies and interdisciplinarity. International excellence, reach and influence will be extended; ambitious partnerships and collaborations developed; and a civic contribution with impact and value sustained to benefit the communities we are part of.

The Strategic Plan is informed by a range of Lead Indicators, some of which are material to and impacted by the Mackintosh Building project:

- Student Experience
- Total population
- Operating surplus
- Liquidity
- Gearing
- Quality of the GSA estate

The Mackintosh Building project is also informed by the Strategic Plan's supporting strategies, specifically the Research and Education strategies.

The Research Strategy focuses on collaboration and interdisciplinary research, knowledge exchange and innovation, building on regional strengths, international partnerships, and the distinctive opportunities presented by the institution's unique heritage and place. The Education Strategy is centred on enhancing the student experience and supporting the growth and development of the academic portfolio, including student numbers, programme provision and modes of delivery. The Estates Strategy, Digital Strategy, People Strategy and Financial Plan provide the enabling framework that supports and underpins the ambitions and delivery of both strategies.

The GSA continues to perform strongly against its strategic objectives, with academic programmes and research that are internationally recognised[5]; high levels of applications and enrolment in a period of intense sector competition; and performance that meets or exceeds Strategic Plan Lead Indicators and other metrics, including Scottish Government COWA[6] targets.

Over the period of the Strategic Plan 2022-2027, the GSA has introduced several new academic disciplines. Together with growth within the existing portfolio, this has increased the total student population from 2270 in academic year 2020-2021 to 3250 in academic year 2025–2026. This exceeds the Strategic Plan target of 2870 for academic year 2026-2027. This growth has been accommodated through investment in and development of the GSA's estate, including further development of the Stow Building, the relocation of the School of Innovation and Technology from Pacific Quay to West Regent Street[7], and enhancements to existing buildings through improved space utilisation and management. These developments have enabled the GSA to expand its academic portfolio and student population without the Mackintosh Building being operational.

Looking ahead, and recognising the challenging international student recruitment environment and current limitations on Scottish-funded places, projections to academic year 2030–2031 do not anticipate significant future growth. Instead, the GSA will focus on moderate growth aligned with new programme development, diversification of international recruitment markets to reduce exposure to geopolitical and market risks, and rebalancing the student profile across levels, fee categories and modes of delivery.

The GSA will continue to optimise and enhance its estate through a number of transformational projects that improve the use, functionality and quality of space, enhancing the student and staff experience. This strategic approach will enable future growth to be accommodated within the existing estate while supporting the gradual withdrawal from buildings that are no longer fit for purpose or would require significant capital investment to provide an excellent working environment and achieve a RICS B rating in line with the Strategic Plan Lead Indicator.

1.3. The Case for Change

The Case for Change sets out the GSA's current position, actions considered to date, and the next steps required to achieve its future strategic ambitions. It considers the GSA's research and academic ambitions, alongside the associated Estates and Infrastructure Strategy and the requirement for future financial sustainability.

It also considers the wider socio-economic impact of the GSA, including its contribution to the city's creative and cultural ecosystem, vibrancy, urban regeneration, economy, its immediate neighbours, and the communities of which it forms a part. This contribution is significant and evidenced within the accompanying Economic Case.

The approach to the Mackintosh Building's reinstatement needs to align with and contribute to:

- Glasgow City Council's city centre strategies, regeneration frameworks, and economic development priorities and City Development Plan 2, and Innovation Zone initiatives.
- Government policies and objectives, including:
    - The Scottish Government's National Strategy for Economic Transformation.
    - The UK Government's Industrial Strategy and Creative Sector Plans.

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[5] QS World University Subject Rankings 2026 8th

[6] Commission on Widening Access 2030 Scottish Funding Council/Scottish Government.

[7] Within this period, the GSA withdrew from leased space at the Hub, Pacific Quay, to leased space at West Regent Street.

- National and local policies around the management and conservation of historic buildings and assets.

Fundamentally, decisions arising from the conclusions of the SOBCA must protect the future sustainability of the GSA as an independent world-leading art school; comply with the heritage and conservation responsibilities associated with a Category A listed building; mitigate impact on our neighbours and community; and deliver demonstrable economic and regeneration impact for Glasgow.

1.4. Work Undertaken to Date

The scope of the SOBCA commissioned in July 2024 was to:

> *"Identify the appropriate route to delivery of the Mackintosh Building rebuilding…take account of the current financial climate, known construction inflation and likely contingency provision looking forward…this work will inform the timeline for the faithful reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building…faithful reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building remains GSA's preferred option, which the SOBC Addendum Process will not reconsider. The GSA remains committed to faithful reinstatement; this addendum process will review our journey towards delivering that."*

This restated the GSA's commitment following the 2018 fire and reflected the clearance, stabilisation and conservation work undertaken on the Mackintosh Building since 2018, alongside progress towards settlement of the insurance claim.

Mackintosh Building Activity Key Dates:

2018	
June	**Mackintosh Emergency Procedures Instigated**
June **Ongoing**	**Phase 1 Order 1 Making Safe Works** Overall activity to make safe the structure, install scaffolding to support/stabilise and protect the building.
June **(to 2022)**	**Fire Investigation by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)**
2019	
February **March**	**Phase 1 Order 3A Making Safe Works** Clearance of debris to main entrance for SFRS Access
March **Ongoing**	**Phase 1 Order 3B Making Safe Works** Scaffolding, site clearance to facilitate SFRS access and investigations. Additional shoring and supports installed.
October **November**	**Phase 1+ SFRS Works Section 1** Clearance works in conjunction with SFRS, alterations to existing works, emergency access arrangements installed.
October	**Phase 1+ SFRS Works Section 3** Site accommodation and welfare established.
December	**Phase 1+ SFRS Works Section 2** SFRS Site Inspection.

2020	
February	**Strategic Outline Business Case** GSA appoints Avison Young to undertake Strategic Outline Business Case for Mackintosh Building.
March **June**	**UK Government Imposed COVID Shutdown** No Activity, management and security only.
June **September**	**Phase 1+ SFRS (post-Covid 19 Lockdown)** Investigation and monitoring of specific areas within the structure, material removal, temporary works extended.
September **(to 2022)**	**Phase 1++ Section 1 & 2** Material removal and dismantling works, installation of safety nets, supervising Archaeologist works, additional steel supports and scaffolding installed. Wall Head protection. Ongoing archiving activities.
2021	
June	**Strategic Outline Business Case** Strategic Outline Business Case produced by Avison Young and approved by the GSA Board of Governors.
October	**Strategic Outline Business Case** Strategic Outline Business Case produced by Avison Young published.
2022	
January	**SFRS Fire Investigation** SFRS Fire Investigation Report published. Due to the extensive damage sustained at the site and physical evidence being destroyed in the fire, the cause was recorded as ‘undetermined’.
August **(to 2023)**	**Phase 1: Order 1 Ongoing Making Safe Works Instructions 1 & 2** Surveys undertaken, trial pits produced, installation of structural scaffolding to support specific making good works and protection activities, removal of upper floor slabs in SW corner, removal of masonry to west elevation (Library) due to safety concerns including stabilisation works.
2023	
January **(to August)**	**Phase 1: Order 1 Ongoing Making Safe Works Instructions 3, 4 & 5** Works to elevations to protect windows and adjustment of scaffolding to facilitate roof installation. Roof covering installed, guttering and downpipes to protect the structure. Moisture monitoring ongoing.
September **(to 2024)**	**Phase 1: Order 1 Ongoing Making Safe Works Instructions 6** Works to existing scaffolding to facilitate further removal works and remedials to cracks to protect the structure. Propping installed to support damaged beams and some dismantling of internal structures to maintain a safe environment.
2024	
May **(to 2026)**	**SOBC Addendum and Insurance Arbitration** Addendum to 2021 SOBC commenced. Arbitration proceedings against insurers instigated.
2025	
March **(to May)**	**Phase 1: Order 1 Ongoing Making Safe Works** Elevational wrap removal, expanded temporary drainage installation.

1.5. Project Vision

The Strategic Outline Business Case approved by the Board of Governors and published in October 2021 concluded:

> *"Our vision is to faithfully reinstate the Mackintosh Building, creating an environment central to our education, research and partnership that will contribute to and enhance Glasgow's position as a leading and internationally significant creative and cultural city…[it is] a working School of Art and a heritage asset… synonymous with GSA's international reputation and one of the most iconic art schools in the world.*
>
> *The Mackintosh Building's unique convening power, its ability to bring together students, staff, and partners from across academia, business and the community, enhancing the ability to interrogate emerging and traditional forms of practice, creative innovation and production within a world-leading environment, enabling and extending partnerships across the world…it must be permeable, useful, and contribute not only to the GSA but to the economic prosperity of Glasgow and to its wider creative and cultural economy."*

This was the basis upon which the GSA commissioned the SOBCA in 2024.

The preferred outcome was rigorously interrogated through the first stage of the SOBCA, comprising the Architectural and Technical Analysis undertaken by Reiach and Hall with Purcell, the Cost Profile prepared by Gardiner & Theobald LLP, and the Financial Analysis undertaken by QMPF in conjunction with the GSA Finance Team.

However, changes in the external operating environment since approval of the SOBC in 2021, alongside the evolution of the GSA's academic portfolio, student population and research activity, require a revised approach. The analysis undertaken through the Architectural and Technical Assessment, Cost Profile, and Financial Analysis demonstrates that the current hold-safe arrangements are not sustainable in the longer term, while full reinstatement is not currently affordable for the GSA acting alone. Accordingly, the SOBCA proposes a phased approach that enables progress to be made now, reduces the costs associated with the current temporary arrangements, and preserves the opportunity for future reinstatement as funding and partnership opportunities emerge.

As stated earlier, the GSA has demonstrated its ability to grow, maintain its international standing and achieve key performance metrics without the Mackintosh Building being operational. The GSA has demonstrated that it can continue to deliver its core purpose while the building remains unavailable. Nevertheless, the GSA continues to support the reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building as a permeable, useful and convening space, which contributes not only to the GSA's learning, teaching, research and innovation, but also to Glasgow's economic prosperity.

At the same time, the GSA is responsible for its long-term financial sustainability, the transformational impact it has on individual students, and the contribution it makes to Glasgow's creative, cultural and innovation ecosystem and wider economy. This means that the reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building, and the GSA's vision for its future, must become a collective ambition: one that is owned, developed and delivered through civic, commercial and philanthropic partnerships. It is underpinned by an ambition for Glasgow to be globally recognised as a creative and cultural powerhouse, driven by a highly skilled workforce, innovation, investment, collaboration, and a unique creative and cultural education, production and presentation ecology. This approach is reflected in the proposal to undertake the reinstatement in discrete phases, beginning with Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 (described further in Section 1.15.).

The work by Reiach and Hall with Purcell identified Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 as the first phase. This is a justified stabilisation intervention which preserves future optionality in a constrained and uncertain environment. It enables future consideration of either the Mackintosh Faithful or Mackintosh Studio reinstatement scenarios, subject to future funding, partnership and strategic decisions.

Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 delivers the medium-to-long-term stabilisation of the Mackintosh Building, enabling the removal of the current extensive external and internal scaffold arrangement. Removal of the external scaffold will make the remaining structure of the building visible and support its conservation as set out in the Conservation Management Plan.

In addition, through museum-level digital interpretation, the Mackintosh Building, its history, and its place within a global creative city and art school will be made accessible through the extensive architectural assets, archives and collections that document its role as a purpose-designed art school.

Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 represents a critical gateway in the long-term reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building. Delivery of this phase by the GSA is the first step in creating the conditions necessary for subsequent reinstatement options (Mackintosh Faithful or Mackintosh Studio) to progress as funding permits. Future phases are expected to be delivered through public and private partnership as part of a wider civic ambition for this part of Glasgow City Centre and its continued regeneration northwards.

This area brings together a concentration of creative and cultural institutions, planned projects and investment, that can collectively create critical mass and demonstrable economic impact as a new Creative and Cultural Production District - Glasgow's 'creative supercluster'. It can also work holistically with the city's existing creative and cultural clusters[8].

Investment in the reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building through this approach has the potential to act as a catalyst for economic regeneration and demonstrate Glasgow's commitment to its creative and cultural economy. This requires civic leadership, ambition, partnership, innovative models of delivery, structure, finance and governance. It reinstates the Mackintosh Building not purely as a museum, historical curiosity, or a working art school for a single organisation, but as an asset for the city, a building for creative production, collaboration and innovation.

Considering the Mackintosh Building and its reinstatement in this way broadens the heritage, social, educational and economic impact at each stage of its reinstatement journey.

1.6. Critical Success Factors

To be considered a success, the GSA identified a number of critical success factors that the Mackintosh Building reinstatement must deliver[9]:

- A high-quality reinstatement of the primary significance of the iconic building as a purpose-designed art school and used for that purpose;

[8] GSA Live Map

[9] At the outset of the SOBC Addendum process, stakeholders (GSA leadership team, estates representatives, and design team members) engaged in a structured discussion to identify the critical success factors. These were subsequently approved by the GSA Board of Governors.

- Functional, flexible and enjoyable spaces within the building that facilitate, enable and inspire students, staff and partners to create, and produce and share work at The Glasgow School of Art, now and into the future;
- An inspiring place which attracts, evolves and unites the very best creative talent from across the globe to Glasgow. Through its provision of world-class facilities and inspiring places to work, research, and create, the reinstated building will play a role in leading innovation, building collaborations, and retaining creative talent for the wider benefit of the community;
- A positive contribution to the appearance, functionality and long-term sustainability of the wider campus.

The Critical Success Factors outlined above define the principal criteria for assessing the success of the possible routes to delivery of the reinstated building.

However, the architectural and technical routes to faithful reinstatement identified by the GSA, together with the Cost Profile and Financial Analysis, indicate that the primary critical success factor at this stage of the Mackintosh Building Reinstatement is:

- **Positive contribution to the appearance, presentation, functionality and long-term sustainability of the wider campus at The Glasgow School of Art, towards the vision and the aims of the Estate Strategy.**

Achieving the remaining three critical success factors would require the GSA to deliver the Mackintosh Faithful or Mackintosh Studio scenarios identified by the architectural and technical team[10].

However, the Financial Analysis demonstrates that these scenarios are not affordable and remain dependent on external funding sources that are uncertain. Without resolving the significant funding gap, neither option is viable. Proceeding without secured investment would place substantial pressure on the GSA's financial position and risk its long-term sustainability and independence as a specialist higher education institution[11].

Equally, this rigorous analysis has identified that delivery of the Mackintosh Faithful or Mackintosh Studio options will require civic, governmental, charitable and commercial partnership. It has also shown that these options must deliver wider urban and economic regeneration and transformational benefits, and should be considered as longer-term projects, as outlined above and in Part 2 of the Economic Impact analysis.

What can be achieved now is the delivery of Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1. The Architectural and Financial Analysis undertaken as part of the SOBCA, along with the Conservation Management Plan, makes clear that Business as Usual (the current emergency scaffold arrangement, temporary protection measures and associated cost profile) is not a sustainable long-term solution, either for the GSA's financial sustainability or for the future conservation, management and reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building.

[10] Reiach and Hall Architects with Purcell.
[11] Financial Analysis QMPF 2026.

1.7. Catalyst Moment

The GSA is at a decisive point in determining the future of the Mackintosh Building and its future relationship with the institution. That future will not be determined in isolation, but shaped by a number of factors that make it appropriate to review the position and determine the next stage of the Mackintosh Building project.

1.8. Strategic Need

Since 2014, the GSA has continued to deliver education and research, fulfil its commitments to the Scottish Funding Council, maintain its international reputation, and grow student numbers without the Mackintosh Building being part of its operational estate.

The Strategic Plan 2022 - 2027 was based on the knowledge that the Mackintosh Building would not be operational during the period of the Plan and unlikely to be fully operational until the early 2030s. While the Mackintosh Building has historically been an important asset for the GSA, delivery of the institution’s strategic ambitions has not been dependent on its availability. Performance against Strategic Plan lead indicators and other key metrics demonstrates continued success in education, research and organisational sustainability despite its absence.

1.9. GSA Funding Profile

The current fiscal environment for UK higher education, and Scottish higher education in particular, is well documented. This includes government funding (for Scottish and RUK students, research and capital funding) and international student fee income.

As a specialist higher education institution, the GSA is more exposed to the pressures of the fiscal environment. While international student fee income has increased by 96% since 2018, funding from the Scottish Funding Council has increased by only 12% over the same period. Capital funding for higher education is also limited and, where available, is often restricted or available through University Financial Transactions Programmes (UFTP).

The financial pressures on higher education run parallel to the wider pressures on public sector funding, although funding opportunities and routes could exist for the Mackintosh Building. These include, for example, UK and Scottish Government-funded City Deals, initiatives arising from the UK Government’s Industrial Strategy and Creative Sector Plan, and, depending on future policy decisions, opportunities associated with further devolved powers for Glasgow or the creation of a city centre development corporation. Any public investment would likely be provided over a multi-year period and would need to demonstrate economic impact in line with HM Treasury Green Book standards. This would require the Mackintosh Building project to act as an anchor investment within a wider city-led and government-supported, multi-partnered regeneration programme.[12]

1.10. Mackintosh Funding Profile

The detailed funding profile considered as part of the Strategic Outline Business Case comprises commercially sensitive information including funding assumptions including insurance, donations, grants and loan funding. The conclusions arising from that analysis are reflected in the Strategic, Economic and Financial Cases.

[12] See Economic Case: Part Two.

1.11. Financial Analysis

The analysis of the potential funding profile confirms that the Mackintosh Faithful and Mackintosh Studio options are unaffordable as the GSA is unable to bridge the funding gap through borrowing.

In contrast, the delivery of Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 is affordable.

1.12. Asset Complexity

The Mackintosh Building is a Category A listed building designated by Historic Environment Scotland[13]. In its current post-fire condition, the building retains that designation. Consequently, the reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building requires both planning permission and listed building consent. Statutory consents will be required at each stage of reinstatement. These would be based on the ultimate intent of faithful reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building, albeit delivered over a longer period and likely through a number of phases as funding permits.

The current arrangement supporting the structure is achieved through a complex combination of scaffolding and shoring that stabilises the walls both externally and internally. Separate scaffolding supports the temporary roof and protective covering currently in place. This arrangement is designed solely to maintain the structural stabilisation of the building and does not contribute to, facilitate, or form part of any future works or subsequent phases of reinstatement.

The development of the scenarios within the SOBCA identified the need to address the existing scaffolding arrangement and undertake extensive works to fully stabilise and repair the structure. These works facilitate the complete removal of the current scaffolding arrangement and stabilise the structure. In achieving this, the project de-risks the structure for future phases of reinstatement.

The Architectural and Technical Analysis identified a wider Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair intervention. The proposed works were subsequently reviewed on the basis that Scenario 3 could be delivered in phases, subject to funding availability and overall financial assessment. This resulted in the identification of an initial implementation phase of the wider Scenario 3 intervention, referred to throughout this Strategic Case as Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1.

The remaining elements of the stabilisation works would be capable of being progressed at a later stage, subject to future funding, statutory approvals and partnership arrangements. Progressing Phase 1 at this stage enables the GSA to reduce the ongoing costs and risks associated with the current temporary holding arrangements while preserving the opportunity to complete the wider stabilisation programme in the future.

This initial phase has been considered by examining two approaches to progressing the overall completion of the stabilisation works:

- A temporary retention system installed internally, including a temporary roof that will facilitate the removal of the existing scaffolding arrangement. This reduces the ongoing operational costs. This approach has a design life of 15 years, following which the structural support will require increased maintenance. It should be noted that the retention system is not permanent, but is being designed to facilitate the installation of the permanent steelwork and provide access to undertake the balance of the works required through the stabilisation scenario.

[13] HES Designation.

- This approach builds on the temporary retention system but introduces permanent steelwork in specific locations. There is a need to retain c.40% of the proposed retention system due to the complexity of certain areas of the structure, which has financial implications. The roof remains temporary. This approach may require statutory consent and approvals.

1.13. Capacity, Capability and Implementation

The GSA's primary purpose is education and research at higher education (university) level.

As a small specialist institution (SSI)[14], the GSA is in receipt of a specific Small Specialist Institution Grant from the Scottish Funding Council. This additional funding reflects the diseconomies of scale for small institutions and includes specific funding for world-class specialist institutions. However, it does not take account of the resource implications of the Mackintosh Building project. These implications extend across financial, people and skills-related resources.

The current governance, management and delivery model for the Mackintosh Building project is not sustainable alongside the GSA's primary purpose and its need to remain financially sustainable, independent and internationally recognised. The revised approach is addressed within the Management Case.

1.14. Risk Appetite

Since 2014, the Mackintosh Building has presented a major risk to the delivery of the core purpose of the GSA. This risk has been more evident in the period since the 2018 fire.

While the School has successfully managed and, where possible, mitigated the risk, it is not a sustainable position. The priority for the GSA must be the delivery of its core purpose: effectively managing and mitigating a complex and challenging operating environment while ensuring the successful delivery of its strategic ambitions and lead indicators.

The GSA's Risk Appetite in relation to institutional financial sustainability is low to moderate[15]. Maintaining the current position of the Mackintosh Building (Business as Usual) would place that financial sustainability at significant risk. Similarly, the Mackintosh Faithful and Mackintosh Studio options are not viable routes for the GSA without an appropriate external partnership vehicle.

1.15. Investment in the Mackintosh Building Reinstatement

The SOBCA considered a range of options for the reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building, supported by architectural, technical, financial and economic analysis. The following sections summarise the options assessed and the conclusions reached.

[14] As designated by the Scottish Funding Council.
[15] GSA Risk Appetite Statement 2026 tbc.

1.15.1 SOBCA Architectural Analysis

The SOBCA architectural analysis[16] identified five potential options, of which four[17] were taken forward for further assessment of project cost, financial viability and economic impact:

- **Scenario: Business as Usual (BAU)**
  - Maintains the existing arrangement of external scaffold to stabilise the building.
- **Scenario 1: Mackintosh Faithful**
  - Reinstates the building as a functioning space including all internal heritage elements.
- **Scenario 2: Mackintosh Studio**
  - Reinstates the building as a fully functioning space. Excludes any reinstatement of internal heritage elements.
- **Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1**
  - A revised stabilisation arrangement which mitigates the ongoing cost of BAU, fully stabilises the structure and prepares it for the main works to be undertaken. The stabilisation project represents a positive step towards mitigating project risks and improving confidence among contractors and funders by demonstrating a clear and deliverable path towards the permanent repair programme.

Following the recommendation of the GSA Board of Governors[18], the **Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1** option has been further developed into potential initial phases of this specific project, which identifies a further two alternative pathways:

- **Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention System**
  - Complete removal of the leased scaffolding and shoring.
  - Installation of a temporary internal retention system and a temporary roof to protect the structure.
  - External structure exposed to the public.
  - Internal repair works to facilitate the installation of the temporary retention system.
  - Gateway project that de-risks the structure and enables a platform for future development.
  - Stabilises and protects the structure with a greatly reduced operational management arrangement for the GSA.
  - Design of the system is based on a minimum 15 years. Beyond this period, increased maintenance of the retention system will be required to continue the stabilisation of the structure.

- **Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention plus Selected Permanent Steelwork**
  - Complete removal of the leased scaffolding and shoring.
  - Installation of a part temporary internal retention system and roof, plus some permanent steelwork to stabilise and protect the structure.
  - External structure exposed to the public.

[16] Reiach and Hall Architects with Purcell.
[17] Scenario 5 Consolidation Low Level was removed.
[18] GSA Board of Governors 17 February 2026.

- Internal repair works to facilitate the installation of a temporary retention system plus selected permanent steelwork.
- Gateway project that de-risks the structure and enables a platform for future development.
- Stabilises and protects the structure with a greatly reduced operational management arrangement for the GSA.
- Design of the system is based on a minimum 15 years for the retention and 50 years for the selected permanent steelwork. Beyond this period, increased maintenance of the installed systems will be required to continue the stabilisation of the structure.

1.15.2. SOBCA Architectural Analysis against Strategic Objectives

Investment in the Mackintosh Building	BAU	Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention System	Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention plus Selected Permanent Steelwork	Studio	Faithful
Transform distinct models of creative education.	No.	No.	No.	Yes. Usable studio and workshop spaces.	Yes. Usable studio and workshop spaces.
Impact through creative research, innovation and partnership.	No.	Potential for innovative research partnerships including museum-level digital interpretation, making the building and wider GSA archives and collections accessible to the wider public.	Potential for innovative research partnerships including museum-level digital interpretation, making the building and wider GSA archives and collections accessible to the wider public.	Yes.	Yes.
Sustainable Independent Art School.	No.	Partially. Mitigates and reduces the current annual expenditure by circa 85% per annum Option has life span of c. 15 years and will require annual maintenance.	Partially. Mitigates and minimises current annual expenditure by circa 85% per annum and will require annual maintenance.	No. Allows withdrawal from leased buildings and potential for growth in student numbers, research activity and third-stream income. However, capital expenditure and institutional financial stability prohibits this option.	No. Allows withdrawal from leased buildings and potential for growth in student numbers, research activity and third-stream income. However, capital expenditure and institutional financial stability prohibits this option.
High-quality reinstatement purpose-designed art school and used for that purpose.	No.	Partially provides a gateway for future works to stabilise the structure at a later stage.	Partially. Option provides a gateway for reinstatement of the building at later stage when funding/ partnership allow.	Yes.	Yes.

Investment in the Mackintosh Building	BAU	Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention System	Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention plus Selected Permanent Steelwork	Studio	Faithful
Reinstated building will play a role in leading innovation and building collaborations through world-class facilities and inspiring places to work, research, and create.	No.	No.	No.	Yes. Capital expenditure and institutional financial stability prohibits this option.	Yes. Capital expenditure and institutional financial stability prohibits this option.
Positive contribution to the appearance, presentation, functionality and long-term sustainability of Garnethill and Sauchiehall Street.	No.	Partially. Would include museum-level digital interpretation contributing to the wider Glasgow Mackintosh and tourism offer.	Partially. Would include museum-level digital interpretation contributing to the wider Glasgow Mackintosh and tourism offer.	Yes. Capital expenditure and institutional financial stability prohibits this option other than through partnership and economic regeneration of wider area.	Yes. Capital expenditure and institutional financial stability prohibits this option other than through partnership and economic regeneration of wider area.

1.16. Strategic Case Conclusion

The Strategic Case demonstrates that, while the Mackintosh Building remains a heritage asset of national and international significance, the GSA's ability to deliver its core purpose of education and research is not dependent on the building being operational. Instead, the strategic need arises from the GSA's responsibilities as the custodian of a Category A listed building and the wider cultural, civic and economic contribution that the Mackintosh Building can make to Glasgow.

The analysis undertaken through the SOBCA identifies Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 as the preferred next step. It provides an affordable and deliverable gateway that addresses the risks associated with the current position, protects the heritage asset, and creates the conditions necessary for future phases of reinstatement to progress as funding and partnership opportunities emerge. Within Scenario 3, the Economic and Financial Cases identify the Temporary Retention System with selected Permanent Steelwork as the preferred implementation option. This scenario provides the strongest balance of affordability, deliverability, long-term value, and future readiness, while remaining consistent with the strategic objectives set out in this case. The Financial Case confirms that this conclusion is unchanged by the assumed insurance settlement and remains based on the relative affordability, value for money, and long-term financial sustainability of the shortlisted scenarios.

The Strategic Case supports the progression of **Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention System plus Selected Permanent Steelwork**, as the appropriate next stage in the reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building. There is no strategic impediment to the further development of this option through the next stage.

Section 2.0

Economic Case

Economic Case: Part One

The Glasgow School of Art

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2. Economic Case: Part One

Executive Summary

This Economic Case identifies the preferred investment scenario for the Mackintosh Building that maintains progress towards faithful reinstatement while meeting the GSA's strategic objectives, affordability and risk.

This Economic Case is supported by Economic Case: Part 2, which considers the wider economic, regeneration and partnership opportunities associated with future phases of reinstatement beyond the scope of the appraisal presented here.

Three scenarios were tested over a 15-year appraisal period, reflecting the minimum life of the investment put in place. These include the business as usual (BAU) position, and two variants of the stabilisation and repair works that have been identified within the Strategic Outline Business Case Addendum (SOBCA) as being required for the first phase towards achieving faithful reinstatement:

- **Business as Usual (BAU):** Continued use of leased scaffolding, with no usable building and no progress towards reinstatement. The potential to purchase the scaffolding was investigated but could not be delivered through the current arrangements.
- **Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention System:** Removal of existing scaffolding and the installation of an internal temporary retention system and roof. This stabilises and protects the structure, significantly reducing annual costs, but does not deliver a usable building.
- **Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention plus Selected Permanent Steelwork:** As above, with permanent steelwork introduced in key locations to provide a more robust and future-ready platform for reinstatement. This scenario does not deliver a usable building.

Projected outturn costs were estimated by the appointed cost consultants, Gardiner & Theobald LLP and QMPF, working in conjunction with the GSA.

Since both investment scenarios represent initial works with no defined end use for the building, a multi-criteria decision analysis (MCDA) was used to guide the assessment of the benefits in line with HM Treasury Green Book guidance. The scenarios were assessed against strategic fit and business needs, benefits optimisation, investment viability, and deliverability:

- BAU performs less favourably against the assessment criteria and does not represent a sustainable scenario.
- Both alternative investment scenarios perform well against the assessment criteria.
- **Scenario 3 with Selected Permanent Steelwork scores highest overall (a weighted score of 86 compared with 60 out of 100)**, reflecting stronger strategic fit, better investment readiness, and lower long-term risk. It scores slightly lower considering the approvals process.

- Although more expensive, the selected permanent steelwork scenario delivers **around 20% better value for money per benefit point** than the alternative and delivers a more sustainable solution.

Economic Appraisal

The Economic Case analysis shows that the preferred scenario is **Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention plus Selected Permanent Steelwork**. This scenario:

- Ends an unsustainable Business as Usual position.
- Supports institutional financial stability by greatly reducing the operational management requirements placed on the GSA, while providing greater longevity for certain elements of the stabilisation works. This contributes to lower ongoing costs than the alternative scenario and delivers against environmental sustainability targets.
- Invests in securing and conserving a world-class heritage asset through the continued conservation management of the existing structure.
- Creates a stronger platform for faithful reinstatement and the wider regeneration of the area than the alternative scenario by contributing to a de-risked gateway and investment proposition.

It represents the best balance of cost, benefit and future readiness available to the GSA at this stage.

2.0. Purpose of the Report

This report sets out the Economic Case for investment in the Mackintosh Building at The Glasgow School of Art (GSA). It forms one part of the overall SOBCA being led by the GSA.

The Economic Case considers the identified scenarios available to the GSA for achieving the strategic objectives set out in the Strategic Case, providing a quantitative and qualitative assessment of them, and a conclusion on the outcome.

An accompanying paper sets out the context for the potential role of the Mackintosh Building and its future reinstatement as a key anchor within a multi-partner creative and cultural sector innovation district and wider master-planned regeneration of the area. (See Economic Case: Part Two.)

The Economic Case contains the following:

- **Scenarios assessed** - a description of the scenarios that have been assessed in the Economic Case as shortlisted and provided through the Financial and Strategic Cases.
- **Assessment framework** - the framework for assessing the shortlisted scenarios.
- **Economic appraisal parameters** - a description of the overall assumptions used in the economic appraisal of the scenarios.
- **Economic appraisal** - including analysis of the economic costs associated with the scenarios, assessment against agreed criteria using a multi-criteria decision analysis, and identification of the preferred scenario based on value for money and strategic fit.

2.1. Scenarios Assessed

Through the development of the SOBCA, a range of architectural and technical scenarios were assessed to support the faithful reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building. These scenarios were developed as phased interventions aligned with funding availability and financial capacity, consistent with the approved outcome of the 2021 SOBC.

While faithful reinstatement remains the long-term ambition, changes in market conditions and affordability mean that delivery will need to be undertaken in partnership or with third-party investment. This Economic Case focuses on the scenarios that the GSA is potentially able to deliver in order to meet the strategic needs set out in the Strategic and Financial Cases.

Through the detailed development of the architectural and technical sections of the SOBCA, it was determined that Mackintosh Faithful or Mackintosh Studio would require substantial works to fully stabilise the existing structure, which is currently supported by scaffolding and shoring. These works are necessary to prepare the building for future phases.

Within the SOBCA, these works are referred to as Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1. They would enable the removal of the existing scaffolding and shoring, while preparing the structure for future phases of reinstatement. Scenario 3 also comprises a number of alternative approaches, dependent on funding and resource. The Economic Case considers these variants of Scenario 3 alongside Business as Usual:

- **Business as Usual (BAU)**

For the purposes of financial modelling, the Business as Usual (BAU) scenario assumes the continuation of the existing leased scaffolding and shoring arrangements, together with the associated management requirements, over the 15-year appraisal period. Under this scenario, the GSA would continue to bear the costs of maintaining the site in its current condition, without delivering a usable building.

- **Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention System**

This scenario would entail work to reconfigure and remove the existing scaffolding and shoring arrangement supporting the structure of the building both externally and internally. It would enable the complete removal of the leased scaffolding and shoring, the installation of a temporary retention system internally, and a temporary roof to protect the structure.

Temporary supports are introduced into the building, with the result that the external structure/fabric is displayed to the public. The works also require internal preparation to facilitate the installation of the temporary support system.

The works would stabilise and protect the structure for an estimated 15-year period while substantially reducing ongoing management costs. This scenario does not provide a usable building and would require increased maintenance beyond the design life of the retention system.

The scenario provides a first step to the overall stabilisation of the structure and can be defined as a gateway to a potential larger reinstatement project. It addresses the immediate ongoing complexity of the existing scaffolding and shoring support and establishes a design solution that would facilitate both the installation of the permanent steelwork and the overall stabilisation works when funding is available. The solution would also support the ongoing maintenance and conservation of the existing structure.

The design solution for this initial phase provides the necessary support for the temporary roof, which would be required throughout the overall development of a faithful reinstatement, while retaining sufficient flexibility within the design to allow it to be extended and adapted over time.

- **Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention plus Selected Permanent Steelwork**

This contains the same elements as the previous scenario, but with the addition of permanent steelwork in specific locations to stabilise the structure.

This scenario would stabilise and protect the structure through a retention system with an estimated design life of 15 years and permanent steelwork with an estimated design life of 50 years. As with the previous scenario, it would significantly reduce the operational and financial burden on the GSA but would not provide a usable building. Beyond the design life of the installation, maintenance requirements and remedial works are expected to increase over time, particularly in areas incorporating the temporary retention system.

The introduction of permanent steelwork alongside temporary retention delivers a more robust outcome and progress towards a future faithful reinstatement. This scenario does, however, introduce a level of complexity regarding the roof design. Under the Temporary Retention option, the roof is supported by the retention system and can be raised to accommodate future construction works by extending that system. The introduction of permanent steelwork requires the roof to be supported by a combination of temporary and permanent elements, reducing its flexibility.

Both scenarios represent the first phase of the wider stabilisation works identified within Scenario 3. While neither completes the stabilisation process, both prepare the structure for subsequent phases subject to funding becoming available. Both scenarios secure and protect the historic structure and provide appropriate weather protection and conservation management.

Both non-BAU scenarios support the GSA's strategic objectives related to financial sustainability, conservation of the heritage asset, and enabling future regeneration opportunities. They do not define a full redevelopment project but instead provide a viable gateway to the next stages of investment and reinstatement.

A description of the key features of the scenarios is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Description of Scenarios

Business as Usual	Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention System	Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention plus Selected Permanent Steelwork
• Continuation of current arrangements • Leased scaffolding	• Complete removal of the leased scaffolding and shoring. • Installation of temporary retention system internally and roof to protect the structure. • Temporary supports introduced into the building - external structure exposed to the public. • Internal repair works to facilitate installation of temporary support system. • Viable holding position that de-risks the structure and enables a platform for future development. • Design of the system is based on a minimum 15 years. Beyond that period, increased maintenance of the retention system will be required to continue the stabilisation of the structure.	• Complete removal of the leased scaffolding and shoring. • Installation of part temporary retention system internally and roof, plus selected permanent steelwork to stabilise and protect the structure. • External structure exposed to the public. • Internal repair works to facilitate installation of temporary retention system + permanent steelwork. • Gateway project that de-risks the structure and enables a platform for future development. • Stabilises and protects the structure with a greatly reduced operational management arrangement for the GSA. • Design of the system is based on a minimum 15 years for the temporary retention and 50 years for the permanent. Beyond that period, increased maintenance of the retention system will be required to continue the stabilisation of the structure.

2.2. Caveats and Limitations of the Analysis

Two key caveats need to be noted:

1. Business as Usual (BAU) reflects a continuation of existing arrangements. However, it is not considered a realistic long-term position. The GSA cannot indefinitely sustain the financial and reputational implications of maintaining the site in its current condition, and there would also be significant opportunity costs. BAU is included within the analysis to illustrate the consequences of inaction. This assessment is supported by the Financial Case.

2. The identified scenarios represent the immediate options that the GSA is potentially able to pursue based on available funding and supported by the Financial Case. They do not define any end use for the building solely through undertaking these works. Consequently, the economic appraisal cannot include estimates of the economic benefits associated with any future use of the building. The potential for the building to form part of a wider, civic-partnered economic regeneration development project is considered in Economic Case: Part 2.

2.3. Assessment Framework

To assess the scenarios identified, the Economic Case considers their relative costs and benefits.

The capital and operating costs of the scenarios have been estimated by consultants Gardiner & Theobald LLP and QMPF, working in conjunction with the GSA's Finance and Estates teams. The appraisal uses the following general assumptions:

- **Appraisal period:** An appraisal period of 15 years. This reflects the maximum predicted design lifespan of Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention System.
- **Inflation:** values have been adjusted for inflation and expressed in 2025/26 prices, using an inflation factor of 2.5% per annum.
- **Discounting:** values have been discounted according to the Social Discount rate of 3.5% per annum in line with HM Treasury Green Book guidance.
- **The scenarios** identified through the SOBCA were costed by Gardiner & Theobald LLP and appropriate contingency allowances were applied. This follows HM Treasury Green Book guidance and means that the risk profiles of the scenarios are being managed within the contingencies identified and that optimism bias is recorded as 0%.

The economic benefits of the scenarios are largely qualitative and strategic in nature. This is because they represent an initial phase of investment and cannot define any uses for the building at this stage. It is the end uses that will ultimately determine the economic benefits of the project.

Since the benefits cannot meaningfully or robustly be monetised, a multi-criteria decision analysis (MCDA) has been undertaken in line with HM Treasury Green Book supplementary guidance. The MCDA provides a transparent framework for considering non-monetised benefits across the scenarios and then comparing these to the costs.

The approach is as follows:

- A set of assessment criteria was agreed. These follow Green Book guidance on Critical Success Factor categories and are shown below (note: the affordability criterion is picked up via the Cost Analysis).
- Weightings were then applied to the criteria, based on the Project Team's judgement on their relative importance.

The GSA determined that strategic fit and benefits optimisation were the most important aspects of the decision: it is essential that the scenarios deliver against the strategic objectives of the project as now defined, and that they help to realise the benefits that are targeted (both are set out in the

Strategic Case). It is also important that the scenarios are deliverable, balance risks, and contribute towards the attractiveness of the site for future development. However, these factors are judged to be secondary to the achievement of the objectives and benefits of the project.

Table 2: Assessment Criteria and weightings

	Explanation	Weighting
Strategic fit and business needs	Strength of the contribution to strategic objectives, i.e. • Institutional financial stability • Removal of the regeneration drag due to undeveloped site • Conservation management of a heritage asset • Wider economic contribution to Glasgow	**30**
Benefits optimisation	How well the scenarios deliver against the benefits identified in the Strategic Case: • Reduction in annual recurrent expenditure to maintain undeveloped building • Enabling phase of building reinstatement • Enhanced urban environment • Catalyst for economic regeneration • Enhancement of Glasgow's Mackintosh tourism offer	**30**
Investment viability	The extent to which the scenarios make the site attractive for investment in future.	**15**
Deliverability / risk	The extent to which the scenarios are deliverable in a timely fashion.	**25**

The Project Development Board Mackintosh assessed each scenario against these criteria, assigning them a score.[1] The scores were then weighted and compared against the high-level outturn cost estimates for each scenario. The results of this process are detailed below.

2.4. Results of the Economic Appraisal

Economic Costs

The capital costs for the shortlisted scenarios have been estimated by Cost Consultants, Gardiner & Theobald LLP, and the operating costs have been estimated by QMPF working in conjunction with the GSA's Finance and Estates teams.

[1] This was completed in a meeting of the Project Development Board Mackintosh on 6 May 2026.

The key points are as follows:

- Should Business as Usual persist over the appraisal period, the GSA would continue to bear the annual scaffolding and management cost.
- The estimated outturn costs of Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention System are based on a risk assessment regarding statutory compliance requirements.
- Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention plus selected Permanent Steelwork has a higher estimated outturn. The additional cost reflects the steelwork and an allowance arising from potential programme implications relating to addressing statutory authorities' requirements.
- Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention System, whilst entailing a significant capital investment, creates a net saving for the GSA compared to BAU scenario . This is achieved through the removal of the majority of the ongoing costs being incurred by the GSA.
- Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention plus Selected Permanent Steelwork also represents better value for money when compared to BAU.

This supports the conclusion of both the Economic Case and the Financial Case that a preferred stabilisation scenario should be adopted rather than continuing with the current BAU position, which has been identified through the Financial Case as financially unsustainable and detrimental to the long-term financial stability of the GSA.

2.4.1. Benefits Assessment

The results of the Project Development Board Mackintosh (PDBM) scoring process on the multi-criteria decision analysis are shown in Table 5. This shows the unweighted scores of each against the assessment criteria and how these scores sum once weighted. It is important to note that these scores reflect the professional judgement of the PDBM. An explanation of the scoring is set out below:

- **BAU** scores poorly against the criteria as it makes little contribution to the strategic objectives, project benefits or investment viability of the site. It scores reasonably on deliverability and risk insofar as it represents a continuation of existing arrangements. However, as identified in the Financial Case, a prolonged continuation of BAU would present significant financial and reputational risks to the GSA and is not considered a realistic option.
- **Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention plus Selected Permanent Steelwork** scores higher across strategic, benefits and investment criteria.
- **Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention System** scores higher on the deliverability criteria reflecting the scope of statutory approvals.

2.4.2. Benefits Assessment Analysis

- The Temporary Retention Plus Selected Permanent Steelwork scenario achieved the highest score for Strategic Fit and Business Needs (90/100), reflecting the additional stabilisation benefits provided by the permanent steelwork.

- Both scenarios (Temporary Retention System, and Temporary Retention plus Selected Permanent Steelwork) significantly reduce the GSA's operational management requirements over the 15-year appraisal period. However, the introduction of selected permanent steelwork provides greater longevity in key elements of the stabilisation works and delivers longer-term reductions in ongoing costs.

- Both scenarios present a contribution to removing the regeneration drag of the site in its current state. By creating a gateway to a larger project in the future, the introduction of permanent steelwork in locations improves the risk profile in those areas for future development.

- Both address the GSA's responsibility to conservation management through continued management of the existing structure.

- The scenario including permanent steelwork scores 90 out of 100 on benefits optimisation, compared with 50 out of 100 for the alternative scenario. The higher score reflects the greater level of investment in the structure at this stage, reducing the need for future stabilisation works. While both scenarios reduce ongoing costs, permanent steelwork delivers longer-term cost reductions in the areas where it is installed.

- The greater level of investment by introducing permanent steelwork in certain locations provides a more robust starting position in these locations for the next steps of delivery.

- Both scenarios generate an output that represents an enabling phase for the building reinstatement. Both improve the urban environment in the immediate local area.

- In addition, the scenario with selected permanent steelwork provides a greater catalyst for the regeneration potential of the site by lowering the risk profile of the site for future investment in – see Economic Case: Part 2 for more detail on this future potential.

- The only criterion on which the scenario including selected permanent steelwork performs less favourably than the Temporary Retention System scenario is deliverability. This reflects the potential increased risk associated with the programme implications relating to achieving statutory compliance requirements, which could delay project delivery by an estimated nine to twelve months. While the Temporary Retention System option is also subject to statutory approval requirements, the associated delivery risk is currently considered lower and may support earlier implementation. However, engagement with the relevant authorities has been limited to date and requirements have yet to be fully clarified.

Overall, *Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention plus Selected Permanent Steelwork* has a weighted score of 86 against a weighted score of 60 for the alternative investment scenario. Hence, both scenarios make a meaningful contribution to the success criteria, however the scenario with permanent steelwork performs notably better in the Economic Case assessment. Neither scenario provides a usable space or function for the building beyond completion.

Table 3: Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis

		Business as Usual		**Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1- Temporary Retention System**		**Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention plus Selected Permanent Steelwork**	
	Weight	Score (UW)	Score (W)	Score (UW)	Score (W)	Score (UW)	Score (W)
Strategic fit and business needs	30	0	0	60	18	90	27
Benefits optimisation	30	0	0	50	15	**90**	27
Investment viability	15	0	0	30	5	**90**	14
Deliverability	25	80	20	90	22.5	**70**	18
Total score			**20**		**60**		**86**

Source: Project Development Board Mackintosh assessment.

2.5. Economic Case Conclusion

The conclusion of the economic analysis is that the preferred scenario is for the GSA to pursue **Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention plus Selected Permanent Steelwork.** Although it is estimated as the more expensive scenario due to potential programme delays arising from statutory authorities' compliance requirements, it makes the strongest contribution to the strategic objectives and business needs set out in the updated Strategic Case.

The scenario also makes the strongest contribution to institutional financial sustainability while protecting the site and providing a gateway to future phases of reinstatement. It also enhances the investment viability of the site, improving the conditions for future investment in the faithful reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building.

Economic Case: Part Two

The Glasgow School of Art

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Contents

Executive Summary

Introduction

This document should be read an accompanying paper to the Mackintosh Building Economic Case. It explores the potential for the positioning of a reinstated Mackintosh Building as a heritage anchor for a wider creative innovation cluster that supports local regeneration objectives.

Heritage-led placemaking

Heritage-led placemaking is one of the most compelling tools for history-rich cities to drive economic impact. The human connection to historic places influences where people choose to spend time and money and where businesses choose to locate and invest. Such places attract highly skilled workers and – in a phenomenon known as the 'heritage premium' – businesses based in old buildings generate a higher-than-average GVA.

Heritage assets, reimagined and repurposed, form the anchor of some of the UK's most successful and well-known urban regeneration masterplans. Merchant City demonstrated how effective heritage-led placemaking can be within Glasgow itself in fuelling renewed economic activity.

Redefining the Mackintosh Building as a flagship anchor, Glasgow could leverage heritage-led regeneration to activate significant and sustainable growth within the city's creative ecosystem and economy.

Opportunity for Glasgow

The Glasgow region is a powerhouse of Scotland's economy, but there remains real opportunity for significant economic growth. New and emerging sectors are already coming forward as critical drivers of this growth, including health tech, climate technologies, space, advanced manufacturing and the creative industries. The city region's three designated innovation clusters, anchored by higher education partners, are facilitating the workspaces, networks and knowledge-sharing that will attract talent, investment and business alongside research, knowledge exchange and innovation.

To date, however, the potential to propel economic activity within the creative industries via innovation clustering has not been fully exploited.

The creative industries are one of Glasgow's biggest unsung success stories, with the city region boasting over a third of all creative and cultural sector businesses in Scotland. Some of the country's most important cultural and creative organisations, including The Glasgow School of Art, Scottish Opera, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and National Theatre of Scotland, as well as rising numbers of creative practitioners, are based in a geographical radius focused on

Sauchiehall Street and extending northwards to the canal. This concentration has been labelled a ‘creative and performance supercluster’ (CPS).

The supercluster is, though, yet to be officially recognised through formal designation, governance, planning or investment. The formalisation of this cluster as a creative and culture-led innovation district would bring significant opportunities. Leveraging the existing critical mass of world-class education, production and business creative and cultural sector actors and activity could maximise what is already one of Glasgow’s greatest and most valuable socio-economic outputs.

The power of heritage-led revitalisation can be coupled with this established creative and cultural ecosystem to position the Mackintosh Building as the anchor for a creative industries and innovation-led regeneration masterplan, enabled through formal designation of a creative and cultural production innovation district.

Planning policy context

National and city-level planning policy and guidance supports both the aspiration to imaginatively position a reinstated Mackintosh Building as a catalyst for regeneration and innovation and to drive economic competitiveness through creating an enabling environment for the creative and cultural sector in Glasgow.

City planning guidance promotes:

- *Regenerating the Sauchiehall Street district.*
- *Convening cultural and creative institutions in the Sauchiehall area as a vehicle for transformation.*
- *Leveraging the creative economy as a key focus for economic development.*
- *Developing land north of the M8 adjacent to the canal to support economic growth.*
- *Connecting city-centre CCS institutions and activities with the existing creative cluster north of the M8.*

Conclusion: Opportunity for the Mackintosh Building

The Mackintosh Building can be positioned as a heritage anchor of a creative and cultural-focused innovation district, building on an existing identified ‘creative and performance supercluster’ of cultural and creative institutions and businesses. The designation could sit within an economic regeneration framing, supporting existing public and private investment and transformation projects in the area. It would create the conditions for future investment with a wider range of public, private and third-sector partners.

The proposition aligns with city planning policy and guidance to leverage the existing success of Glasgow’s creative sector as a vehicle for economic growth and local precedents for the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings for innovation, entrepreneurial and creative business uses.

Introduction

This document should be read as an accompanying paper to the Mackintosh Building Economic Case. It explores the potential for the positioning of a reinstated Mackintosh Building and its role within Glasgow going forward.

Since its completion, the Mackintosh Building has been central to Glasgow's creative identity and an architectural landmark within the city centre. This study is underpinned by the Glasgow School of Art's vision that this dual legacy will continue, to secure its continued contribution to the city's wider creative, cultural and innovation economy. These ambitions build upon Glasgow's existing position as a powerhouse within Scotland's cultural and creative economy, but also considers the very real urban challenges faced within the immediate area.

This report begins with an exploration of opportunities for the Mackintosh Building to play a central role in wider regeneration objectives (Chapter 1). Compounded by the Mackintosh fires and the closure of prominent local actors like BHS and ABC, the Sauchiehall district is recognised as being in need of renewal. Proposals set out herein are aligned with the creation of the Sauchiehall Street Culture and Heritage District and Glasgow City Council regeneration frameworks (Chapter 3).

Chapter 2 frames how the creative industries and innovation clustering can be leveraged within Glasgow to propel economic activity. The report closes with a vision that places the Mackintosh Building at the centre of a wider creative innovation cluster. This cluster will bring together local regeneration objectives, plans and existing activities to amplify impact for Glasgow. In so doing, the future of the Mackintosh Building would be secured as a useful and permeable space that will deliver positive impact to the city at large (Chapter 4).

1. Opportunity for heritage asset-led placemaking

In an age of rapid change, our built heritage serves as an anchor – giving meaning, continuity and place. But historic buildings can also be catalysts for social and economic vitality, making them amongst the most powerful tools a city can deploy for sustainable, place-led growth.

From emotional connection to economic impact

New research from the University of Glasgow and Historic England evidences the fundamental value of historic places to our mental health and wellbeing.[1] Historic buildings foster human connection – they foster identity, belonging, and make places somewhere we want to be. Far from being mere sentiment, though, this hidden value of heritage is also driving economic impact.

The human connection to historic places influences where people choose to spend time, work and invest. Residents and workers are 'drawn to the distinctiveness, authenticity and amenities of their local historic places, and where people go, business and investment follow'.[2] This is particularly true within the creative industries – a sector valued at £145.8 billion GVA to the UK economy in 2024[3] – which are more likely to operate out of listed buildings than non-listed buildings.[4]

Mounting evidence demonstrates the positive effects of heritage on local economic performance.[5] Highly skilled workers are attracted to places with higher numbers of historic landmarks and buildings, whilst – in a phenomenon known as the 'heritage premium' – businesses based in old buildings generate a higher-than-average GVA.[6]

4.4%	*The Percentage Increase in GVA Generated by Businesses in Listed Buildings vs Non-Listed Buildings.*[7]

The economic influence runs further – historic places are vital to growing the local and national tourism economies. A survey of nearly 23,000 international tourists revealed that the foremost driver for visiting Britain was to 'explore history and heritage and 'explore vibrant towns and cities'.[8] Built heritage, therefore, unlocks tourism.
This is the ripple effect that turns emotional connections into spending power, and spending power into local economic growth.[9]

[1] R. Madgin, A. Leeson, C. MacKenzie, L. Gigante, I. Rees (2026): 'Connecting People and Place: Valuing the Felt Experiences of Historic Places', Glasgow: University of Glasgow.
[2] Ibid.
[3] DCMS (2026): Sectors Economic Estimates 2024 (provisional): Gross Value Added
[4] The Heritage Alliance (2025): 'Heritage Creates'.
[5] S. Cerisola (2024): 'Multidimensional creativity as a mediator between cultural heritage and regional economic development in England', Historic England.
[6] M. Backman and P. Nilsson (2018): 'The role of cultural heritage in attracting skilled individuals', *Journal of Cultural Economics*, 42(1); Carlino, G.A. and Saiz, A. (2019) 'Beautiful city: Leisure amenities and urban growth', Journal of Regional Science, 59(3); E. Viladecans-Marsal, (2023): 'The Role of Historic Amenities in Shaping Cities'; The Heritage Alliance (2025), op. cit.
[7] The National Lottery Heritage Fund (2013): 'New ideas need old buildings'.
[8] Visit Britain (2022): 'Motivations, influences, decisions and sustainability research'.
[9] N. Mendoza (2026): 'Heritage holds the key to better places', *Arts Professional*, 10 February.

Old buildings, new purpose: Engines of urban regeneration

The restoration and re-use of historic buildings have been at the heart of some of the most successful urban revitalisation efforts. The restoration and reimagining of old power stations as the Tate Modern[10] or Battersea Power Station[11], for example, have formed the anchor for wider urban regeneration schemes, attracting investment, tourism and economic growth. In Barcelona, historic cotton factories sit at the heart of 22@,[12] transformed since 2000 into a booming knowledge centre, whilst in Detroit Ford Motor has made the historic Michigan Central Station the cornerstone of an innovation district focused on mobility and transportation solutions[13].

In Glasgow itself, the 1980s-90s regeneration of Merchant City is one of the UK's most cited success stories. Today, Glasgow Life in partnership with Glasgow City Council are framing a 10-year renewal of the Sauchiehall Street area through heritage assets via the creation of a Culture and Heritage District, currently in proof-of-concept phase.

Securing the balance between long-term viable use and protection of heritage assets is undeniably challenging, yet their role as markers of authentic identity and carriers of human connection brings tangible placemaking and economic outputs.

Key takeaways

This human connection to places is something that we instinctively feel. The public response to the Mackintosh Building fires is evidence of this deep-rooted relationship.

This connection can be harnessed to place the Mackintosh Building as the foundation of a wider area partnership-driven revitalisation plan to catalyse city-wide economic growth through creative and cultural production, innovation and education. This would sit alongside other heritage assets within the wider area including The Whisky Bond and Spiers Wharf to the north and the significant cluster of Category A, B and C listed building that define this part of Glasgow City Centre.[14]

CASE STUDY

The Custard Factory, Birmingham

This comprises Grade II-listed Victorian industrial buildings and distinctive brick warehouses, transformed via a phased redevelopment beginning in 1992 into

[10] https://www.tate.org.uk/visit/tate-modern
[11] https://batterseapowerstation.co.uk/
[12] https://www.22network.net/qui-som/?lang=en
[13] https://michigancentral.com/
[14] Glasgow City Council (2012): 'Glasgow Central Conservation Area Appraisal'. https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/media/1612/Glasgow-Central-Conservation-Area-Appraisal/pdf/Glasgow_Central_Conservation_Area_Appraisal.pdf

affordable studios, offices, retail, event venues and maker workshops, supported by public realm improvements, that successfully repositioned this area of Birmingham as a creative innovation district.[15]

The Custard Factory masterplan was conceived as the catalytic anchor for the transformation of Digbeth from a peripheral industrial zone into a core city-centre growth district, now one of the largest creative SME clusters outside London. Its early success is widely associated with supporting the de-risking of the area and helping to attract subsequent major private and public investments, including the Birmingham Smithfield masterplan and the HS2 Curzon Street development zone, demonstrating how heritage-led activation can unlock district-scale regeneration.

CASE STUDY

Tileyard North, Wakefield

Rutland Mills, a Grade II-listed Victorian textile mill complex is the subject of a £30 million+ adaptive reuse scheme (Phase 1 opened 2023) creating Tileyard North: 100+ recording studios, production suites, podcast facilities, creative workspaces, event and live-performance venues, education space and public realm. Aligned within the West Yorkshire cultural-corridor and Mass Transit strategies, the masterplan aims to position Wakefield as a nationally significant hub for music and audio-production; to address undersupply of affordable, high quality studio space outside London; and to catalyse wider regeneration of the waterfront, linking to the city centre, The Hepworth Wakefield, and future residential and cultural developments.[16]

The project was a joint venture between Tileyard London (specialist creative operator) and a consortium including Wakefield Council, West Yorkshire Combined Authority, and Arts Council England. Public funding (Levelling Up Fund, Transforming Cities Fund) was coordinated with regional economic strategy to maximise catalytic impact.

CASE STUDY

Sister, Manchester

Currently in development stage, Sister is a £1.7 billion, 15-year masterplan to transform the University of Manchester’s former North Campus into a global innovation district that leverages existing University specialisms. Located within a

[15] https://aceculture.eu/en/artefacts/cat-03/custard-factory-digbeth; https://www.digbeth.com/workspaces/custard-factory
[16] https://tileyardnorth.co.uk/

designated strategic regeneration area, it is designed to be an economic catalyst for the region, projected to contribute around £1.5bn GVA per annum to Manchester and over 10,000 on-site FTE jobs.[17]

The masterplan is a joint venture led by private developer Bruntwood SciTech in partnership with the University. Over 1,500 new homes will be delivered, alongside over 2 million square feet of commercial, innovation, retail and leisure space and nine acres of public realm space. Although primarily new build, heritage assets and existing buildings are retained and repurposed under the plans.

CASE STUDY

King's Cross, London

King's Cross is a £3-billion, 25-year masterplan to transform 67 acres of derelict railway land into a mixed-use urban quarter led by a joint-venture between Related Argent and London and Continental Railways. Built around the retention and adaptive reuse of 20 Victorian industrial buildings, the scheme has become one of Europe's most cited examples of heritage-led regeneration. Occupying a Grade II-listed Granary Building, Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London was an early anchor tenant, generating regular footfall and a sense of creative identity for the district.

Before the redevelopment, King's Cross had low land demand. Post regeneration, the number of businesses roughly doubled in the 11 years to 2021, now including Google, Meta and Universal Music. By 2021, the estate was supporting an annual GVA of £1.42bn and 18,000 jobs.[18] As a measure of growing demand, estimated office rents in King's Cross more than doubled in value, going from 48% below the London city centre average in 2010, to 19% above in 2022.[19]

[17] https://www.investinmanchester.com/news/1-7bn-innovation-district-and-neighbourhood-in-manchester-opens-its-doors-reveals-new-name-sister/
[18] https://www.kingscross.co.uk/press/2021/10/08/the-kings-cross-estate-celebrates-10-year-anniversary
[19] S. Bridgett, T. Leeman, A. Breach (2022), 'Making places: The role of regeneration in levelling up', Centre for Cities, 11 October. https://www.centreforcities.org/reader/making-places/learning-from-kings-cross-regeneration/

2. Opportunity for Glasgow

Glasgow's economy: Significant strengths, significant untapped potential

The Glasgow City Region is the powerhouse of Scotland's economy. With established roots in insurance and financial services, information and communication and manufacturing,[20] it is responsible for a third of Scotland's economic activity and job opportunities.[21] It is the fifth largest city region economy in the UK by GDP (2022), outperforming Manchester in terms of innovation intensity.[22]

However, there remains real opportunity for significant economic growth. The Centre for Cities estimates that Glasgow's economy underperforms by £7.3bn annually.[23] New and emerging sectors have been signposted to drive this growth – including health tech, climate technologies, space, advanced manufacturing and the digital and creative industries. It is essential that they are supported by the provision of the enabling conditions needed for growth and entrepreneurship.

The city region's three designated innovation districts - Glasgow City Innovation District, Glasgow Riverside Innovation District and Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District for Scotland **–** are fostering these conditions through the creation of specialised geographical clusters for advanced manufacturing, energy, 5G, fintech, health tech, space, quantum and industrial informatics, precision medicine and life sciences, anchored by the University of Strathclyde and the University of Glasgow.

To date, however, the potential to drive and grow economic activity within the creative and cultural industries via innovation clustering and investment has not been fully exploited.

Glasgow's high-performing creative economy

The creative industries are a major catalyst to the UK innovation economy. Not only are they responsible for 5.5% of UK GVA (2024), but spillovers from the sector are also proven to drive innovation in the wider economy.[24]

This is particularly relevant for Glasgow. The creative industries are one of Glasgow's biggest unsung success stories. The city region has over a third of all Scotland's creative and cultural sector businesses, with the number of businesses

[20] Glasgow City Region (n.d.): 'Creating an Emerging Economy Evidence Base'. https://glasgowcityregion.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Creating-an-Emerging-Economy-Evidence-Base.pdf
[21] Centre for Cities (2025): 'How Glasgow spreads prosperity and why the City Region needs devolution'.
[22] ONS (2024): 'Regional gross domestic product: city regions'. https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossdomesticproductgdp/datasets/regionalgrossdomesticproductcityregions; C. Williams (2026): 'The key economic metrics Glasgow beats Manchester on', *The Herald*, 22 May.
[23] Centre for Cities (2025), op. cit.
[24] Frontier Economics (2023): 'Creative spillovers: do the creative industries benefit firms in the wider economy?', co-commissioned by The Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Creative Industries Policy & Evidence Centre.

growing at more than double the national sector growth rate in the ten years up to 2010.[25]

£320m	*GVA contribution of CCS in 2021 in the city centre alone (seeing 47% growth over six years).[26]*

Glasgow is distinctive for the comprehensiveness of its cultural and creative ecosystem – its value chain includes both depth and range across education, production and presentation activities. All of the region's six universities run CCS courses, each with their own area of specialism, propelling ongoing talent production. The Glasgow School of Art (GSA) is a vital pipeline to innovation and enterprise for the city's creative and cultural ecosystem. Some 50% of its graduates start their own businesses and more than 60% remain in the city following graduation.[27] The impact of near neighbour Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS) is equally clear, with 60% of its graduates going on to launch companies.[28]

Glasgow's creative and performance supercluster

'Welcome to Glasgow's Creative and Performance Supercluster, an entrepreneurial powerhouse that, not being recognized as such, is currently unable to deliver its full economic potential.' (Mark Logan)

The GSA and RCS form the lynchpin of an existing – but undesignated – education-focused creative and performance supercluster around Sauchiehall Street (Figure 1). Extending northwards to the canal, this supercluster also embraces the national performing companies Scottish Opera and National Theatre of Scotland and leading creative workspaces, including The Whisky Bond and Glue Factory. This grouping collectively generates a critical mass of international-calibre creative and performance education, production and innovation. Professor Mark Logan has dubbed this a supercluster 'hiding in plain sight'.[29]

Unlocking the cluster's full economic potential

Glasgow has an opportunity to leverage this existing ecosystem through the designation of a formalised creative and cultural innovation district, extending from Sauchiehall Street to the canal. Through leveraging a physical proximity of workforce, R&D and infrastructure, its creation would facilitate the type of structured collaboration between stakeholders that has been proven around the

[25] OECD (2022): 'Culture and the creative economy in Glasgow city region, Scotland, United Kingdom', *OECD Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) Papers*, No. 2022/10, OECD Publishing, Paris.
[26] Glasgow City Council (2024): 'Glasgow City Centre Strategy 2024-30'.
[27] M. Logan (2025): 'Former Skyscanner chief: Let's put creativity in spotlight', *The Herald*, 7 March
[28] Ibid.
[29] Mark Logan is the former Chief Entrepreneurial Advisor to the Scottish Government, a Visiting Professor at The Glasgow School of Art, Professor of Computing Science at the University of Glasgow, a Senior Enterprise Fellow at the University of Strathclyde, and entrepreneur-in-residence at The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

world to accelerate innovation, support young businesses and attract talent; this, in turn, creates spillover benefits in the local labour market and value chain.[30]

The designation would launch from a position of strength, with several favourable conditions already aligned[31]:

— Garnethill/Sauchiehall is highlighted by Glasgow City Council planning guidance as an area for transformational change. The area has already seen several placemaking regeneration projects, including the Avenues project, the redevelopment of McLellan Works as a creative business space, and the Sauchiehall Street Culture and Heritage District.

— Cowcaddens/Speirs Lock's existing creative industries ecosystem has supportive conditions for growth. Glasgow City Council has identified Speirs Lock as an area of significant economic potential, particularly for the CCS. Light industrial land, designated for employment use, presents opportunity for CCS production and innovation infrastructure.

— Major CCS capital investment is planned or underway. These include the multi-million pound New Rotterdam Wharf at Speirs Lock spearheaded by Scottish Opera, the redevelopment of the McLellan Galleries to house three CCS partners (The Scottish Ensemble, Glasgow Film and Articulate), Glasgow Royal Concert Hall upgrades, Kings Theatre restoration and modernisation and current planning for the Mitchell Library by Glasgow Life. This is in addition to the existing and on-going capital expenditure around the Canal and North Glasgow[32] and the Theatre Royal.[33]

Through the long-term planning and intentional governance of a formalised CCS innovation district, holistic and sustainable transformation could be delivered to the entire area to leave a lasting regeneration legacy. Positioned as its heritage flagship asset, the Mackintosh Building could provide an anchor to the area-wide partner-led regeneration.

In 2024, **Scottish Opera** received planning permission for a new mixed-use development at **Speirs Lock**, New Rotterdam Wharf. Building upon one of the main opportunities highlighted in the Glasgow North Strategic Development Framework to **strengthen Speirs Lock as a creative hub area**, it will realise new headquarters for Scottish Opera, supporting **creation, production and education**.

[30] Innovation districts can create impacts beyond their boundaries. Data analysis of 50 US innovation districts evidences the generation of sizable numbers of additional support jobs in the broader economy. For example, bioscience research in urban hubs of North Carolina generated increased output in pharmaceutical manufacturing in distressed rural parts of the state. D. Kneale, C. Vigurs, J. Xu, K. Marshall Kissoon, R. Mendizabal-Espinosa, M. Bangpan (2024): 'Innovation Districts: a rapid systematic review and synthesis of innovation district studies'. London: EPPI Centre, UCL Social Research Institute; S. Lawrence, M. Hogan, and E. Brown (2019): 'Planning for an innovation district: Questions for practitioners to consider,' RTI Press: RTI Press Occasional Paper No. OP-0059-1902.
[31] See Appendix 4 for an indicative list of major pipeline projects <1km from the Mackintosh Building.
[32] The Canal and North Gateway (CNG) project, with investment of £83.6m of City Deal funding, aims to deliver site remediation, servicing, new bridges, roads access and public realm improvements to enable regeneration in Sighthill, Port Dundas, Cowlairs and Speirs Lock.
[33] The £14m redevelopment of the Theatre Royal was completed in 2014.

Innovative investment models

Spatial designation for Glasgow's CCS supercluster will help to ensure that investment and action is prioritised to amplify impact. Innovation districts can be powerful magnets for attracting public-private investment through the opportunities they offer in real estate, infrastructure and early-stage investment. They can be opportunities for cities, universities, landowners and institutional investors to work together to develop long-term financing mechanisms.

In England, where spatial designations for innovation districts have been combined with devolved local fiscal powers, this is providing revenue streams to invest in infrastructure and growth within innovation districts. Manchester's devolution deal, for example, has enabled new models of economic growth for the city, such as the £400m Good Growth Fund designed to unlock £1.3bn in private capital across priority projects, including £20m to expand Sister.

Glasgow City Council is already exploring how innovative funding models (including Reserved Investor Funds, growth accelerator models, impact funds and grants) can be leveraged and layered to encourage and amplify public and private sector investment into the city. The growing consensus around a devolution deal for the Glasgow City Region provides strong prospects for the city to drive forward investment in a CCS district and then to capture and reinvest the benefits it will generate.

CASE STUDY

Fuxing Island, Shanghai

Located on 1.3 sqkm of former industrial land, Fuxing Island is new a large-scale, cultural economy-powered regeneration project. Led by a municipal-level development corporation, it is being branded as a Global Maker Island, grounded in repurposing industrial buildings to accommodate creative and technology-orientated tenants, with maker infrastructure at its core.[34]

A maker academy and a university innovation alliance are planned, to encourage resource sharing, while young entrepreneurs will receive support ranging from mentorship to practical training. To reduce barriers for early-stage businesses, rents are significantly subsidised by the municipal government. Meanwhile, cultural programming has played an important role in activating the site ahead of full physical completion. A steady lineup of cultural and creative events has helped draw both visitors and innovation-oriented organisations to the island.[35]

[34] https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/shanghai-launches-fuxing-island-as-global-maker-hub-302648594.html
[35] https://english.shyp.gov.cn/ywb/latest/20250909/489902.html; https://english.shanghai.gov.cn/en-Latest-TalentsinShanghai/20260318/bf78d18063804682a8698ac48e793228.html

Key takeaways

The creative industries are a major contributor to Glasgow's economy but there is significant potential to grow their economic productivity and wider fiscal contribution. An existing 'supercluster' of cultural and creative organisations and businesses extends from Garnethill to the canal, which could be positioned as a new creative and production innovation district positioned within a regeneration area masterplan and investment framework.

As envisioned, the proposition would provide additionality to Glasgow's other existing nodes of creative and cultural activity, ensuring sector growth not displacement.


Glasgow Creative and Cultural Production District
Scan to view this live on Google Maps ▷
NORTH
SARASEN ST
KEPPOCHHILL RD
MARYHILL RD
GARSCUBE RD
CRAIGHALL RD
MARYHILL RD
ST. GEORGE'S RD
GARSCUBE RD
N CANAL BANK ST
St. George's Cross
M8
M8
WEST GRAHAM ST
Cowcaddens
DOBBIE'S LOAN
RENFREW ST
SAUCHIEHALL ST
COWCADDENS RD
NORTH HANOVER ST
Charing Cross
BATH ST
GLASGOW RIVERSIDE INNOVATION DISTRICT
GLASGOW CITY INNOVATION DISTRICT
W GEORGE ST
Queen Street
Buchanan Street
M8
W CAMPBELL ST
HOPE ST
RENFIELD ST

Creative and Cultural Anchors

01	The Glasgow School of Art
02	Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
03	Scottish Opera
04	National Theatre of Scotland
05	Scottish Canals
06	Glasgow Sculpture Studios, The Whisky Bond
07	Agile City CIC
08	Glasgow Royal Concert Hall
09	Mitchell Library
10	Kings Theatre
11	Theatre Royal
12	National Piping Centre
13	CCA Building, Sauchiehall Street
14	GSA Students' Association, Assembly Building
15	Pavillion Theatre

Heritage Assets

16	Tenement House
17	Scottish Jewish Heritage and Archive Centre
18	The Mackintosh Tearooms
19	Garnethil Park
20	Alasdair Gray Archive, The Whisky Bond
20	GSA Archives and Collections, The Whisky Bond
20	RCS Archives and Collections, The Whisky Bond

Listed Buildings

17	Garnethill Synagogue (Category A)
21	St. Aloysius Roman Catholic Church (Category A)
22	97-113b Hill Street [odds] (Category A)
05	Forth & Clyde Canal, Glasgow Branch, Scheduled Monument
23	4-38, Speirs Wharf [evens] (Category C)
24	Canal House, Applecross Street (Category C)
25	Wheatsheaf Building, Spiers Wharf (Category C)
26	Forth and Clyde Canal, Port Dundas Canal Basin, Scheduled Monument
12	The Piping Centre, Cowcaddens (Category B)
11	Theatre Royal (Category A)
27	Mackintosh Building (Category A)
28	S Andrew's House, St Andrew's Ambulance Association (Category A)
29	Queen's Cross Church and Hall (Category A)
30	City Sawmills Former Office Building (Category B)
31	St. George's In The Fields (former) (Category A)
18	Willow Tearooms, Sauchiehall Street (Category A)
32	Woodside Library, St Georges Road (Category B)
33	East Building, Former Canal Workshops, Forth and Clyde Canal, Applecross Street (Category B)
34	2-14 [evens] Possil Road and Farnell Street, Tower Buildings (Category B)
35	Renfield St Stephen's Church, Bath Street (Category B)
36	St. Columba of Iona Roman Catholic Church and Presbytery Hopehill Road (Category A)
37	Rockvilla, Former Canal Lock-Keeper's House, Forth and Clyde Canal, 5-7 Applecross Street (Category C)
38	119 Sauchiehall Street, Hope Street and Bath Street and including arch over Sauchiehall Lane (Category B)
39	156-174 [evens] Bath Street (Category B)
40	11,13 and 15 Bath Street, Albert Chambers (Category B)

Creative Studios and Workspaces

20	The Whisky Bond
41	Glue Factory
07	Civic House
42	Grey Wolf Studios
43	McLellan Works
44	Dundas Business Centre
41	Burns Street Studios
45	Magwrx
46	Clockwise

Exhibition and Performance

47	Mid-Wharf Arts & Design
48	Glasgow Art Club
49	Glasgow Film Theatre
50	RGI Kelly Gallery
51	Grateful Gallery
52	The Glasgow Gallery
53	Garnethill Multicultural Centre
43	McLellan Galleries
02	New Athenaeum Theatre, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
02	Chandler Theatre, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
01	Reid Gallery, The Glasgow School of Art (Reid Building)
01	Garnethill Gallery, The Glasgow School of Art (Reid Building)
01	Window on Heritage, The Glasgow School of Art (Reid Building)
54	Grace and Clarke Fyfe Gallery, The Glasgow School of Art (Bourdon Building)
55	Annex Gallery, The Glasgow School of Art (Stow Building)

Leisure

56	Pinkston Watersports
57	Loading Bay Skatepark
58	Hamiltonhill Claypits Nature Reserve
37	Gathering Ground Old Basin House

Housing

59	Dundashill Eagle St / High Craighall Rd / North Canal Bank St / Borron Street (in development)
60	Dundasvale
61	Braid Square

Development

62	66 New City Road
63	Queens Cross Housing Association/Urban Union Ltd Development (on former Wester Common and St Cuthberts Primary School Site)
64	Artist studios & workspaces, 674 Garscube Road
65	Scottish Opera, New Rotterdam Wharf (Edington Street)
07	Agile City CIC (26 Civic Street)
66	Residential development, Queens Cross Housing Association (26 Glenfarg Street)
67	Purpose built student accommodation development (99 Borron Street)
68	New development of 359 residential units (Site Bounded By Port Dundas Road/Renton Street/ Milton Street Glasgow)
69	Mixed use development, Cowcaddens Fire Station (91 Port Dundas Road)
70	Community Fire Station development (Maitland Street/Stewart Street/ Dunblane Street Glasgow)
28	Office development, former Ambulance Service building (30 Maitland Street Glasgow)
71	Residential development (and listed building conversion) (43 Scott Street)
72	Mixed use and residential development (19 Elmbank Gardens, 300 and 349 Bath Street Glasgow)
73	Purpose built student accomodation and food hall development (292 - 332 Sauchiehall Street)
74	Hotel with purpose built student accommodation development (Renfrew Street/Sauchiehall Street/ Cambridge Street)
75	Mixed use development including student accomodation (184 Sauchiehall Street)
76	New hotel development (224 Sauchiehall Street)
77	New apartment-hotel (82 Sauchiehall Street)
78	Renewal of gardens and greenspaces (Woodside Area/ St Georges Road Glasgow Queens Cross Housing Association)
79	Residential development (520 Sauchiehall Street)
80	M8 Woodside Viaduct (Craighall/Charing Cross)
81	Purpose built student accommodation (285 Bath Street)

Creative Production

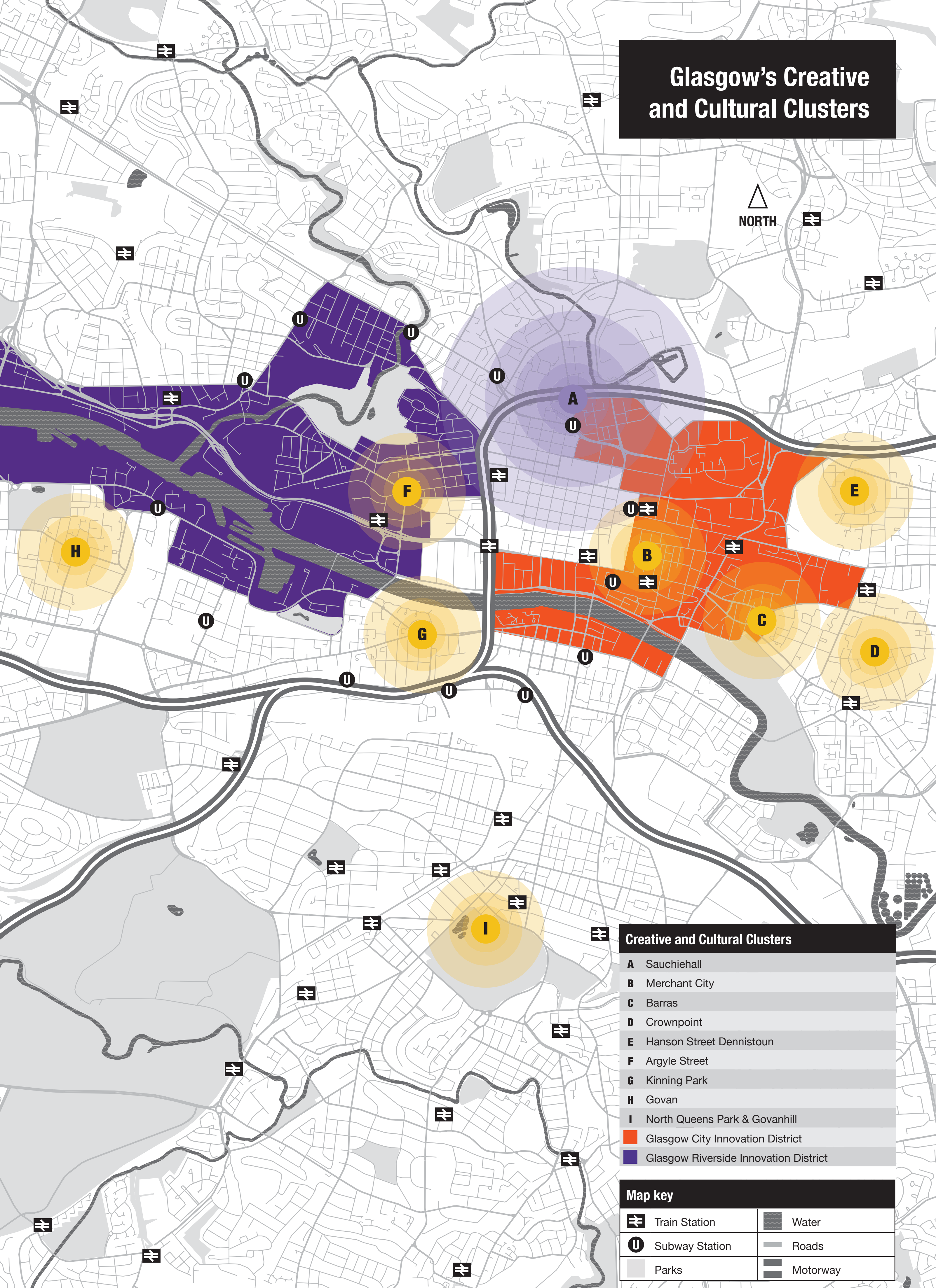
20	Studio Nathan Coley, The Whisky Bond
20	Glasgow International Comedy Festival, The Whisky Bond
20	Fearsome, The Whisky Bond
20	Cunningham McLean, The Whisky Bond
20	Coogan Architects, The Whisky Bond
20	Carbon Futures, The Whisky Bond
20	Chunk, The Whisky Bond
20	Abstract Canvas, The Whisky Bond
41	Flux Laser and CNS Studio
41	Risotto Studio
82	Westend Cabinet Maker
43	Thinkalt, McLellan Works
20	Bluebellgray, The Whisky Bond
41	M.A.R.S Print Stuido
83	Safehinge Primera, Speirs Wharf
23	Plushplans, Speirs Wharf
84	Fireworks Studio
85	Glasgow Tool Library
86	Bikefreedom CiC
87	Jewitt and Wilkie Architects
88	Chemify
46	Do Architects

Education

01	The Glasgow School of Art
02	Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
89	Glasgow Dental Hospital
90	St Aloysius' College
91	Garnetbank Primary School
92	Oakgrove Primary School
93	St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School
94	Abercorn Secondary School
95	Glasgow Caledonian University

Map key

Train Station	Water
Subway Station	Roads
Listed Buildings	Motorway


Glasgow's Creative and Cultural Clusters
NORTH
Creative and Cultural Clusters
A Sauchiehall
B Merchant City
C Barras
D Crownpoint
E Hanson Street Dennistoun
F Argyle Street
G Kinning Park
H Govan
I North Queens Park & Govanhill
Glasgow City Innovation District
Glasgow Riverside Innovation District
Map key
Train Station
Water
Subway Station
Roads
Parks
Motorway

3. Planning policy context

This section outlines the planning policy and guidance framework of direct relevance to the context of the Mackintosh Building renewal, and the above opportunities analysis.

National

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is Scotland's long-term spatial strategy and national planning policy, adopted in 2023.

Of key relevance to the Mackintosh Building renewal, NPF4 policy supports:

1. The protection, enhancement and positive change of **historic assets as a catalyst for place regeneration**. This will see 'historic buildings…brought back into sustainable and productive uses'.
2. The diversification of uses within Glasgow City Centre and investment in maintaining and re-using existing buildings.

Creating Places: A Policy Statement on Architecture and Place for Scotland sets out the Scottish Government's position on architecture and place. It states that creative responses should be taken to enhancing and preserving the existing built heritage, and that the '**development of creative places and culture-led regeneration should be encouraged** as an effective approach to delivering sustainable, high-quality environments'.

Masterplan Consent Areas, introduced under the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, are an upfront consenting mechanism to remove consent risk, reduce delay and support investment. The policy enables local authorities to proactively set out and grant consent for development they wish to be delivered. **Within adopted MCA areas, development can be brought forward without the need necessarily for a planning application** or listed building consent as long as it is in accordance with the agreed scheme.

Glasgow City Council

City Centre Strategy (CCS) 2024-30 is a non-statutory planning document focusing on supporting a more sustainable and greener city centre with more jobs, better transport options and with a wider range of living opportunities.

Two of the three pillars that underpin the strategy are relevant for this context:

- Magnetic experience: Under which, **the city centre will build on culture, creativity and innovation.**
- Front door to innovation: Under which, the city centre will provide a **welcoming environment for health tech, digital, climate science and creative industries**.

A Vision and Plan for the Golden Z, approved by Glasgow City Council in August 2023, is non-statutory guidance for the regeneration of the city centre's historic retail core. The Mackintosh Building site is within the area under discussion, with the GSA/ABC site highlighted as a key focus area.

The vision flags key opportunities to:

— Repurpose existing building stock for high-quality, multi-occupier workspace, to meet existing demand and promote enterprise, with the creative workspace provider McLellan Works cited as a precedent.

— **Nurture the existing creative industries within the area around Sauchiehall Street** as a distinguisher for this part of the city. This includes better front-face the Glasgow School of Art and Royal Conservatoire of Scotland at street level to reinforce vibrancy.

— Collaborate with cultural organisations outside of the Golden Z. The vision identifies the **canal cluster of cultural organisations and creative spaces**.

Associated recommended actions include:

— Galvanise and maximise creative and cultural activity in the Sauchiehall locale.

— Support collaborative workspace to facilitate business incubation.

— **Meet demand for creative workspace**.

— **Convene cultural and creative institutions and players** around the Sauchiehall area locale to drive change.

City Development Plan, adopted in 2017, sets out the Council's vision and strategy for land use whilst also providing the basis for assessing planning applications.

Key aims relevant for this context include creating:

— A vibrant place: e.g. through meeting the needs of established and emerging economic sectors, including those relating to universities and health care, **cultural and creative industries**, low carbon research and manufacture.

— A sustainable place: e.g. through **protecting and enhancing the built heritage** as a core asset of a vibrant and distinctive place.

Key relevant policies include:

— Policy CDP 1: The Placemaking Principle is applied to all development proposals. It gives increased weight and importance to the use of placemaking to improve health and wellbeing outcomes.

— Policy CDP 2: Sustainable Spatial Strategy focuses economic development in Strategic Economic Investment Locations (SEIL).[36]

— Policy CDP 3: Economic Development prioritises maintaining the attractiveness of the City Centre as an investment location, ensuring provision of the physical and digital infrastructure that will attract investors to Glasgow in preference to competitor cities; reinforcing the role of the city centre for retail, employment, leisure, tourism and evening economy uses; supporting the creation of employment opportunities.

City Development Plan: IPG3 Economic Development is non-statutory planning guidance under the City Development Plan, identifying key economic development areas to direct planning for business and industry.

Within the IPG3, the city centre, including the location of Mackintosh Building, is identified as a **Strategic Economic Investment Location**. This is considered a vital location in delivering economic development within business and financial services; green technologies; higher and further education; and visitor economy sectors.

City Development Plan 2 (2026, Proposed), presented to the Glasgow City Council Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration City Policy Committee for consideration in May 2026, will supersede the 2017 City Development Plan when approved.

The third of its three Spatial Outcomes is 'productive Glasgow', involving targeting economic investment. Objectives under this outcome include supporting development proposals for **'tourism, culture and creativity'**. Proposals for **creative industries (Policy 20) as part of wider regeneration plans** are highlighted for support.

The **creative economy** is also highlighted as a **focus for inward investment efforts** for Economic Development Area sites. The plan identifies the area north of the M8 adjacent to the canal (i.e. around Speirs Lock) as an **Economic Development Area with Development Opportunities**.

Sauchiehall Street Culture and Heritage District is identified as an **'area of change'** (Place Policy 2).

City Centre Strategic Development Framework, adopted in 2021, is a long-term plan to guide the city's development to 2050 that provides supplementary guidance for Glasgow's City Development Plan.

Strategic place ambitions include:

[36] Mackintosh Building is included within the City Centre SEIL.

— **Reinforcing the city centre's economic competitiveness** and boosting round-the-clock vibrancy to grow prosperity for all.

— Positioning the **city centre as a centre for knowledge and innovation**.

— Restoring the urban fabric to celebrate the city's heritage.

— Supporting a lively day and night-time cultural and leisure economy.

Key actions proposed include measures to:

— Improve the offer of the city centre as a 'day out destination' with a greater diversification of attractions, leisure opportunities and experiential offer within the retail core.

— Create high quality and vibrant **mixed-use business environments** that better serve and support a modern workforce.

Sauchiehall and Garnethill Regeneration Framework (2016) is supplementary planning guidance.

The density of cultural and educational institutions and activities clustered around Renfrew Street is seen as a vital ingredient in giving the area a stronger urban identity, but they require greater public presence to achieve this.

Arts and culture are positioned as an economic driver. The Renfrew Street area is identified as a strong connector for creative and cultural institutions and activities between the city centre and land north of the M8 – the '**Avenue of the Arts'**. The framework aims to encourage more independent businesses and retailers, especially from the creative industries, flagging the market opportunity of the large number of creative graduates in the area looking for opportunities.

Central District Regeneration Framework is supplementary planning guidance, adopted in 2020.

Its place ambitions include an objective to diversify uses to reinforce economic competitiveness, through:

— Integration of creative local enterprises into vacant units.

— **Promotion of links with existing creative industries**.

— Provision of **a ladder of workspace accommodation** to enable micro-businesses to start-up, scale-up and develop.

Heritage buildings should be highlighted and integrated with any new development as a means of **reinforcing the city's distinctive urban character**.

North Glasgow Strategic Development Framework was adopted as Supplementary Guidance to the City Development Plan in 2023.

A clear priority under its vision is the provision of attractive and accessible business locations to **support enterprise and growth** in emerging sectors. The expansion of the **arts sector at Speirs Lock** is supported under Principle PR 27.

Key takeaways

National policy supports the:

— Creative re-use of historic buildings and culture assets as a catalyst for regeneration.

— Use of Masterplan Consent Areas, already being piloted by Glasgow City Council, to speed up development consent.

Locally, key overarching priorities are to:

— Drive city identity and economic competitiveness through the promotion of culture, creativity and innovation.

— Welcome business growth through provision of a scale of workspace accommodation.

— Support urban character through the preservation and re-use of heritage buildings.

Guidance highlights, in particular:

— The promotion of the arts, culture and creative sectors as a vehicle for economic growth, including connecting city-centre institutions and activities with the existing creative cluster north of the M8 (i.e. Speirs Lock).

— Proposals for creative industries will be supported where the proposal forms part of the wider regeneration of an area.

— Sauchiehall Street Culture and Heritage District as an ‘area of change’.

— The area north of the M8 around Speirs Lock as an Economic Development Area with Development Opportunities.

4. Conclusion: Opportunity for the Mackintosh Building

Since its opening, the Mackintosh Building has been central to the city's creative and cultural identity. This significance presents a unique opportunity to look beyond the Building in isolation and consider it as part of a transformative economic and regeneration ambition for the city, capable of delivering at scale a lasting legacy for Glasgow's economy, its creative and cultural eco-system and social value.

A heritage anchor for a new innovation district

There is opportunity to position the Mackintosh as a heritage anchor of a creative and cultural sector-focused innovation district, maximising the impact of the existing 'supercluster' of cultural and creative institutions and businesses in Garnethill/Sauchiehall and North Glasgow. Designation would foster synergies across these actors to drive idea generation, innovation and entrepreneurship, to generate impact for Glasgow that is greater than the sum of the parts.

This would be the city's fourth designated innovation district, and the only one that supports creative production activity at scale. Extending from Sauchiehall Street to the Canal, it would connect GRID to the west and GCID to the east, creating a continuous concentration of designated innovation-focused activity across the city. Building on the existing creative production happening at scale within the supercluster, the proposition embodies the newest wave of global innovation districts that is shifting the concept from 'centres of discovery' to 'centres that discover and deliver'.

The proposition would be framed as an economic regeneration masterplan to galvanise public and private investment. The masterplan would align with existing placemaking transformations in the area, GSA and RCA estate strategies, current major capital project proposals and future opportunities (such as the GSA's Stow site), enabling it to be positioned as a multi-year, multi-investment, delivered through asset transfers, specific joint venture partnerships and mixed-use developments.

Creating partnerships across the city and city region would be essential in delivering this vision – namely, with Glasgow City Council, Glasgow City Region and Glasgow Life. The proposition would require a multi-stakeholder approach, securing collaboration of the existing creative and cultural stakeholders in the identified area, alongside other key local and national actors (such as housing associations, Scottish and UK Governments). Establishing a governance model that enables both effective leadership and a collective stakeholder voice would be critical to success. The model could correspond with governance structures being put in place for the Sauchiehall Cultural and Heritage District to ensure alignment and partnership focus.

22@ Barcelona Innovation District

Originating in an ambition to revitalise the former industrial Poblenou quarter in eastern Barcelona, 22@ Barcelona is a 200-ha planned innovation district. Since its launch in 2000, the district has followed a 'Triple Helix' model, bringing universities, government and industry to work together according to a shared vision. Widely recognised for its success in attracting, retaining and developing entrepreneurs and knowledge-based companies, 22@ is responsible for 14.5% of the city's GDP and 12.5% of the city's jobs.[37]

The mixed-use development employs an urban model where companies, universities and innovation centres coexist with residential and recreational functions. Alongside economic transformation, a leading objective has been to generate social benefits for existing residents through affordable housing provisions, public facilities, and job training programmes.

Originally steered by a municipal company created by the local government, since 2017 it has been governed by a public foundation via a committee structure. Funding has come from multiple streams, across public funding, private investment, PPPs, EU grants and land value capture.[38]

CASE STUDY

Quartier des Spectacles

The Quartier des Spectacles (QDS) is the urban and cultural centre of Montreal with a growing density of cultural institutions and network of public squares used for artistic and cultural purpose. It is home to more than 80 cultural institutions, including performance halls, museums, galleries and institutions for art education, as well as residential, office and commercial buildings.

QDS is the result of an ambition to revitalise the city centre, leveraging culture to promote urban, tourism, social and economic objectives. Led by the municipality (the City of Montréal), in 2003 representatives of venue owners, cultural organisations, merchants' associations, education institutions, citizens' groups and public bodies came together into a new non-profit organisation, the Quartier des Spectacles Partnership. This 'public-private-people partnership' is an innovative approach to sectoral-led district management. It operates as a special governance structure to support the implementation of the project, with financial support from the federal and provincial governments. The success of QDS is based in large measure on the partnership with the cultural sector, leading to a project based on consensus and developed, produced and managed by all stakeholders.[39]

[37] https://www.22network.net/qui-som/?lang=es
[38] https://atlasofurbantech.org/cases/esp-at22-barcelona/
[39] https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/providing-local-actors-with-case-studies-evidence-and-solutions-places_eb108047-en/the-quartier-des-spectacles-partnership_20f02a59-en.html

Translating cultural capital into convening power at international scale

Historically significant buildings carry an intrinsic soft power that extends beyond their physical infrastructure.[40] The Mackintosh Building's symbolic value within Glasgow and the creative sector, alongside GSA's international reputation, uniquely positions it to become a convener that lends legitimacy and amplifies the global staging of the supercluster as a Creative and Cultural Production Innovation District. Through leveraging its cultural and civic capital, the Mackintosh Building can take on a new role that draws together the local stakeholders but also pulls in world-class global partners, across industry, government and academia to drive partnerships, investment and innovation. Within this ambition, the Mackintosh Building is redefined as a city asset for multiple creative and innovation uses, becoming an active, working asset for the city and its region.

The Mackintosh Building's scale and spaces permit of a flexibility and multiplicity of uses. There is a local and national precedent for the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings for innovation, entrepreneurial and creative workspaces. The proposition is supported by national and local planning policy and guidance that advocates for: historic buildings as regeneration catalysts; creative industries and innovation as a driver for Glasgow's economic growth; and the connection of city-centre creative and cultural institutions and activities with the existing creative cluster in North Glasgow.

Next steps

We recommend the preparation of an evidence-based opportunity case for the designation of a creative and cultural sector innovation district, positioning it as a driver for city-wide economic growth, creative and cultural activity and placemaking. The opportunity case should articulate a compelling, data-driven rationale for investment, participation and long-term impact to support advocacy and policy influence.

This exercise should be informed by:

— Baseline city mapping to understand activity in the sector and provide a dataset for future strategic planning.

— Gaps and opportunities analysis of the city's CCS value chain, informed by the baseline mapping.

— Economic baseline assessment of the city's CCS ecosystem.

— Cross-sector stakeholder engagement.

— Study of funding and investment routes.

— Clear vision and purpose for the proposed district.

— Proposed governance framework.

[40] The Heritage Alliance (2026): 'From local to global: The power of heritage in a changing world'.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Planning policy context

The following documents comprise material considerations in the determination of planning applications within the area of study.

Document	Level	Status	Date
National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)	National	Planning Documents	2023
Creating Places: A Policy Statement on Architecture and Place for Scotland	National	Supplementary Planning Guidance	2013
City Centre Strategy (CCS) 2024-30	City	Supplementary Planning Guidance	2024
A Vision and Plan for the Golden Z	City	Supplementary Planning Guidance	2023
City Development Plan	City	Planning Documents	2017
City Development Plan: IPG3 Economic Development	City	Supplementary Planning Guidance	2017
City Development Plan 2	City	Proposed	2026
City Centre Strategic Development Framework	City	Supplementary Planning Guidance	2021
Sauchiehall and Garnethill Regeneration Framework	City	Supplementary Planning Guidance	2016
Central District Regeneration Framework	City	Supplementary Planning Guidance	2020
North Glasgow Strategic Development Framework	City	Supplementary Planning Guidance	2023

Appendix 2: Long list of relevant case studies

These focus on comparable projects in which significant heritage assets have been positioned at the heart of wider regeneration, placemaking and innovation initiatives.

1. Custard Factory, Birmingham
2. Kampus, Manchester
3. Sister, Manchester
4. Upper and Lower Campfield Markets, Manchester
5. Tileyard North, Wakefield
6. CIQ, Sheffield
7. Battersea Power Station, London
8. King’s Cross, London
9. Quartermile, Edinburgh
10. 22@, Barcelona
11. Fashion City, Milan
12. Quantum Island, Fuxing Island, Shanghai
13. Quartier des Spectacles, Montreal (as a governance model)

Appendix 3: Consultees

The following external stakeholders were consulted as part of the drafting of this report:

Mandy MacDonald	Head of Development Neighbourhoods Regeneration and Sustainability	Glasgow City Council
James Gillespie	Project Manager Neighbourhoods Regeneration and Sustainability	Glasgow City Council
Andy Dale	Development Manager Group Leader	Glasgow City Council
Ben Wilson	Director, Development & Regeneration	Glasgow City Council
Katie Duffy	Head of Arts and Music	Glasgow Life
Karen Shaw	Project Development Manager Sauchiehall Street Culture and Heritage District	Glasgow Life
Graham Smith	Head of Investment, International & Innovation	Glasgow City Council
Rob Morrison	Director	Agile City

Appendix 4: Indicative list of major pipeline projects <1km from Mackintosh Building

Central Glasgow has the busiest development pipeline in Scotland, with a series of significant schemes in construction, consented or under consideration.

Type	Site
Office	50 Bothwell Street (Lucent/Orion Capital Managers)
Office	Bothwell Street (NB) Pipeline
Office	Five Cadogan Street (Nerv)
Office	90 St Vincent Street
Office	150 St Vincent Street (Clearbell Capital)
Office	300 St Vincent Street (Osborne & Co)
Office	46 Waterloo Street (Almadirat House/RPG)
Mixed Use	Broomielaw (Scottish Enterprise)
Mixed Use	Buchanan Bus Station (GTP) – Killermont Street
Mixed Use	Cadogan Square (City Property Glasgow)
Mixed Use	Charing Cross Gateway Phase 1 (C360)
Mixed Use	Dobbies Loan / Shamrock Street (Ranger/New City Burnside)
Mixed Use	Cowcaddens Fire Station (Stanley) Pipeline
Mixed Use	250 Delphin Street (Scottish Opera/Peel Park)
Mixed Use	Buchanan Galleries Masterplan (Land Securities)
Mixed Use	ABC / Vito – Sauchiehall Street
Residential	West Regent Street (LRW/Central Quay)
Residential	Dalhousie Street – The Mount Building (Nevis Properties)
Student Acc.	380 Cadogan Street (Blanefield/Barrack)
Student Acc.	70 William Street / Elmbank Gardens (SMD/CDG Glasgow)
Student Acc.	West Graham Street (Caledonian Property Group)
Student Acc.	282 West Graham Street (Homes for Students)
Student Acc.	84–72 Waterloo Street (Varsity Developments)
Hotel	95 Bothwell Street (HFD Property Group)
Hotel	31 West Regent Street – Cheval Maison (Cheval Collection)
Hotel	The Scotsman Hotel – High School Complex, Drinbank Street (Scotsman Group)

Section 3.0

Commercial Case

3. Commercial Case

Executive Summary

The Commercial Case assesses the commercial deliverability of the preferred scenario identified: Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 – Temporary Retention System plus Selected Permanent Steelwork.

Market analysis indicates that sufficient specialist capability exists to deliver the proposed works and that the principal packages can be competitively procured. The challenges associated with the existing contractual arrangements and the delivery of works within a fire-damaged Category A listed building are considered manageable through appropriate procurement, specialist engagement, and proportionate risk allocation.

No material commercial barriers have been identified that would prevent progression to the next stage.

3.0. Introduction and Purpose of the Commercial Case

The purpose of the Commercial Case at SOBCA stage is to demonstrate that the emerging preferred scenario is commercially credible, that there is a viable route to market which is deliverable, and that no commercial barriers exist which would prevent the project from proceeding to the next stage.

The Commercial Case sets out the proposed delivery and procurement approach for the preferred scenario. It has been developed in accordance with the HM Treasury Green Book and reflects established public sector construction procurement practice. At SOBCA stage, it provides a proportionate, non-committal assessment to support decision-making and assurance.

3.1. Requirements and Scope

The Strategic, Economic, and Financial Cases have identified a preferred scenario. This represents the next step in the recovery and stabilisation of the Mackintosh Building following the 2018 fire. The Commercial Case is required to focus on the approach to delivering the preferred scenario.

To secure a commercially viable outcome, the following key commercial requirements must be met:

- **Clear and defined outputs**: establishing a clear brief for the preferred option: Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 - Temporary Retention System plus Selected Permanent Steelwork. Key outputs have been identified within the Strategic, Economic, and Financial Cases supporting the SOBCA.

- **Appropriate Performance Measures**: ensuring that delivery of the preferred scenario contributes to the achievement of the key outcomes and performance measures established within the Case for Change. For example:
    - To support institutional financial stability.

- To contribute to the wider economic growth of Glasgow.
- To address the negative regeneration impact associated with the undeveloped site.
- To meet the conservation management aspects of the building.
- To form a catalyst for economic regeneration and to facilitate the structure for further investment in the future.

The preferred scenario involves the reconfiguration of the existing structural support scaffold and shoring by introducing a combination of an internal temporary retention system and permanent steelwork with a temporary roof structure. It is recognised that any works within a heritage building are potentially subject to statutory listing, conservation controls, and enhanced planning and building consent requirements. The preferred project could potentially require:

- Specialist conservation and refurbishment expertise.
- Experience of working with traditional materials and techniques.
- Compliance with heritage, planning, and building safety legislation.
- Careful management of unknown conditions and constraints.

At the SOBCA stage, the scope of the requirements is defined at a high level, sufficient to enable early market assessment while allowing flexibility as design development progresses. Positive working relationships exist with the statutory authorities, and early engagement will be essential in establishing an agreed pathway for delivery.

3.2. Market Capability and Interest

The Mackintosh Building is currently stabilised through a complex arrangement of emergency scaffolding and shoring that has been managed on site by the incumbent contractor since the second fire in 2018. The proposed project replaces the existing scaffold and shoring with a combination of a temporary retention system and permanent steelwork. The contractual situation requires that the works are undertaken through the existing Emergency Order that manages the current arrangement. The temporary retention works, permanent steelwork and roof installation packages will be competitively procured to ensure value for money. The dismantling and removal of the existing structures forms part of the original appointment with the main contractor and they will provide a tender for undertaking these works, which will be subject to commercial review.

Initial market analysis for the identified main packages of work indicates that there is an established specialist construction market capable of delivering projects of this nature working within a heritage structure.

The project also benefits from work undertaken following the 2018 fire, including engagement with specialist conservation suppliers, development of a Building Information Model (BIM), and the retention of certain materials and components off-site. These existing project assets and the knowledge gained through the emergency stabilisation works provide a strong foundation for future procurement and delivery planning, reducing uncertainty and supporting efficient mobilisation of the proposed works.

Early engagement with potential suppliers has identified several concerns regarding project delivery, primarily relating to the complexity of installation. To address these concerns, work is ongoing in two areas: first, to establish parties willing to tender for the works; and second, to reduce the risk profile by developing a logistical plan that facilitates the installation and dismantling of the existing arrangements.

While the specialist nature of the works may reduce the size of the potential bidder pool compared with standard construction projects, market engagement indicates that sufficient capacity exists to support competitive procurement of the key packages - namely the retention, permanent steelwork and roof packages - provided risk allocation and commercial terms are proportionate.

3.3. Early Procurement and Route-to-Market Considerations

Due to the current contractual arrangement with the incumbent contractor, it is recognised that the procurement strategy to achieve the preferred outcome cannot follow a standard procurement approach. The proposed contracting strategy will therefore be driven by the particular constraints and complexities of the Mackintosh Building, its existing contractual arrangements, and the specialist nature of the required works.

Preliminary assessment indicates that a flexible procurement approach will be required to accommodate:

- Existing contractor responsibility for the scaffolding and shoring, including its dismantling.
- Requirement for key work packages to be competitively procured.
- Requirement for an enabling works package to prepare the structure for key construction packages to de-risk the project.
- Early contractor involvement or specialist engagement.
- Management of heritage-related risks and unknowns.

The procurement strategy will be developed in collaboration with the GSA's procurement function and delivered in accordance with applicable public procurement regulations and institutional governance requirements. The strategy will be refined to ensure compliance and support competitive procurement of the key work packages.

3.4. Risk Allocation and Commercial Risk Profile

The development of the preferred scenario through the Strategic Case for Change within the SOBCA was structured around a detailed risk assessment of the ability to deliver the scenarios and how these risks could be mitigated. Risk management and contingency planning have been integral to the development and appraisal of the preferred scenario. The existing condition of the structure presents a range of inherent technical and delivery risks, many of which arise from the impact of the 2018 fire and the temporary stabilisation measures currently in place. These risks are well documented, and any design solution must address and manage these risks while mitigating issues as far as reasonably practicable within the scope of the project. The proposed approach is to retain the current appointed structural engineers, working alongside specialist designers, to develop the temporary retention and roof system. This reflects their detailed knowledge of the building and the stabilisation works undertaken to date, providing continuity as the project progresses. This approach will support the development of commercially viable work packages, reduce delivery risk, and help to minimise the financial impact of risk allowances within contractor pricing.

Consideration has also been given to the inherent risks associated with working within a heritage building - such as unknown fabric conditions, constraints on methods, and stakeholder approvals. The development of a detailed Conservation Management Plan, together with associated policies and strategies to address such risks, has been recognised as an early-stage requirement. The principle is to ensure that:

- Risks are understood and transparent.
- Risk transfer is not excessive or unrealistic, and risks are allocated to the appropriate parties.
- Contractors are not expected to price undefined or unmanageable risks.

Early identification and management of heritage-specific risks is expected to improve commercial viability and reduce the likelihood of risk pricing, disputes, or delivery challenges.

3.5. Project Affordability and Value for Money (High-level)

The preferred scenario for the GSA is the gateway stage: Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1.

The Strategic Case and Financial Case confirm that the GSA is not in a financial position to progress the faithful reinstatement of the Mackintosh Building independently. The GSA’s current affordability position has narrowed the range of scenarios that can be pursued in the immediate term. Through development of the Commercial Case, Scenario 3 has been assessed to determine its commercial achievability and attractiveness to the market. Affordability and financial sustainability have also been considered through the Financial Case.

This approach supports affordability and value for money by:

- Encouraging early collaboration and constructability input.
- Reducing uncertainty ahead of fixed-price commitments.
- Supporting whole-life value rather than lowest capital cost.

The review concludes that the proposed scope of works is commercially achievable and capable of being delivered through the identified procurement approach. The Financial Case demonstrates that the preferred scenario has been assessed for affordability and financial sustainability. Cost estimates have been developed by the project cost consultants and will continue to be refined as the project progresses. The budget estimate prepared by Gardiner & Theobald LLP[1] is robust and transparent and provides a sound basis for effective cost management throughout the life of the project.

Overall, the proposed approach supports the achievement of whole-life value for money for the GSA.

[1] The budget estimate was prepared by Gardiner & Theobald in January 2026 and approved by the GSA Board of Governors on 17 February 2026.

3.6. Contractual and Management Considerations

The preferred project involves several existing contractual complexities. The GSA's preferred approach is to procure a number of key work packages through competitive processes and manage delivery through a suitably qualified and experienced contractor.

Within the contractual and management arrangements, the importance of the following has been recognised:

- Proportionate contract management capability.
- Access to specialist technical expertise and early-engagement contractual arrangements.
- Clear governance and decision-making processes with the required level of flexibility to achieve the required outputs.

The proposed contractual and management arrangements are considered proportionate to the scale and complexity of the project and can support successful delivery of the preferred scenario.

3.7. Commercial Case Conclusion

The proposed Commercial Case is considered viable, compliant and aligned with HM Treasury Five Case Model principles. The proposed commercial strategy is expected to support competitive procurement of the principal work packages while appropriately managing the constraints arising from the existing contractual arrangements. An initial risk allocation strategy has been developed and will be refined as the project progresses through subsequent business case stages.

The assessment concludes that, based on the evidence available at SOBCA stage, there are no material commercial barriers that would prevent progression of the preferred scenario to the next stage.

Section 4.0

Financial Case

4. Financial Case

Published Extract

This published version contains the Executive Summary and Financial Case Conclusion only.

This published extract omits the detailed financial appraisal, modelling, affordability analysis, financial tables and appendices because they contain commercially sensitive information relating to The Glasgow School of Art's financial position, third-party commercial arrangements, and the insurance settlement. The findings and recommendations below are unchanged from those presented to the GSA Board of Governors.

Executive Summary

The Financial Case assesses the affordability, funding position, and long-term financial sustainability of the shortlisted scenarios identified through the Strategic and Economic Cases.

The assessment indicates that:

- The continuation of the current arrangement (i.e. maintaining the emergency hired scaffold and shoring) is financially unsustainable for the GSA.
- The Mackintosh Studio and Mackintosh Faithful scenarios are not affordable under the funding assumptions adopted for the SOBCA.
- Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 – Temporary Retention System plus Selected Permanent Steelwork provides the preferred financial outcome.

The Financial Case assesses the affordability, funding position and long-term financial sustainability of the shortlisted scenarios identified through the Strategic and Economic Cases.

Financial Case Conclusion

The financial appraisal demonstrates that **Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 – Temporary Retention System plus Selected Permanent Steelwork** is affordable and supports the long-term financial sustainability of the GSA.

This conclusion remains unchanged whether considering the original arbitration assumptions or the revised funding position following the mediated settlement.

The preferred scenario is therefore considered affordable within the assumptions adopted for the SOBCA and capable of progressing to the next stage.

Section 5.0

Management Case

5. Management Case

Executive Summary

The Management Case assesses the deliverability of the preferred scenario: Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1. It demonstrates that appropriate governance, project management, risk management and assurance arrangements can be established to support successful delivery.

The proposed arrangements follow existing governance structures within The Glasgow School of Art, while introducing a dedicated capital project governance framework proportionate to the scale and complexity of the project.

The assessment concludes that the preferred scenario is capable of being managed and delivered effectively and that no material management or governance barriers have been identified that would prevent progression to the next stage.

5.0. Introduction and Purpose of the Management Case

The purpose of the Management Case is to put in place arrangements for the successful delivery of the preferred scenario for the Mackintosh Building identified through the Strategic Outline Business Case Addendum (SOBCA). At SOBCA stage, these arrangements are presented at a high level and will be developed further through the next stages.

5.1. Project Framework

A governance structure will be established to ensure effective decision-making, accountability, assurance, and oversight throughout the project lifecycle. The governance arrangements will reflect the heritage significance of the Mackintosh Building, associated statutory approval requirements, and the significant reputational, financial and stakeholder interest.

The governance arrangements set out in this Management Case are intended specifically to support the delivery of Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1. As a gateway project, this phase will secure and stabilise the Mackintosh Building, while creating the conditions for future phases of project delivery. Future phases may require alternative governance and delivery arrangements as proposals for the long-term future of the Mackintosh Building are developed and evaluated.

This governance framework will provide a clear delivery hierarchy for the preferred scenario as follows:

Project Delivery Structure

This section sets out the proposed project structure and capital delivery arrangements. It demonstrates that appropriate governance, resources and controls will be put in place to deliver the project successfully within agreed cost, time and quality parameters.

- **Tier 1: Capital Project Board (Strategic Tier)**
  Chaired by the Capital Project Sponsor and accountable to the GSA's Senior Leadership Group, the Capital Project Board will make high-level decisions, manage top-tier risks, and authorise stage progression. It will:

  - Approve key stage gateways as applicable.
  - Monitor performance against cost, project scope, and risk.
  - Resolve escalated issues.
  - Authorise changes within delegated limits according to the thresholds provided in the GSA Financial Regulations.

- **Tier 2: Capital Project Group (Management Tier)**
  Led by an internal Project Manager and supported by an externally appointed Project Management Team, the Capital Project Group will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the project. The Capital Project Group will be accountable to the Capital Project Board for delivering the project within agreed cost, programme and quality parameters.

- **Tier 3: Capital Project Team (Operational Tier):**
  Comprising external consultants - including architects, engineers, cost consultants, and other specialist advisers - the Capital Project Team will be responsible for delivering the technical aspects of the project under the direction of the Capital Project Manager.

The above structure, specifically established to deliver the capital project, will align with existing organisational governance structures and escalation routes within the GSA to ensure consistency, accountability and clarity of authority.

5.2. Project Governance

The governance arrangements for the project will adopt current GSA procedures and governance practices utilised on previous capital projects, as follows:

- **Senior Leadership Group (SLG)**
  The Senior Leadership Group, chaired by the Director and Principal and comprising the GSA's senior executive team, will provide oversight of the Capital Project Board, receive regular reports on project performance, risk, and budget, and make recommendations to the Finance and Resources Committee as required in line with delegated authority.

- **Finance and Resources Committee (FRC)**
  Major strategic decisions on the project will be taken by the Finance and Resources Committee in line with the Board of Governors Schedule of Delegation[1]. FRC will receive regular progress updates from the Project Sponsor and Project Director and will authorise any changes falling outside of delegated limits.

  The FRC is responsible for oversight of the GSA's financial sustainability, estate strategy and resource planning. In relation to the Mackintosh Project, it will provide scrutiny of project

[1] For further information on delegated authorities and decision-making, see the Glasgow School of Art Board of Governors Schedule of Delegation.

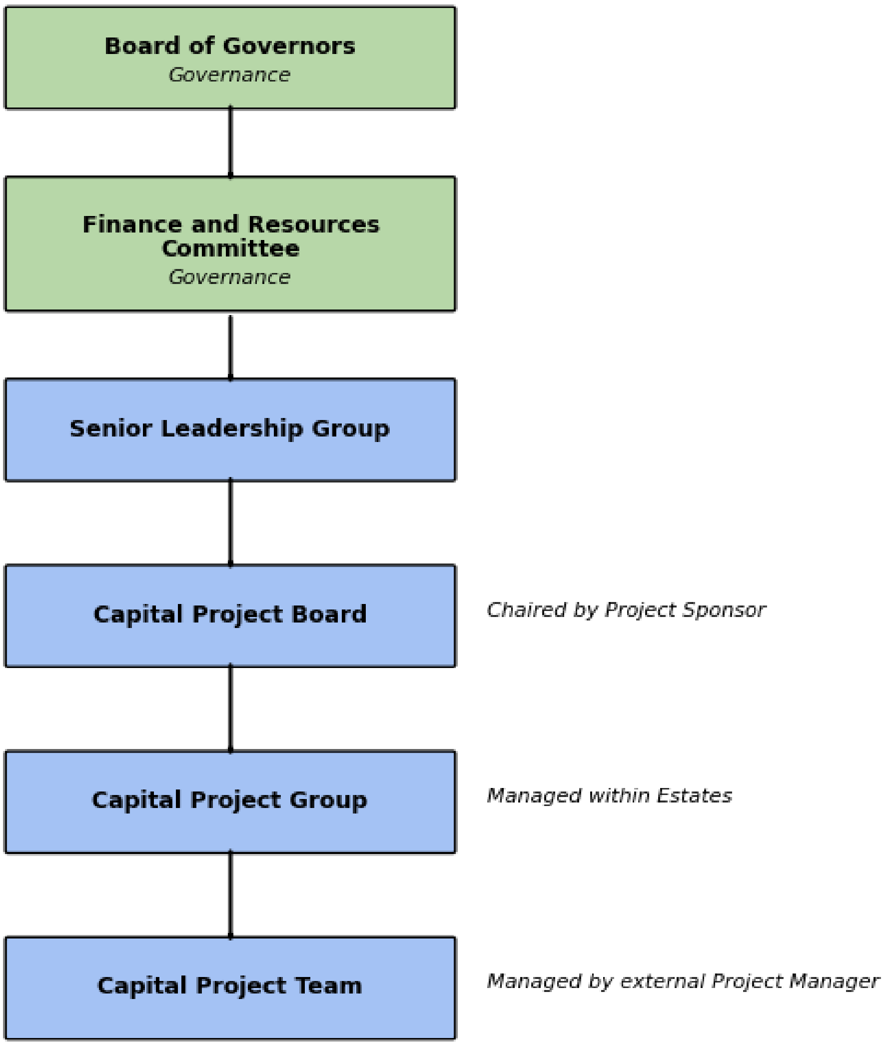
performance, affordability and risk, drawing on input from other relevant committees, including the Audit and Risk Committee.

- **GSA Board of Governors (Board)**
  The Board of Governors is the GSA's governing body and retains overall responsibility for the strategic direction and oversight of the project. It will receive assurance on project performance, risk, finance and estates matters through the Finance and Resources Committee.

5.3. Governance Structure

The Capital Project Board will report to the Senior Leadership Group, which will provide assurance reporting through the Finance and Resources Committee to the Board of Governors.

The reporting structure is as follows:



5.4. Stakeholder Management

The successful delivery of Scenario 3: Stabilisation & Repair Phase 1 will require effective engagement with a range of internal and external stakeholders. Stakeholder management will remain critical throughout the project lifecycle.

Key stakeholders include:

- Board of Governors, Finance and Resources Committee, Senior Leadership Group, staff and students of The Glasgow School of Art.
- Scottish Funding Council.
- Historic Environment Scotland.
- Glasgow City Council and other statutory authorities.
- Local residents, businesses and community groups.
- Funding partners and other stakeholders with an interest in the Mackintosh Building.
- Project consultants, contractors and specialist advisers.

Engagement activities will seek to:

- Maintain stakeholder confidence and transparency.
- Support statutory approvals and decision-making processes.
- Manage stakeholder expectations and concerns.
- Minimise disruption to neighbouring properties and the wider community.
- Support delivery of the project's strategic objectives and benefits.

5.5. Project Assurance

Project assurance will be provided through regular reporting, governance oversight and review at key decision points throughout the project lifecycle. Progress against cost, risk and project objectives will be monitored through the Capital Project Board and reported through the GSA's governance structure. Independent specialist advice - including that obtained from cost consultants, structural engineers, conservation specialists and legal advisers where appropriate - will support project development and decision-making.

5.6. Project Delivery

The preferred scenario identified through the development of the SOBCA, together with the current situation regarding the complex scaffolding arrangements, has significant implications for the logistical planning and delivery of the project. By its nature, the project requires a specific sequence of activities to take place in specific zones to facilitate overall delivery. Consideration has been given to the proposed sequencing at this stage of the project lifecycle; however, the focus has been, and will remain, on developing a delivery route based on value for money, risk allocation, and market capability. The final delivery and construction approach will be structured to:

- Minimise disruption to the surrounding community.
- Provide certainty over cost and time.
- Allow appropriate float and contingency.
- Develop early engagement and enabling works.

- Focus on specialist suppliers and seek their input to refine the challenges and propose acceptable solutions.
- Comply with health, safety, environmental, and regulatory requirements.

Key dependencies and critical path activities will be actively managed to maintain project certainty.

The overall project will be structured around a series of key decision points to support governance oversight and approval of subsequent project stages.

5.7. Risk Management

Effective risk management is central to the successful delivery of the preferred scenario. A structured and proportionate approach will be adopted to identify, assess, mitigate and monitor risks throughout the project lifecycle, ensuring that cost, project, quality, conservation, and health and safety objectives are achieved. Risk management arrangements will align with recognised best practice and existing GSA governance requirements.

The risk management approach will seek to:

- Identify key risks at the earliest possible stage.
- Minimise adverse impacts on cost, programme, quality, and safety.
- Allocate risk to the party best able to manage it.
- Maintain affordability through appropriate contingency.
- Provide transparency and assurance to decision-makers.

The Capital Project Team appointed to deliver the preferred scenario will work with all parties to mitigate the risks through a Risk Register managed by the appointed Project Manager. Individual risks will have assigned owners and mitigation measures, and will be reviewed regularly by the Capital Project Team. The Risk Register will be updated as required and reported to the Capital Project Board through regular RAG reporting, enabling further action to be taken when required.

Significant risks currently identified in relation to the identified preferred scenario include:

- **Cost Overrun and Inflation**: Increases in construction costs or unforeseen site conditions may impact affordability. Mitigation will include robust cost management, contingency allowances, and early contractor engagement.
- **Project Delay:** Delays arising from statutory approvals, design development or supply chain constraints may impact delivery. Mitigation will include realistic programming, early stakeholder engagement, and active project management.
- **Scope Change Control Failure:** Uncontrolled changes to the agreed scope may increase cost and extend the programme. Mitigation will include clear scope definition and formal change control procedures.
- **Market Capacity and Contractor Performance:** Limited market capacity or poor contractor performance may affect cost, quality and project certainty. Mitigation will include early market engagement and appropriate procurement strategies.

- **Health, Safety, and Compliance Risk:** Failure to meet statutory or regulatory requirements could impact project delivery. Mitigation will include the appointment of a competent principal designer and contractor, regular site inspections, and strong leadership.

The risks identified at this stage are reflected in the project Risk Register and will continue to be reviewed and refined as the project develops. Effective risk management, supported by clear governance, ownership and reporting arrangements, will be fundamental to successful project delivery.

5.8. Benefits Realisation

The Benefits Realisation approach demonstrates how the intended benefits of the preferred scenario will be clearly defined, owned, monitored, and realised following completion of the physical works. It provides assurance that the project is focused on achieving measurable outcomes for the GSA, the community and other stakeholders. Benefits realisation will be managed as an integral part of both the project lifecycle and the post-handover operational phase.

A Benefits Realisation Plan (BRP) will be developed and maintained to identify, monitor and measure the realisation of both direct and indirect benefits. The key headings identified below will be structured in a matrix to reflect the specific benefits:

- Description of each benefit
- Baseline position
- Target outcome
- Measurement method and frequency
- Timing of benefits (short-, medium-, and long-term benefits)
- Benefit owner

The BRP will be reviewed and updated at each formal project gateway. The list below summarises some of the direct and indirect benefits that will be achieved through the delivery of the project and the rationale for inclusion of these benefits in the BRP:

Direct Benefits:

1. **Improved Asset Condition:** Replacement of the existing temporary support arrangements with a more sustainable structural solution, reducing ongoing maintenance requirements and associated costs.
2. **Operational Efficiency:** Reduced operating and maintenance costs, and the return of external spaces to the community.
3. **Health, Safety and Compliance Improvements:** Reduced health and safety risks through the transition from a temporary construction site arrangement to a managed asset, supporting ongoing statutory and regulatory compliance.
4. **Improved User Experience:** Removal of the visual and operational impacts of the existing scaffolding arrangements, and improving the appearance and accessibility of the site for stakeholders and the local community.

Indirect Benefits:

1. **Improved Organisational Resilience and Flexibility:** Creation of a stable interim solution that supports future decision-making and reduces exposure to short-term capital pressures.
2. **Reputational Benefits:** Demonstrates the GSA's commitment to taking forward a deliverable and achievable solution for the Mackintosh Building, improving stakeholder confidence, and supporting wider safety and social values.
3. **Strategic Alignment:** Supports the GSA's commitment to delivering the Mackintosh Building and demonstrates ownership of that responsibility. The project enables future phases through investments into a more risk-adjusted structure**.**

5.9. Management Case Conclusion

The proposed management arrangements provide a robust framework for the successful development and implementation of the preferred scenario through subsequent business case stages. Appropriate governance, reporting, risk management and assurance mechanisms will be established to maintain control of cost, project, scope and quality throughout the project lifecycle.

Based on the evidence available at SOBCA stage, no material management or governance barriers have been identified that would prevent progression of the preferred scenario to the next stage.