

Supplementary Guidance: Union Street Frontage

1. Status of Supplementary Guidance

This Supplementary Guidance (SG) forms part of the Development Plan and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The SG expands upon the following Aberdeen Local Development Plan policies:

- Policy NC1 – City Centre Development – Regional Centres
- Policy NC2 – City Centre Retail Core and Union Street

2. Introduction to Topic

Union Street is Aberdeen's principle street which runs east to west through the City Centre. The street plays a prominent and wide-ranging role in City life and has in the past had a major role in the City's retail function. Through the development of Union Square, to the south of Union Street and the extension of floorspace to the north of Union Street in the Bon Accord Centre, the retail role of Union Street is not as significant as it once was. Union Street now hosts a mix of uses appropriate for a thriving city centre. Proposals to enhance the vitality and viability of Union Street will be supported.

The Union Street Frontages Guidelines aim to maintain an appropriate mix and location of shopping, service and commercial leisure functions on Union Street within the Retail Core. It does this by applying minimum percentages of ground floor retail frontage that are required in individual sectors of Union Street. However there will be a greater degree of flexibility with the Union Street Frontages Guidelines on proposals for change of use from Class 1 (retail) to Class 3 (food and drink).

3. General Guidelines

The six individual sectors along Union Street are shown at the end of this document in Figure 5. The minimum percentage of ground floor retail frontage that is required for the individual sectors of Union Street varies, illustrating the relative desirability of fostering continued retail use in and adjacent to particular parts of Union Street.

The Union Street Frontages Guidelines take into consideration the parts of Union Street that are covered by the City Centre Retail Core boundary as defined in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan's Proposal Map (Broad Street to Huntly Street on the north side of Union Street and Castle Street to Bon Accord Street on the south side of Union Street).

Proposals for a change of use from retail (Class 1) (as per The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) 1997 to non-retail uses such as cafés, restaurants, hotels, leisure and financial and professional services will be determined in accordance with Policy NC2: City Centre Retail Core and will be measured against minimum percentages as well as other relevant criteria set out in this document. All proposals for change of use must enhance or adequately maintain daytime vitality and maintain an active street frontage.

There is also a need to avoid excessive concentrations of non-retail uses, including licensed premises, where this would be likely to have a significantly adverse effect on continued retail use of existing groups of retail units or on amenity.

Figure 1: Percentage of Ground Floor Retail Frontage in Individual Sectors:
 (As of 07/11/2016. The actual retail and spare capacity percentages frequently change).

Sector	Minimum Required Retail %	Actual Retail %	Spare Capacity %
A (North side of Union Street between Broad Street and St Nicholas Street)	40%	46.6%	+6.6%
B (North side of Union Street between St Nicholas Street and Union Terrace)	70%	70.7%	+0.7%
C (North side of Union Street between Union Terrace and Huntly Street)	45%	42.3%	2.7%
D (South side of Union Street between Bon Accord Street and Bridge Street)	65%	64.7%	0.3%
E (South side of Union Street between Bridge Street and Market Street)	80%	81.9%	+1.9%
F (South side of Union Street between Market Street and Marischal Street)	65%	64.5%	0.5%

Where a unit is vacant, its last known use is used to calculate the actual ground floor retail frontage of a particular sector, except in cases where a vacant unit has an extant planning permission that has not yet been implemented. In the latter instance, the most recently authorised Use Class is used for calculation purposes.

The Union Street Frontages policy guidelines allow for an unlimited amount of flexibility above the minimum required level of Class 1 retail frontage at ground floor level on Union Street. There is limited flexibility of up to 1% below the minimum required level where the proposed new use meets the other relevant criteria as set out in this Supplementary Guidance.

Figure 2: Sectors of Union Street

