The Egyptian Halls - 46 Year Regeneration Delay! Time for Mediation/Collaboration to Slice the Gordian Knot. And kick start this project immediately!

30th April 2026

MEDIATION/COLLABORATION KICKSTARTS THIS LONG OVERDUE CONSERVATION/REGENERATION PROJECT

The Egyptian Halls - 46 Year Regeneration Delay!

Time for Mediation/Collaboration and kick start this project immediately

See how cheek by jowl Union Corner is with the Egyptian Halls

Introduction

Having submitted a Strategic Intervention Brief (P3) This document sets out clear, documented evidence of Glasgow City Council's (GCC) consistent, non-facilitated endorsement and cooperation with Union Street Developments Ltd (USD) and Union Street Properties (USP) between 1998 and 2018. The evidence demonstrates GCC's sustained recognition of USP's efforts, investments, and progress toward the restoration of the Grade A listed Egyptian Halls, as well as the Council's own parallel roles in a) key facilitation but also procedural, legal delays and funding failures. The following chronology substantiates USP's position for mediation, arbitration, or potential legal actions, which would incur very scarce costs, time resources, which has been reinforced very recently by GCC Leader Aitken as very wasteful.

Action Plan Options

Option A- Collaborative Process

- June-Aug 2026 Feasibility Study/Holistic architectural/structural review; budget TBCF
- June- Nov 2026- Scot Govt Reporter assesses USP GCC acknowledged "significant expenditure" and USI's separate valuation and how 46 years of deterioration has been allowed to occur given four approved but failed Planning Applications on record.
- Dec 2026- Discussions agreement on whether it's a JV between Ediston/USP and USI. Or USP and USI agree a 10 or 15 year lease with phased payment structure
- Timescale Six Months start to finish
- Funding; 33.33% USP/USI, 33.33% Union Street Recovery Initiative, 33.33% Ediston/GCC
- **Benefits; No 2nd CPO, reduced costs, uncertainty removed, can be integrated within overall Union Street Recover plan; Golden Z, City Avenues Project, New Build not an option**.

Option B- Non Collaborative Process

- GCC approve a 2nd CPO - Appeal Process begins
- GCC-Scot Govt have to prove USP 1998-2026 and in parallel USI 2010-2026 have allowed the Egyptian Halls to intentionally deteriorate

a) Scot Govt Reporter assesses and 2nd CPO request is refused- GCC then has to accept USP and USI have not been responsible for circa 46 years of deterioration

b) GCCs request approved; Court of Session appeal 99% certain

c) Timescale 3 years+,

d) Funding' USP and USI and GCC and Scot Govt allocate scarce resources very ineffectively

<u>Downside Summary</u>

- Significant Delays
- Costs increase 40%+,
- Deterioration increases exponentially
- Demolition founded upon known for 25 years Public Safety issues becomes a live option
- Scaffolding cannot be removed until Public Safety is guaranteed

Option A; Submitted to GCC, Scot Govt, Union Street Recovery Initiative 27th Feb 2026

Egyptian Halls, 84-100 Union Street, Glasgow Strategic Intervention Call

Issue

The long-term stagnation of the Egyptian Halls (1980–2026) represents a significant heritage, economic, and governance failure. Without immediate intervention, further delay risks irreversible loss and reputational damage.

Strategic Context

The building offers a £100m+ regeneration opportunity with transformational potential for Union Street and the wider city centre that is Mackintosh-Thomson Mews;
http://www.egyptianhalls.co.uk/opportunity.html

Its redevelopment aligns with national objectives for:

- Urban regeneration
- Heritage preservation
- City-centre economic renewal
- Private-public partnership delivery

Governance Impasse

Progress has been hindered by prolonged procedural drift and lack of coordinated decision-making between key stakeholders, including Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Government.

Recommended Action

1. Immediate agreement to structured mediation or arbitration.
2. Convening of a joint leadership meeting upon submission of the Feasibility Study scoping.
3. Establishment of a time-bound delivery framework with clear accountability.

Objective

To unlock a viable, deliverable regeneration pathway within 2026 and prevent further reputational and economic harm.

Projected Benefits

And a phenomenal very early positive good news indeed story for Glasgow, for the City Centre, for Heritage, for Conservation, for Regeneration, for increased Rates, for Job Creation, which would be quantified as part of the evaluation process

Option B- 2nd CPO Appeal Process assesses USP and USI's case - Timescale 3 years+, costs increase 40%+, deterioration increases exponentially – Demolition potential inexorably increases;

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1. Early Collaboration and Acknowledgment of Responsibility (1998–2003)

- February 1998 (preceding event non disclosed to USP) – GCC had unilaterally imposed a CPO amendment to allow emergency structural repairs, projecting a short delay of "a few months." The outcome, however, was a structural delay lasting over a decade, symptomatic of internal mismanagement within Council processes
- Feb-Aug 1998 USP purchase two of four Ground Floor units, Sept 1999 USP purchases third unit. December 1999 – GCC's Development and Regeneration Services Sub-Committee authorized the Director of Protective Services to enter into an agency agreement with USD Ltd following USP's acquisition of Portfolio Holdings' interest. This step unified ownership resolved CPO objections, and should have kickstarted delivery , with GCC praising the effective collaboration.
- Dec 1999 brilliant 100% Conservation scheme approved lauded by GCC/HES and Greek Thomson Heritage lobby. Sept Year 2000 at Risk Register states, **"***Scottish Enterprise has withdrawn its offer of a grant, and Historic Scotland has reduced its; the project is unlikely to proceed***."** How to snatch Defeat from the Jaws of Victory. Never a truer prediction indeed! And one can also ask how can now 46 years of delay be blamed on the co-owners?
- April 2003 – GCC formally acknowledged public-sector-induced delays: "*The CPO process in this case involves compensation being determined before the Council can gain a satisfactory title… I can understand the frustration expressed by Mr. Souter."*. Never a truer prediction indeed! It took till Jan 2010 to reconcile. And one asks again how can now 46 years of delay be blamed on the co-owners?

Key Point: GCC repeatedly acknowledged both cooperation with USD/USP and its own procedural shortcomings during this foundational phase.

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2. Recognition of Developer Commitment and Investment (2004–2010)

- June 2004 – GCC Economic Development Report:
  - USD re-secured reduced grant funding from Historic Scotland, restoring it from £250,000 to £930,000.
  - USD successfully negotiated the withdrawal of remaining CPO objections.
  - GCC expressly recognized USD's perseverance and negotiation success.
- July 2010 – GCC Letter to Culture Minister Fiona Hyslop:
  The Council described USP as a long-term, highly engaged partner that had "***committed very significant expenditure on site acquisition and development*** and "prepared a range of technical and conservation studies." GCC reinforced a very time-limited opportunity" to realize the restoration project and expressed "extreme concern" that lack of funding would prevent progress. Again how can now 46 years of delay be blamed on the co-owners?

Key Point: GCC's correspondence to government ministers serves as authoritative confirmation of USP's major role, diligence, and the public significance of the project.

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3. Documented GCC Endorsement and Praise continues (2013)

- May 2013 – Letter from Councillor Gordon Matheson, Leader of the Council:
  Matheson congratulated USP for securing Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent, acknowledging GCC's ongoing engagement and commending USP's efforts to bring "the building back into a viable new use… which will complement Union Street and the surrounding area."

Key Point: This letter constitutes direct acknowledgment — from the highest civic level — of USP's competence, good faith, and progress.

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4. Subsequent Contradiction and Institutional Inconsistencies begin to develop (2014–2018)

- February 2014 – GCC letter supporting USP's £5M Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) application: GCC stated: "We wish you success in your application to the Heritage Enterprise Scheme."
- May 2015 – HLF refusal: The HLF concluded there was "no realistic prospect of funding from GCC, Historic Scotland, or the Scottish Government." This directly contradicted GCC's previous assurances of support.
- May 2015, Bailie Cameron in a letter to Shadow Culture Minister Baker ***"As the property recession took hold the project became unviable."*** So GCC is highlighting this impact and is NOT blaming the Egyptian Halls owners. Unlike now, in 2026, based on discounting all evidence it's been provided, and apparently GCC does not the depth of files USP has to hand.
- March 2018 – GCC statement to *Scotland on Sunday*: GCC's public narrative shifted, suggesting instead that "building owners should join with us in a co-operative manner," disregarding the documented history of collaboration and delays caused by public-sector process failures.

Key Point: These reversals highlight an absence of consistent governance strategy and a potential pattern of administrative discrimination against USP, despite extensive evidence of commitment and compliance.

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5. Evidence of Long-Term Non-Viability Ignored

- September 2000 – Buildings at Risk Register: Documented project non-viability due to withdrawal of Scottish Enterprise and reduction of Historic Scotland grants.
- **January 2010 – GCC acknowledges USP's resolution of the 12-year title impasse, originally forecast to delay "a few months."
- Feb 2014 GCC to USP HLF £5M Grant App- *wish you success in your application to the Heritage Enterprise Scheme. We look forward to learning the outcome of this bid in due course.*
- May 2015 HLF to USP *We have discussed the project with both GCC and Historic Scotland. Our conclusion is that there is no realistic prospect of you receiving funding from either of those bodies, or from the Scottish Government, in the foreseeable future. The proposal submitted to us is therefore not viable***.**
- May 2015 letter (Bailie Cameron) to Scot Govt: GCC attributed project unviability to the broader property recession, not USP's conduct.

Key Point: The record is consistent: public-sector decisions created systemic non-viability and prolonged delay; USP's actions were constructive and remedial throughout.

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6. Legal and Procedural Observations

The documented pattern confirms the following:

- Sustained collaboration (1998–2018) endorsed by GCC at multiple levels.
- Repeated acknowledgments of USP's financial, administrative, and technical commitments.
- Procedural mismanagement within GCC — including delayed CPO processes and internal decision fragmentation.
- Discriminatory treatment post-2014, in contradiction to previous Council positions.
- Grounds for action: Any differential treatment or grant facilitation for other parties would constitute demonstrable discrimination and potential legal liability.

Key Point: Documented evidence is on file for objective assessment either as part of agreed Mediation/Arbitration or if this proceeds to legal actions, which we all know waste time, resource and scarce funds; which could be deployed in a 100% positive way immediately.

7.Regeneration, Conservation, Economic Additionality delayed for 26 Years

The Egyptian Halls has had FOUR approved but failed Planning Applications 1997-2018 – There will be a FIFTH! Since 2000, difficult choices sidelined, missed opportunities, failures to deliver joined up government, inadvertent misrepresentation. And in addition to the praised significant capital investment made. There is also the significant income earned from ground floor shops and intermittent Hoarding advertising, which has all been spent on trying to maintain the building. There are very challenging decisions ahead if the building is to be saved, no interest from private sector investors and developers due to known and proven non-viability reinforced also by documented GCC and HES assessment based on being provided with Development Appraisals 2000-2019 (6 different firms) and are on record praising this approach. GCC however now believe differently and have approved a Preferred Bidder founded upon inaccurate structural condition, leads to mis briefed scheme costs and skewed valuations. Remarkably this preferred bidder approval has stated it would secure 40% public/grant funding (non-confirmed) Yet there is documented evidence GCC-HES/Scot Govt denied similar grant funding to USP 2015 onwards.

Key Point: how to leverage and maximise the current Pre-App, which both replicates the approved 2013 application but also mirrors the Ediston proposal and then for all stakeholders to engage positively with GCC-HES and Ediston and USP-USI so all are working collaboratively ASAP.

8. Stakeholders' Collaboration Options?

This project had approved grant funding in 1997 of £1.5M. What public sector interventions it needs now would be quantified by Pre-App and causal Feasibility Study. Hence, we arrive at the final decision process. Given there's documented proof only funding has, been holding up Union Street's regeneration since the Year 2000.

Key Point: Effective collaboration would see challenges resolved as part of a facilitated pragmatic Mediation/Arbitration process; co-ordinated by the Union Street Corner Recovery Initiative

Conclusions

Between 1999 and 2015, GCC's own communications provide convincing evidence of sustained cooperation and recognition of USP's integrity and effectiveness. Post-2014 deviations from this position — including arbitrary denial of access, inconsistent statements, and grant obstruction — are not only unsupported by the documented record but indicate a reversal contrary to public-sector accountability principles. This record provides prima facie evidence suitable for presentation in mediation, arbitration, or before the Court of Session: GCC itself repeatedly affirmed USP's collaboration, commitment, and competence in the Egyptian Halls redevelopment project. Yet can by the use of statutory powers with and the presence of significant knowledge gaps within GCC has allowed a narrative to develop, which is an almost 100% reversal to now blame the co-owners despite documented proof confirmed Regeneration, Conservation, Economic Additionality benefits have being delayed for 26 Years

Background Downloads

Mackintosh-Thomson Mews: http://www.egyptianhalls.co.uk/opportunity.html

CPO Review Response: http://www.egyptianhalls.co.uk/assets/files/3001-2026CPOReviewResponseDoc.pdf

Inadvertent Misrepresentation 2002-2004: http://www.egyptianhalls.co.uk/assets/files/CPO-TitleTransferDelay-InadvertentMisrepresentationDocument.pdf