

Market Square Project - Stakeholder Engagement Workshop Output Summary



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Market Square Project- Vision Workshops output summary

The Market Square is arguably one of the most important outdoor public realm assets within the city, given its central, strategic location within the historic core. There has been an ongoing community interest and debate around improving its use and appearance as a key community asset.

The City Council commissioned a feasibility study [Feasibility assessment \[PDF, 24MB\]](#) which was completed in July 2019. The study shows that the square suffers from a range of design and management issues, which prevent it from achieving its full potential as a venue for our 7 day a week market and as a key city centre public space. The executive summary of the feasibility assessment provides a succinct explanation of the conclusions drawn and recommendations made.

Strategically, the city and its associated Greater Cambridge catchment area is experiencing significant population and economic growth, with plans to deliver a further 14,000 additional homes to be provided for in the city by 2031, as well as 19,500, in South Cambs. The city is also a nationally and internationally important visitor destination, with the number of visitors increasing from 5 to 7 million per annum over the past 2 years. Given the above context, the timing was considered right to bring forward a strategic project to enhance the economic, social and environmental value of the Market Square as a key community asset while being sensitive to the site's obvious heritage value and retaining its market function.

The completion of the feasibility study marks the start of a multi-phase project to develop a detailed development plan and associated investment strategy for the market square. The next phase of the project is to develop a proposed vision and concept design for the square, which is capable of implementation and attracting the capital investment required to deliver it. This phase of work will be informed by the feasibility study and key stakeholder input; and will be subject to Committee approval in October 2020. The resulting vision and concept design will be available for public consultation over the autumn of 2020.

We invited representatives from key organisations to help us shape the proposed vision and concept design, in terms of the design and layout, use and management of the space, both during the day and at night. Workshops were held at the Royal Cambridge Hotel in Cambridge on 15 and 16 January 2020 and two evening meetings were held in the central library for market traders on 15 and 29 January 2020. Participants were taken through a series of exercises to explore their thoughts and feelings about the space known as the Market Square, as it is now; to consider

any changes or improvements they would like to see; and to advise ideas for how it might be used; either in a commercial capacity or by the community.

Representatives from the following organisations and staff from specialist areas at the city and county councils attended:

Organisations invited

Cambridge Association of Architects
Friends of Cambridge Market
Cambridge Living Streets
Historic England
Cambridge BID
Kings College
Healthwatch
FECRA
Market Traders Association
Hobsons Conduit Trust
Cambridge University Estates team
Bidwells
Gonville & Caius College
Cambridge Past Present & Future
Landlords
Visit Cambridge
Police
Transition Cambridge
Great St Marys Church
Cambridge Cycling Campaign

Staff attended from the following areas

Equalities
Access
Road Safety
Environmental Health
Housing
Street Lighting
Highways
Archaeology
Tree team
Cycling
Licensing
Property

Transport and Infrastructure
City and County Councillors also attended

Feedback from the workshops will help us shape the brief for the next stage of the project. We expect to start work on the concept design in the spring of 2020.

Purpose of Workshops

To inform the development of a proposed viable vision and concept design for the public open space known as Market Square in accordance with the findings of the initial feasibility assessment and following project objectives:

- To develop a proposed vision for space, in terms of its appearance, use and management, covering day and night periods
- To develop a core concept design for the space, with options for different elements, covering both day and night-time periods
- To incorporate a continued daytime general and Sunday market, but with an improved design that enhances both the market offer and overall visitor experience of the space
- To maximise the ability to use the space for other activities at times when not being used by the General or Sunday market
- To enhance the quality of the public realm offer and associated furniture provision, including waste management and seating
- To ensure the underground structures associated with the square, including drainage pipes and culverts (a structure that allows water to flow under a road) are physically sound and able to function effectively
- To conserve and enhance the heritage value of the space

Invited stakeholders were asked to participate in a three part group discussion exercise to identify likes, dislikes and any changes they would like to see. They were asked the following questions to help us explore:

Likes and Positives of the space

- What works?
- What are the positives of the space?

- What do you like and what are the key positive features of the existing space, in terms of its appearance, use, management?

Dislikes and Negatives of Space

- What doesn't work?
- What are the negatives of the space?
- What do you feel are the key dislikes/negative features of the existing space, in terms of its appearance, use and management?

Proposed Changes

- What are the required changes, in terms of appearance, use and management that you would like to see reflected in a proposed vision and concept design for the space?
- What commercial and/ or community uses would you like to see taking place in the space, outside of the day-time market use? (assuming no fixed market stall infrastructure constraint).

Group Feedback

Feedback from the group exercises was recorded on the day on post it notes. These have been transcribed and grouped under headings in the next part of the document and record the positive and negative views from stakeholders; and the changes they would like see implemented, as part of the project.

Likes and Positives of the Space

Location and historic context

Focal point of city centre

Location

Civic centrepiece for city

Focus to city centre

Central attraction to the city

Creates a centre to the city

Commercial/cultural/social centre

Enhances the vibrancy of the city centre

Likes and Positives of the Space continued:

Supporting local economy/businesses
Shop fronts surrounding
Commercial centre
Setting of attractive buildings
Guildhall, surrounding facades
Guildhall makes a good head building
Views of historic core
(Generally) charming historic space
Historic beauty (could be improved)
Cobbles and fountain remind us of our civic and commercial heritage
Context of space - buildings and views
Heritage around square is imposing
Brilliant vistas
Architecture around
View from Great St Mary's Tower, when canopies clean
Great St Mary's

The Market

Historic asset and value - still a success
Cambridge is a market town
Good variety of stalls - Mixed use
Substantial changes don't need to be made
Business opportunity for a range of traders
Opportunity for start ups
Supports independent businesses
Diverse and interesting selection of stalls
Great market of various stalls for shoppers and tourists
Good range of variety of stalls
Multi use goods for sale - repair
Location good for footfall, tourists
Stalls providing services to local people
Vital to keep a market instead of dependency on supermarkets
Stall holders provide advice on produce
High quality local produce, often organic
Hand-made, artisan and distinctive items
Attractive for locals
Relaxed and friendly atmosphere
Has vitality, vibrancy and buzz
Bustle of market creates great ambience
Vibe and atmosphere during the day

Likes and Positives of the Space continued:

Busy, active area full of life

Tourist attraction

Popular with visitors from other countries

Attractive for visitors

Has character, not sanitised

Not pretentious

Vibrancy and colour

Canopy scene is attractive

Candy stripe awnings

Fixed stalls = Traditional market with unique traditional character

Public Realm

Informal temporary seating at fountain is useful

Dislikes and Negatives of the Space

Waste management/hygiene

Management of rubbish/bins is poor

Waste management: compactor/bins

Refuse issues

Not well-kept bins

Rubbish compactor intrusive/unpleasant

Waste compactor / bins - dirty & smelly

Bins/compactor unsightly

Poor food hygiene - items uncovered

No hygiene, or perceived poor hygiene

Cleanliness

Difficult to clean and maintain

Piss pot/shithole

Lack of inspections

Space dirty and smelly, especially the ground surface

Dirty, rubbish on the ground

Hard to clean but pretty dirty after hours

Rubbish central

Largest public toilet in Cambridge

Dislikes and Negatives of the Space continued:

Filthy mess

The market needs cleaning every night

Cleanliness is poor for stalls and floor (anecdotally, traders leave because of this)

Pigeons

Evening /night-time offer

Look and feel in the evening or night time

Intimidating/uninviting when dark

Unattractive at night

Evening and night time "ghost town"

Unused space at night, lack of evening offer

Anti-social at night

No night time draw

Underutilised at night

Unwelcoming space in evening

Perceptions in the evening of not being safe

Should be full of tourists for the evening too

Wasted space in the evenings

Lack of flexibility outside market hours

Alternative evening uses have to squeeze themselves in

No space for evening events

Taxis dominate Market Hill in the evening/night

Council is assuming clearing away stalls at night will make a difference to anti-social behaviour

Council is assuming there is a need for another open space for night-time activities

Public Realm, Infrastructure and use of space

No civic pride in history or commercial success

Fountain area scruffy with rubbish

Bland, lack of focal points

Unreliable WIFI

Lack of public seating

Poor location of existing seating

No sitting space (outdoor cafés etc)

Not enough seating

Lack of seating

Nowhere to sit down

Nowhere to sit and enjoy

Dislikes and Negatives of the Space continued:

Quality of public realm (places for people to dwell)
Insufficient resources for people to stay rather than linger
CCTV availability
Lack of greenery / tree canopy cover
Not enough civic décor - plants, lights flowers etc
Lack of green space, planting, landscape
Cluttered (street furniture etc.)
General sense of clutter
Uneven drainage
Dark, not well lit at night
Poor lighting / lighting at night time, lighting not sufficient to make the square inviting and safe in the evenings
Street lighting is unsightly and quite poor (nothing in the centre)
Street lighting at night adding to "unsafe" impression

Surface treatments

Accessibility, uneven and dangerous surfaces
Poor surfaces not fully accessible
Different surface levels
Changing levels
Different levels limits accessibility and increases hazards
Hard surface dominates
Mix of surfacing (tarmac/cobbles) unsympathetic to character of space as a whole
Uneven cobbles
Cobbles need repairing and relaying sensitive to listed status
Cobbles need making disabled friendly
Ground unsafe for people with mobility issues
High kerbs

Facilities

Lack of toilet provision for public and traders
No toilets for the volume of people using the space
Traders' underground toilets are dirty/unpleasant
No water supplies to stalls
Not providing proper facilities
Lack of appropriate water facilities
Lack of lighting for stalls

Dislikes and Negatives of the Space continued:

Highway

- Confusion of highway
- No one uses the one-way system
- Poorly signed one-way road
- Pedestrian/cycle/vehicle conflict
- Surrounding highway not friendly to pedestrians
- Pedestrian areas unclear if you're a tourist
- Unclear which areas are pedestrianised
- Crazy mix of cyclists + pedestrians + the odd car (in restricted hours) - dangerous!
- The road should be pedestrianised
- Separate traffic from perimeter road
- Motor vehicles parking on the pavement
- Not enough dropped kerbs
- One-way traffic route around not practiced by cyclists
- Cycle route through unclear
- Space too busy for cycling
- Confusion for cyclists

Proposed Changes

Public Realm /Infrastructure

- Make fountain key feature
- Benches, more seating options
- Public seating area
- Seating and socialisation
- Fixed seating area
- Seating around edge
- Greening/landscaping
- Foliage
- Greening of space, landscaping
- Trees
- More greenery in form of trees. Ideally eventual large canopy trees to provide shade
- 4-6 trees in locations around market square
- Possibility of tree planting
- New surface which can be properly cleaned
- Water and electrical supply should be installed

Proposed Changes continued:

Lights on the market

Flexible lighting, according to use of space

Change ambience for evening events with interesting lighting

Remove the compactor

Better waste management solution

Underground waste management

Underground bins for traders, surrounding businesses and litter bins

Better/more frequent cleaning

Provide information about history of the market square as a civic and commercial centre and its features, the fountain, Hobsons conduit etc

The Market

Support sustainable food production by small scale local producers

Market seating, but not to detriment of market

Hot food area with seating

Business seating, café

Create common eating area (shared by several food stalls)

Separate area for hot food stalls

Develop plan so market can continue to operate during any period of works

Market should include traders who provide services for local people (rather than food and trinket stalls for tourists) to ensure it remains a local market

Dismountable stall option must be explored in terms of set up, storage and robustness

Seating and Eating

Timed set-up: daytime = market, evening = public space/eating areas

Tables/chairs outside like Don Pasquale

Hot food area with seating could continue into evening with some stalls

Al fresco night time dining, street food and encourage restaurant dining

Food stalls and seating in centre by fountain

Street food and cafés

Surface Treatments and Highway

Single entity, one surface

Surfacing - level shared space, i.e. Brighton New Street

Level surfaces

One level of paving across the complete area - highway and market square

Proposed Changes continued:

Completely pedestrianise the area, with vehicles only allowed in at certain times of day

Pedestrianised area with one surface

Level to encourage market flow

Use the road space for stalls

Reconfigure roadway - more space for market

Expand the market footprint

Shared surface questionable

Accessibility for users

Setts to be made safe (flat, non-slip)

Create modern traffic order

Change highway restrictions

Traffic limitations

Decommission the highway

More flexible vehicle route (stop up public highway)

Public highway integration, extend perimeter

Changing of un/load times/areas to increase market square area as a whole to integrate streets like Rose Crescent

Reduce carriageway - extend space

Removal of road opens up other uses, like relocation of cinema / performance space

Common Themes recorded – Positives

Access, Highway and Restrictions

Multiple entrance opportunities (potentially permeable)

Good amount of entrance/exit points for access

Good pedestrian porosity

Disabled "Blue Badge" parking

Predominantly pedestrianised, generally free of motor vehicles during the day

Car-free during the day

Pedestrian environment

Low motor traffic environment

No through route for cars

No motor vehicles during 10:00-16:00

Good that vehicles are slightly restricted (but could be better)

Common Themes recorded – Positives continued:

Use of space

Some limited space for campaigns
Area for public protest
Important space for rallies/protests etc
Space for public outpourings (e.g. after shootings in Florida, death of the mayor)
Democratic space
Good place for lunch

The Market

Smells nice
Hot food stalls are an attraction
Different way to buy food
Useful food stalls (fresh fruit/veg, bread, cheese)
International street food stalls
Positive aspect of street food stalls - adding to vitality and footfall
Good eating places (formal and informal)
Night time food vans are welcome

Common Themes recorded – Negatives

Public Realm/Infrastructure

Chaotic mess
People sitting on the fountain impede access through the market
Clumsiness of middle area - difficult to find a route
Cluttered - (street furniture etc.)
Quality of public realm (places for people to dwell)
General sense of clutter
The fountain is hidden
Layout - poor sight lines
Difficult to see "middle" area
Ground unsafe for people with mobility issues
Accessibility, uneven and dangerous surfaces
Poor surfaces
Not fully accessible

Common Themes recorded – Negatives continued:

Walking on cobbles
Cobbles need repairing
Cobbles need making disabled friendly
No signs for Cambridge Market, no direction signs
Poor signage/wayfinding
Need for explanation of what it is - what stalls, tourist info, no interpretation boards

Look and Feel

Look and feel in the evening or night-time
Intimidating/uninviting when dark
Unsafe at night
Unattractive at night
Evening and night time "ghost town"
Should be full of tourists in evening too
Unused space at night, lack of evening offer
Anti-social at night
No night time draw
Underutilised at night
Un-welcoming space in evening
Perception not safe in evening

Use of Space

Wasted space in the evenings
Lack of flexibility outside market hours
Alternative evening uses have to squeeze themselves in
No space for evening events
Surrounding table and chairs licensing is obstructive
Not enough pavement space for al fresco dining. Pedestrians and shoppers transgress. Needs better delimiting
Crowded seating outside pizza place, corner of Market Square
Not enough café culture

Highway and Access

Different surface levels
High kerbs
Different levels limit accessibility and increases hazards
Lack of dropped kerbs

Common Themes recorded – Negatives continued:

Road should be pedestrianised
Separate traffic on perimeter road
Highway and surfacing are not clear for use
Unclear which areas are pedestrianised
Space allocation with highway is poor - i.e. pedestrians have the least space
Surrounding highway not friendly to pedestrians
Pedestrian areas unclear particularly if you are a tourist
Pedestrian/cycle/vehicle conflict is dangerous
Poorly signed/communicated one-way system which is also not used
One-way traffic route around not practiced by cyclists
Knowledge of space, what is there
Disorganised

The Market

Too many food traders/abundance of fast food, consequent impact on other stalls (e.g. craft, fresh produce, flowers)
Food stalls, smell
Poor food hygiene - items uncovered, no nearby bins for less mobile people
Hygiene levels - perceived poor hygiene
No festive markets
No way to tell who is trading where- no maps
Non-clustering of stalls
Layout and use of space is not optimal
No wayfinding, orientation, interpretation
Stalls all jumbled up
Layout means that you can only see the outside stalls, inside feels intimidating
Stalls not well laid out, layout is confusing to visitors
People go around the market rather than through it
Not very inviting
Fixed stalls prevent space flexibility
Permanent structures = no flexibility of use
Current metal fixed structure
Not a flexible space

Cycling & Issues affecting cyclists

Cycle route through unclear
Confusion of highway

Common Themes recorded – Negatives continued:

Space too busy for cycling
Confusion for cyclists
Lack of cycle storage and parking in the square
Cycle parking location / format / number
More secure cycle parking required
Hi-lo cycle parking - better to be 'Sheffield' stands
Not enough parking for non-standard bikes e.g. cargo bikes, tricycles
Cycles are parked everywhere - needs consolidation

Issues affecting traders

Poor trader access
Vehicle/pedestrian movement during set up and takedown
Not very weather-proof - better canopies needed
Damp and wet
Lack of shelter from rain
Fumes from street food affecting non-food traders

Common Themes Recorded – Proposed Changes

Public Realm / Infrastructure

Increase market square area as a whole to integrate streets like Rose Crescent
Infrastructure not prescriptive
Expand borders beyond the square - opportunities for other areas such as Market Hill and Kings Parade to be used
Reduce carriageway - extend space
One level of paving across the complete area - highway and market square
Level to encourage market flow
Expand the market footprint
Use the road space for stalls
Restore fountain and make a focal point
Create space around the fountain
Open up central space
Level the surfaces
Surfacing - level shared space, i.e. Brighton New Street

Common Themes Recorded – Proposed Changes continued:

- Create single entity, one surface
- Ensure accessibility for users
- Redesign layout
- Reconfigure square
- A programme of use for the public realm
- Change of use: daytime / mid evening (5.30-ish) / night time (9pm onwards)
- Extend the experience
- Provide more ease of movement
- Create clear open spaces (by matching levels)
- See-through vista
- Create new through routes/ footfall to change the flow e.g. through Great St Marys Church, through the middle of market stalls etc. so people are crossing and traversing the square in different ways
- More seating everywhere
- Good quality, better designed bins for waste
- Improved waste management and cleansing
- Needs more and improved designed 'way-finding' signage and sign posting to historical features, sites, buildings etc
- Place making i.e. change the dynamics of flow
- Lose taxi rank in Market Street, creates more space
- Link the buildings e.g. open Great St Mary's Church so people are enticed to walk through to get to other parts of the space

The Market

- Moveable dismountable stalls, collapsible / pack-away-able
- Stalls need to be robust
- All stalls to be demountable
- New stalls - better in the rain
- Fewer fixed stalls
- Clear fixed stalls to allow more flexibility of space
- Provide more space between stalls
- Improve stall layout - wider space between stalls
- Clear walkways
- Improved layout with better access to stalls - may need to restrict stall numbers/size
- Keep static stalls, include a percentage of temporary stalls
- Radical infrastructure of stalls – movement
- Zoning - defined areas of the market (art area, produce area, food area)
- Specialist grouping of traders

Common Themes Recorded – Proposed Changes continued:

Separate area for hot food stalls
Temporary food stalls
Seasonal specialism
More theme days with local focus / produce
A very English market like York or Eddington
Christmas Market
Weekend winter/Christmas market
Encouraging local producers/market traders - Organic Sunday
Not just market traders and stalls but a space with no barriers

Highway and signage

Create modern traffic order and change highway restrictions
Change loading/unloading times/areas
Decommission the highway
Reconfigure roadway - more space for market
Public highway integration, extend perimeter
Flexible vehicle route (stop up public highway)
Removal of road opens up for other uses like relocation of cinema / performance space
Shared surface questionable as traffic limitations
Map
Better orientation and wayfinding
Completely pedestrianised area with one surface and restrict vehicles
More Blue Badge parking needed

Cycling & Issues affecting cyclists

Resolve pedestrian/cyclist conflict
Intercept cyclists at an early point
Manage cycling by design
Cyclists must dismount
Increase cycle parking (including possibly underground if £ available) on or near market square, i.e. King's Parade
Future use of known vaults/cellars/air raid shelter - cycle parking below ground?
Underground cycle parking - one space totally inadequate, needs strategic proposals for city centre parking

Common Themes Recorded – Proposed Changes continued:

Use of Space/ Visitor Experience

The square becomes a destination with a purpose
Create common eating area (shared by several food stalls)
Timed set-up: daytime for market, evening is public space / eating areas
Clear space of stalls at night time for concerts, rallies
Not just market traders and stalls but a space with no barriers
Space for street theatre like Covent Garden
Atmosphere as vibrant as Krakow or Marrakesh with 'snake charmers' and street performance
Allowing use in transition periods between day and night, encourage people to dwell longer
No cyclists or at least controlled cyclists
Giant Christmas tree and carols at Christmas
Tables/chairs outside like Don Pasquale
Hot food area with seating
Hot food area with seating could continue into evening with some stalls
Seating for businesses and café
Food stalls and seating in centre by fountain
Street food and cafés
Evening market with food focus - food vans/supply of alcohol
Night time food provision
Al fresco night time dining, street food and encourage restaurant dining
Night time food market
Night markets, with current stall-holders being given right of first refusal
Encourage themed night-time markets every so often
Street performers in the evening
Night time performance
Needs night time events
Anti-social behaviour at night must be managed well
Festivals, events - formal programmed and informal spontaneous
Timetable for "beating heart" - what happens when, heritage what's on tours
Include in tours
Music, concerts, seated events
Charity events
More theatre and cinema, music/ cinema event once a week
Sports viewing
Equality and diversity events

Common Themes Recorded – Proposed Changes continued:

Enhancing public art

Public art space

Exhibition / art space

We are not inviting comments from the public at this stage. Opportunities to provide feedback will be advertised as part of the public consultation over the autumn of 2020.

Market Square Project - Market Trader Workshop Part A

Wednesday 15 January 2020 17:45 – 19:00

Central Library, Cambridge

Notes taken of questions asked and subsequent discussions:

Attended by:

Joel Carre, Head of Environmental Services, Cambridge City Council

Sarah French, Project Manager, Market Square project

Format:

Feasibility study key findings – short presentation

Q&A session (on feasibility study)

Concept design/market specialist brief – short presentation

Q & A session (on concept design/market specialist brief)

Welcome and introductions conducted around the room

Introduction by Joel Carre:

Tonight is the first of two sessions being held on 15 and 29 January 2020 with the purpose of answering:

1. Q & A around project
2. Workshop to provide feedback on feasibility assessment

A 15 minute presentation was given on the project outlining the issues faced and potential opportunities to be investigated and a summary was given of the process we are following and the next steps in the project.

- The market square is one of the most important public spaces and an asset for the community. It provides a venue for the market and civic functions/other events
- Cambridge City Council owns the central cobbled area and Cambridgeshire County Council is responsible for the public highway
- The city council put money aside in 2018 to look at how we could improve the day time and night time use of the square outside of its use as a market
- The area is host to 8m visitors a year and we need to improve the space to meet the needs of visitors and the wider community
- Our brief is to improve the space but retain the market function – the market will be accommodated within any plan
- We want to work with you and the wider community and look at how we can improve the space – for commercial or community activities
- Space is at a premium, Cambridge is a dense city

The project started in November 2019, will progress over the longer term and won't happen overnight, the initial review work is complete but it has identified issues and raised opportunities. The Feasibility Assessment has been published and available to view: [Feasibility assessment \[PDF, 24MB\]](#)

We have approval by the council to:

- retain the market
- improve the offer
- look at how we use space for other activities – Making the most of space when it's not being used as a market

We are keen to:

- improve the overall appearance of the space
- improve waste management which detracts from its historic appearance and the space
- declutter the space
- investigate the underground structures and identify exactly where they are, how sound they are and if feasible to use
- protect and enhance the heritage

The project will be a 3 year process provided funding available

We will come up with a concept design next, then follow a series of stages before applying for planning permission

We wish to take the community with us and the plan supports traders businesses in the city

Issues

- Fixed stall infrastructure presents issues to project - can't use space for anything else Makes square difficult to clean and attracts anti-social behaviour at night
- Cambridge is a global city and the square currently is not fitting
- There is a lack of seating
- It's not pleasant for eating or for just enjoying the space
- There are different surface levels across the space. It doesn't look good, it is difficult to clean and hard to navigate if you have any walking impairment
- Road has one way system, set up for traders and deliveries but mainly pedestrian, is confusing to pedestrians and cyclists. If made one level would give us a larger area to use

Next stage is to develop outline plan

We are holding workshops today and tomorrow for organisational stakeholders We will be talking to lots of other organisations about our plan. We wish to road test to obtain some consensus. The plan will then go to committee before going out to full consultation over the winter of 2020. Responses will be fully evaluated.

We wish to take this project forward in a transparent and inclusive way, identifying what are the changes we can agree consensus on, that will bring change and improvement to the space

We have put in for and additional £30K of funding to complete the next stage of Concept Design

By spring/summer 2022 we hope to be able to apply for planning permission

The city council has some capital to invest but is looking for a 5% return on investment into the asset

The city council is also the landowner of the central section so there may be other issues we discover and that would need further investment eg, underground problem

We are looking to build on the initial work completed and engage with the community to come up with a viable plan. The market traders have a key stake in the project. It's important you work with us constructively and openly. We have a very successful market which is down to you as traders

Floor opened to questions:

"In section 5.4 of the feasibility assessment it raises a query over traders rights. This isn't good enough and we want to establish common laws and custom and practice."

JC response - We are already looking to establish the rights and we will be sharing this information. I don't want this to be adversarial.

"How do we address the problem of Marks and Spencer lorry deliveries/heavy lorries coming into the square?"

JC response – We will be talking to businesses about their servicing and delivery needs and looking at how we can re-configure the highway to make better use of space

"There is not a great reputation for CC and CCC working well together"

JC response - We have working group and working closely with CC and they are partners in project

"Are other organisations involved?"

JC response – Yes, the BID, Cambridge Past Present and Future and Visit Cambridge

"Who is responsible for space if made one level?"

JC response – The city council has a legal right to use the public highway even though it is owned by the county council. The highway need relates to pedestrians and cyclists as well as vehicles. Nothing is off table at the moment.

"So the footprint of the market could move?"

JC response - Yes it could potentially

"Where will the funding come from?"

JC response – Part of the next stage is to get detailed costings and consider where funding will come from. Potential for lottery funding now elements in the square are listed

"Could that element be looked at now?"

JC response – We are looking to commission different elements with the funding we have now. We need specialist input and learn from what other cities are doing. We could look at crowd funding or raise an appeal to raise donations

‘Where has 5% return figure come from? It is public funding and public land but you stated council owns the bit in the middle and is £150K return needed on top of the £300K it already generates?’

JC response – We will be looking at commercial opportunities to raise funds, such as evening events or the issue of licenses etc. We have not explored this fully yet. External funding is yet to be identified. We will be investigating commercial opportunities that are identified in this next stage

‘Will it be dependent on us having totally removable stalls?’

JC response - We don't know. The space is serving no function at the moment at night other than a couple of hot food stalls

A discussion took place around the possible extension of trading hours or more regular night –time markets

‘There will be a great impact on businesses if council goes down this route. Traders already working ten hour days then going off to obtain stock etc, before coming back next day’

JC response – We have no wish to impact on the market. We want to work with you and find a solution

‘The council needs to provide a team who will service the market and provide assistance to set up and take down. This should be built into the business plan’

JC response - We want to establish demand to ascertain what the community would like to see happening in space

‘We need to understand if traders will be made responsible for the set up and take down in the event of any temporary relocation or in any future design?’

‘Council needs to make the space appropriate to accommodate hot food traders, fumes, oils and fats are causing offensive smells. You need to look at fire safety and extraction’

JC response – We can possibly look at a separate hot food area in the market

‘Please don't remove all fixed structures, some of us bring stock on bicycles’

‘This project is very long term. The food issues are happening now and that needs managing now and should not be lost in the detail’

JC response - I'm ultimately responsible for the market so will look into the operational issues raised. I'm keen to do what we can with the resources we have

and address the issues highlighted. If you feel that additional cleaning is needed or that cleaning of the end sheets of the canopies is needed or if you have any other issues, please send to the management team

‘Food issue is three years old – gives off smell and grease which damages your products and makes them smell’

‘If there is no commercial take up for the square what happens then?’

JC response – We are also looking at community use not just commercial, so concerts or street performers etc

‘Consider putting more budget in. The market team is under resourced. Things could be addressed now. No social media was conducted over the key Christmas period. A missed opportunity to promote market. Cambridge local plan is starting how do we ensure output from this informs local plan?’

A discussion took place around planning policy and joined up working.

JC response – We will link into the project ‘making spaces for people’. It is looking at how growth will affect city to improve its function and access and is charged with coming up with a strategy. Roads into pavements or more walking/cycling opportunities in central core. Help with air quality and congestion

‘Are Gonville & Caius plugged in to this?’

JC response - Yes they attended workshop today

‘There is not enough marketing of the market carried out enough - Lack of investment’

JC response - Marketing is carried out at the moment by two guys who are very tech savvy – we need you to provide us with the information they can promote

“Infrastructure is historic – old English country market with historic feel. How do we protect that? It is a brand.”

JC response – The stalls themselves are not historic but are from 1970’s. The square is historic. Agree need to protect but we want to improve the market offer to provide benefits to traders and the community

Final comments made as meeting drew to a close:

“It is not a pop up market like on the continent.”

“Looks like rubbish as not maintained properly”

“Current set up is more sustainable than investing in plastic gazebos”

Market Square Project - Market Trader Workshop Part B

Wednesday 29 January 2020 17:45 – 19:00

Central Library, Cambridge

Notes taken of questions asked and subsequent discussions:

Format

Group discussion on what required changes participants would like to see reflected in a proposed vision and concept design for the space regarding:

- Appearance
- Use
- Management
- Commercial and/or community uses (outside of the day-time market use and assuming no fixed market stall infrastructure constraint)
- Identification of key themes and suggested alternative proposals

Part One – Likes and Positives of space and Dislikes and Negatives of space

Part Two – Suggested changes in appearance, use and management

Part Three – Number One Priority

Participants names redacted

Event Facilitator:

- Nina Allwood, NCA Associates, Independent Research Consultant

Other Attendees:

- Rosy Moore, Executive Councillor for Environmental Services and City Centre (Observer)
- Joel Carré, Head of Environmental Services and Market Square Project Sponsor, Cambridge City Council (Observer)
- Sarah French, Market Square Project Manager, Cambridge City Council (Note-taker)

Welcome and Introductions

Nina Allwood (NA) led round room introductions of everyone in attendance and explained the format of the workshop. Then came an introduction from Joel Carré (JC) the head of service responsible for markets and street trading in Cambridge and

the project sponsor. A summary was given of the process the council will follow and the next steps in the project.

JC

“This workshop is for you to state what you would like to see improved in the market square; to look at the opportunities and; how it can be used during the day and at night outside of the market trading times. It’s a big piece of work that will take several years to complete and will need lots of input from across the community if the space is to fulfil its full potential.

There will be lots of opportunities to engage moving forward and we are currently putting together an outline delivery plan and a plan for where the funding is coming from. We are working to complete this planning work by the summer and get a report to Committee in October 2020. We would then go out to public consultation and report the findings back to Committee in March 2021. We are at the start of the process. This is your time so please engage fully, enjoy it and make the most of the opportunity. We look forward to working with you.”

NA

Introduced format and took everyone through purpose of meeting and timings. Advised that she is an independent facilitator engaged by the council, that everything discussed will be confidential, no one will be identified, and that people are free to say whatever they want.

Cllr Rosy Moore arrived and introduced herself as the Executive Councillor for Climate Change, Environment and City Centre

RM

“The market, tourism, street cleansing and toilets are in my portfolio. It would be good to get to know you better and find out what you think. I think there is a bit of a misunderstanding regarding the project. To be clear, we 100% want the market to continue the same, we just want to make it and the surrounding market square space better.”

Warm up exercise

NA asked everyone to introduce themselves and say what type of stall they run. She asked each person to describe in one word how it feels to be a market trader in Cambridge. Responses were as follows:

- *Under-fulfilled*
- *Tired*
- *Concerned*
- *Confused*

- *Unhappy*
- *Worried*
- *Optimistic*
- *New*
- *Happy as a trader*
- *Could do better*
- *Feels old*
- *Concerned*
- *Nervous and concerned*
- *Improvements*
- *Hopeful – but...*

Part One - Likes and Positives of space (What works well)

NA asked everyone to say what they like or what works well at the moment. Responses were as follows:

- *Customers*
- *Long days*
- *Community*
- *Opportunity to talk to people*
- *Local*
- *Stalls are right size*
- *Stalls are sturdy, permanent and nailed to floor so don't blow away*
- *Flow of stalls*
- *History is continuing – living*
- *7 days a week*
- *Long days*
- *Opportunity*
- *Supportive community of other traders*
- *Diverse*
- *Gives start-ups a chance*
- *Stalls match*
- *Find unique products you don't find elsewhere*
- *Continuity – always there*
- *Medieval appearance*
- *United Nations*
- *Good access to stalls for loading etc*
- *Colour and vibrancy*
- *Social interaction*

- *A meeting place*

Part Two - Dislikes and Negatives of space (Things that don't work so well)

NA asked everyone to say what they don't like or what doesn't work so well at the moment. Responses were as follows:

- *Dirty*
- *'Pepper pot' – food stalls not zoned*
- *Lack of storage for display boards*
- *Poor drainage*
- *Cobbles are slippery*
- *Traffic around square itself*
- *Large lorry deliveries outside of pedestrian times*
- *Not promoted*
- *Waste compactor – the fact that it is there*
- *State of toilet facilities for traders and no public toilets*
- *99 market stalls lot of variables as trade on different days hard/confusing for customers to know when stalls trade and where*
- *Footfall has changed over years stalls now have a front and a back which doesn't work*
- *Stall lighting – have to provide own*
- *Lighting of area*
- *Vertical sheeting not rolled up at night – creates areas for anti-social behaviour*
- *Lack of seating*
- *Distant management 'come back at 9am'*
- *Inability to communicate with other stall holders – no collective point other than going through management*
- *Platform needed for those that cannot leave stalls*
- *2 x night time food stalls attract anti-social behaviour. Night clubbers who sit on floor*
- *Cleaning done very early night clubbers then make a mess traders have to clean up*
- *Casual traders lighting variable dependent on stall allocated*
- *Cobbles collect water and uneven*
- *Drainage smelly*
- *Lack of power capacity*
- *Outdated stall infrastructure – too old, rusty, cut himself the other day, inflexible.*

- *Not conducive to flow of market*
- *Canopies dirty*

Part Three - Suggested changes in Appearance, Use and Management

NA asked everyone to say what they would like to change. Responses were as follows:

Appearance

- *Cleaned in short term*
- *Promote market in joined up way over the short, medium and long term*
- *Local people don't use. It's turning into tourist destination (some disagreement about this statement)*
- *Many local customers*
- *Lot of empty stalls – needs promoting to encourage new traders but some of the pitches are let but not used every day. Regular daily traders then stand on half empty market on some days. Gives poor impression to visitors who might think this is what the market is like*
- *Mechanism needs to be put in place to identify empty stalls – it doesn't exist*
- *Website that links to an app to tell traders an empty stall is available next day to help fill*
- *Offer incentive to take space at short notice*
- *Empty stalls long term. If stalls are to have fixed infrastructure use them as workshops for youngsters to offer apprenticeships and training. This could be a stepping stone from college or encourage things such as upcycling*
- *Comments from customers that market is now all about food and nothing else*
- *Group food together*
- *Have stalls specifically designed for hot food with access to power and extraction of smells*
- *Younger customers come for food and market attracts younger customers at weekends*
- *No hot food traders at meetings. Anecdotally they have stated grouping food stalls together would be better*
- *'Pepper potting' works in that it makes people move around the market to see what is there*
- *A level highway would be a major step forward. Would still be highway but one surface*
- *Remove dropped kerbs the road divides space. This would improve relationship of market in terms of space and accessibility*

- Needs different coloured designation as done elsewhere
- Reset cobbles
- Footprint of market could move if area made one level
- Could open up other areas for other uses without disturbing core market
- More flexible layout
- Want permanent stalls to stay
- NA asked the question 'If stalls were non- permanent but erected every day for you - who would like that?'– 5 hands went up
- Set up and take down will be too expensive for the council and unlikely
- It doesn't have to be all or nothing (in terms of fixed infrastructure against unfixed)
- Core area of fixed stalls, (for those that trade most days), food court, seating

Use

- Whatever comes in needs to be robust - Perhaps change seasonally
- Level area and include front of Guildhall. This would give social area you are looking for
- Anti-social behaviour makes a mess when pubs and clubs turn out – affects traders who have to clear up
- Flexible space for seating/concerts
- Traders won't care if stalls taken down and put up until it doesn't work and the rent goes up
- Struggling to think what activities area would be used for on regular basis that will earn income
- More likely restaurants will expand for al fresco dining
- Other cities don't have what we have
- Shakespeare in the square would work
- Peas Hill could be pedestrianised and used for cultural activity
- Want to trade longer in summer – events would interfere with this
- (Mixed views were expressed around longer trading hours)
- Once vans come in for traders who wish to leave this effectively signals market is closing Lack of trade when opening later. Tried for a year but not worth while
- More lighting would improve ambience in square
- Run night workshops and classes on stalls in summer evenings
- Better seating and lighting to encourage people to linger and visit

Management

- *Get rid of waste compactor put underground collect out of hours not during market trading hours or when events running*
- *Need (professional/dedicated) team with broader remit to manage public realm space as well as market – build cost of this into cost of capital project. Develop team now with council putting in money this will help develop project and create buzz*
- *Stalls need to be bespoke to be able to configure and use in different ways depending on traders coming in each day*
- *Not the job of traders to clean around stalls*
- *Don't understand why council is saying because stalls are fixed they can't be cleaned properly*
- *Boards need to be moved to access stall areas properly*
- *Is jet washing the most appropriate way of cleaning?*
- *Why can't it be swept? Change cleansing regime*
- *Only recently like this never used to be. Grout has come out of cobbles – (difference of opinion) – this has been like this for ever*
- *Like to lock up stock and go home, can then travel in by bike*
- *Storage area underground too small*
- *Planting – create community garden in square. Trees*
- *Re-start fountain would be very attractive to people*

Part Three - Number One Priority

NA asked everyone to name their number one priority/most desired change. Responses were as follows:

- *More axis of stalls for access*
- *Alter footprint for better flow and more access*
- *Retain fixed stalls just as it is (although no consensus)*
- *Flexible managed space*
- *Making more economically viable*
- *Easy to work in*
- *More storage*
- *Separate hot food area*
- *Hidden waste management*
- *Cleaned*
- *Keep layout as it but with brand new roofs and walls*
- *Level off whole area, utilise new areas for changes, don't destroy what you've got*
- *Use facilities of BID to promote market. Market seems to be left behind*

- *Seating*
- *Planting*
- *Central feature of a fountain*
- *Maintain history and spirit of space*

End of Workshop

NA asked everyone to express how they felt at the end of the workshop. Responses were as follows:

- *Got to find a way to get hot food traders into these meetings – they need to have a voice*
- *Want notice board on market*
- *Council should promote web page more*

NA handed back to JC

JC

“Thanks to everyone for your energy and contributions. Lots of ideas and commonality with our other stakeholder groups, which is very encouraging. Will see what we can take forward in the short term and get on with. Longer term aspects will be fed into the planning process. To support us with the planning work, we will be appointing market design specialists to review the output from tonight and associated options to improve the market and associated market square space, including what others have done elsewhere. There will be further opportunities for you and your market trader colleagues to get involved in the planning work over the next 5-6 months. We will also be issuing regular bulletins and updates on the project web page to help keep people informed of what is happening.”