



Leicester
City Council

Leicester Market Re-development

Decision to be taken by: City Mayor
Decision to be taken on: 20 March 2023

Lead director: Mike Dalzell

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: Castle
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- Report version v6

1. Summary:

The purpose of this report is to provide details of the redevelopment of Leicester's Market and to approve the addition to the capital programme.

The re-development will make significant improvements to the market and tackle the recent decline in its performance by creating a modern, high quality retail environment for shoppers and traders.

2. Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

2.1 Approve the addition of £8.07m to the capital programme to fund the redevelopment of the Leicester outdoor market. Of this, £0.1m will be funded from UK Shared Prosperity funding, with the remaining £7.97m to be funded from the following policy provisions:

- £7.3m from Outdoor Market Phase 3
- £0.67m from Highways, Transport & Infrastructure

2.2. Note the use of remainder of the scheme cost (£0.86m) is to be met from the existing markets capital budget.

3 Report

3.1 - Introduction

3.1.1 Leicester Market has been trading in its current location for over 750 years and is one of the most recognizable and iconic features of the city. However, in recent years trading in the outdoor market area has declined and has not recovered following the COVID-19 pandemic. Some longstanding traders have retired and not been replaced, and overall occupancy levels have fallen. Although there has been significant investment in the surrounding streets and for the creation of the Food Hall and Green Dragon Square, the outdoor Market itself is in urgent need of attention. This redevelopment programme is designed to meet that need.

3.1.2 The proposals reflect that the current Market is currently too large, and the

proposals seek to rationalise space into permanent trading areas that can be sustainable in the longer term and to create flexible spaces that can be used to accommodate specialist markets. Some quality public art features will be incorporated in the scheme to offer 'instagrammable' moments as part of the new public realm areas.

3.1.3 It is recognised that the fresh fruit and veg stalls are the heart of Leicester Market and retaining that core is central to the plans. The creation of new trading units however also offers the opportunity to attract new and different traders that can expand the range and quality of the dry goods on offer. The proposals will build on the best of the current offer but seek to attract a new audience and ensure the Market is a draw for visitors to the city as well as for local residents. The following interventions are proposed:

3.1.4 Remove the covered canopy to the market to the north and south to create three distinct zones.

3.1.5 Zone A to the south, adjacent Market Place Approach will provide a new high quality public realm space with opportunities for specialist, seasonal and pop-up markets that allow the core market area to expand when required. A new café offer will also be provided.

3.1.6 Zone B in the centre, will be a retained fixed market, operating under a new roof, with upgraded stalls, improved lighting, new surface treatments and the ability to close the space off at night through a shuttering system.

3.1.7 At present when not in use the Market area suffers from anti-social behavior as people are attracted to it because it offers an undercover space. This in turn leads to people avoiding the area in the evening, even as a walk through. The plans will enable the space to be secured when not in use. The secure perimeter and ability to control access will also help create better options for hire e.g. on Sundays when the traditional market is not in use.

3.1.8 Zone C to the north, will offer a series of individual self-contained units for traders, offering flexible trading layouts and an improved public realm treatment.

3.1.9 During these works it is recognised that there will be a requirement to temporarily relocate existing Market traders. Therefore, a temporary Market will be created on Green Dragon Square whilst construction works are undertaken.

3.2 – Market Place Overview

3.2.1 The market sits within the Market Place conservation area and is surrounded by many historic listed buildings.

3.2.2 There are multiple approaches to the market, including Market Place Approach, Cheapside, Victoria Parade, Odeon Arcade, Hotel St, and the new link through Dolphin Square from Horsefair Street.

3.2.3 The council will soon be proposing a further link from Cank Street to Green Dragon Square which is also intended to bring animation and greater footfall to the wider Market area

3.2.4 The interventions will open vistas from many of these approaches to enable

visitors to better see the Market which can otherwise be easily missed. The perspective from Market Place Approach now is particularly poor.

3.3 – Zone A

3.3.1 Approach & Vistas

Currently there is a hard edge to the Market from Market Place Approach, created by the current café and the canopy edge and as a result it doesn't help to draw passersby towards the Market. The proposals will relocate the café, offer a much better visual invitation to the Market and open up views through to the Corn Exchange and Green Dragon Square beyond.

3.3.2 Accommodation

Although not ideally located now, a café is a very desirable asset to the Market. Proposals will include the provision of a new and expanded café/F&B unit including more opportunities for outdoor seating, relocated towards Dolphin Square.

The remainder of Zone A will be a flexible space which can accommodate a multitude of offerings from temporary pop-up market stalls for temporary markets, food carts, special events etc. The space will accommodate 12-20 pop-up stalls spread round evenly throughout Zone A. It will also support some new softer landscaping features to an extension to the public realm when not in use.

3.3.3 Services

Pop up services will be provided (access covers within the surfacing), these will be spread around zone A to suit the locations of pop-up stalls. Services will include 32amp electrical connections, water connections and drainage.

3.3.4 Surface Treatment

Main requirements for a new surfacing treatment are as follows:

- Meets highways standards
- Easy clean
- Slip resistant
- Breaking up finishes and definition of spaces is desirable.

Proposal is to use Porphyry for Zones A (and C) which has been shown to demonstrate the above qualities

3.3.5 Planting & Street Furniture

There will be some new trees and some limited street furniture so as to retain the overall flexibility of the space. There may be some opportunities for public art features.

3.3.6 Lighting

To improve the feel of the space in late afternoon and the evening, street lighting will be utilised to emphasise key features and make the space more welcoming.

3.3.7 Materiality

Consideration has been applied to the existing pallet surrounding the market and the recently completed Food Hall, the introduction of green walls and roofs are being explored for the new cafe along with the incorporation of sustainable technologies where possible.

3.3.8 Vehicular Access

Provision has been made for an in and out route for LWB vans when delivering goods to the market. Deliveries will be daily between the hours of 6am-10am and 4pm-6pm. Access control for vehicles by means of rise and fall bollards is to be included.

3.4 – Zone B

3.4.1 Approach & Vistas

Zones A & C will work to improve the approaches and vistas. Zone B is intended as an individual destination. The current cut through route in the market (diagonal route running from Cheapside towards the Corn Exchange) will be removed to encourage more dwell time in zone B and allow a more rational stall arrangement.

3.4.2 Accommodation

Zone B will house approximately 84 stalls configured in blocks of 4 which is the optimal layout for traders. All existing stalls will be replaced as they are now very tired and in poor condition. The new stall layout will also create easier pedestrian routes as the current layout is not easy to negotiate due to dead ends. The new stalls will allow for better material storage that keeps walkways clear of clutter. They will be built of composite materials which is preferred over the current timber stalls. There will be discussions with traders to develop further the design of a trial stall that delivers the above benefits.

Each stall will have a signboard, as they do at present, which can be mounted and demounted each day. The graphics for this will be determined by each stall holder.

3.4.3 Services

Stalls will be serviced with electricity via pop up units. There is no requirement for water or wastewater.

3.4.4 Surface Treatment

Within zone B it is envisaged that the main circulation areas will be demarked differently to the stall areas. Material finish will be a mix of concrete and resin slabs.

3.4.5 Lighting

Lighting to the stalls is currently not sufficient and lux levels are much less than is required for a modern retail environment. The new design for the Zone B building removes the existing support columns from the internal space which will create a much more open feel. It will also require removing the current lighting support grid so the new and enhanced lighting solution will be hung from the roof.

As with Zone A, external lighting to the space is to be considered to improve the feel of the space outside of business hours.

3.4.6 Enclosure

Zone B will be capable of being closed off out of hours. There is no security requirement for this area, as goods will not be stored within the space overnight. Closing off the space will prevent antisocial behavior and misuse during non-business hours. The enclosure of the space does not need to be solid or provide additional weatherproofing, but should not attract vandalism. As they will be operated every day, shuttering solutions will comply with the HSE's manual handling requirements and will need to be robust. Some sections of the perimeter will be permanent 'slats', some will be shuttered sections that retract to the roof.

3.4.7 Façade and Fenestration Works

Extensive consideration was given to retaining the existing roof for Zone B however, it became evident that a new structure will bring better cost and maintenance advantages and avoids liability issues that would occur if we 'cut back' the current structure.

It also has further advantages such as i) enables us to remove existing support columns which allows more stalls (12 more than if we retained the existing roof), ii) allows 'northern roof' panels that provide more natural light, iii) increases the quantity of solar panels we can support on the roof structure, iv) removes anything that pigeons can sit on, v) allows a simplified roof edge treatment that mimics the food hall and avoids the maintenance issues of the current canopy and vi) allows the Market Place East edge to step back from the road.

3.4.8 Vehicular Access

No vehicular access is intended within Zone B, other than to permit access to the services easements in the area, which will require removal of stalls.

3.4.9 Flexible Space

The proposed design pulls the edge of the market slightly further away from the Corn Exchange creating further opportunities to locate pop up temporary stalls in that zone if required.

3.5 – Zone C

3.5.1 Approach, Vistas, and anti-social behavior

As with Zone A there is currently a hard edge to the market from Cheap Side, which is created by the stalls which sit right up to the highway. There is a clear diagonal route through the Market from this approach, though this can encourage the market to be used simply as a short cut. The proposals open vistas to the Market, Food Hall and Corn Exchange by removing the current roof, but it is intended to have permanent trading units in this location.

Consideration was also given to the retention of the roof in this area. However, this is not preferred as retention permits opportunities for groups to gather under cover during hours when the Market is not operating. That is a long-standing issue as it encourages anti-social behavior which in turn leads to people avoiding the area. The interventions overall are designed to remove any opportunity for people to gather under cover out of hours.

3.5.2 Accommodation

Zone C will accommodate 17 no standalone units similar to the kiosks which sit under the current canopy but with a larger footprint of approximately 15sqm. Units will offer different styles of selling, some opening to one side to operate as a kiosk, whilst others will function like small shops.

3.5.3 Services

All units will be provided with electrical connections, heating, ventilation and data.

However, 4no units will also have water and drainage connections.

3.5.4 Waste Management

A waste management facility will be accommodated within Zone C but with operations out of sight. That will replace the current facilities opposite Dolphin Square that are unsightly and visually obtrusive.

3.5.5 Planting & Street Furniture etc

As this space is fixed, design will incorporate some soft landscaping and street furniture with potential for some robust play equipment and public art features.

3.5.6 Lighting

To improve the feel of the space in late afternoon and the evening, street lighting will be utilised to emphasise key features and make the space more welcoming.

3.5.7 Materiality

As with Zone A, consideration has been made to the existing pallet surrounding the market and the recently completed Food Hall. The introduction of green walls and roofs have been explored along with the incorporation of sustainable technologies where possible. The construction methodology for the units is open for discussion, however it is thought that modular/prefabricated units are desirable to mitigate time on site. Continuity of materials throughout the zones is desirable.

3.5.8 Vehicular Access

Provision has been made for an in and out route for Long Wheelbase vans when delivering goods to the market. If an in out route is not achievable, then sufficient turning heads are to be installed to enable vehicles to manoeuvre. Deliveries will be daily between the hours of 6am-10am and 4pm-6pm. Access control for vehicles by means of rise and fall bollards are to be included.

3.6 Temporary Markets

3.6.1 During works to the existing market it is anticipated that the existing stall holders and unit traders will be housed in a temporary market provision on Green Dragon Square. The requirements for this space are as follows:

3.6.2 Accommodation

Up to 50 stalls will be provided. All stalls will be covered. 20 self-contained weatherproof units, similar to the kiosks within the current market can be provided. Each needs to be approximately 9sqm. Provisional layouts have been worked up showing how this can be accommodated within Green Dragon Square. Following feedback from trader's new 'hangar' type structures will enable all the above stalls and containers to be under cover to provide better weatherproofing and thermal protection for traders and shoppers.

3.6.3 Services

Stalls are to be serviced with electricity in the same way they are now via posts dropping down to each section of stalls. There is no requirement for water or wastewater. All 20 kiosk units are to be provided with electrical connections.

3.6.4 Waste Management & Power

A waste management facility similar to that proposed within Zone C will be required.

It is envisaged that the proposed power draw and other services requirements can be managed by the existing provision within Green Dragon Square. If additional supplies are required, water bowsers and generators may need to be accommodated.

3.6.5 Surface Treatment

Green Dragon square is a relatively new public square with Porphyry surface treatments. Therefore, protection of this has been considered when selecting accommodation units and the cover for the market.

3.6.6 Planting & Street Furniture

Most of the existing planting and street furniture can be retained though a couple of benches closest to the rear of the corn exchange will need to be removed.

3.6.7 Lighting

Temporary internal lighting will be required to the space.

3.6.8 Materiality

Although this is a temporary provision, it will be in place for 12-18 months, sits within a conservation area and stands next to the proposed Cank Street Link. Therefore, careful consideration has been made as to its impact not only on the feel of the space, but neighboring traders.

3.6.9 Vehicular Access

Provision has been made for an in and out route for LWB vans when delivering goods to the market.

3.7 Sustainability

3.7.1 'design-in' measures throughout the scheme will maximise the environmental and sustainability performance of the re-development.

3.7.2 The design has explored opportunities to minimise carbon footprint, e.g., Photovoltaic panels to Zones A and B, adequate insulation where applicable, use of suitable building and construction materials throughout. Efficiency in lighting choices, green wall to the proposed café in Zone A, FSC approved timber, Sustainable Urban Drainage, new glazed roof lights to minimise the use of LED lighting (maximum light entry allowance, minimal solar gain), utilities and services as well as additional features throughout the scheme.

3.8 Trader Engagement

3.8.1 Since the proposals were released in the public domain in September 2022 there have been extensive discussions with existing market traders on a one-to-one basis led by the market management team. All traders have now had a chance to review and discuss the proposals. Feedback has largely been positive about the proposed scheme, and it has been broadly welcomed. Reservations have been primarily about how to manage during the interim period while works are completed and in particular issues around weatherproofing. These are being addressed in the new approach to the temporary market at Green Dragon Square and the design of the permanent units at Zone C will be worked up in discussion with traders during the next phase of work. Designers are confident that trader concerns can be accommodated and mitigated.

3.9 Material

3.9.1 Since September 2022 the design team have reviewed the materials to be used for the flooring in the new outdoor market area. For reasons of durability, ease of maintenance and quality of finish it has been agreed to use Porphyry stone which also matches the material in Green Dragon Square and other important city centre spaces.

4.1 Financial implications

The total estimated cost of phase 3 of the Leicester Market Redevelopment is £8.93m. This report seeks approval for a £8.07m addition to the capital programme. £7.3m of this is to be funded by a release from the Outdoor Market Phase 3 policy provision, along with a £0.67m release from the Highways, Transport & Infrastructure policy provision, and £0.1m from the Shared Prosperity Fund. The remainder of the scheme cost (£0.86m) is to be met from the existing markets capital budget. The proposed budget for this scheme reflects capital cost inflation since project inception.

Whilst the market is budgeted to deliver a £215k net revenue surplus to the Council, it has suffered from covid-related income shortfalls and, as a result is currently forecasting a budget shortfall of £300k in 2022/23. Once completed, the proposed redeveloped market is projected to return a surplus in the region of £170k, an improved position when compared with 2022/23. During the period of temporary relocation there will be additional one-off costs in the region of £150k. Any interim and permanent budget shortfalls will need to be managed through the delivery of savings within the department.

Stuart McAvoy – Head of Finance

4.2 Legal implications

Redevelopment of Leicester Market by the Council will potentially require compliance with a range of legal issues for the Council as landowner. The basis upon which the traders currently hold their interest in the market (e.g., lease, license, tenancy at will or assured short hold tenancy) will need to be understood and advice provided with regards to the proposed relocation. In addition, all necessary consents, licenses, and orders will be obtained by the Council under the relevant regulatory regimes – including but not limited to planning and highways matters having regard to the Council's additional roles as local planning and highways authorities with specific responsibility for such matters too. Commercial law aspects, such as in relation to works contracts and related third party appointments plus grant funding terms, will also need addressing.

Kevin Carter – Head of Law

4.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

The council's sites and buildings are a significant source of carbon emissions, responsible for around 66% of its carbon footprint. Electricity use at the outdoor market and market office in 2019/20 had a carbon footprint of 78 tCO₂e. Following the city council's declaration of a Climate Emergency, and ambition to achieve carbon neutrality, it is vital that new development by the council is delivered to the highest possible standards of energy efficiency and carbon neutrality.

As noted within the report, sustainability is already being considered within this project, in terms of options to ensure that the carbon footprint of the new development is minimised. Suitable measures may include improved insulation, low carbon heating and lighting options, sustainable materials, and renewable energy systems as relevant. Consideration should also be given to minimising emissions from the temporary market, reducing waste from any demolition activities, and targeting a high level of recycling.

Any development will also be required to follow policy CS2 of the Adopted Leicester Core Strategy and relevant building regulations as standard. A toolkit is also being developed to support the achievement of reduced carbon emissions in council capital construction and renovation projects.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284

4.4 Equalities Implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

The report proposal sets out plans to make improvements to Leicester's Market. The improvements identified could help improve access for people with a range of disabilities and this has been acknowledged as part of the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). It must be recognised that the temporary market may have some negative impacts on people with a disability, but mitigations to help prevent this have been identified in the EIA. There may be more information which could help identify impacts on people who share a protected characteristic via engagement and consultation as the project progresses and this should be monitored and reflected in the EIA, with mitigations considered where appropriate.

Kalvaran Sandhu, Equalities Manager – Ext 37 6344

4.5 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

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5. Background information and other papers:

None

6. Summary of appendices:

None

7. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

8. Is this a “key decision”?

Yes

9. If a key decision, please explain reason

Capital expenditure of over £1m is to be committed on a scheme that has not been specifically authorised by Council.