



# Licensing Committee Report

Date	<b>05 November 2019</b>
Classification	<b>For General Release</b>
Title or report	<b>Tachbrook Street Market Electrical Upgrade and Pitch Realignment Proposal</b>
Report of	<b>Director of Public Protection &amp; Licensing/Director of Economic Development</b>
Decision maker	<b>Licensing Committee</b>
Wards involved	<b>Tachbrook, Warwick, St James's</b>
Financial summary	<b>There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.</b>
Report author and telephone	<b>Catherine Brice, Head of Westminster Markets. 0207 641 1432</b>

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed electrical infrastructure upgrade and subsequent pitch realignment for Tachbrook Street Market. This includes the rationale to realign the current market layout, a background to the electrical upgrade and the benefits these changes will deliver, to ensure the market thrives and proposers.
- 1.2 The proposals have been designed to implement the necessary improvements to trader's electricity access, in line with commitments made in the Council's Markets Strategy, whilst improving health and safety and wayfinding at the market. The aim is to create a modern destination market, where vendors can trade safely, and visitors navigate more easily. The council wants to move away from independent sources of energy which are also unsafe and environmentally impactful and provide a robust solution for safe and efficient energy supply to traders. Without implementing a new layout, the electrical upgrade will not be able to take place. This electrical implementation is vital to ensure the future of the market and encourages new traders with up to date infrastructure.
- 1.3 Relevant Cabinet Members and Ward Councillors have been briefed and consulted on the proposed changes.



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**2.0 Recommendation**

2.1 The Committee is requested to consider the proposals and asked to approve, if appropriate, the proposed new layout of the market including the reduction in the overall number of pitches.

**3.0 Background**

3.1 The Council's Market Strategy identifies the need for improvements in infrastructure and re-design within the local plan for Tachbrook Market. The aim is to create a modern destination market, where vendors can trade safely, and visitors navigate more easily.

3.2 The current electrical assets are near the end of their lifespan and some are already unusable. Replacing the existing electric system is imperative. The current below ground power bollard solution has historically struggled with water ingress, making it prone to frequent fault.

3.3 In the 2018 Markets Consultation, feedback from traders emphatically stated the need for an urgent electrical upgrade, with the need for a more sophisticated power supply system that allocates one bollard per pitch.

3.4 The proposed new scheme will also reduce ground level street cabling which currently is a hazard to both customers and traders.

3.5 The current layout of Tachbrook Market provides space for 33 pitches. Due to the nature of the traders most do not have a 1 meter gap between hot food stalls, which is suggested for fire safety grounds. The situation is exacerbated as there are different pitch sizes on different days of the week causing overcrowding. The lack of clear pitch demarcations and numbering also represents challenges for City Inspectors, making day to day management more difficult.

3.6 The proposed pitch standardisation will reduce the overall number of pitches to 24 stalls and ensure all comply with health and safety recommendations. All these stalls will have access to safe and sufficient power to run their business operations.

3.7 A further consideration fed back through the Markets Consultation, from both traders and the community, was the need for seating on the Market. The traders felt seating would encourage visitors to stay longer, with the possibly of encouraging a higher spend. In response, the Markets Development team acquired five sets of tables and



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benches from the ward members that are erected daily at the market, this has been well received by traders and the community.

### 4.0 Electrical Upgrade

4.1 The electrical upgrade will involve installing 24 new electricity bollards in line with existing street furniture along the market frontages and will allow:

- the provision of a safer and more sophisticated power supply system which allocates one 16amp bollard per pitch and one smart cable per bollard.
- increased safety, with a new monitoring system within the feeder pillars which cuts out if a fault is found or if power overloads
- a reduction of the number of maintenance callouts and loss of trader business due to water ingress, burnt out sockets and tripped fuses
- the Council to recover the cost of trader power consumption. To date the Council has not charged traders for their electricity consumption as the technology was not available to do so. However, with the emergence of Electric Vehicle Charging technology, there is a model now to monitor and charge electricity to each individual trader. The new technology includes meters that will ensure traders are only charged for the power they use individually at a set cost per kWatt.

### 5.0 Pitch realignment

5.1 The proposed pitch realignment will ensure the market is safer by eliminating the risk of fire spreading between hot food stalls. This will involve introducing a 1 metre gap between hot food traders (with the exemption of four traders operating double pitches – see attached diagram below) and will:

- Standardise pitch sizes to 3m x 3m to improve the markets image
- Reorganise the market layout to improve wayfinding and market appearance
- Create clear pitch markings with pitch number locations to avoid confusion
- Ensure equal pedestrian circulation from either end of the market by aligning traders along the retail frontages, with each facing the other from either side of the street.



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**6.0 Implications for trader licences**

- 6.1 Street trading in Westminster is governed by the City of Westminster Act 1999. In the case of Tachbrook Market, the street is designated and there is an approved layout. A change in layout must be approved by Licensing Committee.
- 6.2 The proposed layout changes have been designed to minimise impact on the traders whilst, at the same time, allowing each pitch access to electricity. Only traders that use electricity will be charged and only according to their individual usage. The rate will be set inline with current rates for electricity usage.
- 6.3 The new proposed layout has enough pitches to accommodate all of the current licensed traders.
- 6.4 Market traders have already been consulted with regarding the electrical upgrade proposal, inviting them to make comments as part of a formal consultation.
- 6.5 Currently there is only one permanent trader on Tachbrook Market. All the other traders are trading on temporary licences. Following the public realm work for the electrical upgrade and approval by The Committee of the proposed new layout traders will be invited to apply for permanent licences. It is anticipated that this application window would be between February and March 2020 and the applications would be determined and granted in May 2020.
- 6.6 Only one objection was submitted in response to the consultation. Below is an overview of the objection points received from the trader. See Appendix 3.

**7.0 Next steps and timeline**

- 7.1 Subject to the Committees approval of this proposal, officers would recommend and plan for a January implementation of the electrical upgrade.
- 7.2 Detailed analysis has taken place to ensure that work interventions are minimal and managed properly. Officers recommend the best option to proceed is to close the market for the third week of January - typically the quietest period on the market. It is not deemed possible to relocate the traders to other sites during works as the majority require power to operate. Traders have been spoken to and in agreement that if the market is closed for a week in January this will not adversely affect their business operations.
- 7.3 The works will be implemented in seven working days.



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## **8.0 Staffing Implications**

8.1 There are no staffing implications as a result of this report

**If you have any queries about this report, please contact:**

Catherine Brice, Head of Westminster Markets.

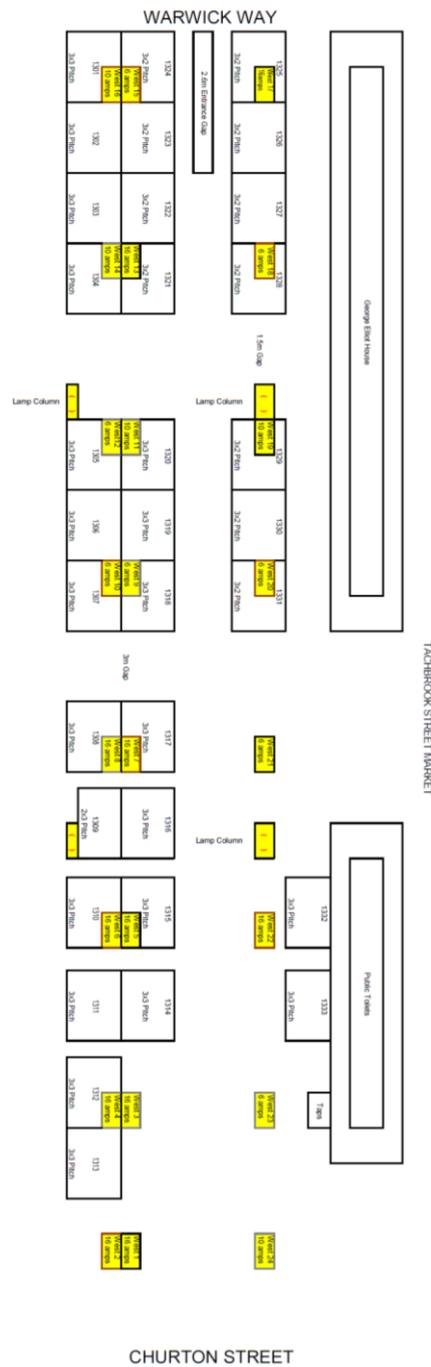
[cbrice@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:cbrice@westminster.gov.uk)

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Appendices

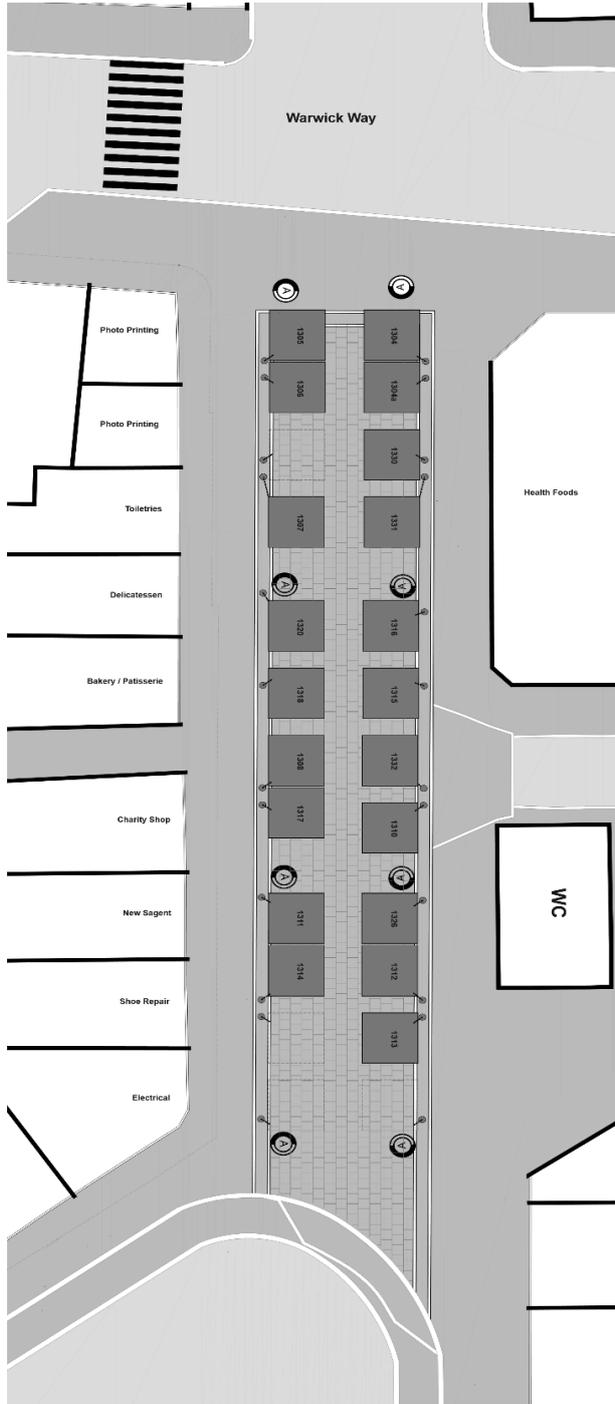
Appendix 1 – current layout of Tachbrook Street Market





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Appendix 2 - proposed new layout of Tachbrook Street Market





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*Appendix 3 - Comments received by the council follow the consultation with the traders on the proposed electrical upgrade.*

All five comments were made by one trader,

1. Implementing one metre gaps between stalls would cause a risk to stall security as currently traders on neighbouring pitches watch over each other's stalls.
2. By isolating stalls, gazebos and trader infrastructure is likely to be damaged by high winds.
3. The centre of the market square is currently not used as much by pedestrians when compared with the pavement. It is important to note as there is no clear thoroughfare in the market, pedestrians walk in many different directions through the market square.
4. As stalls are currently next to each other, customers can browse other stalls whilst shopping.
5. By turning the pitches to face inwards, stalls will miss passing trade from pedestrians on the streets running parallel to the market square. on the streets nearby.

6.7 In response to the objection

1. **Implementing one metre gaps between stalls would cause a risk to stall security as currently traders on neighbouring pitches watch over each other's stalls.**

Fire safety officers have recommended a 1metre gap between stalls in order to ensure the safety of those in the market in case of a fire on a stall. The 1metre gap significantly reduces the likelihood of fire spreading. Officers have also assessed this risk for non-hot food traders and recommend that a 1 metre is not substantial enough to cause serious risk to the security of the stall. This also future proofs the market so each stall could either be a hot food or non-hot food stall in the future – giving the market additional opportunity for new products.

2. **By isolating stalls, gazebos and trader infrastructure is likely to be damaged by high winds.**

All traders need to have their own weights to secure their infrastructure in all types of weather conditions. Additional weights should be used in cases of high winds as opposed to relying on neighbouring stalls to tie them down. The trader



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from which this objection was raised from does not currently have any neighbouring stalls from Monday – Wednesday.

3. The centre of the market square is currently not used as much by pedestrians when compared with the pavement. It is important to note as there is no clear thoroughfare in the market, pedestrians walk in many different directions through the market square.

The new layout will introduce a clear pathway through the market, directing customers down the centre enabling each stall to be seen. The seating is also placed in the middle of the square to encourage those to remain in the market square with the middle providing a clear and direct walkway.

4. As stalls are currently next to each other, customers can browse other stalls whilst shopping.

One metre does not seem a substantial enough distance to cause a significant change to this. In addition, the proposed layout will allow customers to view the market as a whole rather than only a few stalls at one time, hopefully actually enhancing the shopping experience as opposed to disrupting it. Once again this future proofs the market so each stall can be a hot food or non-hot food stall in the future.

5. By turning the pitches to face inwards, stalls will miss passing trade from pedestrians on the streets running parallel to the market square.
6. Regardless of which direction the pitches face, the market will still be visible to those walking on the streets nearby. Additional market signage is currently going through planning to really raise visibility of this market and we are also introducing a much greater level of PR and marketing than currently exists.