

WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF DECISION

SUBJECT: HANOVER SQUARE PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Notice is hereby given that the Cabinet Member for Built Environment, has made the following executive decision on the above mentioned subject for the reasons set out below.

Summary of Decision

1. That formal approval is given for the concept design for Hanover Square as attached in Appendix E to the report: Concept Design;
2. That the Cabinet Member agreed the use of existing Section 106 public realm contributions to be spent on the detailed design development of the proposed comprehensive Hanover Square Public Realm scheme as detailed below;
3. That the Cabinet Member agreed to the Council pursuing alternative funding options including Heritage Lottery Funding to support additional landscape improvements to Hanover Square Gardens and associated heritage assets as detailed below;
4. That the Cabinet Member agreed to this project being subject to initial local stakeholder engagement and informal consultation;
5. That delegated authority be given through the Hanover Square Project Board (currently Chaired by the Head of Strategic Transport Planning and Public Realm) and subject to the decisions of the Executive Directors of Growth Planning and Housing, City Management and Communities, and the City Treasurer in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Built Environment, City Management and Customer Services, Sustainability and Parking, and Sports and Leisure, to seek approval for minor modifications to the approved concept design for Hanover Square through the Hanover Square Board;
6. That the Executive Directors and City Treasurer in conjunction with the Cabinet Member be given delegated authority for the Council to enter into legal agreements that relate to the funding package for the Hanover Square project;
7. That the Cabinet Member agreed the outline project delivery programme for Hanover Square as set out in Appendix D to the report.
8. Further agreement will be sought to proceed with subsequent stages of this project. Implementation of the scheme in its entirety will be subject to the necessary funding being secured.

Reasons for Decision

1. Hanover Square has been dominated by traffic, with wide carriageways, low quality pedestrian space and a general lack of a coherent public realm. Properties have been predominantly in office use with little ground floor activity, however significant infrastructure and development activity here is seeing the character and function of Hanover Square changing at an unprecedented rate.
2. Numerous private developments, both planned and underway and the arrival of Crossrail into the Square in December 2018 will see an influx of additional visitors to the Square. Crossrail alone is expected to bring over 10,000 pedestrians to Hanover Square in the morning peak (7-10am).
3. The proposed Hanover Square Public Realm Improvement Scheme is a key project of the West End Partnership and will comprehensively transform Hanover Square into an internationally significant public space through:
 - Delivery of a greatly improved public realm which: integrates Crossrail's Bond Street Eastern Ticket Hall with heritage and new schemes; is safer for all users; increases the capacity of the Square to cope with addition pedestrian demands and improves comfort levels and ease of movement for pedestrians; and which recognises the Square's rich history and changing role;
 - Delivery of enhanced highway and traffic management arrangements including new pedestrian crossings and taxi facilities;
 - Delivery of better physical and visual connections between the square and its surrounding environment.
4. The concept design for Hanover Square (Appendix E to the report) has been developed with direct input from Transport for London and other key stakeholders and public realm consultants and has been approved by the Hanover Square Board so that it can be taken through Feasibility and Initial Design stages to more accurately gauge costs, mitigate risks, provide a more robust programme and carry out initial stakeholder engagement.
5. Public realm contributions have been collected from development schemes within the immediate vicinity of the proposed public realm scheme, specifically for public realm improvement works and so it is entirely appropriate for these funds to be spent on the proposed public realm improvement scheme.
6. Specific proposals for the square include:
 - The pedestrianisation of the western side of Hanover Square with space for pedestrians to orientate themselves outside the new station entrance;
 - The use of quality natural materials throughout the Square;
 - The introduction of modern street lighting;
 - The necessary relocation of the cabman's shelter;
 - Controlled service vehicle access to Tenterden Street to help minimise pedestrian and traffic conflict; and

- Improved highways layout around the Square including at its junctions with connecting streets.
7. In addition to the hard-landscaping works required to integrate the Crossrail station in 2018, the Council is also seeking funds to deliver improvement works within Hanover Square Gardens, to recognise their importance and rich heritage and to seek to protect the gardens from damage that may arise with the expected rise in pedestrian movements through the square resulting from the arrival of Crossrail and the change of use of many of the properties around the square from office use to having active and retail frontages.
8. An initial informal enquiry has been made to the Heritage Lottery Fund and officers will review the application process to seek funds to deliver necessary additional improvements within the garden railings, including to the railings and associated heritage assets, through this process.
9. Officers are hereby seeking to informally consult all local stakeholders on the emerging design proposals for Hanover Square and on proposed traffic and servicing arrangements. A number of on-street surveys are required to take this project forward to detailed design stage. As such approval will be sought through a second Cabinet Member Report, to carry out more detailed public consultation on the proposed scheme during late 2016. A further report will be submitted to authorise this consultation.
10. Delegated authority is sought to enable decisions on minor alterations to the design to be made at officer level in consultation with the Cabinet Member. The concept designs will be subject to feasibility testing and as such the concept design may require minor alterations, for example to improve traffic flow and relocate utility service covers and street furniture.
11. This report is not seeking approval to implement the full Hanover Square public realm scheme at this stage, rather it is seeking agreement to develop a deliverable scheme. The *full* scheme will only be implementable if sufficient funding can be secured. A further Cabinet Member Report will be drafted seeking agreement to proceed with subsequent stages of this project as further funding becomes available.

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Publication Date: 08 September 2016

Implementation Date: 14 September 2016, 5pm (subject to call-in)

Reference: CMfBE/14/2016