

Report of Head of Programmes and Projects

Report to Director of City Development

Date: 18 March 2020

Subject: Redevelopment of City Square

Are specific electoral wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, name(s) of ward(s): Little London & Woodhouse and Hunslet and Riverside		
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, access to information procedure rule number:		
Appendix number:		

Summary

1. Main issues

- City Square is a gateway piece of public realm in Leeds city centre. It is often the first experience people have of Leeds when arriving in the city and a key gateway for most visitors, residents and workers. It is the pivotal area of public realm in the city centre, from which a matrix of parks, green spaces and squares connect. These spaces provide and embrace activities and active lifestyles such as social interaction, external dining, cycling, walking, running and relaxation. It provides the 'Leeds Welcome' which should be a positive first impression and experience of a city that feels as good as it looks.
- A number of interconnected projects and programmes are currently under development, including Connecting Leeds, Armley Gyrotory, Leeds Station Improvements, Bishopgate Street works and HS2, which present the potential to bring together all of these proposals and reimagine and expand City Square to more than double its current size thereby formally closing the space to general traffic, providing the opportunity to transform City Square.
- Guided by Our Spaces Strategy and Principles (being considered at this Executive Board under a separate but complementary report) the space can be expanded to over 1 hectare, and redesigned to create a world class, vibrant and inclusive space which can also respond to our climate challenges and cultural ambition. Creating a space which welcomes people, speaks of our diverse communities and resonates with the citizens of Leeds and supports healthy lifestyles, is of prime importance

and strengthens and prioritises the Our Spaces work programme around 21st century infrastructure as part of the Inclusive Growth Strategy.

- Currently City Square is a small area of public realm (0.3 hectares) with a cycle lane around its southern edge that is bisected on three sides by up to 4 lanes of traffic on each side that results in the space facing inwards. These 4 lanes of highway need to be crossed by over 40,000 pedestrians every day, whether they are arriving by train, bus, and taxi or walking around the city centre. Linking in to City Square from the south is Neville Street (via Bishopgate Street), identified as the most polluted street outside of London (Friends of the Earth).
- A redeveloped City Square will link directly to Leeds Station, the closure of New Station Street and the construction of Bishopgate Street Steps. With the predicted increase in rail journeys there is a requirement to ensure that the areas surrounding the exits of the station support the high capacity movement of people. Leeds Station is the busiest station in the north with 34 million passengers each year that has openings out onto City Square. The new Northern and TransPennine franchise, as well as HS2 will deliver a step change in rail capacity. Bishopgate Street Steps are to be constructed to aid passenger movement from the station and the redesigned City Square will complement the welcome and movement out from the station following the closure of New Station Street.

2. Best Council Plan Implications (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- The proposals in this report supports the priorities for Sustainable Infrastructure, Child-Friendly City, Age-Friendly Leeds, Culture and responds to the declaration of a Climate Emergency:
- Sustainable Infrastructure
 - a. A redesigned City Square will improve public transport connections, safety and reliability.
 - b. Removing general traffic on City Square and the provision of bus corridors will provide a safer environment, enhance the public transport offer and aid the ease of passenger transport connections.
- Child-Friendly City
 - a. A new City Square will enhance the city now and for future generations and supports our ambition to be a child friendly city.
- Age-Friendly Leeds
 - a. The redesign of City Square will support accessible and affordable transport options which help older people get around.
 - b. The redesign City Square will be accessible, safe, clean and welcoming.
- Culture
 - a. The redesign City Square will provide the opportunity to grow the cultural sector by providing a larger programmable space for events, particularly for the year of culture in 2023.
 - b. The accessibility of the redesigned City Square will ensure that culture can be created and experienced by everyone.
 - c. The redesigned City Square will enhance the image of Leeds by providing space for events and managing the arrival for people attending major events and attractions elsewhere in the city.

- The Climate Emergency
 - a. The increase in green infrastructure of City Square as part of the public realm design will increase carbon capture, improve air quality and assist the management of water runoff during extreme weather events supporting our ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030.

3. Resource Implications

- City Square has Capital Programme Fund approval of £500k for feasibility work. The estimated design competition costs are approximately £200k and approval will be requested from the Chief Officer Asset Management & Regeneration through a delegated decision.
- A Capital injection will be required in 2023 to support this aim. It is the intention to provide details to a future Executive Board once a design has been determined that has cost certainty.

Recommendations

The Director of City Development is recommended to:

- a) Approve the commissioning of a RIBA led design competition to determine design options for the future redesign of City Square.
- b) Note that a design brief is to be developed with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) to support the design competition and be submitted to Executive Board at the appropriate time.
- c) Note the responsibility to oversee the delivery of the redesign of City Square.
- d) Note that the outcome of the design competition will be presented to Executive Board for consideration and endorsement of the preferred bidder.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1. The purpose of the report is to provide information and detail in respect of the City Square design competition.
- 1.2. To request approval to commission a design competition to determine design options for the potential redesign of City Square.

2. Background information

- 2.1. Our spaces are the streets and places between buildings. They are continually interconnected spaces including streets, squares, parks, cycle ways and the waterfront. Our spaces positively support commerce, reflect our culture and heritage, provide opportunities for relaxation, events and social interaction. They speak of place and community and are our visual first impression to businesses and visitors.
- 2.2. The city is changing and we need to ensure the public realm offer is in line with the vision and ambition as set out in the Our Spaces Strategy and investment is identified to ensure the city's profile for businesses, residents and visitors, grows at

the same pace as development takes place, thereby ensuring that our city is an attractive vibrant place to be.

- 2.3. City Square is a gateway piece of public realm in the city centre. It is often the first 'experience' most people have of Leeds when arriving in the city and a key gateway for most visitors and workers which should embrace activities and active lifestyles, social interaction and relaxation that is well connected and signed. It will provide a 'Leeds Welcome', a positive first impression and experience of a city that feels as good as it looks. City Square is home to The Queens and Park Plaza Hotels, Leeds Railway Station, Restaurant Bar and Grill and Banyan and the Majestic and soon to be the home of Channel 4.
- 2.4. The provision of high quality public realm can deliver outcomes to support the Leeds Inclusive Growth Strategy, Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Leeds commitment to be a Child Friendly city by providing places for people to be active, play and rest supporting healthy, active lifestyles. The UK Public Health White Paper 2010 notes that green spaces can improve mental health and the quality of community life. Spaces also contribute to the city's cultural, retail and leisure offer, providing event space, a more appealing setting for businesses and greater street trading opportunities. All of these benefits make the city centre more attractive and support the economy.
- 2.5. Closing City Square to general traffic facilitated by the improvements to Armley Gyratory and alterations to bus routes through Connecting Leeds would increase the area of public realm within and around City Square to approximately 1 hectare.
- 2.6. City Square is one of the public transport arrival points in Leeds, with a strong historic, cultural and architectural background. The redesign of City Square will support the business case for the WY+TF transport investment of £175 million to increase public transport capacity on the network as part of the Headrow Gateway scheme for Connecting Leeds.
- 2.7. The redesigned City Square will link to Leeds Station and the construction of Bishopgate Street Steps (to be funded from the Transforming Cities Fund should the bid be successful). Works to Bishopgate Street and the closure of New Station Street as part of the bid for Transforming Cities Fund will allow the redevelopment and opening up of the station which will add significant value from a place making perspective and effectively form part of the wider City Square environs. This work stream then effectively delivers the closure of Neville Street.
- 2.8. With the predicted increase in rail journeys there is a requirement to ensure that the areas surrounding the exits of the station support the high capacity movement of people. Leeds Station is the busiest station in the north with 34 million passengers each year that has openings out onto City Square. The new Northern and TransPennine franchise, as well as HS2 when it arrives in 2033, will deliver a step change in rail capacity. Bishopgate Street Steps are to be constructed to aid passenger movement from the station and the redesigned City Square. Improvements to Armley Gyratory (which will be subject to an Executive Board later in 2020) will facilitate the closure of City Square to general traffic and will complement the welcome and movement out from the station provided by Bishopgate Street Steps.

- 2.9. With the recent declaration of a Climate Emergency there is a requirement for Leeds City Council to support the change to carbon neutrality. City Square will be designed to increase the greening of the city, improve air quality, provide biodiversity net gain and manage surface water run-off.
- 2.10. Leeds also needs to consider the value that high quality public realm brings to a setting/location, how people want to use public spaces, including pavements, roads, squares and parks; and when we consider the implications of improving the public realm we need to consider how people move, use different types of transport, the effect of adjacent roads, the architectural settings, and people's enjoyment and their mental and physical sense of well-being as they move through the city. The ambition is for a redeveloped City Square to address these considerations.
- 2.11. As the first point of entry point to the city it is a vital space introducing visitors to Leeds. City Square's final design will need to consider how it reflects its heritage through retaining aspects of the current and largely Victorian public art or whether it presents a different kind of public space in the future. This consideration and the outcome will be tested through the design competition and subsequent decision making processes.
- 2.12. It is proposed that City Square will be designed and built through the Scape framework as part of a programme also delivering Meadow Lane, Bishopgate Street Steps, Regent Street Bridge, and Armley Gyratory.
- 2.13. Scape is a National Civil Engineering framework, covering England, Northern Ireland and Wales, that is compliant with UK and EU procurement regulations. The framework will operate for a total of four years and will provide direct access for any public sector organisation to a principal contractor for civil engineering and infrastructure projects with values between £50,000 and £100m+.
- 2.14. The Scape framework is intended to provide efficiencies by working together as a collaborative team from the outset. Time efficiency is one of the major benefits of the framework by avoiding the need for individual and possibly multiple Official Journal of the European Union procurement for a programme of schemes of the scale it is to deliver. The programme is to create further efficiencies by affording the contractor the ability to manage construction teams across the whole programme allowing Leeds to achieve the restricted individual project timescales. City Square is therefore a major component in contributing to these efficiencies.
- 2.15. In order to develop a holistic design proposal for City Square that meets the vision for the 'creation of world class, vibrant and inclusive public realm' as set out in the Our Spaces Strategy, as well as addressing challenges around air quality, climate change, biodiversity, it is proposed to undertake a design competition.
- 2.16. Through a design competition managed by RIBA it is anticipated that professional consultancies with the requisite experience for the creation of the type of space envisaged, will express an interest in being involved in the design competition and potential development of a high quality scheme for City Square.

3. Main issues

- 3.1. In response to the growth of the city, Leeds City square was originally opened at the start of the last century, when Colonel Thomas Walter Harding (Lord Mayor of

Leeds between 1898-9) commissioned William Bakewell to design a square. It was originally proposed to name the Square after John Smeaton but this was rejected in favour of the descriptive 'City Square'. The statues, including the Black Prince, and the Nymphs were erected between 1897 and 1903. Since then the Square has seen many changes.

- 3.2. In the early 20th century trams arrived. During the 1930's public air raid shelters were built and were subsequently damaged during an air raid on Leeds. Initial plans for an underground subway system within Leeds were also drawn up in the late 1930s but the advent of war and post-war austerity stopped the subway lines from ever being built. Statues were realigned in the 1950s as traffic increased.
- 3.3. In 1997 the road in front of the old Post Office building was closed and traffic diverted. Refurbishment of the Square enabled this space to be brought into what became a much larger City Square with outdoor eating. The statues were rearranged again and the balustrading reinstated. The whole square was repaved and tree planting and street furniture was replaced. A water feature was added but issues with the water nozzles which regularly blocked eventually led to its decommissioning and the fountains were switched off in 2013. The latest major addition to the square in 2018 was the sculpture 'Legs Walking' by Leeds artist Kenneth Armitage.
- 3.4. The closing of City Square to general traffic, facilitated by improvements to Armley Gyrotory and alterations to bus routes through the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme provides a unique opportunity to reconsider City Square. The increase in space will also allow consideration of the form and function of the space and create an opportunity to recreate a space which reflects our ambition to be the Best City.
- 3.5. The redesign of City Square supports the principles of the draft Our Spaces strategy. City Square is central to the Our Spaces Strategy and is the city's premier area of public realm, which seek to provide a world class 'front door' to the heart of the city centre.
- 3.6. The current public perception of City Square appears to be negative as is evidenced below from collected comments feedback as part of the engagement on the draft Our Spaces Strategy:-
 - I worked in Leeds for many years and passed through City Square hundreds of times, it's not really somewhere I'd make an effort to go to because it's only quite small and other than a few benches nothing really to do.
 - City Square is rather disappointing. The statues outside the magnificent post office are rather charming. The benches are rather sterile and cold so unlike any other European city, this is not really a sociable/pleasurable place to be.
 - Hundreds of pedestrians heading for trains have to push past long queues for the buses. There's just not enough capacity for the number of people heading though this space, it feels cramped, stressful and edgy. It's also quite dirty, not a great entry to the city.
 - I avoid cycling on the cycle path past the queen's hotel because of the way it cuts across the roads. It's really difficult to stay safe around the cars and buses (which come from all directions);

- Access to the Railway Station is one of the worst I have ever seen. The roads around the station area are severely congested and there are poor/restricted waiting arrangements.
 - City Square is closed off with a big wall. There's also no green space and the square is surrounded by roads which makes it bad to spend time in.
- 3.7. In order to develop a holistic design proposal for City Square that meets the vision for the 'creation of world class, vibrant and inclusive public realm' as set out in the Our Spaces Strategy, as well as addressing challenges around air quality, climate change, biodiversity, it is proposed to undertake a design competition.
 - 3.8. The Scape Framework provider Balfour Beatty have proposed to invite the RIBA to undertake the design competition to select a design consultant for this scheme. The RIBA has extensive experience and is a widely recognised provider of architectural competitions, delivering high quality selection processes for both private and publicsector clients.
 - 3.9. In the first instance it is proposed to advertise an open competition with a Standard Selection Questionnaire. The questionnaire will set out the requirements in a design brief to the bidders (who could be local, national or international) in relation to the need for a multi-disciplinary design team who have proven experience of delivering world class public realm in a city centre setting, that can address the civil, mechanical and electrical engineering requirements for lighting, water features, surface water attenuation etc. as well as the potential for public art input to create a unique new sense of place for City Square. The questionnaire submissions will be reviewed by an experienced panel (TBD but potentially would consist of internal and external advisors with experience of designing and delivering public realm) who will provide a recommended short list (up to 5 as advised by RIBA) for an invite to develop and provide submissions for assessment.
 - 3.10. Once the shortlist has been confirmed the preferred bidders will be required to develop their design submissions, to take account of all of the design brief requirements as well as demonstrating how the technical design solution can be successfully delivered on an incremental/phased basis alongside potential high level costs.
 - 3.11. The five Submitted designs will be presented for Plans Panel for pre-planning application advice to determine whether it is likely that the submitted designs would be granted planning permission. This feedback will be made available to the Design Panel during their deliberations to aid their decision.
 - 3.12. Engagement will be undertaken with the public by making the final submissions available for comment. Public feedback will not be a direct vote on the submission but public feedback will be made available to the Design Panel during their deliberations to aid their decision.
 - 3.13. Following public engagement final submissions will be reviewed by the Design Panel, who following assessments and potentially interviews with the preferred bidders, will recommend to the Executive Board, a winning bidder who will be invited to further develop the scheme design to planning submission and implementation.

3.14. Due to the interdependencies and timelines of the work streams that provide the opportunity to create the City Square redevelopment proposals, it has been necessary to break the whole scheme into a number of phases.

3.15. The speculative programme for the phases:

- Phase 1 – Infirmary Street realignment (Connecting Leeds delivery by June 2020);
- Phase 2 – Infirmary Street realignment (Connecting Leeds delivery by November 2020);
- Phase 3 – Narrowing of Quebec Street and footway expansion (City Centre Package - 2021)
- Phase 4 – Reconfiguring of road alignment New Station Street (To be delivered as part of Bishopgate Street Steps delivered December 2022)
- Phase 5 – Closure of City Square to traffic (delivered December 2022)
- Phase 6 - Potential redevelopment of the existing public realm and closure of highways (funding to be confirmed – delivery by end 2022);
- Break of all works during 2023 to allow City Square to be utilised for the Year of Culture
- Phase 7 – Full delivery of the City Square design proposals to complete the new space (2024 onwards)

3.16. The speculative programme for the design competition (subject to approval).

Task Name	Start	Finish
Issue Memorandum Of Information and Standard Selection Questionnaire	Fri 22/05/20	Fri 22/05/20
Deadline for receipt of Standard Selection Questionnaire returns	Tue 21/07/20	Tue 21/07/20
Standard Selection Questionnaire assessment	Wed 22/07/20	Tue 28/07/20
Moderation meeting & selection of shortlist	Wed 29/07/20	Wed 29/07/20
Short-listed Participants notified and Notifications to unsuccessful Candidates	Thu 30/07/20	Wed 05/08/20
Invitation To Tender (ITT)	Thu 06/08/20	Thu 21/01/21
Issue Outline Design Brief & ITT to shortlist	Thu 06/08/20	Thu 06/08/20
Site visit & open briefing session for Short-listed participants	Mon 10/08/20	Mon 10/08/20
Short-listed participants invited to present ideas to the Council in advance of formal Tender Submission Deadline	Tue 08/09/20	Tue 08/09/20
Tender Submission Deadline	Tue 06/10/20	Tue 06/10/20
Public Engagement	Wed 07/10/20	Tue 29/12/20
Evaluation of ITT submissions	Wed 30/12/20	Tue 05/01/21
Clarification interviews & presentations	Wed 06/01/21	Wed 06/01/21
Confirmation of Contract Award	Thu 21/01/21	Thu 21/01/21

3.17 The design brief will take account of the challenges facing Leeds, as laid out in the Our Spaces Strategy, and developed using the strategy design principles.

- **People First** – Our Spaces will be designed for people. They will be comfortable, stimulating, relaxing, healthy and safe.
- **This is Leeds** – Our Spaces will celebrate Leeds's built and natural assets, from the edge of the River Aire to the magnificent architecture of the city centre
- **Everyone Welcome** – Our Spaces will be inclusive, designed for all ages, abilities and reflect Leeds's diverse communities
- **Better Connected** – Our Spaces will be highly connected, considering pedestrians first, clearly legible and easy to navigate
- **Greener Future** – Our spaces will be resilient to climate change, with green environments cooling the air, sustainably managing surface water and absorbing carbon
- **Bring it to Life** – Our spaces will be places for cultural activity, from small interactions to major events
- **Economic Sense** – Our spaces will be valuable economic infrastructure that supports businesses and provides a canvas for new investment

3.18. The brief will be developed as part of the design competition process. It is important City Square, as an area of over a hectare, creates areas of shade and contemplation, opportunity for play and activity, rest and meeting, which speak of our communities and welcome everyone. The space should foster health and wellbeing, encourage bio-diversity, encourage animation and vibrancy.

3.19. Finance for the scheme delivery has yet to be approved and it is anticipated that approval will be sought in later years budget submissions.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1. Consultation and engagement

4.1.1. The recommendations to Executive Board in October 2015 (An Approach to Street Design and the Public Realm in Leeds City Centre) were endorsed

- endorse the principle of the Council developing a strategic plan for public realm improvements in the City Centre based on principles outlined in paragraph 3.7;
- agree to the Council consulting and engaging with stakeholders on potential schemes to be brought forward based on the design ideas and opportunities; and
- subject to the outcome of consultation, request officers to bring a report to Executive Board outlining a proposal plan of public realm improvements, costings and funding and note that the Head of Strategic Projects, City Development, will be responsible for bringing this report back.

4.1.2 Consultation in the Our Spaces Strategy has been undertaken at;

4.1.2.1 City Centre Public Realm Programme Board (April 2018)

4.1.2.2 LMT briefing July 2018

4.1.2.3 Executive Board September 2018

4.1.2.4 Our Spaces public engagement Nov 18 – April 19

- 4.1.3 Briefing to inform the Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development of the emerging proposals for the enhancement of City Square January 2020.
- 4.1.4 This report was originally due to be considered by Executive Board at a meeting scheduled for Wednesday 18th March 2020.
- 4.1.5 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the meeting was cancelled, and replaced instead with an informal meeting of the members of the Executive Board, with members dialling in remotely.
- 4.1.6 Under current legislation, as members were not physically present in one location, it was not a properly constituted Executive Board meeting and therefore cannot take decisions.
- 4.1.7 The decisions outlined in this report will now be taken by the Director of City Development through a delegated decision.
- 4.1.8 Executive Board members made a number of recommendations, which are reflected in the recommendations of this decision, which were:
- (a) That the commissioning of a RIBA led design competition to determine design options for the future redesign of City Square be approved;
- (b) That it be noted that a design brief is to be developed with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) to support the design competition, with it being agreed that the design brief be submitted to Executive Board at the appropriate time;
- (c) That it be noted that the Director of City Development is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the redesign of City Square;
- (d) That it be noted that the outcome of the design competition will be presented back to Executive Board for consideration and endorsement of the preferred bidder.

4.2. Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 A screening document has been prepared and an independent impact assessment is not required for the approvals requested. See appendix A.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- 4.3.1 Our Spaces Strategy: embodies our vision for the creation of vibrant, inclusive, world class city centre public realm. Our ambition is that through the Our Spaces Strategy, our public realm becomes the city's greatest cultural asset.
- 4.3.2 Creating inclusive accessible and inviting public realm is integral in supporting the child friendly and age friendly agendas.

4.3.3 Culture: The 'Our Spaces Strategy' has the ambition of making our spaces our greatest cultural asset. Through its Culture Strategy the city has set a bold new vision for our public spaces to become our greatest cultural asset, building on the legacy of our parks and waterways to create a new international standard which embeds culture in our streets, shopping centres, parks and urban spaces. Investment in the public realm is needed to realise this ambition.

4.3.4 The redesign of City Square will meet the following strategic values and outcomes;

4.3.4.1 Strategic Outcomes

- A redesigned City Square will contribute to increasing 'access to green spaces'.
- A redesigned City Square will contribute to people moving 'around a well-planned city easily'.

4.3.4.2 Sustainable Infrastructure

- A redesigned City Square will improve transport connections, safety and reliability.
- Reducing private traffic on City Square and the provision of bus corridors will provide a safer environment and aid the ease of passenger transport connections.

4.3.4.3 Age-Friendly Leeds

- The redesigned City Square will support accessible and affordable transport options which help older people get around.
- The redeveloped City Square will be accessible, safe, clean and welcoming.

4.3.4.4 Culture

- The redesigned City Square will provide the opportunity to grow the cultural sector by providing a space for events.
- The accessibility of the redesigned City Square will ensure that culture can be created and experienced by anyone.
- The redesigned City Square will enhance the image of Leeds by providing event space and managing the arrival for people attending major events and attractions.

4.3.4.5 Child- Friendly City

- A new City Square will enhance the city now and for future generations.
- Best Council Plan Outcomes
- The greening of City Square and its expansion in size enable greater access to green spaces, leisure and the arts.
- The redesigned City Square will contribute to people being able to move around a well-planned city easily.

Climate Emergency

4.3.5 Full Council declared a climate emergency in March 2019, with the stated ambition of working towards a net zero carbon city by 2030. The council has accepted that very urgent action is required to make our contribution to containing global temperature

rises within 1.5C. Beyond this limit, there is a strong scientific consensus that there will be catastrophic consequences for both humanity and the natural world.

- 4.3.6 An urgent priority for the city is reducing carbon emissions to restrict global warming. Green infrastructure (through the Our Spaces programme) can play a key role in contributing to this agenda. Based on locking up carbon to mitigate UK greenhouse gas emissions, the Committee on Climate Change has advised national Government that there is an urgent need to increase national canopy cover from the current 13% to 17-19%. Leeds, therefore has to significantly increase its tree canopy cover and this is not just woodland creation. Urban trees are hugely important, in addition to locking up carbon they also mitigate air pollution and along with other planting, cool urban heat island temperatures, contribute to flood risk management and improve biodiversity.
- 4.3.7 A Climate Emergency Update to Executive Board in January 2020 highlighted that addressing the issues of landscape and biodiversity presents the opportunity to offset some of the remaining carbon in production but also to enhance wildlife and improve the public experience. A combination of developing woodland on our own holdings, together with work with other land owners is set to bring forward millions of trees in the next thirty years. The report highlighted our programme to develop green spaces in the city centre as it becomes a major residential centre, shifting its emphasis towards encouraging biodiversity.
- 4.3.8 More trees and planting in our spaces will also attract new animal and plant species, increasing biodiversity at a time when many species are at risk, and also supporting the creation of green corridors across the city.
- 4.3.9 The council has a commitment through the West Yorkshire Transport Plan to a series of initiatives which are designed to cut carbon emissions by a quarter over the next decade. It is the council's aim to be city where you don't need to use a car. The measures include:
- Doubling bus patronage
 - A 75% increase in rail
 - A 10% increase in walking
 - A 300% increase in cycling
 - A 15% decrease in car usage
- 4.3.10 To support and encourage the use of public and active transport, a redesigned City Square aims to support and deliver the creation of high quality public realm that makes journeys across the city centre safe and enjoyable for pedestrians and cyclists.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 City Square has Capital Programme Fund approval of £500k for feasibility work. The estimated design competition costs are £200k and approval will be requested from the Chief Officer Asset Management & Regeneration through a delegated decision.
- 4.4.2 A Capital injection will be required in 2023 to support this aim. It is the intention to provide details to a future Executive Board once a design has been determined that has cost certainty.
- 4.4.3 The redevelopment of City Square is constrained by the improvements to Armley Gytratory being completed and the need to ensure that City Square is available for

Leeds 2023. It is therefore not anticipated that construction will start until 2024. If the above constraints allow and depending on the chosen design, there may be an opportunity to consider undertaking preparatory advance works in 2022.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

4.5.1 None of the contents of this report are exempt or confidential under the access to information rules detailed in the constitution.

4.5.2 Use of the Scape Framework may leave the council open to a claim from providers who feel the contract should have been effectively advertised and that the council has not been wholly transparent. However the framework was advertised and competitively procured.

4.5.3 It is up to the council however to decide what degree of advertising is appropriate and it is felt that no advertising was the most appropriate method for the council.

4.6 Risk management

4.6.1 Risk is to be managed through application of 'best practice' project management tools and techniques via the City Council's 'PM Lite' risk methodology. Risk management forms just one part of PM Lite and further details on risk can be seen in the Insite page: <https://insite.leeds.gov.uk/toolkits/managing-a-service/riskmanagement>. The progress of the scheme (RAG rating and comments) will also be included in the routine reporting to the council's Strategic Investment Board.

4.6.2 Project Management resource has been allocated from within City Development to manage the project and risk.

4.6.3 A priced risk log is being developed for the scheme by Leeds City Council and the contractor will be engaged to contribute to its development to ensure all the risks for the project have been identified together with the relevant owner of the risk. The priced risk register will be used to inform the client contingency for the project. The council's project risk log will be maintained and updated throughout the project and escalation of any risks that sit outside of the agreed tolerances will be managed via the City Square Project Board.

4.6.4 A client held contingency, commensurate with a project of this value, will be included within the approval figure to address any risks that occur during construction. The client held contingency will be calculated as the project progresses.

5 Conclusions

5.1 Currently City Square is a small area of public realm (0.3 hectares) with a cycle lane around its southern edge that is bisected on three sides by up to 4 lanes of traffic on each side that results in the space facing inwards on itself.

5.2 Closing City Square to general traffic facilitated by the improvements to Armley Gyratory and alterations to bus routes through the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme (LPTIP) would increase the area of public realm within and around City Square to approximately 1 hectare.

- 5.3 The increase of available space for public realm provides a unique opportunity to reconsider City Square and its wider environment. The increase in space will also allow consideration of the form and function of the space and create the opportunity to recreate a space which reflects our ambition to be the Best City.
- 5.4 In order to develop a holistic design proposal for City Square that meets the vision for the 'creation of world class, vibrant and inclusive public realm' as set out in the Our Spaces Strategy, as well as addressing challenges around air quality, climate change, biodiversity, it is proposed to undertake a design competition.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Director of City Development is recommended to:
- a) Approve the commissioning of a RIBA led design competition to determine design options for the future redesign of City Square.
 - b) Note that a design brief is to be developed with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) to support the design competition and be submitted to Executive Board at the appropriate time.
 - c) Note the responsibility to oversee the delivery of the redesign of City Square.
 - d) Note that the outcome of the design competition will be presented to Executive Board for consideration and endorsement of the preferred bidder.

7.0 Background documents¹

- 7.1 None.

8.0 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A - EDCI Redevelopment of City Square v1.1
- 8.2 Appendix B - City Square Plan

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.