

Report of the Assistant Director

Wellingborough Market Update

1 Purpose of report

To provide an update on the findings of the trial relocation of the general market and to make proposals for the future operation of the market.

2 Executive summary

2.1 This report provides an update on the findings of the relocation of the market for a trial period from the Market Square to Orient Way (behind the Pagoda) from Saturday 1 December 2018 for a period of two months; and seeks approval to continue with these arrangements..

2.2. Approval is also sought for officers to consider improvements to the area behind the Pagoda to enable trading to continue and to look at the future options for the Market Square.

3 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Copy of the urgent action taken.

Appendix 2 – Table showing the total number of stalls.

Appendix 3 – Map showing the area market traders will operate, the street trading pitches and the location of Orient Way.

4 Proposed action:

The sub-committee is invited to RESOLVE to:

4.1 **Approve the permanent relocation of the general market to Orient Way (behind the Pagoda);**

4.2 **instruct officers to consider options to improve this space to better support market trading and report back to this sub-committee as required;**

4.3 **instruct officers to consider options for the future use and design of Market Square and report back to this sub-committee as required;**

4.4 **instruct officers to consider options for a sustainable market offer in the longer term and report back to this sub-committee as required.**

5 Summary

5.1 A meeting was held with the general market traders on Monday 19 November 2018 to discuss the continued decline in trade and trading conditions at the

market in its established location. Traders requested a move to Orient Way, the area behind the Pagoda, for a trial period of two months. An urgent action was prepared by officers and approved to enable this move. This can be seen at Appendix 1.

- 5.2 Officers and Wellingborough Norse employees monitored the trial and a summary of the findings can be seen at Appendix 2.
- 5.3 The stall holders moved from the Market Place to the area behind the Pagoda at various times throughout the trial with some traders remaining on the Market Square. Some practical issues had to be overcome, which will require consideration in any proposed plan for a more permanent trading solution in the area going forward.
- 5.4 On 21 January 2019 a meeting was held with the chairman and vice-chairman of this sub-committee, market traders and officers to discuss the outcome of the trial relocation and the future of the market.
- 5.5 The feedback was mainly positive, with most traders reporting an increase in trade. It was agreed by the majority of traders that they would like to remain at Orient Way at the area behind the Pagoda to continue to benefit from increased footfall.
- 5.6 Some practical works will need to be undertaken to allow a more permanent trading solution as well as a review of market and street trading fees in the town centre.
- 5.7 The Market Square will continue to host the more popular Tuesday themed Bric a Brac market that sees an average of 11 stall holders which cannot be accommodated at Orient Way due to its size.
- 5.8 The Market Square has been identified as an area in the Town Centre Strategic Review agreed by this sub-committee, that could offer greater opportunity for the town centre and would benefit from a review, building in flexible options for market trading and other uses.

6 Discussion

- 6.1 The market has continued to decline, despite interventions identified in the NAMBA health checks and previous reports to this Sub-Committee and other Committees. Traders were concerned that they would no longer be able to trade if this decline continued. Traders therefore requested a re-location to Orient Way to trial whether being closer to footfall would have an impact on takings.
- 6.2 The trial ran for a period of two months in December and January 2018. During December the average total number of stalls on a Wednesday was four, on a Friday, seven and on a Saturday, being the busiest day, was eight. The same pattern followed throughout January, further information is shown in Appendix 1.

- 6.3 Throughout the trial two stall holders decided to stay on the Market Square and did not relocate. This was for a variety of reasons including poor weather conditions, being short staffed and regular customers not knowing where they were if they moved. One trader confirmed that the new location is not large enough to accommodate his stock.
- 6.4 Initially the trial relocation has created more work for W Norse. Practical issues arose such as the quantity of gazebos and the time needed by W Norse to erect them. Whilst these were overcome, further consideration will be needed for any permanent solution if approval is given to continue with the arrangement.
- 6.5 The traders agreed however that they felt safer at the area behind the Pagoda, it was a more pleasant environment for themselves and their customers, and that they were able to support each other due to their close proximity to each other. The increase in footfall was noted along with many of the traders gaining new customers and some increasing takings. Members of the public have commented that they thought that this was a brand new market and didn't realise that there was a market on the market square previously.
- 6.6 Highways Regulations have confirmed that they do not see a reason why the temporary arrangement of stalls as per the plan submitted could not continue at the existing times.
- 6.7 Approval is therefore sought for officers to extend the temporary move for an indefinite period, which will allow traders to stay on Orient Way until a permanent arrangement is put in place.
- 6.8 For a more permanent arrangement traders have requested some issues be considered at Orient Way such as the removal of benches and bike racks as well as the installation of a means of fixing the gazebos to the ground. Therefore approval is sought to consider the options and implement minor works within existing budgets. Should the changes be more significant or have financial implications this will be brought back to this sub-committee.
- 6.9 The permanent arrangement is likely to involve establishing additional Street Trading pitches at Orient Way on a permanent basis and a review of the fees charged. This will be developed and brought back to a future committee.
- 6.10 There are currently a total of seven street trading pitches within Wellingborough town centre, as shown in Appendix 3. The average number of pitches being used during December and January is two. The pitches behind the Pagoda have been booked only by charities to date. The re-location of the market traders does not therefore significantly impact upon street trading income. The pitch in front of the Pagoda will require particular review.
- 6.11 Whilst the trial re-location of the majority of remaining market traders to the area behind the Pagoda is proving to benefit existing traders through safer trading conditions and increased takings, the market will continue to operate at a loss. It is not anticipated that moving the market to Orient Way will result in increased income sufficient to cover the costs of running the market as currently structured.

The move is anticipated to retain a market presence in the town centre and assist in reducing the current debt figure whilst the ongoing review is concluded.

- 6.12 The Tuesday Bric a Brac market (income retained by W Norse) has an average of 11 stalls and whilst it has declined in size, is too large to operate at the area behind the Pagoda and will continue to operate at the Market Place. Should there be an increase in general market traders the overflow will also be accommodated back on the Market Square. This would be discussed with the traders and W Norse as necessary. Should work be done on Orient Way then a temporary relocation is also likely to be needed.
- 6.13 The relocation of the traders to Orient Way and the reduction of the Bric-a-Brac market to it's current size also provides an opportunity to consider the future use of the Market Square and how this space can be used for maximum benefit to the town centre. The need to review the area to make better use of the space and the opportunity it offers is currently being considered. Therefore approval is sought to consider the options for this space and report back to the sub-committee as necessary.
- 6.14 Options may also include solutions to issues raised by traders such as concerns about the control of vehicles around the Market Place including a suggestion of a barrier to stop the cars driving through, potential for extra parking, problems with anti-social behaviour and drinking.

7 Legal Implications

Local Government Act 2003 grants power to make regulations and fee changes for Markets.

8 Financial and value for money implications

Some budget is in place to implement minor changes to re-locate the market to the area behind the Pagoda. If more significant changes are needed a report will be brought back to the appropriate committee with any budgetary implications.

Any proposal to re-model the Market Place and any budgetary implications will also be brought back to committee. £50,626 from the Rushden Lakes s106 is earmarked for public realm improvements at the market.

9 Risk analysis

Consequences if realised	Likelihood of occurrence	Nature of risk	Control measures
Traders will be able to continue trading and potential for debts to be cleared and additional	Traders have reported increased takings, this is a sign of a more sustainable market.	Market traders have stated they will not be able to continue trading at the market if current trading conditions	The number of traders and income will continue to be monitored. Any plans for the Orient Way and

booking of stalls could be realised.		continue. The Market Place is currently underutilised and is a focus for anti-social behaviour	the Market will not preclude any plans for options for future uses.
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10 Implications for resources

Officer's time will be required to carry out any of the identified options and can be carried out by existing staff and within existing budgets.

11 Implications for stronger and safer communities?

Markets are recognised as contributing to community cohesion. The recommendation is thought the most likely option to keep the market running in future.

12 Implications for equalities

There is no proposal to substantially change or introduce any new service at this stage, however once a way forward is agreed an equalities impact assessment will be undertaken. W Norse will continue to support traders. Public access and visibility to the market will improve.

13 Author and contact officer

Denise York, Project Coordinator

14 Consultees

Adrian Piper, Assistant Director
Victoria Phillipson, Property and Projects Manager
Alice Arden-Barnatt, Project Manager

15 Background papers

None

REQUEST FOR URGENT ACTION**(In accordance with Section 3.4.09 Urgent Action of the Constitution)****REPORTING COMMITTEE:**

Town Centre Sub-Committee

DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

December 11th

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

For general market traders operating at the Market Square to move to Orient Plaza to trade for a period of two months from 1 December on a trial basis.

REASON FOR URGENCY:

The market traders are not generating enough income at the Market Place to continue trading, and therefore the market is likely to cease. The re-location must take place as soon as can be arranged, prior to the next meeting of the Town Centre Sub-committee and subsequent Development Committee.

KEY FACTS:

The future of the market is uncertain and has been making a loss in recent years. Changing shopping habits and reduced footfall at the market place has resulted in a loss of trade. Traders have requested that they move to Orient Plaza in order to be closer to potential customers.

This will involve WNorse managing the set up of 10 traders on the market days that they usually operate on, in a new location at Orient Plaza. Traders will operate from portable pop up stalls/tables. The Tuesday Bric a Brac will remain at the market.

The trial re-location will operate for two months from 1 December. The set up of the trial will be reported at December Town Centre Sub-committee. At the end of the trial a report will be taken to February Town Centre Sub-committee to consider the results and a more permanent solution going forward.

The setting of street trading fees in relation to market fees will also be considered at the end of the trial.

Orient Plaza is Highways controlled with a roadway running through it. A location plan is currently being developed with traders and WNorse and will be submitted to Highways w/c 26th November prior to the anticipated trial start date. Highways have already indicated the criteria that must be met, which we are currently working into plans.

NB: To comply with the Constitution this signed urgent action pro forma must be attached to a report to the next meeting of the Committee concerned.

Street traders may query fees involved. One permanent booking (doughnuts) will be located alongside the market traders. Whilst not directly comparable, the street trading fee per annum is £5,460 (divided by 365= £14.95), the market fee per day is £10-£13 for permanent traders. Other bookings at Orient Plaza are received currently from charity organisations paying no fee and on an ad hoc basis.

The street trading pitch that is next closest in proximity is ST6 is the pitch located in front of the Pagoda. This is booked on a Monday and Saturday. Other street trading pitches are located at Market Street.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (SEE BELOW):

x3 pop up stalls will be purchased from existing budgets assigned to market regeneration. This will allow traders to re-locate that currently rely on displaying their good on the fixed stalls supplied at the Market Place.

Plans will allow for the continued booking of street trading pitches, and therefore income, at Orient Plaza.

Street traders may request a reduction in fees, more in line with market fees. Currently there is one trader that has booked and paid for a pitch on an annual basis.

SIGNATURES:

• **REPORT AUTHOR:**
Alice Arden-Barnatt

DATE: 22ND Nov 2018

• **CORPORATE DIRECTOR:**


ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

DATE: 27/11/18

• **CHAIRMAN/VICE-CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE:**



DATE:

27/11/18

IF FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS SIGNATURE OF:

• **CHAIRMAN/VICE-CHAIRMAN OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE:**



DATE:

27/11/18

NB: To comply with the Constitution this signed urgent action pro forma must be attached to a report to the next meeting of the Committee concerned.

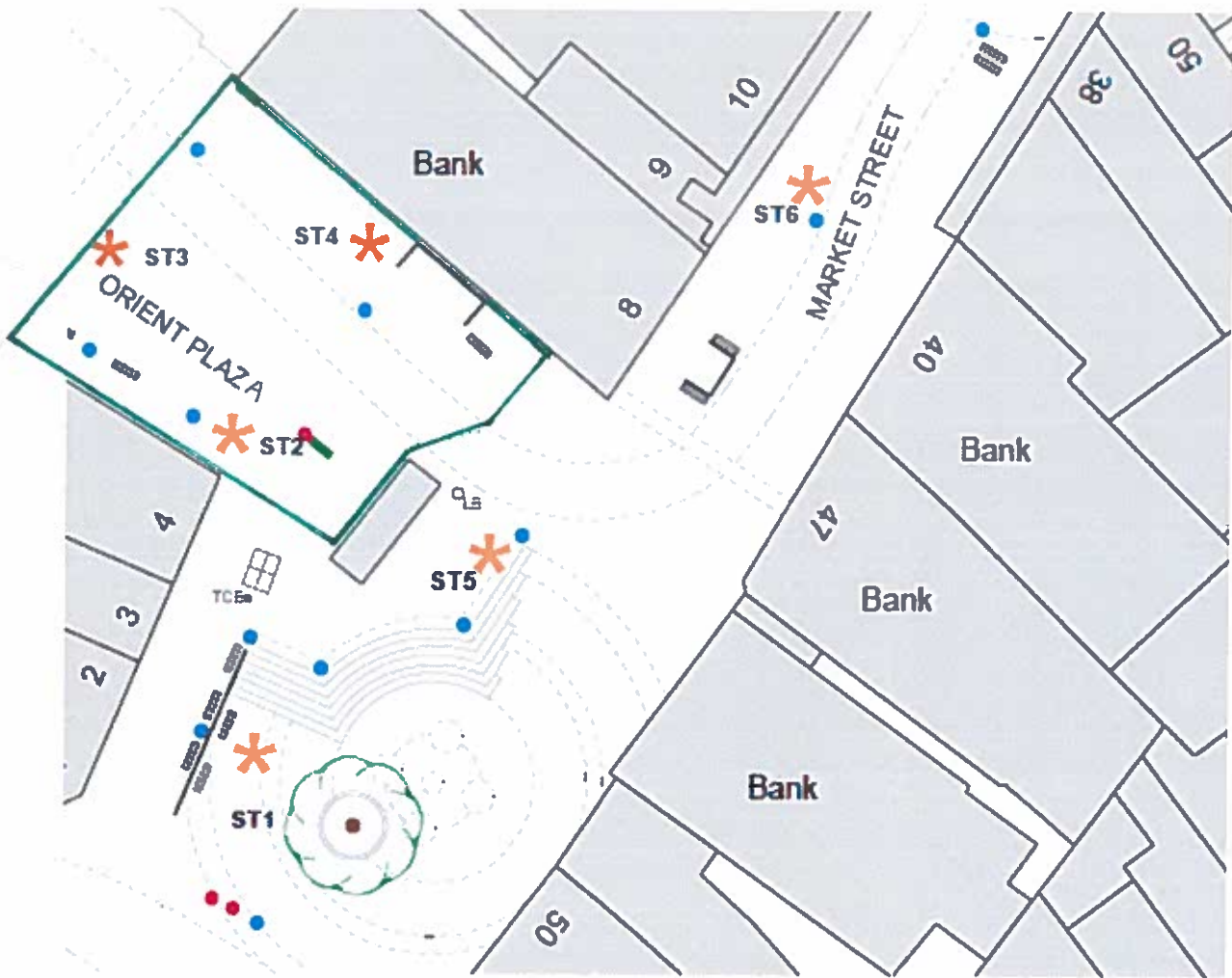
Total Number of Market Traders
Located on the Market Square and Orient Plaza

December 2018

	Total No. Located on the Market Square	Total No. Located at Orient Plaza	Total No. of Traders
Sat 1 st Dec	2	6	8
Wed 5 th Dec	1	2	3
Fri 7 th Dec	2	1	3
Sat 8 th Dec	5	5	10
Wed 12 th Dec	1	3	4
Fri 14 th Dec	4	2	6
Sat 15 th Dec	3	4	7
Wed 19 th Dec	1	4	5
Fri 21 st Dec	3	3	6
Sat 22 nd Dec	3	7	10
Fri 28 th Dec	1	3	4
Sat 29 th Dec	2	5	7

January 2019

	Total No. Located on the Market Square	Total No. Located at Orient Plaza	Total No. of Traders
Wed 2 nd Jan	1	3	4
Fri 4 th Jan	1	2	3
Sat 5 th Jan	0	6	6
Wed 9 th Jan	1	4	5
Fri 11 th Jan	1	4	5
Sat 12 th Jan	0	7	7
Wed 16 th Jan	1	2	3
Fri 18 th Jan	1	3	4



- * = Street trading pitch location
- = Area for temporary trading at market fees