

## Casson Block Enhancement Consultation

### Summary of Consultation Feedback and WCC Responses

Consultation Feedback	Winchester City Council Response
<b>Cobbled area</b>	
Granite setts should be retained and re-set	Agreed. The setts or 'cobble' are part of the original design by Sir Hugh Casson. Tree roots have disturbed them, but they can be reset around tree roots, which will require working by hand.
Maintain the attractive cobbles and trees	Agreed. Advice from our Arboriculture officers is that the trees have significant amenity value and should be retained.
57% respondents suggested more of the cobbles should be removed	The draft plans show some encroachment into the cobbled area to enable larger terraced areas in front of the businesses. This could encroach further, but on balance, the Council feels that a portion of the cobbled area should remain in order to retain the original character of the area. Further encroachment would also impact on the trees.
Raise cobbled area up to the same level as the existing terrace	This would not only be expensive to do, but cause the loss of the four trees in the area.
Discourage parking on the cobbled area	There is no formal parking area here, as delivery parking for the businesses is available to the rear of the building.
Increase planting around the existing trees	Due to the location immediately adjacent to the road and the constraints of the site, it is unlikely that planting around the existing trees would survive. Hampshire County Council would also be unlikely to approve such planting adjacent to the Highway. Planters on the new terrace will provide additional planting that can be more easily maintained.
<b>Dressing the area</b>	
Timber cladding to the vertical faces of retaining walls should be avoided. Alternative treatment should be carefully considered.	This will be considered as part of the detailed design.
81% respondents suggested small planters should be used to create a greener effect	Small planters around the terraced area will be considered as part of the detailed design.
52% of respondents suggested larger	Planted columns which do not jeopardise

planted columns to dress the existing columns of the Casson Block be installed	the building itself will be considered as part of the detailed design.
Large planters to screen the traffic	Planters are proposed for the new terraces. Their size will be considered as part of the detailed design.
Dressing the area is unimportant	The Council feels dressing the area is important in order to maintain the Casson Block as an attractive, inviting part of the city. Experience of Christmas lights and floral decorations during the summer around the city centre is such that dressing the area is deemed very important to many people.
<b>Overall design</b>	
There needs to be a reduction in traffic along St George's Street for any enhancements to have effect	Hampshire County Council is considering the traffic management in Winchester. However, this is an issue far greater than the scope of the Casson Block frontage enhancements project.
Commission a wider redesign of the whole area using expertise of an architect or urban designer	The draft design is by RPF Associates who have a great deal of experience in civil engineering, highway and infrastructure design. The brief they have been given has focussed on the frontage of the Casson Block, and has not included the building itself due to its historical nature. A wider design and scheme would likely result in greater costs and further delays. The Council's landscape architect is also part of the project team.
The proposed design is too fussy	The detailed design will consider this comment in the context of the area of the city in which it is set.
<b>Railings</b>	
The handrail next to the existing ramp should be reconsidered, as per part M of the Building Regulations	A handrail will be needed to aid pedestrians with disabilities up or down the ramp. However, its location on the north or south side of the ramp, and its design can all be carefully considered.
Could retaining walls be increased in height to act as barriers, rather than having additional railings?	This will be considered as part of the design.
If railings are added, they should be consistent in their design with railings already in situ.	Agreed.
<b>Ramp</b>	
The existing ramp should be reconsidered	The ramp allows those in wheelchairs, mobility scooters and prams and pushchairs to access the Casson Block

	from the east without encountering steps. This is felt to be necessary to maintain this area as welcoming for pedestrians.
The ramp was added approximately 20 years ago. It clashes with one of the trees currently, which needs resolving.	This will be considered in the detailed design.
Could the ramp be moved to another area, perhaps where the old water feature is?	Alternative locations for the ramp will be considered, although may prove to be uneconomical as part of this project.
<b>Terraced area</b>	
Sympathetic lighting to make the area welcoming and safe	Agreed. A certain standard of lighting is required directly outside the businesses in order to meet public safety standards. However, additional, more creative lighting design will also be considered as part of the detailed design.
Businesses should be allowed to use the terraced areas.	Currently Nicolas and Tom's Deli have outside seating. The extended terraced area could create space for more outdoor seating, although this requires licensing and any application will be considered on its own merits. Air quality may be one of the considerations here (see below).
<b>Other comments</b>	
The passageway next to the Hampshire Chronicle building should be improved	The ground treatment in this area will be consistent with the area outside of the businesses. Opening up of this area by removal of planting box may also help to create a lighter environment.
Possibly link this project with the enhancements to St Maurice's Covert?	Whilst we continually learn from other projects we have been involved in, combining this project with another does not present enough of an advantage. We value the difference between the areas and environments in different parts of the city, and do not wish them to have a monotonous feel.
Concerns about the air quality in the area, and the resulting likelihood of restaurants and cafes being permitted external seating.	As part of the licensing process, air quality will be considered when applications are made to have external seating for restaurants and cafes. Air quality in this area has recently been analysed and shows higher than mean levels of Nitrous Oxide. Whilst efforts are being made to reduce this in the long term, in the short term it should be considered when deciding whether to licence activities so close to the carriageway. It may result, for example, in restrictions in timing of tables and

	chairs outside, or mitigation to reduce the exposure of customers to such levels of air quality.
Reconsider the old water feature – now used as a planter	Agreed. The detailed design will consider whether this should be removed altogether, with an anticipation of revealing more of the original cobbles.
Could the telephone box be removed?	Agreed. This is now being investigated alongside re-siting or reducing the size of the air quality monitoring unit. This will enable the area to be opened up.