

DELIVERING IMPROVEMENTS TO RIDLEY ROAD AND ASHWIN STREET: FINAL PROPOSALS



Hackney Council is committed to Ridley Road Market's continued success and to creating a successful and vibrant town centre in Dalston. As a part of this commitment, we are match-funding the £770,000 Mayor of London's Good Growth fund awarded to Dalston to deliver £1.5m of improvements in the market and Ashwin Street.

Following engagement with the Ridley Road Market traders and businesses on Ashwin Street, the appointed architects, Studio Weave, have developed design proposals for the market layout, public realm and greening.

This document outlines ideas and comments gathered at engagement events and presents the final proposals for you to comment on.

The projects main objectives are to:

- Ensure Ridley Road Market continues to thrive and serve its community while retaining its existing character.
- Support traders to increase sales through the introduction of WiFi, increased pitch sizes and access to handheld card payment machines.
- Introduce new areas for shoppers to sit, relax and spend time in the market, and encourage a wide range of activities to attract more visitors to the area.
- Introduce trees and planting to make the market a healthier and more pleasant environment.
- Improve pedestrian movement through the market.
- Design out crime and anti social behaviour.
- Introduce improvements at Ashwin Street that will complement Ridley Road and future public realm improvements in Dalston's town centre.

The Council has appointed Studio Weave architects to develop designs for the market, Ridley Road and Ashwin Street. Following discussions and engagement with Ridley Road Market traders and Ashwin Street businesses, Studio Weave, have developed design ideas for the market layout as well as improvements to the street itself.

The next stages

The final proposal exhibition will run for 5 weeks until **27 July 2021**; it will then be handed over to Hackney's Streetscene team to implement.

Our engagement to date

We have undertaken a number of public and focused engagement and co-design sessions to inform the design ideas set out in this document. These include;

- Online workshops with market trader representatives to discuss new layout arrangements and other design proposals: April 2020
- Walk-about site visits: 8, 13, 16, and 22 January 2020
- Trader interviews: 16 January and 21 February (30 Responses)
- Stall on the market: 21 February (40 Responses)
- Public roundtable event at Ridley Road Market Bar (30 Responses)
- Virtual Workshop with traders: 6 March 2020
- The Issues and Options: Dalston Plan consultation. November 2019-February 2021. During the public consultation we held stalls on the market to talk to traders and shoppers about layouts and the design of public spaces.
- The Dalston Conversation: (September 2018 - May 2019). Throughout the Conversation, residents and businesses provided comments and ideas on how to improve while maintain Ridley Road and Ashwin Street's character. This helped us develop our initial ideas for this project. To find out more, go to **dalstonconversation.commonplace.is**
- Meetings with Ashwin Street businesses and stakeholders.
- Workshop with businesses from Ashwin Street and the neighbouring area, including Bootstrap, V22 and the Dalston Eastern Curve Garden.

Following engagement workshops with traders, businesses, residents and other local stakeholders, we held a more focused workshop on 6 April 2020 with market trader representatives to discuss new layout arrangements and other design proposals for Ridley Road. This feedback has directly informed the design ideas shared in the following pages.

Ridley Road and Ashwin Street feedback:

Market stall layout

The entrance to the market from Kingsland High Street where the majority of permanent fresh fruit and vegetable grocers are positioned is extremely congested. This makes accessing the market challenging, particularly for those with mobility issues and pushchairs. Initial conversations looked at how the orientation of market stalls could be changed to allow for different walking routes into the market. This included a back-to-back option, where stalls would be pushed together back to back to allow customers to walk either side of the stalls. However, concerns about the back-to-back option included:

- Restricted vehicle access into the market during setup and unloading of the market.
- Potential for reduced footfall throughout the market due to visitors not completing the market circuit.
- Back-to-back stalls at the entrance to the market would not create an open and welcoming environment for customers into the market.
- London Fire Brigade also raised concerns that the back-to-back orientation would create an access issue for emergency response vehicles.

Market stall styles and dimensions

The distance between market stalls, street furniture, neighbouring businesses and entrances to the market were raised as a concern during the engagement. It was therefore suggested that we increase pitch sizes from 2.5m x 2.5m to 3m x 3m, and increase the amount of spaces between stalls and introduce more frequent breaks in the stalls for people to walk in between.

Traders were eager to continue with the variety of different stalls types currently in the market. Further discussions with traders will take place to identify the specific requirements for any new stalls. The proposal to incorporate branded gazebo style stalls throughout the market was welcomed.

Places to sit, street furniture, green space

Traders who attended the engagement event agreed that we need to increase the number of spaces to sit down and spend time in the market. The Council and the police are looking at how to ensure these changes do not increase antisocial and criminal behaviour and that any changes to the market actively reduce opportunities for crime through good design.

Additional green space and seating (shown on the plan as the Market Garden area) and greening throughout the street was welcomed, with a view that it could help to attract new shoppers to the market. Additionally the introduction of a dedicated hot food stall area was welcomed. The location of both the Market Garden and hot food stalls could be used to address the lack of activity at the St Mark's Rise end of the market.

Signage and Wayfinding

New market signage was identified as a high priority at all entrances to the market. Traders think this will increase the presence of the market

and attract more visitors and shoppers to the market and to the shops along the street.

Ashwin Street Feedback:

Character of the area

The character and identity of Ashwin Street is special and to be celebrated. It is cultivated by its collection of 'quirky' and independent businesses which stands in contrast to other areas of Dalston. The diverse mix of uses, including a theatre, bars, music venues, affordable workspaces, a baker, a church and an antique shop highlight this unique 'mini high street' character. There is a strong sense of community along the street and needs to be nurtured and supported.

Community feedback highlighted that unused or vacant sites collect waste and provide an opportunity for anti-social behaviour. Similarly, poor hoarding creates an unwelcoming image of the area, especially during the evening. These should be restored or replaced to improve the 'image' of the street. Businesses pointed to using local artists and designers based on the street/area to create murals and wayfinding.

Public realm features of Ashwin Street

The green area and public realm is very popular and creates a social atmosphere, particularly in the summer months. Businesses highlighted that further greening and pedestrianisation could create opportunities for spill out (i.e. seating), events and a street market.

Damaged and uneven paving is a hazard and barrier to accessibility. The proliferation of the parking along the street creates blockages and traffic during busy times and makes it difficult for commercial deliveries and emergency vehicles. Similarly, informal motorcycle parking for food delivery is a nuisance to neighbouring businesses.

Final proposals

Proposed Market layouts

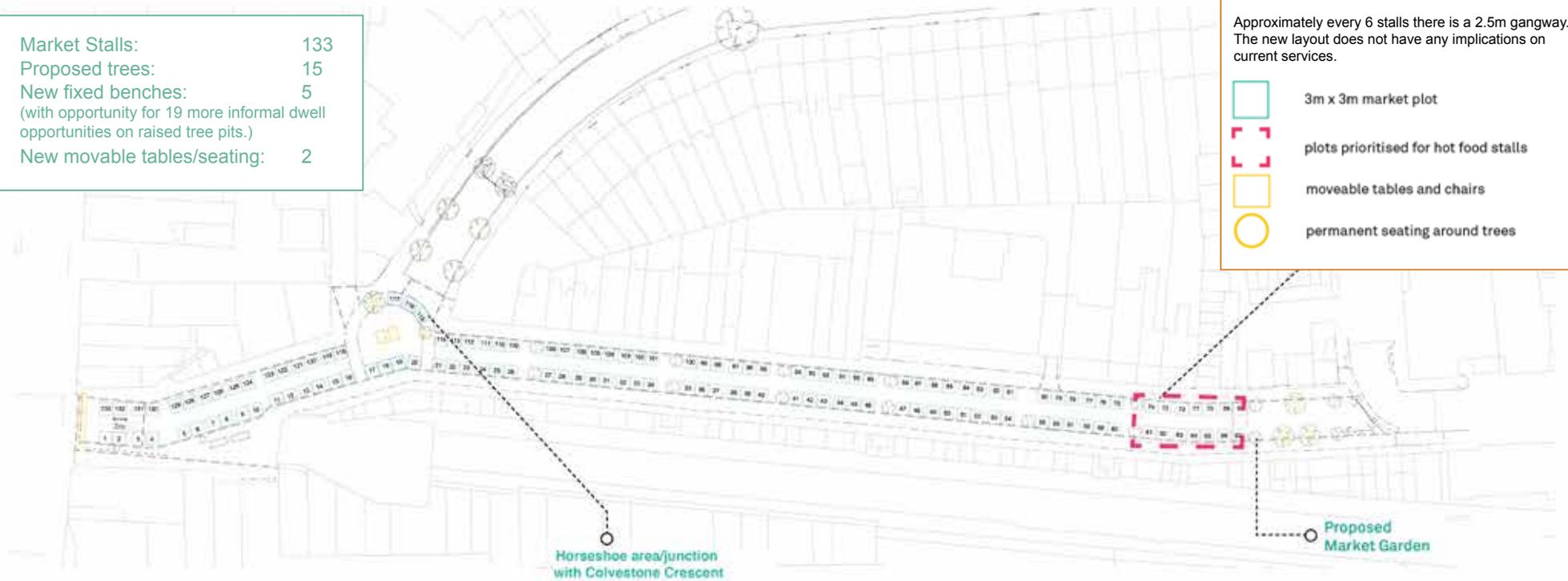
The project team has developed a proposal for a new market layout that offers improved accessibility through the market and provides more frequent and wider spaces between stalls at regular intervals. This will make it easier to walk through the market, cross between stalls at either side of the street, and provide better visibility to both market stalls and the shops along Ridley Road. To accommodate these improvements, 36 existing vacant market pitches will be lost but engagement with traders indicated that this is an acceptable compromise in order to improve the layout and setting of the market and Ridley Road.

Proposed Changes	Proposed Layout
(1) St Mark's Rise entrance: new market garden area (trees and seating)	Introduction of a Market Garden area (trees and seating) at the eastern end of the market to create a new entrance and feature area in the market
(2) Hot food stall zone - Provision currently in various parts of the market	Dedicated hot food stall area towards St Mark's Rise near to the new Market Garden seating area creating a food court area
(3) Improved access throughout the market	Wider spaces between market stalls for shoppers to walk through and outer pathways widened between the backs of the market stalls and the front of the shops on Ridley Road to increase accessibility to the shops
(4) Dwell Spaces - spaces to sit and relax	Create five new seating areas throughout the market
(5) Pitch numbers	Reduce number of stalls to 133 (loss of 36 stalls)
(6) Introduction of trees	15 trees (subject to further survey work)
(7) Colvestone Crescent entrance	Reduced number of stalls around the horseshoe area to provide opportunities for greening, space to linger and public seating
(8) Pitch Sizes	Pitch sizes to be increased to 3m x 3m

Market Stalls:	133
Proposed trees:	15
New fixed benches: (with opportunity for 19 more informal dwell opportunities on raised tree pits.)	5
New movable tables/seating:	2

Approximately every 6 stalls there is a 2.5m gangway. The new layout does not have any implications on current services.

-  3m x 3m market plot
-  plots prioritised for hot food stalls
-  moveable tables and chairs
-  permanent seating around trees



Summary

Proposed layout, focuses on improving access throughout Ridley Road market and maximising greening along the street.

Other design features include:

- Character zones at all entrances, providing character areas within market for alternate market offers (see over the page for more details on the character zones)
- New trees and seating areas throughout the market
- Designated areas for hot food.
- Designated 'market garden' area for trees and seating

This is the Council's preferred option as it maintains the existing character and attractiveness of the market and builds on what currently works well.

How does this differ from the existing layout?

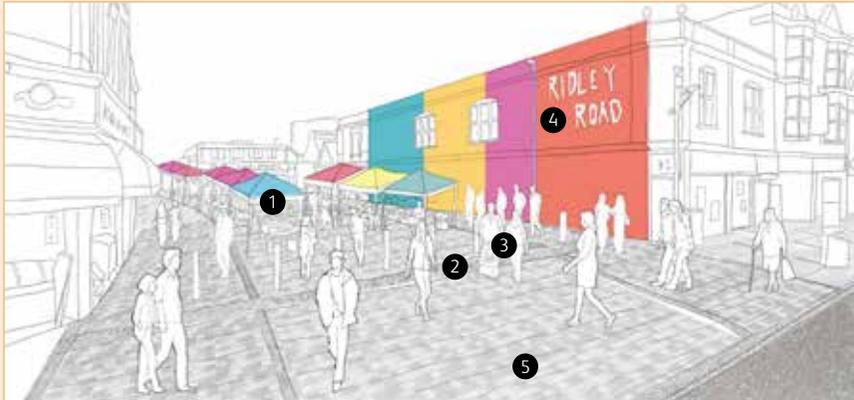
- The introduction of the Market Garden area at the entrance from St Mark's Rise.
- A dedicated hot food area near the St Marks Rise entrance/exit to the market.
- Wider and more frequent gaps between stalls to enable people to move through the market more easily.
- Extensive tree planting.
- The introduction of seating in five areas throughout the market.

Other improvements will deliver new market stalls, improvements to shop fronts, free wifi provision, and handheld card payment machines for traders.



NEW CHARACTER AREAS

The new layout of the market will provide an opportunity to create new areas within the market to attract shoppers and visitors and these are set out below:



Character Area 1

Character area 1 looks at defining the main Kingsland Road entrance to the market and increasing accessibility throughout this area.

Design elements:

1. Market stalls
2. A 3m free space between bollards and the first stall to create an entrance zone in the market.
3. Removal of street clutter such as bollards and railings to clear passageways and increase accessibility.
4. 'A 'Welcome to Ridley Road' wall art commission. Brief and design to be developed in collaboration with a local artist.
5. Upgrade paving around new bollards to prevent vehicle access.

Proposals also include:

- Market stalls with card payment facilities and wifi access.
- Planters and seating to introduce greening to the entrance zone.



Character Area 2

Character area 2 is the horseshoe between the entrance of the market and the central stretch of Ridley Road around Colvestone Crescent and Birkbeck Mews. This area is predominantly taken up by stalls spilling across the entire area and does not adequately function as a public space.

Our proposal looks at design interventions that give the space the identity and structure of a public square.

Design elements:

1. Trees and bespoke seating around the public space.
2. Market stalls
3. Stalls on the horseshoe

Proposals also include:

- Wheelable tables and chairs for customers to eat on.
- Cleaning of shop awnings.
- Potential opportunity for market signage.



Character Area 3

Character 3 Market Garden looks at a new area of trees and seating to the east of Ridley Road near St Marks Rise. Currently, this stretch consists of a long, uninterrupted run of market stalls and we feel it would prove beneficial to provide an additional point for shoppers and visitors to sit and rest.

Design elements:

1. Trees and seating.
2. Associated paving works to create a clearly marked area for seating.
3. Clean shop awnings.

Proposals also include:

- Gateway signage.
- Market stalls.

Ashwin Street layout

The project team have developed proposals for Ashwin Street to build on the street's character as a focal point for independent creative and cultural business and address some of the issues with the street environment.

Objectives

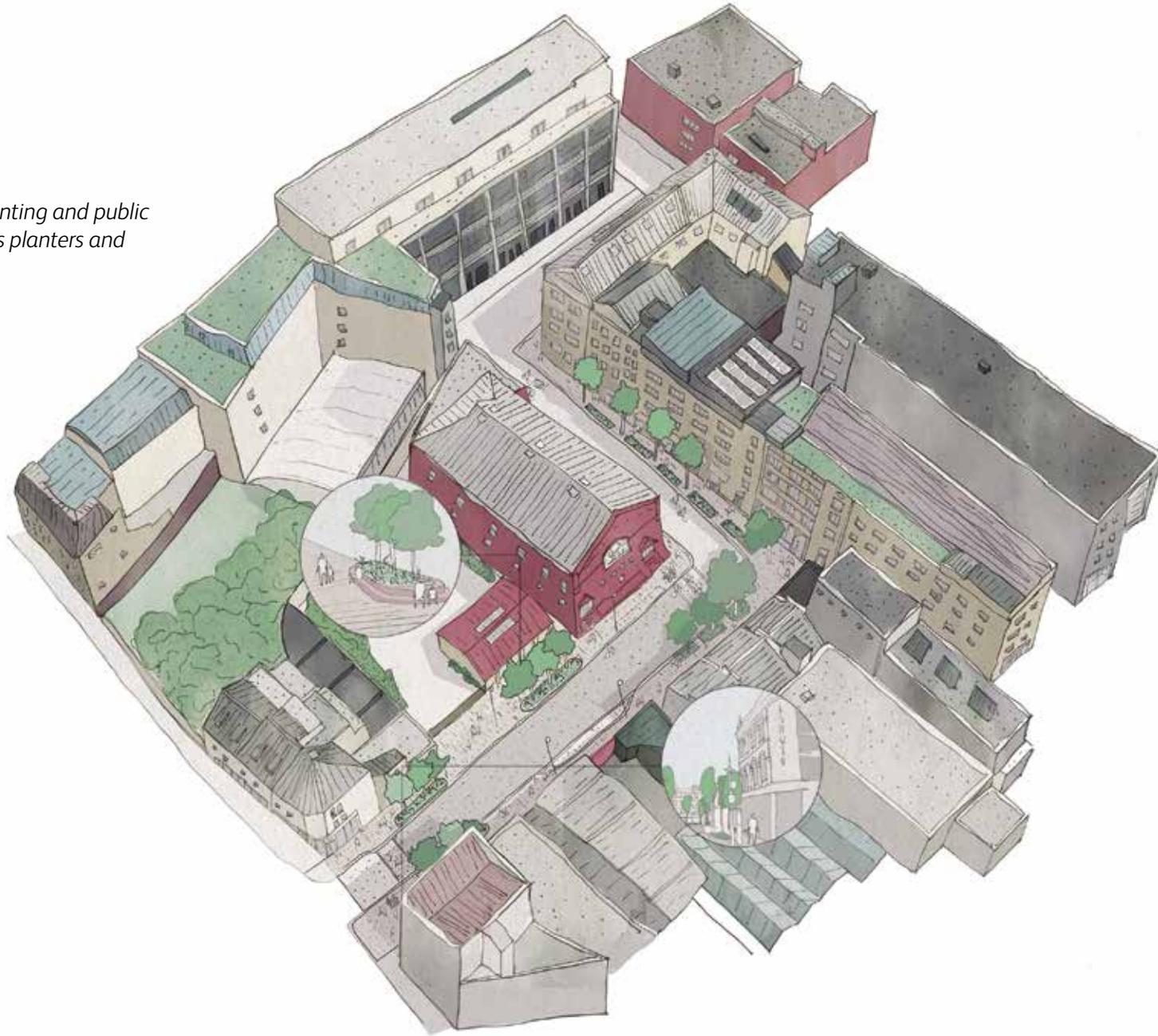
The proposed changes aim to:

- Improve Ashwin Street as a gateway into Dalston town centre
- Create a more welcoming environment as a place to visit and dwell in, supporting the mix of businesses on the street.
- Make the street more appealing for walking and cycling, promoting it as an alternative route to Kingsland High Street.
- Address existing issues with the street environment.

Design elements

- Introducing six new trees along the street, with design features to aid them to grow and encourage them to thrive
- Improving the condition of the existing trees, and replacing one tree that is in poor condition with a larger, more durable tree
- Adding new planting that complements the existing trees and proposed new paving, adding colour and vibrancy to the street through the introduction of species that will blossom.
- New street planting and raised kerb rain gardens
- New wayfinding and signage, signposting from Dalston Lane and Dalston Junction station
- Improving existing paving along the street with a mix of grey granite setts with an edging course of darker granite cobbles.

Indicative image of new planting and public realm improvements such as planters and raised kerb rain gardens.



Tell us your thoughts

This is your opportunity to tell us what you think about the proposal for Ridley Road and Ashwin Street.

This document and all supporting documentation can be found online at: **hackney.gov.uk/regeneration-dalston**

Complete the online questionnaire at **consultation.hackney.gov.uk**

You can provide feedback on the project until **27 July 2021**.

Next Steps

Implementation is planned to start in September 2021 and will last for up to 10 months.

The streetscene and markets teams are working with Ridley Road Traders' Association and Ashwin Street businesses to develop an implementation plan to ensure as little disruption as possible to trading.