

Committee(s): Streets and Walkways Sub – For decision Projects Sub – For Decision	Date(s): 03 December 2019 16 December 2019
Subject: Queenhithe and Vintry Public Realm Improvements, Programme Report Unique Project Identifier: 11945,10793 and 12034	Public
Report of: Director of the Built Environment	For Decision
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Summary

There are a number of public realm improvement projects in the Queenhithe and Vintry area which are being managed using a programming approach in order to coordinate reporting and timescales and ensure that dependencies and risks are managed.

The Queenhithe and Vintry Programme is formed by the following projects:

- Little Trinity Lane public realm enhancements - improvements to walking routes from the City to the Riverside and the creation of a useable green public space, mitigating the impact of pollution and noise from Upper Thames Street.
- Queensbridge House Hotel Section 278 works - adjustments to the highway and public realm, to facilitate the integration of the development into the public highway.
- Globe View Walkway - improvements to this closed section of covered walkway so that it can be opened to the public and enable the completion of the Thames Path, which is a long-standing policy objective of the City.

This report;

- Provides brief updates on each project.
- Provides an update on key dependencies and risks associated with the programme.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. Note the updates provided on the individual projects contained in the programme;
2. Approve design option one of the Globe View Walkway project to be taken forward to the next gateway;
3. Delegate approval to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee to approve Globe View Walkway Gateway 4 report (Detailed Design).

Main Report

Background

1. There are a number of projects in the Queenhithe and Vintry wards at various stages of development, including:
 - Little Trinity Lane public realm enhancements (approaching Gateway 4/5)
 - Queensbridge House Hotel S278 (approaching Gateway 5)
 - Globe View Walkway improvements (approaching Gateway 4)

These projects are not just physically adjoined, they also share dependencies in terms of scope and timelines and are therefore being managed using a programming approach, as agreed by Members in the programme initiation report in December 2018.

2. These projects will deliver improvements to walking routes and the public realm, so that the hotel development at Queensbridge Hotel can be successfully integrated into the public realm. The proposed works to Globe View Walkway will enable this closed section of riverside walkway to be opened up and joined to the new section of walkway through the hotel development that is currently under construction. This will fulfil a long-standing policy objective to complete the Thames Path in the City.

Current Position

3. Since the last programme report in December 2018, progress has been made in the development of designs and a public consultation exercise has been completed. Below is a brief update on each of the projects

Little Trinity Lane

4. A design option was approved in December 2018 that includes:
 - Re-landscaping the linear green public space at the southern end of Little Trinity Lane to provide an enhanced public realm, improved seating, lighting, pollution and noise mitigation;
 - Widened and more accessible footways and raised sections of carriageway.
5. A public consultation exercise was carried out in summer 2019 to seek the views of local occupiers and stakeholders. The responses received were very positive. The main comments received are set out below:
 - Strong support for increased greening
 - Consideration in design of potential to create a space where church/community events/activities could be held
 - Welcome investing in innovative solutions to address concerns over noise from adjacent Thames Street impeding on usefulness of the space

6. The comments received are being taken into consideration in the completion of the detailed design. The final design will focus on maximising the greening and versatility of uses of the space, including climbing plants on a pergola to form a green screen. The total project budget has been capped at £418,445 following the review of the projects within the Department of the Built Environment (approved by committees in July 2019), and so it is unlikely that acoustic screening will also be affordable within this constraint.
7. Next steps and programme

The scope of the project is still to be finalised due to the interdependencies with the adjacent Queensbridge House Hotel S278 works. The next steps are as follows:

- A structural survey of the planter wall has been commissioned to inform the detailed design and cost estimate.
- Detailed Design finalised by February/March 2020
- Construction Package April – July 2020
- Gateway 4/5 – July 2020
- Start on site – October 2020

Queensbridge House Hotel S278 Works

8. This project involves highway changes and public realm improvements to the streets in the vicinity of the hotel development which is currently under construction (anticipated completion late 2020).
9. The hotel development includes a new section of riverside walkway within the building that is being constructed by the developer (to specifications agreed through the planning approval process). The aim is to link this walkway to the existing walkway at Queenhithe to the east and a re-opened section of walkway through Globe View to the west (see project below). Officers are working closely with hotel representatives to coordinate the design and timing of these works in order to achieve an accessible, pleasant and continuous Riverside walkway.
10. The highway changes and public realm improvements include paving improvements and level changes to integrate with surrounding footways and walkways, as well as raised sections of carriageway to accommodate the servicing requirements of the hotel development. These works will also deliver improved accessibility, lighting and way-finding. There is a desire to introduce greenery where possible. However, opportunities for tree planting are extremely limited due to space restrictions and the presence of underground services and the existing foundation for the footbridge. Alternative greening options are being considered in the design development subject to agreement by the developer.
11. The City's Highways Team is producing the designs for the highway changes around the development. An outline scope of works has been

agreed with the developer, upon which the Section 278 agreement is being drafted. Once the design is finalised and a cost estimate is produced, the S278 agreement will be finalised.

12. Next steps and programme:

- Review concept design options with client: Dec 2019
- Construction drawings and cost estimate produced: Jan to March 2020
- Finalise S278 agreement: March/April 2020
- Produce and submit Gateway 5 approval: April 2020 (Chief Officer delegation)
- Start works on site: June 2020 on south side – North side dependent on hotel development's programme

Globe View Walkway enhancements

13. This project involves improvements to the currently closed section of Riverside Walkway within the Globe View block of flats, west of the Queensbridge House Hotel.

14. The design development requires close liaison with the residents of both Globe View and Queensbridge House, the hotel developer, Globe View freeholder company and the public house.

15. Architects and lighting designers have been commissioned to produce designs for the space. In summer 2019, two design options were consulted on. The feedback received was overwhelmingly in favour of Option 1, which involves widening openings as much as structurally possible to maximise natural light, eliminating hiding spaces where possible to enhance the feeling of safety, enhanced lighting and finishes. Option 2 included a series of sections of cladding that would remove all hiding spaces on the northern wall and provide a more contemporary feel with smoother lines.

16. The main comments received in the public consultation summarised below.

- There is a desire for as much natural light as possible. Therefore, widen openings more if possible
- Important to ensure good quality lighting day and night to create an inviting, welcoming and safe environment
- Continuity of experience between Globe View and Queensbridge House Hotel walkways to drive footfall along the river (away from traffic and pollution), including artwork subject to available funding.

Officers liaised with the City of London Police Architecture Liaison Officer at design initiation stage and will be working closely with them in the finalisation of the design.

17. Based on the outcome of the consultation, it is recommended that Option 1 be taken forward to the next Gateway.

18. Next steps and timescales:

- Complete RIBA stage 3 (detailed design) by January 2020
- Gateway 4: January 2020 (delegation to Chairman and Deputy Chairman of service Committee)
- Construction pack: Jan – March 2020
- Gateway 5: April 2020 (Chief Officer approval)
- Start on site: June 2020 – complete by end of August 2020

Officers are seeking to delegate approval of the Gateway 4 to the service Committee's Chairman and Deputy Chairman. Structural investigations need to be completed to inform the finalisation of the design and the estimation of the total project cost. The investigations are still ongoing.

19. The cost range for the project may need to be increased and this will be confirmed at the next Gateway, informed by the outcome of ongoing structural investigations. The main reason for this increase is to enable the delivery of a fit-for-purpose scheme that addresses residents' aspirations.

20. This project has inter-dependencies with the Queensbridge House hotel development and related S278 Highway works and also the Broken Wharf apart-hotel/restaurant building refurbishment to the west that is currently under construction. The programme approach will enable coordination of design, timescales and site access in close liaison with main contractors.

Risk Implications

21. There are a number of key risks that cut across all of the projects which are managed at programme level. These relate to timescales, approvals, scope and budget. A number of risks that were identified at the programme inception stage have now been either closed or reduced in impact. This includes the possibility of objections from local occupiers, which, following the successful public consultation exercise, is no longer a significant risk.

22. Key programme risks that remain live include:

- Structural constraints,
Risk response: reduce

Investigations and close liaison with relevant officers (Highways and Structure teams) will help establish the constraints and inform design development to minimise impact on cost.

- Site access
Risk response: accept

Much of the works encompassed in the programme are impacted by site access related issues because of other developments ongoing in the programme area and the riverside location. Coordination with the relevant main contractors will be undertaken to minimise site-access issues and improve efficiencies.

- Delays to Legal Approvals
Risk response: reduce

Globe View Walkway is currently private land and is due to be adopted as City walkway upon completion of the works. Legal agreements with the landowners are required to carry out the works and also ensure the City Walkway Declaration. These agreements will inevitably require scrutiny from the landowners' surveyors and legal teams. Officers have engaged with the landowners' representatives in order to ensure robust and ongoing communication of the stages of design development and surveys.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: programme plan
- Appendix 2: programme timeline
- Appendix 3: programme dependency network
- Appendix 4: Visuals of proposals for Globe View Walkway and Little Trinity Lane

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