

<b>Committee:</b> Streets and Walkways sub-Committee	<b>Date:</b> 19 November 2012	
<b>Subject:</b> Riverside Walk Enhancement Strategy – Report on progress and proposed review		<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> The Director of the Built Environment		<b>For Decision</b>

### **Summary**

This report provides an update on the continued implementation of the Riverside Walk Enhancement Strategy and proposes a review and update of the strategy. Since the strategy was approved in 2005 a total of 14 schemes have been completed. The last update was reported in October 2011 and since that time, the following progress has been made:

#### **Schemes completed/commenced:**

- Completion of Year 1 of the Connecting Spaces project that included lighting, paving and street furniture improvements;
- Completion of a tree planting scheme at High Timber Street;
- Substantial completion of improvements to Steelyard Passage to include lighting, paved gateways and a sound installation; and
- Commencement of landscaping improvements at Paul's Walk

#### **Other schemes that have received approval are:**

- Connecting Spaces Year 2: works are due to start in winter 2012;
- London Bridge staircase: works are due to start in early 2013;
- Enhancements to the Millennium Bridge area: designs are to be further developed ahead of starting works in summer 2013

#### **Completion of the Riverside Walk:**

The walkway under Globe View is currently gated shut. An outline options appraisal report was due to be considered by Members in October 2012 that set out proposals that would enable the walkway to be opened up. A new section of Riverside Walk is also planned within Queens Quay House and Queensbridge House as part of a hotel and restaurant development.

A total of some £7.4m has been committed to the Riverside Strategy of which £4.1m has been expended to date.

The riverside is now greener, more popular and better connected to the rest of the City as a result of the implementation of the strategy. There are also additional pressures in the area, particularly in terms of the high numbers of joggers and an increasing number of illegal cyclists that use the walkway. A review and update of the strategy is now required to bring the document up-to date with current policy and ensure that it meets the changing needs of the area. It is proposed that the amended document be reported back to committees, before being consulted upon with the public and subsequently adopted as a revised strategy for the area.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that:

- (i) The update information on the Strategy is received and actions noted.
- (ii) Officers commence a review and update of the Strategy, with a view to the updated draft being approved by Members prior to public consultation in 2013

### **Background**

1. The Riverside Walk Enhancement Strategy is a comprehensive area-based approach to the enhancement of the Riverside Walk in the City. Its main aims are:
  - The creation of universally **accessible connections** between the riverside and the rest of the City.
  - The creation of new and the redesigning of existing **green spaces** for people to stop and enjoy the Thames, as well as to encourage the biodiversity of the City riverside.
2. The strategy and the framework for its implementation were approved by Committees and the Court of Common Council through a strategic evaluation report in 2005. The approval provides that projects in the Strategy are to be implemented in phases as funding becomes available.

### **Completed Riverside Projects**

3. To date, fourteen projects have been completed which are set out in Table 1 below. A plan of Riverside projects is attached in the Appendix.

**Table 1: Completed Riverside projects to date (west to east)**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Blackfriars ramp extension and associated enhancements</b>	The existing narrow ramp was extended and widened with feature lighting and curved mirrors installed on the soffit above the walkway to create an enhanced environment Completed March 2009
<b>Blackfriars ramp hoarding</b>	A new hoarding has been installed to enclose the spaces under the bridges. Completed April 2010
<b>Blackfriars ramp hoarding extension</b>	The hoarding was extended to cover an adjacent caged area and lighting was installed. Completed autumn 2011 The space behind the hoarding is now used regularly for art installations funded by art galleries and consultants at no cost to the City.
<b>Pauls Walk East re-landscaping</b>	Old timber planters and benches have been replaced with new more robust granite ones, together with

	enhanced planting, an irrigation system and lighting. Completed March 2010
<b>High Timber Street enhancement</b>	Paving and access improvements to this section of the Riverside Walk where the walkway diverts away from the River. Completed April 2007
<b>High Timber Street tree planting</b>	The planting of six trees and associated footway widening. Completed March 2012
<b>Steelyard Passage enhancement Phase 1</b>	Installation of lighting and paving enhancements. Completed April 2007
<b>Steelyard Passage enhancement Phase 2</b>	Installation of paved raised tables as enhanced gateways to the archway, further lighting improvements, a bin enclosure and a sound installation. Completed November 2012
<b>Angel Lane: New public space and re-paving around Riverbank House</b>	A linear public space has been created from redundant carriageway, incorporating significant planting and seating. The space also includes a vehicle drop-off point at the northern end. York stone paving has also been laid around Riverbank House. Angel Lane: Completed April 2011 Riverbank House paving: Completed July 2011
<b>Grants Quay ramp and landscaping</b>	A ramp was installed to replace steps and significant landscaping and seating introduced to provide an enhanced public space on both the upper and lower terraces. Completed May 2009 A sculptural stone bench (funded by the stone supplier) was installed at Grants Quay as part of an architectural student competition. Completed December 2009
<b>Dark House Walk, re-planting (Open Spaces project)</b>	The existing planters at Dark House Wharf were re-planted by the Open Spaces Department as part of a five year replacement planters scheme funded through the on street parking reserve. Completed March 2008
<b>Old Billingsgate bollards</b>	Installation of granite blocks to prevent illegal vehicle access to Riverside Walk associated with the unauthorised use of the office building at Old Billingsgate Market as an events space. Completed June 2007
<b>Sugar Quay Ramp alterations</b>	The existing steep ramp was adjusted to make it more shallow and create a more accessible connection Completed March 2009
<b>Connecting Spaces Year 1</b>	A series of paving, lighting and street furniture improvements with a particular focus on Dark House Walk Passage where sports equipment has also been installed. Completed March 2012

4. The riverside environment has been significantly enhanced through the implementation of the above projects. As a result, the aims of the

strategy are being realised, with a better connected, more comfortable and greener environment emerging.

### **Improved Pedestrian crossings on Upper and Lower Thames Street**

5. Significant changes have been made since the strategy was adopted in that a number of the pedestrian crossings on Upper and Lower Thames Street have either been improved or created. Improved and safer crossings (with signals for pedestrians) have been installed at Queen Street, Byward Street and Swan Lane and new crossings have been provided at Angel Lane and Old Billingsgate. By March next year, all will be straight-across crossings (Dowgate Hill being the last). Officers have worked closely with TfL to achieve these improvements. These changes have greatly enhanced connections between the City and the Riverside, in line with the objectives of the strategy.

### **Update on Projects under Construction and Recently Approved Projects**

#### ***Paul's Walk West (Medium priority project)***

6. The proposals for this area, adjacent to Blackfriars bridge, include the re-landscaping of the existing public space that is in a poor condition and incorporates steps making parts of the space inaccessible for all users. The plans include the removal of the steps and the design of new planting areas. Enhanced seating and lighting are also included.
7. To mitigate the impact of their prolonged occupation of the Riverside Walkway, Network Rail are undertaking these works at their cost to the City's approved design.
8. Works are currently under construction and are expected to be completed in May 2013.

#### ***Staircase from London Bridge to the Riverside Walk (High priority project)***

9. A new staircase to connect London Bridge to the Riverside Walk is a core project of the Strategy. This staircase will replace the existing enclosed staircase within the bridge structure which has a very poor environment and associated problems of anti-social behaviour and crime. It is to be constructed on the east side of the Bridge and cantilevered over the river where it will be clearly visible to pedestrians.
10. An Issue report was approved by Members in September and October 2012. This set out details about the licence agreement that is required

before works can commence and the reasons for the delay in reaching this agreement with neighbouring owners. Works are expected to commence in March 2013.

### ***Enhancements to the Millennium Bridge Area (High priority project)***

11. The high volumes of people using this area mean that it has become one of the most important gateways to the City and the local environment needs to reflect the best image of the City for these millions of visitors. A scheme was approved by Committees in September 2012 to create an improved gateway space at the Millennium Bridge approach and an enhanced green space on the Riverside Walk at Paul's Walk.
12. Detailed designs are currently being developed and authority to start work will be sought in early 2013.

### ***Connecting Spaces Year 2 (Medium priority project)***

13. The Connecting Spaces project includes paving, lighting and street furniture improvements. These primarily affect areas of the walkway that have not been addressed by previous schemes, in order to create a better connected riverside walkway. There is also a need to add further signage on the walkway, including signs to discourage illegal cycling which has become more of a problem in recent years.
14. The first phase of this project was completed in March 2012 and the second phase (Year 2) was approved by Committees in September 2012. Works will be completed by the end of March 2013.

### ***Globe View Walkway (new High priority project)***

15. The walkway under Globe View was gated shut as part of a temporary planning permission in 2003 due to problems of rough sleeping and fire lighting. These problems were a result of the poor layout and disconnected nature of the walkway.
16. A report that assessed the options for improvements to the walkway to enable it to be opened is being considered by Members in October 2012. The option recommended to be taken through to the detailed options appraisal stage emerged in discussions with residents and involves re-configuring the existing walkway to widen openings and provide a more direct route together with a small external walkway on the east side of the building. This option will solve many of the problems associated with the layout of the existing walkway and would mean that the previous anti-social behaviour problems would be unlikely to

recur. Further consultations with residents, occupiers, Members and officers are proposed to take place as part of the detailed options appraisal.

### **Riverside Walk Diversion**

17. The completion of the Riverside Walk (the Thames Path National Trail) is expressed in various City of London policies and strategies, including the Core Strategy and the Riverside Walk Enhancement Strategy.
18. The Riverside Walk currently diverts away from the River at High Timber Street. In the short to medium term, enhancements have been implemented to High Timber Street. In the longer term, it is planned to continue the Riverside Walk adjacent to the River, under the buildings at Globe View, Queensbridge House and Queens Quay House. The proposals to enhance and open up the walkway at Globe View are set out above. However, there is still a section of the Riverside Walk at Queensbridge House/Queens Quay House that is not yet complete.
19. The completion of the walkway at Queensbridge House is planned through the implementation of a planning permission for a hotel granted 20 March 2012. The development agreement between the City and the developer also includes the provision of Riverside Walkway under the neighbouring residential building at Queens Quay. A planning application was submitted in July 2012 for this section of walkway as well as a restaurant use.

### **Remaining Riverside Walk Enhancement Strategy schemes**

20. Table 2 below, sets out the remaining projects from the Strategy that are not currently programmed or funded.

**Table 2: Remaining Riverside strategy projects**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Update</b>
Blackfriars Bridges: creation of retail/commercial uses in spaces under the bridges.	High	TfL require access to the bridge structures for inspection and maintenance and so this project is on hold. Discussions are ongoing with TfL. This area is also impacted by the proposed Thames Tunnel.
White Lion Hill re-landscaping	Medium	Progress has been delayed as the street was required to be kept open by TfL because of Blackfriars junction works. It is proposed to revive this scheme as part of the strategy review.

Connecting Spaces Year 3 (paving, lighting and street furniture improvements)	Medium	Year 1 is completed and Year 2 is planned. Year 3 is currently unfunded.
Re-landscaping of garden space at St.Magnus the Martyr Church / St Magnus House	Low	This is an area of private land. The scheme is currently unfunded
Re-cladding of concrete sections of Riverside Wall in Granite and replacement of riverside railings with suitable alternative.	Low	Unfunded

### **Riverside re-developments and infrastructure projects**

21. The Thames Tideway Tunnel proposal has been designated as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. It is a major new sewer that will tackle the problem of overflows from the capital's Victorian sewers and will protect the River Thames from increasing pollution for at least the next 100 years. Key aspects of the project that impact on the Riverside Walk include:

- The permanent relocation of Blackfriars Pier to the east of Blackfriars Bridge,
- The creation of a new foreshore structure that will become a new open space on the west side of Blackfriars Bridge and the enhancement of the Riverside Walk in this area,

The proposal is currently under development

22. There are numerous redevelopments in the Riverside area that are either under construction, approved or planned, and which may have a temporary impact on access to the Riverside. These include:

- Bridge House
- Mermaid Theatre
- Puddle Dock
- Queensbridge House
- Seal House
- Sugar Quay
- Three Quays

23. There are also numerous other sites along the riverside that have the potential for redevelopment in the future.

24. The character of the Riverside Walk has changed significantly over the past 5 years and the planned developments listed above will see further changes in the future. The developers and occupiers of the new developments have high expectations for the local environment and therefore the enhancement of the Riverside Walk is vital for the continued success of the area.

## **Proposed Review and Update of the Strategy**

25. Since the Strategy was adopted in 2005, the Riverside Walk has become more popular with increasing numbers of local workers, residents and visitors making use of the riverside, not only as a walking route but as a quiet place to relax. A survey carried out by TfL in 2009 showed that 34% more people were using one of the enhanced spaces at Grants Quay than in 2008. This survey also revealed a 48% increase in users rating the space as 'very good' and a 41% increase in pedestrians using the space because they find it a more enjoyable and pleasant as a route. The users of the walkway are changing too, with a wider variety of people including visitors, families and weekend users. The additional numbers of people using the walkway has also led to increased pressure on the available space, particularly as the walkway is used by a large number of joggers and an increasing number of illegal cyclists.
26. The implementation of the strategy has made the riverside greener, more comfortable, more popular and better connected to the rest of the City. However, the strategy is now over 7 years old and the nature of the area and the people who use it has changed significantly in that time.
27. A review and update of the strategy is now proposed that will bring the document up-to date with current policy, including the recently adopted Core Strategy, and ensure that it meets the changing needs of the area. It is proposed that the amended document be reported back to committees, before being consulted upon with the public in 2013 and subsequently adopted as a revised enhancement strategy for the area.
28. The Strategy review and update will include:
- Aligning the Riverside walk enhancement strategy with the Core Strategy and the emerging City Local Plan, the City's Sustainability Policy and the Riverside Appraisal of the Thames Policy Area SPD (due 2013)
  - Measures to prevent illegal cycling on the walkway and a review of enforcement
  - Assessing the impact of flood risk and proposals for climate change adaptation, including the feasibility of sustainable urban drainage systems and suitable planting for the riverside environment;
  - Taking into account the numerous redevelopments in the area and potential future developments and infrastructure projects;
  - Improving walking routes and connections between the Riverside and the City, particularly at Blackfriars, Southwark Bridge and the Tower;



- Improvements to the local environment where private and public areas meet where it is often unclear if the public are able to use those areas;
- Improving access, particularly addressing the steps at Fishmongers' Hall Wharf which is the last remaining section of the walkway that is not accessible to wheelchair users;
- Developing options for the enhancement of the walkway and private areas at Old Billingsgate, Dark House Walk and St Magnus House to include discussions with private land owners;
- Re-assessing the options for White Lion Hill landscaping;
- Developing a lighting scheme for the Riverside as part of the strategy;
- Developing an approach and proposals for art on the Riverside as part of the strategy.

### **Financial implications**

29. A total of some £7.4m has been committed to the Riverside Strategy of which £4.1m has been expended to date. The majority of projects from the Strategy have been externally funded through TfL and Section 106 obligations connected to redevelopments on the Riverside. Details of costs and funding for projects are set out in the tables in the Appendix. The City has, to date, committed approximately £2.1m towards the delivery of the Riverside Walk Strategy from the On-Street Parking Reserve and Bridge House Estates. The remaining £5.3m has been met from funding bids to TfL and the Cross River Partnership totalling some £1.7m and Section 106, Section 278 and other external contributions of £3.6m. Approximately 72% of the total cost of projects is externally funded which is far in excess of the original expectations for the strategy. Beyond 2014 the Section 106 mechanism will be replaced by the City's Community Infrastructure Levy. A funding strategy for the remaining elements of Riverside Walk will be identified as part of the revised strategy for the area.

30. The Strategy Review and Update will be carried out 'in-house' by officers within existing local risk resources.

### **Strategic Implications**

#### ***Corporate Plan:***

31. The Strategy helps achieve Strategic Aim: 'To provide modern, efficient and high quality local services and policing within the square mile for workers, residents and visitors whilst delivering sustainable outcomes.' by providing a comfortable and functional local environment that supports sustainable transport and encourages biodiversity.

## **Core Strategy**

32. The Riverside Walk has been identified as a 'Key City Place' in the City's Core Strategy (adopted 2011). The key aims for Thames and the Riverside area are: improving vibrancy whilst retaining tranquil areas, promoting environmental improvements, increasing accessibility on land and by river and managing and reducing flood risk.

Policy CS9 further expands upon these aims as follows:

'To ensure that the City capitalises on its unique riverside location, sustaining the river's functional uses in transport, navigation and recreation, whilst minimising risks to the City's communities from flooding, by:

1. Designating the Thames Policy Area and preparing and keeping under review an area appraisal which identifies the attributes of the area and gives guidance on development within this area.
2. Ensuring that buildings and spaces on or near the riverside contribute to the aims of the Riverside Walk Enhancement Strategy, particularly through:
  - (i) securing completion of the riverside walk at Queenhithe;
  - (ii) improving access to the river and riverside walk from the rest of the City and the Thames bridges;
  - (iii) improving the vibrancy of the riverside by encouraging a mix of uses particularly at Three Quays, the Millennium Bridge, and Blackfriars, whilst preserving privacy, security and noise abatement for residents, businesses and other stakeholders;
  - (iv) improving opportunities for biodiversity, in line with the City of London Habitat Action Plan for the Thames foreshore.
3. Supporting the construction of the Thames Tunnel, including connection of the Fleet combined sewer outflow, resulting in reduced storm water discharges into the River Thames and improved water quality.
4. Promoting the functional uses of the River Thames and its environs for transport, navigation and recreation particularly through:
  - (i) retaining Walbrook Wharf, Blackfriars Pier, Swan Lane Pier and access to Tower Pier, and encouraging use of these facilities for river transport;
  - (ii) maintaining London Bridge, Tower Bridge, Blackfriars Bridge, Southwark Bridge and the Millennium Bridge;
  - (iii) resisting development on or over the River, including permanently moored vessels, except for structures which specifically require a waterside location for river-related uses;
  - (iv) encouraging the use of the River Thames for the transport of construction and demolition materials and waste.
5. Permitting residential and hotel development within the Thames Policy Area as long as flood risk issues can be adequately addressed, with particular emphasis on:
  - (i) allowing clustering of housing along the riverside, particularly close to the existing residential development at Queenhithe;
  - (ii) maintaining residential uses in the Inner and Middle Temples;
  - (iii) encouraging clustering of hotels close to visitor attractions and in areas of vibrancy.'

## **Conclusion**

33. Several high and medium priority projects have now been completed, resulting in significant enhancements to the Riverside Walk. The long-awaited London Bridge staircase is scheduled to commence construction in early 2013. The riverside is greener and more popular than ever and numerous redevelopments have either taken place or are planned in the near future. A proposed review and update of the strategy will bring the document up-to date with current policy and ensure that it meets the changing needs of the area. It is proposed that the amended document be reported back to committees, before being consulted upon with the public and subsequently adopted as a revised strategy for the area.

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## Appendix A: Funding Summary (October 2012)

**Table 3: Completed Projects**

Project	Priority	Funding source	Budget (£'s)	Out-turn (£'s)	Variance (£'s)
Riverside Walk Strategy (Evaluation)	High	CoL, TfL, S106	84,000	84,000	0
Old Billingsgate Bollards	High	CoL	5,000	5,000	0
High Timber Street	High	CoL, TfL,	82,000	82,000	0
Sugar Quay Ramp Alterations	Medium	TfL	11,000	11,000	0
Grants Quay Ramp and Landscaping	High	CoL, TfL,	906,000	906,000	0
Spaces Under Blackfriars Bridge (Evaluation)	High	CoL	5,000	5,000	0
Blackfriars Ramp Extension	Medium	TfL	168,000	168,000	0
Blackfriars Hoarding – Western Section	Medium	TfL	31,000	31,000	0
Blackfriars Hoarding – Extension (Phase 2) *	Medium	S106	76,500	70,253	6,247
Pauls Walk (Evaluation)	Medium	S106	45,000	45,000	0
Paul's Walk – Eastern Section Re-landscaping	Medium	TfL	166,000	166,000	0
Cannon Street Footbridge (Evaluation)	Medium	S106	83,000	83,000	0
Steelyard Passage (Evaluation)	High	S106	28,000	28,000	0
Steelyard Passage - Phase 1	High	CoL, TfL,	105,000	105,000	0
Steelyard Passage – Dedication of Public Highway	High	S106	10,000	10,000	0
Angel Lane Landscaping	Medium	S106, S278	1,114,000	1,114,000	0
Connecting Spaces - Year 1	Medium	TfL	227,000	227,000	0
High Timber Street Planting *	Medium	TfL, S106	87,537	64,315	23,222
<b>Totals:</b>			<b>3,234,037</b>	<b>3,204,568</b>	<b>29,469</b>

\* These projects have been underspent and forthcoming outcome reports will provide a detailed analysis

**Table 4: Forthcoming / Projects Under Construction (As at October 2012)**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Funding source</b>	<b>Budget (£'s)</b>	<b>Expenditure to Date (£'s)</b>	<b>Remaining (£'s)</b>
London Bridge Staircase	High	CoL, TfL	1,695,000	536,515	1,158,485
Steelyard Passage - Phase 2	Medium	S106	226,190	170,234	55,956
Paul's Walk - Western Section Re-landscaping (Evaluation)	Medium	Network Rail	24,000	24,000	0
Paul's Walk - Western Section Re-landscaping	Medium	Network Rail	406,000	39,004	366,996
Globe View Walkway (Evaluation & Design)	High	S106, TfL	61,000	9,873	51,127
Connecting Spaces - Year 2	Medium	TfL	150,000	9,173	140,827
Peter's Hill – Play-builder Scheme	Low	CoL, London Marathon Charitable Trust, Dept of Education	48,000	40,750	7,250
Millennium Bridge Area & Planting/Planters (Evaluation)	High	CoL, S106	50,000	60,292	-10,292
Millennium Bridge Area Project (Design & Play-builder Works)	High	S106, London Marathon Charitable Trust	79,500	32,372	47,128
Millennium Bridge Area Project – Implementation (Subject to Design Approval)	High	CoL, S106	1,393,805	0	1,393,805
<b>Totals:</b>			<b>4,133,495</b>	<b>922,213</b>	<b>3,211,282</b>