

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Planning and Transportation Policy and Resources Court of Common Council	16 April 2013 02 May 2013 16 May 2013
Subject: Adoption of Bank Area Enhancement Strategy	Public
Report of: Director of the Built Environment	For Decision
<p>Summary</p> <p>This report seeks approval for the adoption of the Bank Area Enhancement Strategy and informs Members of the results of public consultation and the subsequent revisions to the Strategy. Copies of the Strategy and of the consultation results and analysis are available in the Member's Reading Room, or on request.</p> <p>The Bank Area Enhancement Strategy sets out the City's vision for road danger reduction, transportation and public realm improvements in the Bank area over the next 5-10 years. It provides a framework, ensuring that works are coordinated and improvements prioritised to make the best use of available funds.</p> <p>A two stage public consultation approach was adopted for this strategy the first was undertaken in the autumn of 2011 and the second in October 2012. Respondents, from the latest round of consultation were generally positive.</p> <p>Following the analysis of the consultation responses five areas of the strategy have been amended. These include specific changes to Lombard Street, the Alleys and Bank Junction. The remaining two areas of modification relate to Conflict (Cycling and Safety as an overall theme) and the night time economy.</p> <p>Proposals have been grouped into high, medium and low priorities in the delivery plan for the strategy. It is proposed that projects will be delivered according to priority level and it is anticipated that funding for these will be from externally funded sources such as Section 106, Section 278 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions from existing and future developments within the area. Funding will also be sought from Transport for London. If the strategy were approved, delivery of some of the high priority schemes will be initiated through the project gateway process.</p> <p>Recommendation It is recommended that Members agree the adoption of the revised</p>	

Main Report

Background

Context

1. The City faces the challenge of co-ordinating sustainable long-term economic and working population growth, whilst protecting and improving the environment and quality of life for the City's community. The City's Core Strategy plans for employment growth of 96,000 between 2006 and 2026, with much of this focused on the eastern half of the City.
2. The Bank Area Enhancement Strategy aims to address both the existing conflicts and problems whilst also addressing the demands associated with future growth in the area. In line with the Core Strategy, the City needs to plan for future growth to ensure that it functions successfully, provides a suitable environment and maintains the City's status as the world's leading international financial and business centre.
3. The Bank Area Enhancement Strategy sets out the City's vision for road danger reduction, transportation and public realm improvements in the Bank area over the next 5-10 years. It provides a framework, ensuring that works are coordinated and improvements prioritised to make the best use of available funds. This allows the City to plan for future growth, in accordance with the City's Core Strategy Policies, in particular the Cheapside and St Paul's Key City Place policies. The Bank area is very busy and faces many challenges and pressures which will become further exacerbated as the area becomes busier. Bank is a key area to implement measures to improve road safety and reduce road danger for users. The Area covered in the Strategy can be seen in Appendix 2.
4. The first round of consultation in 2011 found that the area, and Bank Junction in particular, is not perceived to work well from many users' points of view. It is believed that there is:
 - too much traffic congestion,
 - inadequate provision for pedestrians,
 - a lack of space,
 - crowded footways
 - poor crossings,
 - not enough provision for cycling
 - conflict between the different users.

The above perceptions are supported by the statistical findings of the road danger reduction plan which shows Bank as one of the worst City junctions for collisions.

5. Traffic patterns in the Bank area have changed significantly over recent years with a reduction in private car use and an increase in sustainable transport modes, especially London Underground usage and cycling. These trends are set to continue in future years with pedestrian movement, London Underground usage and cycling all set to increase significantly due to the increase in office space within the City.
6. Employment in the City is predicted to increase to 428,000 in 2026. Much of this will be delivered by the planned new office developments in the Eastern cluster. Also, there are planned improvements to the transport infrastructure in the area including a capacity upgrade of the Northern line platforms and new entrances at Bank station. There is also the potential for a western extension of the DLR. In 2018 a Crossrail station will open at Moorgate/Liverpool Street which will effectively add 10% to the capacity of London's transport thus changing the way people move in the area.
7. Other Area Enhancement strategies that impact upon Bank have previously been prepared for parts of the City to deliver improvements to the public realm including Cheapside, the Eastern City Cluster, Aldgate and Tower, and most recently, the Fenchurch and Monument area. A plan of the current coverage of the City by Area Enhancement Strategy can be found in Appendix 1.

Strategy Background

8. Following the approval in October 2009 from Planning and Transportation, Joint Estimates Working Party, Resource Allocation Sub and Policy and Resources Committees; Officers submitted a funding bid to develop the Bank Area Strategy to TfL through the Major Schemes funding programme. TfL agreed in principle that Bank was an important area of work, however TfL could not provide the funding in the requested financial year as they would be funding Holborn Circus and Aldgate projects. Bank remains on the TfL waiting list for funding.
9. Officers considered that the production of the strategy needed to be undertaken before TfL funding would be made available and so Section 106 funds from neighbouring developments were identified for the production of the strategy and their use was approved by Planning and Transportation and Finance Committees in June 2011 and the Court of Common Council in July 2011.
10. Planning and Transportation Committee approved a pre-consultation report in June 2011 which set out the method and aims of the Bank

Area consultation to assess the perceived problems within the area. The results were reported back to the Committee in January 2012.

11. The first round of public consultation in the autumn of 2011 was successful in assessing the emerging themes for the area and the key priorities. 880 people took part in this consultation and this shaped the way the draft strategy was written. The draft Bank Area Enhancement Strategy was presented to the Planning and Transportation Committee in July 2012 along with the Fenchurch Street & Monument, Liverpool Street and West Smithfield Draft Area Strategies, seeking approval to publicly consult on the documents.
12. The public consultation exercise for all of these draft strategies started in October 2012 and ran until the end of December. The Bank Area Enhancement Strategy received 99 individual responses, most of which were well considered and provided constructive responses. A full post-consultation report analysing these comments can be found in the Members' Reading Room, or on request. The highlights of the results are presented below.
13. The Bank Area Enhancement Strategy develops further the objectives contained within the London Plan, the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy, the City's Corporate Plan, Core Strategy and the emerging Local Plan, the Road Danger Reduction Plan and the Department of the Built Environment's Departmental Business Plan.
14. In contrast with some of the older approved area strategies, the Bank Area Enhancement Strategy does not propose detailed design information about specific projects, but rather presents an overview of proposals which are capable of delivering necessary improvements. All projects identified within and arising from the strategy will be subject to detailed option analysis and design. These will be reported via the relevant committee processes and include an appropriate level of public consultation.

Current Position

Public Consultation 2012

15. Following the public consultation in 2011; a draft Strategy document was written. This was then publicly consulted on in the autumn of 2012 to ensure that the themes and priorities identified in 2011 remained appropriate to meet the needs of the City community. There were four key strategy objectives:
 - Reduce conflict and improve Road Safety for all modes of transport
 - Improve the function of Bank Junction for all modes of transport
 - Accommodate future growth, ensuring that the area functions well and provides a suitable environment that contributes

towards maintaining the City's status as the world's leading international financial and business centre

- Improve the pedestrian environment, create more space for pedestrians and ensure that the streets and spaces are inclusive and accessible to all

16. The consultation was carefully targeted to ensure that views of all relevant stakeholder groups were gathered including pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, City of London Members, residents, local occupiers and businesses, workers, local churches, visitors, Livery Companies, City of London Police, Transport for London, Living Streets, City of London Access Group and English Heritage.
17. A variety of consultation methods were utilised to ensure broad coverage which can be found in Appendix 3, from which we received 99 individual consultation responses. These included 73 SNAP survey responses, 19 individual email comments and seven detailed responses from Key stakeholders. These consultation responses have been analysed and a full report on the findings can be found in the Member's Reading Room, or on request. The highlights of the findings are summarised below.
18. The Strategy document has been reviewed and changes made to better reflect our stakeholders views. The revised document, which is seeking approval to be formally adopted, can be found in the Member's Reading Room, or on request.
19. The key themes that emerged from this round of consultation reflected the themes raised in the 2011 consultation. The four most common themes raised were:
 - The pedestrian environment
 - Traffic, congestion and conflict
 - Cycling
 - Night time economy

Issues raised within these themes included safety, sustainability, accessibility, wayfinding and enforcement.

20. The four strategy objectives were agreed as being the right ones for the area with 69% of Snap survey responses citing the objectives to *"improve the pedestrian environment, create more space for pedestrians and ensure that streets and spaces are inclusive and accessible to all"* and to *"accommodate future growth, ensuring that the area functions well and provides a suitable environment that contributes towards maintaining the City's status as the world's leading international financial business centre"* as the most important.
21. Bank Junction remains a concern for users. However comments received regarding the potential options to resolve the issues here often conflicted, particularly regarding who should have priority.

Conflict between modes including pedestrians and cyclists was raised with very different viewpoints being aired.

22. The consultation highlighted the increasing difficulty in seeking to create design proposals that will suit the needs of all users at all times. This difficulty will become more apparent as detailed proposals are brought forward. A concern was raised by the cycling community regarding the widening of pavements as a solution for pedestrian crowding in parts of the City, and how this would impact on cycle safety. It is apparent that a common email was circulated amongst some of the cycling community to copy and paste and send in their views. Six of the 19 email responses appear to be based on this copy and paste response. The Strategy will make clear that designs will not be developed that would jeopardise the safety of any particular user group.
23. Issues surrounding the impact of the night time economy were raised by users and occupiers of the area. Cornhill was raised as an issue with antisocial behaviour cited as the key concern. Future enhancement proposals need to consider the impact of licensed premises in the area and designing out potential antisocial behaviour issues through lighting, seating location and cleansing. This area strategy does not cover enforcement and licensing, but it is clear from the two public consultations that the night time economy poses significant problems for many in the area, particularly residents.
24. During the consultation period, some respondents commented on detailed design specifications. The strategy is a high level document and does not seek to specify detailed design issues. However many of the detailed issues raised have been welcomed and will be incorporated into the developing design briefs for each proposal. Officers will continue to work with groups, such as the City of London Access Team, Living Streets and TfL to develop the proposals to ensure that they are inclusive and consider a wide variety of users and uses.

Revisions to the Draft Area Enhancement Strategy

25. Following the 2012 public consultation the strategy has been revised as follows:

Lombard Street

26. Following the first round of consultation, concerns were raised regarding the contra flow cycle lane on Lombard Street and the pedestrian environment. The draft strategy proposed to improve the pedestrian environment by considering paving the carriageway and reviewing the safety of the existing contraflow cycle lane. The draft strategy also considered changes to Lombard Street as key to improving the by-pass routes of the north-south lanes as there is a high level of informal crossing by pedestrians emerging from the lanes here.

27. Through the latest round of consultation, responses supported in general what we had proposed, but asked us to go further with some of the proposals. Proposals now include more radical approaches such as giving consideration to total pedestrianisation, timed closures, shared surfaces and the possible redesign of the contra-flow cycle lane to make it safer and reduce conflict with pedestrians. The contraflow lane has been raised as causing much of the conflict in this street. The comments received over both sets of consultation raised conflict between the speed of cyclists, in the 'wrong' direction, and the conflict with pedestrians and vehicles in a narrow carriageway. Users are essentially trying to use Lombard Street as a shared space but without observing the etiquette required as it is not designed as a shared space. The Strategy now suggests that the priority of this street should be to make it predominately a safe walking and cycling route whilst retaining the ability for frontages to service and access.

Alleys

28. Respondents to the first round of consultation were positive about the existence of the alleyways in the City of London and that they were welcomed both as a feature that adds character to the area and as shortcuts and by-pass routes avoiding the busier streets and the main junction. It was also suggested by respondents that the alleys could be enlivened by giving opportunities to small retailers and to be better signposted. The draft strategy proposed to improve the alleys for pedestrians by introducing level carriageways and raised tables, improving cleansing and refuse management, wayfinding and looking at ways to activate the spaces.
29. The responses received in the latest round of consultation again reflected the great appreciation of the character of the alleys and there was also a steer that the lanes should be about the movement of pedestrians and therefore "*simplification of walking routes should be key to design decisions*". However respondents were also concerned that some of the improvements, such as encouraging active uses, would detract from their character and conflict with them being used as pedestrian routes. In response to these concerns the proposals have been simplified. The strategy now reflects that changes to the alleys should encourage their use as walking routes by methods such as improved cleansing, lighting, and wayfinding and should be sympathetic to their character. In the appropriate place and context, encouraging active frontages can still be considered for particular alleys, courtyards and lanes where appropriate to the function and character of that area.
30. As an example of how pedestrians can be encouraged to use the alleys as bypass routes, an initiative is being progressed to install a moving projection in Change Alley. This is a six month programme to

encourage pedestrians to use Change Alley to see the projection as a point of interest and to enliven the space through art. It is hoped that this will encourage exploration of the other lanes and alleys in the area as well. This initiative is planned to go live later this year.

Conflict, Safety and Cycling

31. The first round of consultation clearly highlighted conflict and safety as a key area of concern for the users of the area. Comments received included that the area was dominated by traffic and that there is a lack of provision for pedestrians and cyclists. The draft strategy sought to address these concerns throughout the document by setting objectives for the area as a whole, such as “to reduce conflict and improve road safety for all modes of transport”. In the revised strategy this objective is further clarified to include “Improving cycling provision and safety, and to review the current hierarchy of cycling routes, and provision of cycle lanes”.
32. The latest round of responses did not disagree with the objectives set for the strategy. However the responses did strongly confirm our view that cycling is a big issue, as is the conflict with other modes. The proposals to improve the situation were perhaps not as well articulated as they could have been in the draft strategy. What the draft strategy sought to convey was that proposals aim to improve the situation for all users, however in some areas greater priority is given to a particular mode. However the draft strategy should have been clearer that this would not be at the detriment of safety of any other mode.
33. Comments received in this latest round of consultation highlight that cyclists do not want narrower carriageways to accommodate increased pedestrian flows as they feel this would impact on their safety. Some comments from pedestrians felt that cyclists had already been given too much priority and caused pedestrians to feel vulnerable. Both of these user groups are key vulnerable users in terms of reducing road danger and meeting our targets in the City’s Road Danger Reduction Plan. There is clear evidence that the pedestrian environment needs improving and there is a need for increase in capacity in some streets, however this will not be undertaken at the sake of cyclists or vulnerable road users safety. The traffic demands and the implications for all road users will be carefully reviewed as part of the detailed design of the proposals.
34. The Strategy has been amended to better reflect that solutions are complex and that it is not the aim to make the area any less safe than it is now for any mode. The way this is to be achieved will be through design and consultation with the user groups.

Bank Junction

35. Respondents described Bank junction as “over-complicated, confusing and dangerous, and dominated by vehicular traffic at the expense of

provision for pedestrians and cyclists" in the first round of consultation in 2011. The draft strategy recognised that the junction faced existing challenges with the sheer number of people of all modes using the junction and that there were also future challenges that needed to be considered. These challenges include the increase in pedestrian and cycling numbers and the planned changes to the local transport infrastructure that will increase transport capacity in the area, and therefore usage. Six objectives were proposed for the junction in the draft strategy:

- Improve pedestrian environment;
- Better provision for cyclists;
- Reduce traffic conflicts;
- Managing future demand;
- Creating a more efficient junction; and
- Improving safety.

High level options were suggested such as shared space, timed closures, raised carriageway and road closures in the draft strategy as possible ways forward.

36. Comments received in the latest round of consultation did not really cover the objectives which were proposed, but did show a wide variety of views, particularly regarding who should have priority at the junction. The consultation did impress the difficulty faced in trying to satisfy all user groups. This particular element of the Strategy remains a concern for most respondents but there is little consensus as to how a solution might be achieved.
37. One of the main priorities for the junction is to "*reduce conflict and improve safety for all modes of transport*". With this in mind, and the feedback from the consultations, the strategy has been amended to be clear that the solution for the junction will need to be radical and will require some users of the junction to have less space and priority than they would have currently. The strategy now makes clear that safety of all modes is important, and that reducing conflict improves safety for all. The solutions for the junction will not be looked at in isolation of each other and a successful outcome for Bank junction has to be considered against the holistic movement pattern in the wider area. The junction currently has a high level of conflict, and therefore as part of the road danger reduction plan, it is key to reduce the level of conflict to improve road safety for all users.
38. The strategy document does retain the broad options for the junction, as there was no clear guidance given from the consultation results as to what would or would not be acceptable to proceed with. There was however positive reinforcement that something needed to be done. There is a need to deliver something very different and

significant if the target reduction in casualties and collisions is to be met as part of our Road Danger Reduction Plan. Officers would need to undertake technical work to establish the best solution; however it is important to highlight to Members that whilst the strategy is at a high level, the project which will be formed for the Bank Junction area is likely to require the closure of at least one of the arms of the junction in order to reduce the amount of vehicles flowing through. This would then mean that the capacity could then be redistributed amongst the remaining users. Officers believe that the cost of providing a radical solution will be in the region of £4-6 million. At this stage it is believed that the likely scenario would be the closure of Threadneedle Street, which would need to be undertaken with a selection of measures on the other arms such as timed closures, shared space and raised carriageways. However, this suggestion is to emphasise the kind of solution that the project will be looking at. All proposals will be subject to a significant amount of technical work to prove viability and to ensure that there is a reduction in the risks for vulnerable road users in this area.

Night Time Economy

39. The night time economy, and particularly weekend use was a theme that emerged from the first round of consultation. Concerns were raised by both residents and business occupiers in relation to cleansing and antisocial behaviour. The draft strategy recognises these problems particularly in Cornhill and the back of the Royal Exchange which suffer from the environmental challenges presented by the night time economy. The draft Strategy contains a high level objective to "*adapt street cleaning arrangements to accommodate changing area use*" which aims to accommodate the needs of the burgeoning night-time economy and to "*encourage alternative evening and weekend use*" to promote a greater variety of uses.
40. The concerns of the impacts of the night time economy were raised again in the latest consultation. However as a transportation and public realm enhancement strategy there is only so far that this strategy can go to tackle this issue. The Strategy has been amended to reflect that antisocial behaviour can be minimised by good design, such as not encouraging people to congregate. Good lighting and the provision of public toilets can all help to minimise the impact of antisocial behaviour. However this may be in conflict with what is desirable for the day time economy.
41. Close working with our transportation, public realm and licensing enforcement teams, as well as the City of London Police, during the design will also help to achieve this. There may also be more that can be done in terms of licensing and planning to impact on night time antisocial behaviour and the issues raised through the consultation have been passed to the licensing, planning and enforcement teams.

Implementation Framework and Funding Strategy

42. The strategy includes a delivery plan which is set out in Appendix 4. The projects identified are prioritised according to the significance of the issues they address, such as road safety, and the results of the public consultation. The projects are divided into High, Medium and Low priority categories.
43. The High Priority projects include Bank Junction (estimated to cost £4m-£6m), North-South Courts and Lanes (estimated to cost £50,000 – £750,000 per Court/Lane depending on the scale of the space and the design option chosen) and Lombard Street (estimated to cost £500,000 - £1.5m). All costs are inclusive of evaluation and design costs. As demonstrated by the wide range of costs, the figures quoted are subject to significant refinement as design options are developed. Streets such as Threadneedle, Old Broad Street and Cornhill appear in the medium priority listing as their design and development for the length of the street will be dependent upon the outcome of the design for the junction.
44. External funding of £2.14m has been identified for the strategy projects through existing and forthcoming Section106 Agreements. Details of these funding sources are set out in Appendix 5. It should be noted that many of these contributions are for transport improvements and these will be particularly suitable for developing the Bank Junction proposals.
45. Members will note that there is a significant difference between existing funds identified and cost estimates for the strategy proposals. Further funding is to be sought from TfL and the Strategy is already identified in TfL's programme of 'major schemes' and awaiting funding to be made available. It is proposed that ordinarily the Strategy projects will be delivered according to priority level over a ten year period. It is anticipated that the vast majority of the funding for projects arising from the Strategy will be externally funded via Section 106, Section 278 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions from future developments within the area. Progression of schemes will be subject to advance receipt of the funds for the relevant design or implementation stage.
46. Members have already approved the use of £140,000 of Section106 funds from the Bucklersbury House (£50,000) and the 22-24 Bishopsgate (£90,000) Agreements to develop the Bank Area Enhancement Strategy. A summary of the expenditure to date is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Strategy Costs

	Approved Budget (£)	Expenditure & Commitments to date (£)	Remaining (£)
Fees	73,199	72,974	225
Staff Costs	66,801	61,091	5,710
Evaluation Total	140,000	134,065	5,935

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Corporate Plan

47. The strategy will support the delivery of the Strategic Aim : 'To support and promote the City as the world leader in international finance and business services' by ensuring that the area is fit for purpose in terms of function and environment and is able to accommodate future growth.
48. The strategy will also assist in meeting the 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 fitting and functional local environment that supports sustainable transport and promotes the cultural and historic identity of the City'.

Core Strategy

49. The Core Strategy sets out the vision for planning in the City up to 2026. The proposed Bank Area Enhancement Strategy helps to deliver this vision and, in particular, Policy CS5 and Figure 6 that identify the Bank Area as having scope for improved movement as part of the wider initiative to improve the Cheapside and St Paul's area as a 'Key City Place'

Road Danger Reduction Plan

50. The recently adopted City's Road Danger Reduction Plan "*seeks to achieve a genuine reduction in danger for all, to make the City's streets safer and improve the quality of life for everyone in the City*" and is committed to "*implement engineering solutions to improve road safety at locations with the highest risk, including the removal of gyratories and junction remodelling*". The Bank Junction project, which will be formed out of this strategy, will seek to help deliver this.

Conclusion

51. Overall, the 2012 consultation on the draft Bank Area Enhancement Strategy was successful. It has given greater certainty that the objectives and aims of the strategy are the right ones, as they were positively received. The comments received have generally been well

constructed and provided positive critique of the strategy and its proposals which has helped define changes to the document as outlined above.

52. It is recommended that the amended Bank Area Enhancement Strategy, which can be found in the Members' Reading Room, is adopted. On adoption a number of the high priority proposals can be initiated as projects. Comments from the consultation will be used to assist and inform the design briefs for individual schemes.
53. It is intended that the Bank Junction project will be initiated through the appropriate procedures in the summer of this year in order to link in with the various other streams of work which are being undertaken across the City by both ourselves and external parties.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – City Area Strategies Plan
- Appendix 2 – Bank Area Strategy Plan
- Appendix 3 – Consultation and advertising methods utilised in 2012 consultation.
- Appendix 4 – Bank Area Delivery Plan
- Appendix 5 – Funding Strategy

Background Papers:

- Bank Area Strategy – proposed public consultation: June 2011
- Bank Area Strategy – results of public consultation: January 2012
- Bank, Fenchurch & Monument, Liverpool Street and West Smithfield draft Area Enhancement Strategies – Pre-consultation report: July 2012

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