

Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Streets & Walkways Sub-Committee Cultural Hub Working Party (for information)	21 September 2015 1 October 2015	
Subject: Fleet Street Area Enhancement Strategy – pre-consultation report		Public
Report of: The Director of the Built Environment		For Decision

Summary

This report sets out the planned public consultation exercise for a revised and expanded Fleet Street Area Enhancement Strategy. Numerous large-scale, regenerative changes are planned to take place in the wider area over the next decade, and so there is a need to respond to these changes and an opportunity to implement transformative change on Fleet Street, Ludgate Hill and the adjoining courts and lanes.

Fleet Street represents an area of need in terms of public realm enhancement and investment. The existing public realm has changed little following the decline of the newspaper industry in the 1980s, and offers inefficient pedestrian, cycling and bus infrastructure to meet the needs of the City of London today. Ludgate Circus has been targeted as a location for road casualty reduction, and loading patterns along the corridor conflict with other road users. There is also a lack of high quality public open space in the area, particularly in the courts and lanes south of Fleet Street.

The 2004 Fleet Street Courts & Lanes Design Strategy focussed on improvements to the courts and lanes north of Fleet Street where funding was available through Section 106 contributions on local developments. The Strategy did not propose enhancements to Fleet Street itself, because at that time the City did not have the experience and resource to complete a project of this scale. The City is now well versed at planning and delivering large scale, transformative projects, and enhancements to the Fleet Street corridor would now be considered a 'business as usual' activity.

Whilst transformative in itself, an enhancement of the Fleet Street corridor would also complement other large-scale projects in the wider area. Proposals for a major remodelling of Aldwych are being developed by Westminster City Council and Transport for London, and the Garden Bridge is proposed to 'land' near the Temples, creating a new strategic pedestrian link. Similarly, the north-south Cycle Super Highway intersects Fleet Street at Ludgate Circus, and the east-west route will run parallel with Fleet Street along the Embankment.

At the local level, Fleet Street is an important pedestrian, cycle and traffic route. At present, the street does not adequately support these users; Ludgate Circus has been identified as a priority area through the City's Road Danger Reduction Plan; and footway widths are inadequate at numerous points along the corridor. Whilst the courts and alleyways adjacent to Fleet Street are valuable local links, many of them do not currently offer attractive and welcoming environments, with a lack of seating

a particularly common issue.

All of these projects will significantly change the function of the area, and there is a risk that if these changes are not addressed the Fleet Street corridor will fail to support an increased demand for quality public space and sufficient space to accommodate increases in pedestrian and cyclist movement.

The revised and expanded Strategy will also provide a framework for public realm and highway enhancements in the area, including the courts and lanes adjacent to Fleet Street. It will establish a set of objectives to ensure that the area is accessible, well connected, provides comfortable spaces for people to enjoy and will deliver safe and well-functioning streets and spaces for all users.

The 2004 Fleet Street Courts & Lanes Design Strategy facilitated the delivery of six priority projects, at a cost of approximately £1.6m over a five year period. Since 2009, as a result of the low level of development in the area there have been no further projects implemented. The transition to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as a principal source of funding will allow the City to better address areas of need, such as Fleet Street, rather than be restricted to areas of development activity (noting that allocation of CIL will be dependent upon an assessment of competing priorities).

A total of £56,350 (fees and staff costs) will be required to carry out the public consultation and take the strategy to adoption in 2016. This amount is consistent with cost of similar processes relating to the recent Cheapside and Guildhall Area Enhancement Strategy and Riverside Walk Enhancement Strategy. It is proposed that this is funded from the Section 106 agreement connected to 30 Old Bailey / 60 Ludgate Hill.

It is proposed that the draft Fleet Street Area Enhancement Strategy be made available for public consultation in winter 2015. Subject to the outcome of the consultation process, the strategy will be submitted to committees for adoption in spring 2016. Delivery of the projects identified in the strategy will be timed, dependant on funding and the coordination of streetworks to mitigate potential congestion.

Copies of the draft strategy are available in the Member's Reading Room.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:-

- i. Additional resources of £56,350 be approved to carry out the consultation and finalise the strategy document, to be funded from the Section 106 agreement connected to 30 Old Bailey / 60 Ludgate Hill;
- ii. Members agree that public consultation on the Fleet Street Area Enhancement Strategy takes place in winter 2015;
- iii. Authority be delegated to the Director of the Built Environment to finalise the details of the relevant consultation materials in liaison with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee.

Main Report

Background

1. The Fleet Street Courts & Lanes Design Strategy was approved in 2004 to coordinate the delivery of functional improvements, visual enhancements and integrated management in the Fleet Street area. The key vision of the strategy was to create an accessible, safe, functional and attractive series of courts and lanes adjoining Fleet Street, enhancing the 'fine grain' of the street network in the area.
2. The strategy was conceived as part of the City's 'Street Scene Challenge' programme, and set out a five-year plan for implementation. Key individual projects were outlined in line with a set of overarching design guidelines, building on the existing character of the conservation area in which the strategy area sits.
3. It is now proposed to update the 2004 document, in order to bring it up to date with relevant policies, and to broaden the scope to include the entire Fleet Street / Ludgate Hill corridor and the courts and lanes to the south of Fleet Street.

Policy Context

4. The review of the Strategy aims to align the document with the policy framework provided by both the Mayor's London Plan and the City's Local Plan. The revised strategy also supports the objectives of key corporate strategies, including the Air Quality Strategy, the Cultural Strategy and the Visitor Strategy.
5. The Strategy area falls within the Fleet Street and St Paul's Cathedral conservation areas. A Character Summary and Management Strategy SPD was adopted for the latter in 2013 and the draft for Fleet Street was reported to the Planning and Transportation Committee on 31st July 2015, following which a draft was made available on the City's website for informal consultation.

Fleet Street Area Enhancement Strategy Objectives

6. Through the Local Plan, the City Corporation plans for future growth in order to ensure that the City can continue to function successfully and provide a welcoming environment for residents, workers and visitors. The strategy will provide a framework for the future development and improvement of the public realm, based on clear evidence of need and requirements for future growth. The revised Fleet Street Conservation Area SPD will provide further guidance in this regard.
7. The strategy will also play an important role in the development of the Cultural Hub. As one of only two main links between the City of London and the West End, Fleet Street will play an increasingly important role in facilitating

the movement of people between two cultural centres, whilst having the potential to become a destination in its own right.

8. The vision for the Fleet Street Area Enhancement Strategy is consistent with the policies contained within the City's Local Plan. The main vision consists of three aims:
 - To create simple, attractive and welcoming spaces for the benefit of the City community;
 - To improve the function of the street environment for all users and mitigate conflict between these different modes of transport;
 - To improve accessibility of streets and crossings thus creating an inclusive street environment for users of varying mobility levels.

9. The vision is supported by a number of additional objectives that seek to implement the policies of the strategies and plans outlined above. These objectives include:
 - To continue the implementation of the City's Road Danger Reduction Plan, by seeking to reduce the number of casualties;
 - To progress the development of the Cultural Hub, enhancing the setting of cultural attractions in the area whilst facilitating movement between cultural destinations further afield;
 - To conserve or enhance the significance of the City's heritage assets and their settings;
 - To improve the lighting of the streetscape;
 - To investigate opportunities for public art;
 - To introduce more seating in the area, with an appropriate mix of seating types.

Major project proposal – Fleet Street / Ludgate Hill corridor

10. The main project proposal identified in the Strategy is the reconfiguration and enhancement of the Fleet Street / Ludgate Hill corridor. This route is the principal ceremonial route to the City from the west, and is identified in the Local Plan as one of the City's Principal Shopping Centres.

11. Despite the importance of the route, and the changes that have taken place since the exodus of the newspaper industry in the 1980s, the streets have received isolated improvements, but not within the context of an overarching strategy. Footways are generally narrow and cluttered, and are inadequate to cope with the increasing numbers of people using them. It is

proposed to redress the balance in favour of pedestrians, modelled on the recent enhancements to Cheapside.

12. As was the case with Cheapside, a study commissioned by the City of London found that rental prices for retail units in the area are lower in comparison to other 'principal shopping centres' in London. Enhancements to the public realm would likely increase the attractiveness of the area, improving the image of the street and leading to greater investment.
13. To achieve this, proposals include widened footways along the length of the corridor and a reduction in street clutter. This may be achieved by narrowing the carriageway and introducing inset loading facilities. The key junction at Ludgate Circus will be designed in accordance with the north-south Cycle Superhighway, which is currently under construction. As part of the consultation, consideration will be given to the preferred approach to accommodate increasing numbers of cyclists.
14. Tree planting is not proposed on the main thoroughfare, in order to maximise available footway width and preserve key viewing corridors of landmark buildings along the route.

Courts & Lanes

15. The 2004 strategy proposed a variety of enhancements to the courts and lanes to the north of Fleet Street. As noted above, a number of these projects have since been implemented, improving connectivity and accessibility in the area.
16. Despite the success of the completed projects, there are many other similar spaces, particularly to the south of the main corridor, that would benefit from similar enhancements. Priorities include improving local wayfinding and increasing the amount and variety of seating on offer.
17. It is proposed to replicate this successful approach in the area to the south of Fleet Street. The fine grain nature of these courts and lanes provide opportunities to increase connectivity, and provide calmer, quieter movement alternatives to the main corridor, whilst at the same time creating improved 'dwell' spaces which are currently underprovided in the City.
18. Their enhancement will also allow greater understanding of and access to the area's heritage, connecting as they do landmarks such as St Bride's Church and St Dunstan-in-the-West.

Consultation Approach

19. A public consultation is proposed at this stage of the Strategy development to ensure a responsive and inclusive approach. The consultation will target different stakeholder groups, including visitors, workers, local businesses and other key local occupiers, residents and developers to ensure that as full a picture as possible is achieved. Consultation with other City departments has

already taken place, and relevant amendments made to the draft document.

20. It is proposed that the draft Strategy will be the subject of consultation exercises for a six-to-eight week period during autumn 2015. Following the end of the consultation period, the Strategy will be reviewed and amended in light of the feedback received, following the 'you said, we did' approach. The revised strategy will be brought back to Members for formal adoption, which is anticipated will be in March 2016.
21. The consultation will be carried out to ensure that the views of all relevant stakeholders are gathered. Engagement will be sought using a variety of methods that will be adjusted to suit the target group. The following groups and methods of consultation will be utilised:
 - Local residents will be consulted via leaflets and an article in the City Resident magazine.
 - Local businesses, occupiers and developers will be consulted through emails, leaflets and staffed drop-in sessions;
 - Visitors and vehicle drivers will be consulted through on-street publicity, including posters and postcards, which direct people towards the City website, with taxi drivers approached through the London Taxi Drivers Association;
 - Cyclists will be consulted through the City Cycle Forum;
 - TfL will be consulted through direct meetings with officers;
 - All consultees will also be directed to the City's website where the full strategy document will be available to view, and a questionnaire will be available to provide feedback.
22. If Members are minded to approve this report, it is recommended that authority be delegated to the Director of the Built Environment to finalise the details of the relevant consultation materials in liaison with the Chairman/Deputy Chairman of the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee.
23. A consultation on the draft Fleet Street Conservation Area SPD is also planned to take place in autumn 2015. Officers will consider how the two consultations may be coordinated.

Financial Implications

24. To date the Strategy has been developed using funding from Transport for London, through the Major Schemes programme for 2014/15. A total of £64,000 was allocated, of which £37,369 was spent; this allowed for the development of the draft Strategy, consultation with internal stakeholders, and updates to the Strategy in preparation for full public consultation. The financial summary to-date is set out in Appendix 4, table 1; the remaining funds allocated from TfL could not be used as the contribution was only received in October 2014 and was time-limited, and so the balance was directed to other City projects where Members considered that the funding

could best be utilised. This funding was fully utilised through projects such as Austin Friars.

25. The estimated cost of the public consultation and management of the process to adoption is £56,350 (shown in Appendix 4, table 2). There is no funding available from the TfL allocation for 2015/16, and so it is proposed that these costs be funded from the 30 Old Bailey / 60 Ludgate Hill Section 106 contribution.
26. The fees element will be used to: design and procure consultation material, including leaflets, flyers and promotional boards; consolidate and analyse feedback from the consultation; and produce a revised strategy document in light of the comments received. The staff costs will be used to: manage the consultation and strategy review process, including management of consultants, through to adoption of the strategy; provide a staff presence during the consultation period; and produce the necessary reports to take the strategy through to full adoption in 2016.
27. A more detailed funding strategy in relation to the delivery of projects identified will be presented to Members as part of the report recommending adoption of the strategy following consultation. This will take account of any amendments to the document as a result of the consultation. The planting of trees and other enhancement works may result in some additional revenue costs in terms of maintenance; any such implications will be further considered as part of this process.
28. Funding for the implementation of the projects contained in the strategy is likely to be provided from a combination of: future Section 106 contributions and Section 278 agreements associated with local developments; Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments; and Transport for London's funding programmes for Major Schemes and the Local Implementation Plan.
29. Any future allocation of resources will be subject to further approval in line with the strategic prioritisation of the various proposals, value for money considerations, and availability of funding sources. However, many of the proposed strategy measures are likely to be considered as "relevant infrastructure" (e.g., roads and other transport facilities; open spaces) and therefore the use of S.106 and S.278 contributions towards them would not be compliant with the CIL Regulations.

Conclusion

30. It is proposed to undertake public consultation on the Fleet Street Area Enhancement Strategy in order to aid the development of the strategy and ensure that the proposals meet the needs of the City community. This will take place in autumn 2015, with a revised version submitted to Committee for adoption in March 2016.
31. It is recommended that:

- Additional resources of £56,350 be approved to carry out the consultation and finalise the strategy document, to be funded from the Section 106 agreement connected to 30 Old Bailey / 60 Ludgate Hill;
- Members agree that public consultation on the Fleet Street Area Enhancement Strategy takes place in winter 2015;
- Authority be delegated to the Director of the Built Environment to finalise the details of the relevant consultation materials in liaison with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee.

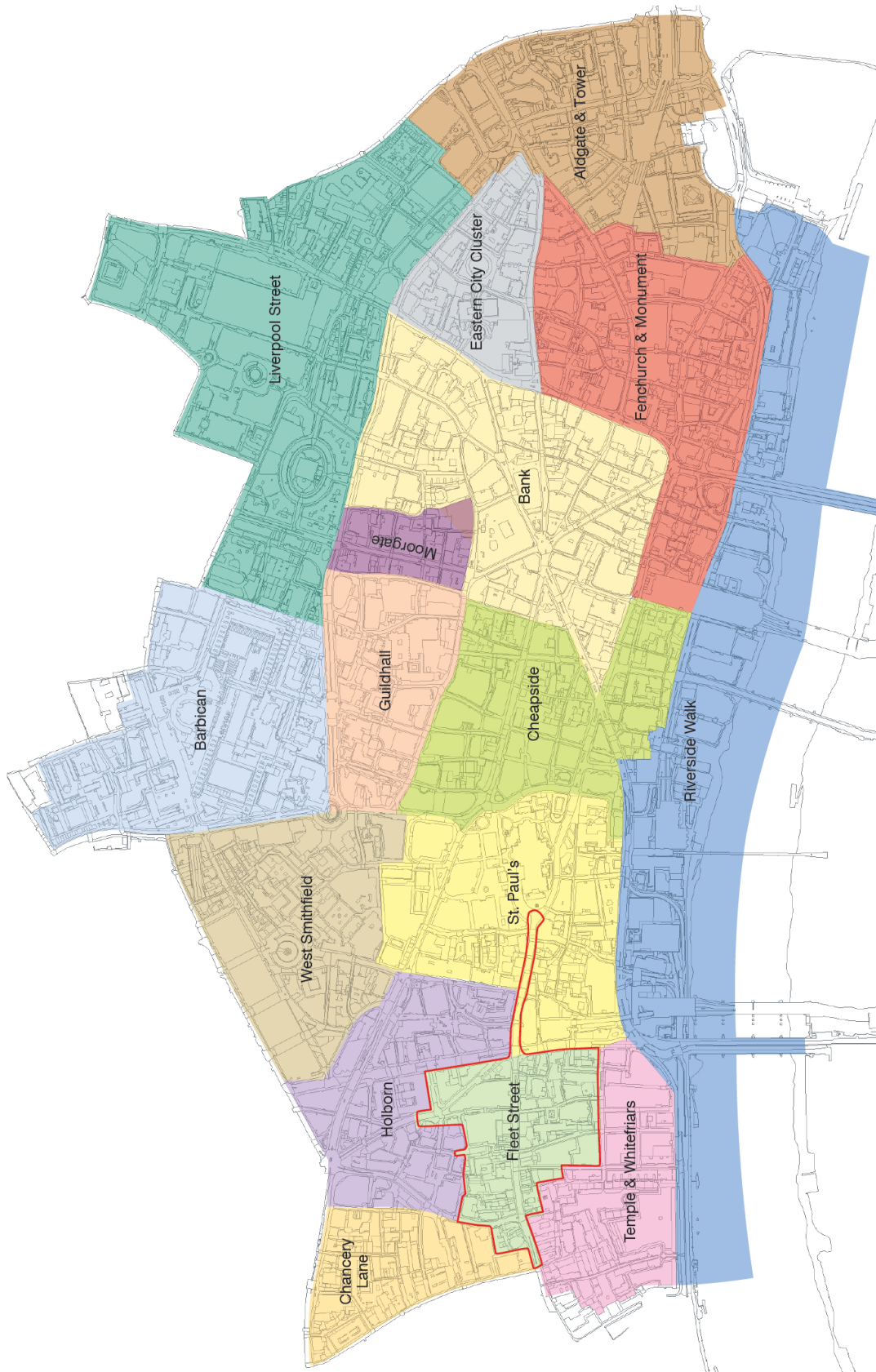
Appendices

- Appendix 1: City of London Area Enhancement Strategies Map
- Appendix 2: Projects Completed under the 2004 Fleet Street Courts & Lanes Design Strategy
- Appendix 3: Plan of key public realm enhancement opportunities
- Appendix 4: Finance summary tables

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Appendix 1: City of London Area Enhancement Strategies Map



Appendix 2: Projects Completed under the 2004 Fleet Street Courts & Lanes Design Strategy

Project	Description	Approximate cost
Fleet Street Courts & Lanes	Various improvements to the numerous courts and lanes in the Fleet street area as part of the implementation of the Fleet Street Courts and Lanes Enhancement Strategy. The works included lighting, signage, paving and seating improvements	£270,000
Shoe Lane (Phases 1 & 2)	Improved junction at Shoe Lane, a street closure and associated security infrastructure around the Goldman Sachs buildings, and the introduction of new public art	£600,000
Red Lion Court	Accessibility improvements through the raising of the carriageway to footway level and re-surfacing of the area in high quality paving materials	£120,000
Johnson's Court	Re-landscaping of this historic courtyard and included the addition of trees and planting, a central water feature and seating to create a more useable and attractive space	£170,000
Crane Court	Installation of a number of lead planters, creating a more attractive public space.	£180,000
St Bride's Passage	Upgrading of existing planters and the introduction of additional planters, new planting, paving, lighting and seating	£275,000
Total		£1,615,000

Appendix 3: Plan of key public realm enhancement opportunities



Appendix 4: Finance summary tables

Table 1 - Expenditure to-date

16800303 - Fleet Street Area Strategy Review			
Description	Approved Budget (£)	Expenditure (£)	Balance (£) *
Pre-Evaluation - Staff Costs	24,000.00	23,868.99	131.01
Pre-Evaluation - Fees	40,000.00	13,500.00	26,500.00
TOTAL	64,000.00	37,368.99	26,631.01

* Re-allocated to Austin Friars

Table 2 - Revised budget required to finalise strategy

16800303 - Fleet Street Area Strategy Review			
Description	Approved Budget (£) **	Increase (£)	Balance (£)
Pre-Evaluation - Staff Costs	23,869.00	31,350.00	55,219.00
Pre-Evaluation - Fees	13,500.00	25,000.00	38,500.00
TOTAL	37,369.00	56,350.00	93,719.00

** After re-allocation of resources to Austin Friars