

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Open Spaces and City Gardens	11 th October 2017
Subject:	Public
Senator House Garden Improvements	
Report of:	For Decision
Director of Open Spaces	

Summary

The City has entered into a licence agreement for the use of its Senator House Garden as access for a major refurbishment of Senator House. The agreement includes the closure of the garden for the works period, waterproofing of the City's slab over the London Underground Ltd tunnel which runs under the garden and the refurbishment of Senator House Garden following the construction work. All the works are to be carried out at the expense of the Senator House tenant, Legal & General.

The proposed works to Senator House Garden represent an improvement on the previous garden and provide a high quality, accessible and welcoming garden which is clearly identifiable as a public space provided by the City.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Approve the detailed design of the proposals to improve Senator House Garden at no cost to the City of London Corporation.

Main Report

Background

1. Legal & General (L&G) is the leaseholder of Senator House, Queen Victoria Street and has negotiated a licence with the City Corporation to use Senator House Garden as works access for the refurbishment of its property. The City Corporation is the underlying freehold owner of Senator House and the leaseholder of Senator House Garden.
2. During the course of development of a licence for L&G to use Senator House Garden, it emerged that the City is responsible for the maintenance of the London Underground(LU) structure under the garden and in order to avoid future disruption and cost, this structure is to be waterproofed ahead of the garden improvement works by L&G as part of the licenced works.
3. Terms were agreed with L&G for it to procure and pay for all design, materials and installation needed for the reinstatement of Senator House Garden and waterproofing of the London Underground slab which is beneath the garden.

4. Gateway 5 approval was given in September 2014 for the temporary use and subsequent reinstatement of Senator House Garden and an Issue Report outlining changes to the scheme and the terms of the licence was approved by the Chairman and Deputy Chairman under delegated authority in April 2017. Consent was also obtained from London Underground under the terms of the City's lease dated 9th June 2009.

Current Position

5. The site was closed to the public under the terms of the licence which runs for 18 months from 19 July 2017, with planting due to take place by the City Gardens team before the end of March 2019, at the developer's expense.
6. The detailed design of the improvement works to Senator House Garden have been further developed in consultation with your officers and are presented to you for approval at Appendix 1. The proposed improvement works are at no cost to the City.
7. Officers had previously considered that, in addition to the Senator House Garden improvements, an obligation to improve the adjoining part of Cleary Garden could be included in the licence. However undertaking the waterproofing work, in additions to the Senator House Garden improvements, was considered a greater priority to be funded by L&G and the design does not preclude improved access and integration with Cleary Garden in the future, subject to identifying suitable funding and obtaining further approvals.

Options

8. A single option has been developed in consultation with your officers because of the constraints which have become apparent following detailed site investigation. These constraints include the close proximity of the LU slab to the surface, restrictions on drainage and designated rights of access across the site.

Proposals

9. The proposed design addresses key issues concerning the design of the previous garden including:
 - Clearer identity of the garden as a publicly accessible space provided by the City, through the use of materials consistent with areas of high quality public realm in the City;
 - Provision of safe public access to the garden;
 - Increased opportunities for seating;
 - Improvement of the appearance and amenity value of the garden for people in the area.
10. The design retains the existing two lime trees on the site which are being protected during the development works. Additional planting will introduce a range of plants to provide greater interest and biodiversity.

11. An irrigation system has been included in the proposals to offset the additional maintenance of the improved garden.
12. In addition L&G has entered an agreement to carry out regular cleansing of the completed garden at their expense in recognition that the garden is likely to attract significantly more users.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

13. The proposals link to the strategy themes of providing:
 - a World Class City which is competitive and promotes opportunity.
 - a World Class City which protects, promotes and enhances our environment.
14. The proposals reflect the City's strategic aim to provide modern, efficient and high quality local services and policing within the Square Mile for workers, residents and visitors with a view to delivering sustainable outcomes. In addition the proposals reflect the Department's strategic aim to provide safe, secure and accessible Open Spaces and services for the benefit of London and the Nation.

Implications

15. The proposals are at no cost to the City with all cost paid by the developer and secured through a licence agreement.

Conclusion

16. A detailed design has been developed for the proposed reinstatement of a high quality public space at Senator House Garden following the licenced use of the site for the refurbishment of Senator House. All costs are to be paid by the developer of Senator House. The design has been developed in consultation with your officers and will provide a high quality accessible public garden with increased ornamental planting and seating.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Proposed design of Senator House Garden

Patrick Hegarty

Technical Manager, Open Spaces Department

T: 020 7332 3516

E: Patrick.hegarty@cityoflondon.gov.uk