

Committees: Streets and Walkways Sub - <i>for information</i>	Dates: 26 September 2023
Subject: Moor Lane Environmental Enhancements Unique Project Identifier: 9441	Gateway 5 Regular Progress Report
Report of: Interim Executive Director Environment Report Author: Gillian Howard	For Information
<h1>PUBLIC</h1>	

1. Status update	Project Description: <p>Public realm enhancements in Moor Lane to provide greening and an improved walking environment, with the creation of a “linear park” and widened footways.</p> <p>A Gateway 3 Issue Report, approved in December 2020, gave authority to incorporate Section 278 works on the eastern side of Moor Lane, as part of the 21 Moorfields development, into the scope of the original project.</p> <p>Since that decision, officers have considered both elements of the project simultaneously to develop the design as whole. The implementation, however, will be phased to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • align the delivery of works to the eastern footway (referred to as Area A in this report), funded through a Section 278 contribution, to the developer’s timeline; • finalise the design proposals for the western footway (referred to as Area B in this report) following the public consultation at the end of 2021. Construction of the
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	<p>western footway will commence once the design is finalised.</p> <p>The Gateway 4c-5 report for Area A was approved in July 2022. We are under a legal obligation to deliver these works, which will start in October.</p> <p>The Gateway 5 for Area B was approved in May 2023. This included a delegation for the Director City Operations, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Streets & Walkways Sub Committee, to decide on the final planting scheme.</p> <p>This report provides an update on recent activity and the next steps for Area B.</p> <p>RAG Status: Amber (amber at last report to Committee)</p> <p>Risk Status: High (medium at last report to committee)</p> <p>Total Estimated Cost of Project (excluding risk): £2,968,680</p> <p>The total cost for Area A, funded through Section 278 agreement, is estimated at £1,508,680.</p> <p>The total budget for Area B, funded through Milton Court Environmental Improvement Works (Section 106) payment and Climate Action Strategy Cool Streets programme, is set at £1,560,000</p> <p>Spend to Date: TBC</p> <p>Costed Risk Provision Utilised: £0.</p>
<p>2. Key points to note</p>	<p>Next Gateway: Gateway 6</p> <p>Discussions on the design of Area B are ongoing with representatives of the residents of Willoughby House and the Heron, and the Barbican Association (referred to as ‘residents’ representatives’ in the remainder of this report).</p> <p>As the last report to the Committee (May 2023) highlighted, this is a location with significant constraints. The central portion of Moor Lane has sub-surface constraints relating to restricted depths and loading limits on the Underground structure and utilities at a shallow depth. These constraints mean that street trees are not viable in this section of the street. This applies across the entire width of Moor Lane not just under the current or proposed areas of paving.</p> <p>To provide additional greenery without impacting the Underground structure the design for Area B (western footway) proposed to widen the pavement by a minimum of 1.5 metres and install modular planters, modelled on the design of the existing Moor Lane community garden.</p>

	<p>The existing community garden at the northern end of Moor Lane (the Clean Air Garden, also referred as the Pot Garden), which is on Barbican Estate land, was recommended to be retained with some modifications. Further discussions surrounding maintenance were still required.</p> <p>The final elements of the design relating to the greening were agreed to be delegated to the Director City Operations in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Streets & Walkways Sub Committee once discussions with residents' representatives had concluded.</p> <p>Greening proposals are being developed in consultation with the City Garden's team and a consultant. These aim to introduce species of trees and lower-level planting that will support biodiversity, be climate resilient and provide year-round interest.</p> <p>No alterations to traffic movement in the street were proposed as part of these proposals, with the carriageway width kept to minimum of 6 metres. This is required to accommodate two-way traffic and access to off street premises, including the Willoughby House car park (particularly when the gate is closed between Moor Lane and Fore Street).</p> <p>Potential changes to traffic movement on Moor Lane are being considered as part of the development of the Healthy Neighbourhood Plan for the area. If an access restriction beyond the current timed closure is proposed, then this will be subject to the usual assessment and consultation before a decision is taken.</p> <p>The Gateway 5 approved at the May committee aimed to enable efficiency savings to be made by coordinating delivery of Area B improvements alongside the delivery of the Area A S278 scheme for the development at 21 Moorfields. The S278 works were anticipated to start in September at the time but will now start in October.</p>
<p>3. Reporting period</p>	<p><i>May 2023 to September 2023</i></p>
<p>4. Progress to date</p>	<p>Area A</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Area A S278 scheme (the eastern side of the street) is due to start construction in early October 2023, subject to the developer releasing the required highway. Work is expected to complete in March 2024. 2. The City is in legal contract to deliver the approved design that was agreed in July 2022. Materials and infrastructure have been procured and utilities are programmed.

3. Area A is not covered by this progress report.

Area B

4. A meeting with the resident representatives took place in May to progress the discussion on planting outlined in the Gateway 5. Focus turned more towards bringing forward bigger changes in the Clean Air Garden which required further trial holes to be undertaken to establish what opportunity there might be and how this might impact the proposals for the public highway.
5. Following that meeting, the resident representatives requested to meet with the Town Clerk. This meeting took place in late July. Residents' representatives have also written to Officers and several Members, including the Chairman of Streets & Walkways and the Chairman of Policy & Resources.
6. Residents' representatives have expressed overall dissatisfaction with the proposed design. Their concerns go beyond the types of planting which had been previously understood to be the remaining outstanding issue given the constraints of the street.
7. The recommendation to retain the Clean Air Garden/Pot Garden with some modifications to its look and feel is also considered to not go far enough.
8. Residents' representatives have requested to pause and reset the project that would include a different design approach led by an external design team.
9. This request has not been agreed to. Instead, it was agreed that the communication and engagement of the project would be reset and the current design reviewed to ensure it is the best and most appropriate scheme.
10. The approach to the design review is currently being finalised but will include independent advice.
11. The design review will also consider the potential closure of Moor Lane to through traffic, with local access retained, and whether this would alter the design approach.
12. The design review will establish what, if any, options there are that might allow taller trees or greater planting in a way that is deliverable, sustainable, and maintainable in the longer term.
13. Trial holes within the Clean Air Garden were undertaken over the summer to inform Officers understanding of what might be possible within this area. They discovered that the old car park ramp is still in situ meaning that the depth available changes across the site with the slope of the old ramp. This will need to be factored into any future proposals.
14. With the design of the western footway under review, the ability to make efficiency savings by coordinating the

	<p>construction work with Area A is no longer possible. At best, work to the western footway will follow on from the work associated to the S278 development work, which is expected to be completed in March 2024.</p> <p>15. Note that any potential changes to traffic movements or improvements beyond the current scope of the project, if identified, are unfunded and would need to be delivered as part of the implementation of the wider Healthy Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
<p>5. Next steps</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A site meeting with residents' representatives has been arranged for early October to discuss the Clean Air Garden/Pot Garden and understand exactly what the issues with the current garden are, and what the ambition for its future is. 2. The outcome from this meeting will enable Officers to establish improvements that might be possible and how they might interact with the proposed design for the public highway. 3. This will also inform the design review which is expected to be completed by early-November. 4. A meeting with residents' representatives will be arranged for mid-November to present and discuss the results of the design review. 5. Depending upon the outcome of this progress meeting a report will be prepared for Member consideration on a proposed way forward for the project. This is most likely to be in January 2024 committee cycle.

Appendices

Appendix 1	Approved plans
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