

Committees: Streets and Walkways Sub - <i>for decision</i> Projects and Procurement Sub - <i>for information</i>	Dates: 30 January 2024 12 February 2024
Subject: Cursitor Street / Breams Buildings Public Realm Improvements Unique Project Identifier: 11538 / 11061	Gateway 6: Outcome Report Light
Report of: Interim Executive Director Environment Report Author: Emmanuel Ojugo Policy and Projects, City Operations	For Decision

PUBLIC

Summary

1. Status update	<p>Project Description: The project area proposed enhancements to Cursitor Street and Breams Buildings, two adjacent streets that run east of Chancery Lane. On 20th October 2020 Members approved a phased approach to delivering improvements to both streets.</p> <p><u>Programme Slippage</u></p> <p>The project programme was extended beyond the expected December 2021 completion date due to a number of issues that are summarised in section 9: <i>Assessment of project against key milestones</i>.</p> <p>The summary of improvements:</p> <p><u>Phase 1: Cursitor Street</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinststate the street tree at the junction with Chancery Lane that was removed to facilitate the development of the adjacent office developments on Cursitor Street. • Install three planters with integrated seating and sustainable, low maintenance, robust planting. • Implement a new paving design layout, resurface in Yorkstone, and where possible re-using materials. • Improved street lighting and feature lighting, that both improves permeability and provides an accent to some of the more creative elements in the design. <p>Note: Works to Cursitor Street are now complete. Some additional officer time was required to make some design changes to accommodate future gas utilities access requirements. This is reflected in Appendix 4: Finance.</p>
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	<p><u>Phase 2: Breams Buildings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the existing constraints, primarily the position of the Transport for London (TfL) Cycle Hire station, it is proposed to carry out lighter touch improvements in Breams Buildings by introducing greenery (east of the station) subject to site conditions and improve the overall quality of the street. <p>Note: Works to Breams Buildings have yet to be initiated due to the emergence of the Fleet Street Area Healthy Streets Plan approved by Planning and Transportation Committee on 21st November 2023. They will be reprogrammed and delivered under wider proposals within the area as an outstanding action.</p> <p>See Appendix 1,2 and 3 for site location plans, phasing, including site photos.</p> <p>The project programme was subsequently extended due to some issues external to the project. The effect on the programme is summarised in section 9: <i>Assessment of project against key milestones</i>.</p> <p>Risk Status: Low</p> <p>Costed Risk Provision Utilised: N/A</p>
<p>2. Now Next steps and requested decisions</p>	<p>Requested Decisions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Agree authorisation to revise the current approved budget allocation for the Cursitor Street phase of £371,647(within existing totals), to cover an overspend attributable to additional officer resource required to accommodate some design changes, as reflected in Appendix 4. Note: Any funds that remain will be reallocated to Breams Buildings and reported as part of the programme of delivery for the Fleet Street Area Healthy Streets Plan. II. Approve outstanding actions in Section 13 of this report to be completed, on which final accounts and project closure can commence. III. Approve the reprogramming of the Breams Buildings phase of works to be implemented as part of the wider delivery of the Fleet Street Area Healthy Streets Plan approved in November 2023. IV. Agree authorisation to revise the current approved budget allocation for the Breams Building phase of £109,119 (within existing totals), to cover an overspend attributable to additional officer resource required, as reflected in Appendix 4.

<p>3. Key conclusions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project managed to deliver the reinstatement of a tree in Cursitor Street and a significant uplift in greenery, which has long been an aspiration in an area with historically low green coverage. • The Chancery Lane community’s aspirations and expectations were met by ensuring the surrounding public realm works were completed to the City standard in accordance with the City’s current public realm enhancement guidance. • The practical completion of the works that includes new areas of York Stone paving and seating has significantly improved the look and feel of the space. The two adjacent developments were delivered consecutively which meant a full closure of the street for a number of years. The Cursitor Street works are a welcome improvement. • The proposed improvements to Breams Buildings have yet to be delivered and it is now proposed to implement works as part of a series of phased improvements, related to the Fleet Street Area Healthy Streets Plan. This will avoid carrying out abortive works and ensure the proposals work together. <p>Key learning and recommendations for future projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close co-ordination and engagement with stakeholders and City project teams enables smooth project delivery. This is essentially true of this site, where there were two developers within close proximity of each other with competing needs and programmes. • Early engagement with utilities programmes and other statutory bodies such as TfL reduces conflicts when accommodating highways activities.
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Main Report

Design & Delivery Review

<p>4. Design into delivery</p>	<p>4.1. The design of the scheme utilised the City’s existing palette of materials in accordance with the Public Realm SPD (2016). The then Chancery Lane Association and latterly the Fleet Street Bid, as local stakeholders, were included as part of design development and project governance.</p> <p><u>Cursitor Street</u></p> <p>4.2. The project area (the western section of Cursitor Street was already pedestrianised, but due to development activity it was closed to pedestrians. As part of improvement proposals, there was an aspiration to reinstate a street tree removed from</p>
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	<p>Cursitor Street at its intersection with Chancery Lane. Its removal was necessary to enable adjacent building works. It was also important to increase greenery in a street with historically low coverage and provide opportunities for seating. Works have now been completed.</p> <p><u>Breams Buildings</u></p> <p>4.3. It was determined quite early in the design process there was less scope for improvement in Breams Buildings when compared to Cursitor Street. This was mainly due to the linear presence of a Transport for London (TfL) docking station containing 25 cycles for hire. This constraint had the effect of dissecting and limiting possibilities for improving the lateral quality of the street.</p> <p>4.4. Moving or relocating the docking station was not considered viable. The expected cost of covering TfL’s temporary loss of revenue for an extended period of down-turn time was prohibitive.</p> <p>4.5. The response was to introduce some greenery, probably to the east of the TfL Cycle Hire station. This phase of works has not yet commenced. It was agreed with local stakeholders to reschedule the works to align with the needs of the wider Fleet Street Area Healthy Streets Plan programme approved by Planning and Transportation Committee on 21st November 2023, to avoid abortive work costs. The programme will be the subject of a separate report to committee.</p>
<p>5. Options appraisal</p>	<p>Due to the small scale of the changes, the project proposed single options for both Cursitor Street and Breams Buildings. Whilst Breams Buildings will not be delivered by this project, Cursitor Street has recently been completed within the existing budget allocation.</p>
<p>6. Procurement route</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The design was developed by the Transportation and Public Realm team and later completed in house by City Engineers and the City Gardens team, working closely with local stakeholders to progress and finalise the design. • The construction package was prepared in-house by City Engineers with collaborative input from the City Gardens team to finalise the planting schedule. • Hard landscaping and civils works on-site were to be undertaken by the City’s term contractor. • All soft landscaping was to be delivered by the City Gardens team.
<p>7. Skills base</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project team has the skills, knowledge and experience to manage delivery of this and similar future projects. • A communication strategy was developed in the early stages of the project to include the numerous stakeholders and ensure good coordination of the public realm works whilst managing the

	<p>expectations of the adjacent building developments within close proximity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The landscape design was delivered in-house, developing designs that would inform the final construction package. • City officers were also engaged in the process to ensure that utilities companies programmes were accommodated and monitored in the City's Highways Activities Programme.
<p>8. Stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main stakeholders were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38 Chancery Lane (adjacent developer) • 40 Chancery Lane (adjacent developer) • Colville Estate • The Chancery Lane Association • Fleet Street Quarter BID • London Borough of Camden • Local Gas Provider (Utility Service) • UK Power Networks <p>8.1. The project was delivered in close liaison with a number of stakeholders including the London Borough of Camden with whom the City shares a section of its western border. Other stakeholders included the adjacent developers of 38 and 40 Chancery Lane, both of which straddle Cursitor Street at its junction with Chancery Lane.</p> <p>8.2. Regular updates were provided to all interested parties throughout the project to reduce conflict and respond to queries.</p>

Variation Review

<p>9. Assessment of project against key milestones</p>	<p>The following milestones were reported in the Gateway 5 report September 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete utilities asset land searches – November 2020 • Construction pack: November 2020 • Order Materials: December 2020 • Implementation Phase 1 (Cursitor Street) February/March 2021 – May 2021. • Implementation Phase 2 (Brems Buildings) July 2021 – September 2021 • Monitoring: October 2021 – November 2021 • Gateway 6: December 2021 <p>The construction programme was affected by delays, some were expected whilst others were beyond the control of the project.</p> <p>Delays to the programme</p>
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The project works were expected to be completed by the end of 2021. However, due to delays in the developers' programme and some unforeseen occurrences, the project programme was extended.

9.1. It was widely accepted that the effects of the global pandemic would impact highway activities and project programmes. The developers temporarily halted all building activities including internal fitting out of both the new 38 and 40 Chancery Lane buildings as a result of the pandemic. Activity was restricted for approximately 6 months up to October 2020. It was not practical to initiate works as the developers still required a presence in the street.

9.2. Following an easing of the pandemic social distancing rules around October 2020, the City agreed to accommodate a request from the Chancery Lane Association, a local business stakeholder group, to initiate a temporary programme of activity up to summer (2021) to reinvigorate a stagnant business environment in the Chancery Lane Area. The project implementation would be put on hold to consider accommodating elements from the Chancery Lane Association programme of activity, in particular opportunities for seating with the street food market and new pavement licences to supplement local food outlets.

9.3. It was further agreed to incorporate some temporary covid-19 response measures to provide planters and seating in Cursitor Street as a place-maker ahead of the project being implemented later.

Staff Resourcing

9.4. Following internal staff changes between March 2021 and March 2022 there was a need to defer the main green elements until the next planting season in late 2022 when additional staff resourcing was available. Therefore, the planters were also delayed to ensure they did not accumulate rubbish whilst left empty waiting for planting.

Cursitor Street

9.5. Despite engagement with utility providers, it was still necessary to redesign elements of the scheme to accommodate the requirements for Gas.

9.6. A gas main runs down the centre of Cursitor Street. In the latter stages of the construction design the local gas provider, requested the City remove the proposed 3 planters from the

	<p>design because they impacted unfettered access to their gas main, required for future maintenance needs. The planters formed the bulk of the planting in the street and therefore integral to the design, so removing these was unacceptable.</p> <p>9.7. Additional officer time was required to liaise with the local gas provider to agree a position. It was concluded that the planters would be redesigned and repositioned to provide a section of clearance for the gas provider to access their in-ground asset.</p> <p>9.8. Changes to the planter configuration also meant changes to the design and therefore volume of the planters. In order not to lose a significant amount of planting coverage, it was agreed to abandon the grass lawn element in all three planters and create a new planting schedule.</p> <p>9.9. The initial sloped design of the planters was altered to a more uniform upstand height. This allowed for an increase in planting variety/coverage. The planters' in-built seating element was removed to reduce the thickness. The in-built seating was replaced by free-standing design which responded to the unique curvatures of all three planters.</p> <p><u>Breams Buildings</u></p> <p>9.10. Similarly, it was agreed to delay project works in Breams Buildings. Again, ahead of any implementation it was agreed to install some temporary covid-19 measures such as planting and seating. See Appendix 3.</p> <p>9.11. Following the completion of Cursitor Street works it was agreed that any works to Breams Buildings would be better delivered in line with the Fleet Street Area Healthy Streets Plan approved in November 2023 at Planning Committee. The above Plan will report their programme of works separately and will include where works to Breams Buildings sits with in the programme of delivery in the area.</p>
<p>10. Assessment of project against Scope</p>	<p>Whilst the scope of works for Cursitor Street has remained quite consistent, there is some uncertainty around the implementation of the Breams Buildings project phase. It is proposed that the Breams Buildings programme of delivery be reported separately as part of a subsequent report setting out the schedule of activity for the Fleet Street Area Healthy Streets Plan.</p> <p><u>Phase 1: Cursitor Street</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinstated street tree at the junction with Chancery Lane. • Installed three planters with sustainable, low maintenance and robust planting. Integrated seating element was removed and

	<p>replaced by free-standing, flexible seating that complimented the planters' unique radii.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented a new paving design layout, utilising Yorkstone, and re-used existing materials where possible. • Introduced lighting that improves permeability and provides an accent to the curvature of the planters. <p><u>Phase 2: Breams Buildings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Breams Buildings works are currently being rescheduled to be delivered as part of wider improvements in the Fleet Street area and scheduled in a subsequent report to committee in the next financial year 2024/25.
<p>11. Risks and issues</p>	<p>During the construction phase a few risks materialised affecting the overall programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact to the programme was mainly as a result of the global pandemic slowing activity through uncertainty, procurement issues, competing highway activities in the City. • The request from the local gas service provider to alter the Cursitor Street design to facilitate access to their underground asset, resulted in an unforeseen design change despite continuous engagement with utilities services throughout the project programme. • The project area was considered low risk with the main constraints being the TfL Cycle Hire station on Breams Buildings. However, this constraint risk was accepted. The Fleet Street Area Healthy Streets plan started to engage more widely during 2022 and it became more apparent that this scheme would sit better with the emerging Fleet Street Area Healthy Streets Plan approved by committee in November 2023. Works will now be scheduled to align with this wider programme of improvements. • There were very few complaints regarding noise as a result of construction, but there were some anxieties expressed regarding the length of the programme including other works outside of the project. Officers carried out additional engagement work to allay the fears of local stakeholders. • The biggest issue has been the overall delay to the programme, which has seen costs increase and these are reflected in the Appendix 4 Finance tables.
<p>12. Transition to BAU</p>	<p>This project utilised standard design practices with a clear plan for transitioning to business as usual. The project has remained within scope with commonly agreed maintenance regime that will commence when the project has concluded.</p>

Value Review

<p>13. Budget</p>	<p>Outstanding Actions</p> <p>Members will note that whilst the Cursitor Street phase of works have been completed, the improvement works to Breams Buildings have yet to commence. The works have been temporarily halted to dovetail with emerging commitments in the wider area related to the overarching Fleet Street Area Healthy Streets Plan approved by Planning and Transportation Committee on 21st November 2023.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="491 725 1449 804"> <tr> <td><i>Estimated Outturn Cost (G2)</i></td> <td>Estimated cost (including risk): N/A Estimated cost (excluding risk): £180,000*</td> </tr> </table> <p>Cursitor Street</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="491 880 1428 1144"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th><i>At Authority to Start work (G5)</i></th> <th><i>Final Outturn Cost</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>Fees</i></td> <td>£2,750</td> <td>£1,175</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Staff Costs</i></td> <td>£82,947</td> <td>£ 91,525</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Works</i></td> <td>£260,950</td> <td>£ 241,242</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Other*</i></td> <td>£25,000</td> <td>£0</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Total</i></td> <td>£371,647</td> <td>£333,942</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*Commuted Maintenance to be spent once project is complete.</p> <p>Final accounts will be verified upon completion of works and payment of invoices. In the case of Cursitor Street, although this is not expected to be the case, it is recommended that any unspent funds be transferred to the Breams Buildings project to be delivered with the Fleet Street Area Healthy Streets Plan.</p> <p>Further to this should any funds (including unspent accrued interest) remain, these will be returned to the developers in accordance with the Section 106 Agreement with the City of London. See Appendix 4 showing funding sources.</p>	<i>Estimated Outturn Cost (G2)</i>	Estimated cost (including risk): N/A Estimated cost (excluding risk): £180,000*		<i>At Authority to Start work (G5)</i>	<i>Final Outturn Cost</i>	<i>Fees</i>	£2,750	£1,175	<i>Staff Costs</i>	£82,947	£ 91,525	<i>Works</i>	£260,950	£ 241,242	<i>Other*</i>	£25,000	£0	<i>Total</i>	£371,647	£333,942
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<p>14. Investment</p>	<p>N/A</p>																				
<p>15. Assessment of project against SMART objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancement of the public realm was achieved whilst maintaining the movement function of the street; • The project delivered improvements in quality and consistency of surface materials in the local area by utilising the City's approved palette of materials. This was a continuation of the existing design language delivered in the wider Chancery Lane area; • The improvements have been a success. Accessibility has been improved and particularly for those with mobility 																				

	impairment by providing contrast in surface materials, especially in an area where the carriageway was previously raised to footway level.
16. Key benefits realised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The installation of a street tree removed to facilitate adjacent building works was reinstated, as originally conceived to make the adjacent developments acceptable; • The design of the space reflects the character of the Chancery Lane Conservation Area, in line with the objectives set out in the Chancery Lane Area Strategy to utilise natural materials that enhance the setting of the unique local heritage; • The functions of the street have been maintained, and the simple design language improves both the accessibility and permeability of the space.

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

17. Positive reflections	Efficient, joined up thinking between City officers ensured a co-ordinated clear approach to resolving potential issues. The City's Street Works team and the Comptroller and City Solicitor were particularly helpful in providing guidance when addressing future access needs from a local gas provider. This was further strengthened by officers' regular communication with local stakeholders to facilitate the success of the project, resulting in a much-improved environment.
18. Improvement reflections	Given the uncertainty around the global pandemic and its impact, on reflection it may have been better to submit the Gateway 5 report when the work environment exhibited greater stability.
19. Sharing best practice	By engaging in regular meetings to share ideas, disseminate and record best practice, improvements are assured. Lessons learnt are to be captured as part of annual review process within the wider Policy and Projects team.
20. AOB	Works to Breams Buildings have yet to commence, and will be delivered as part of a suite of improvements in the wider Fleet Street Area Healthy Streets Plan catchment (approved in November 2023).

Appendices

Appendix 1	Location Plan, Works Phase Plan
Appendix 2	Indicative General Arrangement Plan
Appendix 3	Images
Appendix 4	Finance Tables
Appendix 5	Project Cover Sheet
Appendix 6	Risk Register

Contact

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