

Committees: Streets & Walkways Sub-Committee (<i>for decision</i>) Projects & Procurement Sub-Committee (<i>for information</i>)	Dates: 14 May 2024 10 June 2024
Subject: St. Paul's Gyratory Transformation Project – Phase 1 (Greyfriars Square design) Unique Project Identifier: 113377	Gateway 4C: Detailed Design (Complex)
Report of: Interim Executive Director Environment Report Author: George Wright, Transport and Public Realm, City Operations	For Decision
<h1>PUBLIC</h1>	

1. Status update	<p>1.1 Project Description: The project aims to transform the streets and public realm between the old Museum of London site and St. Paul's Underground station through the partial removal of the 1970's gyratory.</p> <p>1.2 The project is split into two phases. Phase 1 covers the project area to the south of the rotunda roundabout. Phase 2 focuses on highway changes on the roundabout and is linked to the Museum of London/Bastion House redevelopment which the City of London Planning Applications Sub-Committee recently resolved to grant planning permission, subject to an Article 31 Direction by the Secretary of State. This report relates to Greyfriars Square within the Phase 1 area.</p> <p>1.3 Project progress: Members approved a Gateway 4C report in January 2024 and agreed a final highway layout option which is currently being progressed to detailed design stage. This report also provided an update on progress with the design for the new public space, Greyfriars Square, and Members approved a recommendation that an area within the new space be set aside for the provision of a play feature.</p> <p>This Gateway 4C report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides Members with details of the proposed final RIBA Stage 3 developed design for Greyfriars Square. • seeks Member approval to progress the design of the public space to RIBA Stage 4 (detailed design).
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	<p>RAG Status: Amber (Green at last report to Committee)</p> <p>Risk Status: Medium (Medium at last report to committee)</p> <p>Total Estimated Cost of Project (excluding risk): £15-17 million (phase 1 only). Funding sources: Section 106, OSPR, CIL.</p> <p>Change in Total Estimated Cost of Project (excluding risk): No change.</p> <p>Spend to Date: £1,430,768</p> <p>Costed Risk Provision Utilised: 0</p> <p>Slippage: By approximately six weeks (no impact on overall programme)</p>
<p>2. Next steps and requested decisions</p>	<p>Next Gateway: Gateway 5 – Authority to Start Work.</p> <p>Requested Decisions:</p> <p>Members of Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee are asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the recommended RIBA Stage 3 developed design for the Greyfriars Square new public space and authorise officers to commence the RIBA Stage 4 detailed design; 2. Approve an additional budget of £110,000 from the agreed capital allocation (OSPR) to reach Gateway 5 (see section 3);. 3. Note the revised total proposed project budget of £5,454,622 (including risk) is required to reach Gateway 5. <p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May-December 24: RIBA Stage 4 detailed design for Greyfriars Square finalised, informing detailed construction works estimate. • October 24 – Gateway 5 Authority to Start Work for new highway layout (approved in January 2024). • March 2025 - Gateway 5 Authority to Start Work for Greyfriars Square. • Spring 2025 – Commence highway construction. ** <p>** : Programming for highway construction works is provisional and highly dependent upon the construction programme of 81 Newgate Street; in particular the developer’s ability to clear their construction activities from the highway to enable access for the City’s Highway contractor and enable the required traffic changes.</p>

3. Resource requirements to reach next Gateway

3.1 It is estimated that the following additional resources will be required to reach Gateway 5.

Item	Reason	Source of Funding	Cost (£)
Soft landscaping	Contract growing of plants in bespoke soil mix	OSPR	£110,000
Total			£110,000

3.2 The approach to the procurement of vegetation and plants within the square is still being determined. One option under consideration involves growing in a nursery two years in advance of planting. This would require the release of funds prior to the Gateway 5 report. This is more fully explained in paragraphs 4.21-4.23.

The costed risk provision remains unchanged at £280,000.

4. Design summary

Public consultation on RIBA Stage 2 concept design

4.1 In May 2023, Members approved taking the RIBA Stage 2 concept design for Greyfriars Square to public consultation in August/September 2023. The consultation results were presented to Members in January 2024, details of which can be viewed in [Gateway 4C January 2024](#)

Development of RIBA Stage 3 public space design

4.2 LDA Design were re-appointed in October 2023 to progress the RIBA Stage 3 developed design.

4.3 The design development has been overseen by a steering group comprising representatives from Historic England, Cheapside and Culture Mile BIDs, St. Paul’s Cathedral, the 81 Newgate Street development team and HSBC, with input and support from officers in City Gardens, Cleansing, Transportation & Public Realm, Highways, Environmental Resilience, Sports Strategy and Planning.

4.4 LDA were asked to assess the feasibility of increasing the amount of greenery and seating in the new space as these two components received the most support from consultation respondents. LDA were also asked to ensure that any hard landscaping was designed not to be attractive to skateboarders.

4.5 The steering group met on four occasions as the design was further developed and provided valuable input and

feedback that informed design revisions, leading the recommended Stage 3 design. A key challenge was the competing land use demands within a finite space. These include finding a balance between the need to provide space to hold occasional public events, ensuring adequate permeability to accommodate pedestrian desire lines, re-locating the Santander docking station and the provision of play features.

Play features

4.6 At the January 2024 Streets & Walkways sub-committee meeting, Members agreed to set aside an area of up to 116m² for the provision of a children's play feature. An area of planting to the north of the London Underground ventilation shaft on Newgate Street was the agreed location.

4.7 To inform the design approach for the play features, the project team engaged with the City Parent Carer Forum to get their views and input into how the play feature could best benefit children with additional needs or disabilities. The recommended design proposal reflects the Forum's feedback and is supported by them.

4.8 Members subsequently asked that officers undertook some particulate monitoring in the proximity of the ventilation shaft to assess emissions from the vent and officers commissioned AECOM to undertake this work.

4.9 Monitoring took place during February and March and recorded PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} particulate concentrations. AECOM also undertook a desk top analysis of research carried out on the air quality impacts of other ventilation shafts. The reports key findings are:

- Whilst particulate concentrations at platform level can be very high, these concentrations are likely to quickly disperse when vented.
- It is likely that the emissions from the ventilation shaft at the new Greyfriars Square location would not be sufficient to impact long term ambient pollutant levels in the area surrounding the shaft.
- The closest monitor to the proposed play feature recorded PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations close to the Mayor of London's 2028 target for PM_{2.5} and the WHO limit value for PM₁₀.

4.10 The report concludes the ventilation shaft at the Greyfriars Square does not cause elevated ambient concentrations of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} in the monitored locations, providing re-assurance that it is safe to proceed with the play

features in this location. The report summary is provided in Appendix 3. The full report is available on request.

Other features

4.11 The project team has been working with Sustainable Drainage systems (SuDs) specialists on the design specification for rain gardens which will be located to the east and west of the principal north-south walking route through the space. SuDs capture rainwater from the immediate catchment; storing water, reducing and slowing the flow into the sewerage system, helping to alleviate flood risk. Rain gardens provide the added benefit of redirecting this water into purpose designed green infrastructure providing more sustainable landscaping solutions.

4.12 Work has been on-going with the City of London Police to ensure the design incorporates appropriate security features proportionate to the size, location and nature of the proposed public space, taking into account the potential for future events.

4.13 Engagement has taken place with Christ's Hospital School regarding the relocation of the Christ's Hospital statue and they are supportive of the proposal to re-site the sculpture on a new bespoke plinth close to its original location.

4.14 Planning permission has recently been granted to re-locate the Santander cycle hire docking station adjacent to the railings of the Greyfriars churchyard (a move necessary to enable the conversion of Newgate Street to two-way working).

4.15 The project team has continued to work closely with the development team behind 81 Newgate Street, in particular the interface between Greyfriars Square and the western perimeter of the building which was modified under the new planning approval granted in August 2023. This resulted in a new set of steps on the south east corner of the space that required changes to planters and levels. The team has also been meeting regularly with the HSBC project team and they have provided helpful feedback on the Stage 3 design.

4.16 Overall, the recommended Stage 3 design aims to balance the competing land use needs within the space as well as protecting and enhancing key vistas and walking routes. In the context of greening, Appendix 5 shows the existing extent of planted area, what was proposed for the Stage 2 concept design and the proposal for the Stage 3 developed design.

At Stage 3, there is a reduction of approximately 105m² of planted area, primarily due to the introduction of the play feature and the set of steps to the south west of 81 Newgate

Street. This is partially mitigated by an increase in new trees from seventeen in the Stage 2 design to twenty-eight in Stage 3.

Greyfriar's Square: Stage 3 design summary

4.17 Greyfriar's Square will deliver a new public space of approximately 3000m² in the heart of the City. It will provide a new and enhanced view of St. Pauls Cathedral and better integrate Christchurch Greyfriars into the wider public realm. It will create a new space where people can meet and spend time, where children can play and enjoy sensory activity. It will have the infrastructure to host occasional special events and it will introduce new biodiversity on the green corridor between Bankside and the Barbican.

Appendices 6 and 7 show General Arrangement plans of the proposed design and a selection of computer generated images (CGIs).

4.18 Key features of the design are:

- The introduction 580m² of new planted areas to complement the 420m² of existing planting within Christchurch Greyfriars and the proposed 70m² of private planting adjacent to 81 Newgate Street; delivering a total of 1070m² of planted space.
- 322m² of the new planted areas will be rain gardens and 178m² of the adjacent paving will be permeable, allowing surface water to drain into the ground and reducing run-off into the traditional drainage system.
- 28 new trees to complement the existing eight trees within the project area.
- The introduction of a range of seating types and styles throughout the space.
- A play feature with active play equipment and sensory activities.
- The reuse of the Thames Embankment granite blocks to create a 45 metre linear play feature – the “Alee Bridge Walk” - through the rain gardens.
- A lighting scheme specifically designed for the new space.
- Removal of the low wall around Christchurch Greyfriars so the church is fully integrated into the new space. The original church boundary will be outlined within the paving and engraved with historical information about the site.
- The introduction of power supplies to support occasional events or activities within the new space.

4.19 The Stage 3 design includes the provision of cycle stands to the north and the south of Greyfriars Square. However, cycling within the new space will be prohibited. North-south and east-west cycle lanes will be provided on the carriageway and will be protected wherever space permits.

4.20 Appendix 8 contains a package of information on the street furniture, hard and soft landscaping specifications. It includes comprehensive details of proposed paving treatments, seating types, play equipment, planting palette, the Allee Bridge Walk and the SUDs rain gardens.

4.21 The rain gardens will require a specific type of soil mix specification which differs from the soil used by plant nurseries normally used to procure plants by the City. The specialist advice from the City Gardens Manager and the SUDs expert is to source younger, smaller sized bare root plants when planting as they are able adjust to their different growing conditions more quickly and become resilient to environmental stresses of the changing climate.

4.22 Bare roots plants would result in the planting appearing rather underwhelming in years one and two, but in the medium to longer term the planting will be more climate resilient, requiring a lower level of maintenance.

4.23 To help mitigate the reduced visual impact, the project team is exploring the option of contract growing the plants off-site in the correct soil mix so they are better established and larger when ready for planting across the new space. In addition, to manage expectations information panels would be introduced to explain the planting approach, give information on the rain gardens and the need to adopt new approaches to help mitigate the impacts of climate change.

4.24 CGI's of the play feature can be viewed in Appendix 9. The design is a blend of proprietary, active play equipment and sensory features connected to sound and touch. It is expected that the play features will appeal mainly to children under ten. Details of the specific proposed products can be seen in Appendix 8.

Next steps

4.25 Progression of the RIBA Stage 4 detailed design for the new public space will include:

- Further assessment of the below-ground utility infrastructure to confirm buildability of planters and maximise the space available for planting.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed specifications for seating elements and play features. • Detailed planting specifications. • Creation of a historical interpretation working group to agree content and progress design. • Liaison with nurseries regarding planting specifications, leading to a contract growing of the plants.
<p>5 Confirmation that design solution will meet our SMART objectives</p>	<p>The proposed design will meet the following project objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the experience of walking • Create quality public spaces • Create a safer environment for all • Meet the access needs of residents and businesses.
<p>6 Risks</p>	<p>6.1 The key risks relating to Greyfriars Square between this report and Gateway 5 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Specific technical challenges associated with this element of the project include the location of utility infrastructure and London Underground structures, which are situated under parts of King Edward Street and the Newgate Street slip road.</i> Dialogue is on-going with London Underground and utility companies. This will continue as the design is progressed to its detailed stage to minimise any associated risk with these assets and give confidence that the scheme can be built as per the Stage 3 specification. Any significant changes to the proposed Stage 3 design will be reported to Committee. Costed risk allocation: £170,000. (See also section 7 below). • <i>The stage 3 proposals – particularly the CGIs – raise expectations that are not delivered.</i> It will be important that the messaging makes it clear that the proposed design is at RIBA stage 3 and the next stage of design work will deliver the final design that the City is confident can be built. The messaging should highlight that the final design is dependent on the constraints of below ground utilities being resolved; budget constraints; and the technical requirements of rain garden planting. • <i>Contract grown plants are wasted due to construction delays/project overruns, leading to financial loss and cost increases.</i> The current programmed window for planting in the Greyfriars Square is Autumn 2026 to Spring 2027 which is considered realistic and achievable but if this window is missed some plants may be lost and will need to be replaced and a holding fee would be charged by the nursery. • <i>The nursery providing contract grown plants goes out of business resulting in a financial loss and delays to providing plants.</i> The City would use established nurseries with a proven track record. Financial due diligence would form part

	<p>of the procurement process. Pot grown plants could be sourced should the nursery go out of business but may struggle on the specialist soil required for the rain gardens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Delays to the construction programme due to contractors linked to the 81 Newgate Street development not releasing highway to the City as agreed.</i> Officers are meeting regularly with the contractor working on 81 Newgate Street construction and will also meet with HSBC’s fit-out contractor when appointed. A regular dialogue and close coordination should minimise the risk of unforeseen delays. <p>The full Risk Register for the St. Paul’s gyratory transformation project can be viewed in Appendix 2.</p> <p><u>Issue:</u></p> <p>6.2 In January 2024, Members were informed that an initial (C3) estimate of £2.1m had been received for utility works relating to changes to the highway layout at the St. Martin’s Le Grand, Newgate Street, Cheapside junction. Members approved the release of funds to enable these advance utility works to be undertaken prior to Gateway 5, subject to officers reporting back to Members when a more detailed estimate had been received.</p> <p>6.3 A more detailed cost estimate has been received which, unusually, exceeds the previous cost estimate. At this stage officers are working through a series of mitigation actions with the utility provider to try and establish a more reasonable way forward. Progress on this will be reported at the next Streets and Walkways meeting.</p>
<p>7 Legal and Equality Implications</p>	<p>7.1 In exercising functions as traffic authority, the City Corporation are required to comply with the duty in Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 which requires the traffic authority in exercising its functions, to secure the expeditious, convenient, and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians), so far as practicable having regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises (b) the effect of amenities of any locality (c) national air quality strategy (d) public service vehicles (e) any other relevant matters

7.2 The City Corporation also have a network management duty as the local traffic authority to secure the expeditious movement of traffic and in performing that duty may take any action which the City Corporation consider will contribute to securing the more efficient use of the road network or the avoidance, elimination or reduction of road congestion or other disruption to the movement of traffic (S.16 Traffic Management Act 2004).

Regard has also to be had to the relevant statutory guidance.

7.3 Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 the public sector equality duty requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity and
- Foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic (i.e. race, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership and gender reassignment) and those who do not.

7.4 An interim Equalities Analysis was undertaken in May 2023. It recommended that the public space provided a range of seating types for different audience use, particularly disabled and older people. The Stage 3 design proposals include a range of seating to meet this recommendation. Should the Stage 3 design be approved, a final Equalities Analysis will be undertaken for Members to consider at Gateway 5.

Appendices

Appendix 1	Project Coversheet
Appendix 2	Risk Register
Appendix 3	Financial information
Appendix 4	Newgate Street Underground air vent shaft monitoring summary
Appendix 5	Changes to planting areas
Appendix 6	Stage 3 General Arrangement Plans
Appendix 7	Stage 3 CGIs
Appendix 8	Stage 3 specification for furniture, hard and soft landscaping features
Appendix 9	Play feature CGIs

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