Committees: Streets and Walkways Sub (for decision) Projects and Procurement Sub (for information) Natural Environment Board (for information)	**Dates:** 19 November 2024 9 December 2024 10 December 2024
Subject: Climate Action Strategy, Cool Streets and Greening Programme – Phase 3 City Greening and Biodiversity (Fann Street and St Peter Westcheap) **Unique Project Identifier:** N/A *PV Project ID 12332*	**Gateway 4:** **Detailed Design (Regular)**
Report of: Executive Director Environment **Report Authors** - Ben Bishop, Environmental Resilience Officer, Districts Surveyors (Climate Action Strategy) - Emmanuel Ojugo, Project Manager, City Operations	**For Information**

PUBLIC

1. Status update	**Programme Description:** Cool Streets and Greening is a £6.8m Climate Action Strategy (CAS) programme to pilot climate resilient streets and open spaces in the Square Mile. In February 2023 a Gateway 3-4 report was approved for Phase 3: 'City Greening and Biodiversity', which identified several sites for relandscaping along with various other projects that have been separately taken forward. Detailed designs for the relandscaping of Fann Street (west) and St Peter Westcheap churchyard have been prepared and this report seeks approval to progress these to Gateway 5. **Project Descriptions** <u>Fann Street</u> The proposals include removing the existing free-standing concrete planters to construct a series of in-ground planting beds along with permeable paving. The design focuses on enhancing biodiversity through flower-rich perennial planting and offers an improved public realm, by increasing accessibility, and supporting efforts to mitigate antisocial behaviour. <u>St Peter Westcheap Churchyard</u> This churchyard is located on Wood Street at its southern border with Cheapside, set back behind the small retail unit. The garden currently feels dated and shabby, attracting smokers and littering. It is

	proposed to relandscape it by increasing the green coverage with more resilient planting and ensuring the existing mature tree, reportedly one of the oldest in the City of London, is protected. The existing paviours are concrete, and these are to be replaced by natural stone that is befitting an historic churchyard. New seating will also be introduced. **RAG Status:** Green (both projects) **Risk Status:** Medium (both projects) **Total Estimated Cost of Project post-Gateway 5 (excluding risk):** *Fann Street: £150,000 – £230,000* *St Peter Westcheap £180,000 - £350,000* **Change in Total Estimated Cost of Project (excluding risk):** N/A **Spend to Date:** £390,685 spent across a number of projects within the City Greening and Biodiversity project code and includes spend on the preparation and design on these sites to date. Fann Street and St Peter Westcheap are deliverables from Phase 3: City Greening and Biodiversity - Cool Streets and Greening programme as approved by Members in the February 2023 Gateway 3-4 report. Each project will be allocated individual budget codes prior to the next gateway. **Costed Risk Provision Utilised:** None **Funding Source:** Cool Streets & Greening Programme (OSPR) **Slippage:** These proposals have been subject to extensive consultation with the local community at Fann Street and the church at St Peter Westcheap. Due to their location and constraints, design development has taken longer and they are due for completion by winter 2025/26.
2. Next steps and requested decisions	**Next Gateway:** Gateway 5 (Authority to start work) – delegated to Chief Officer for both projects **Next steps Fann Street:** • Final arrangement subject to further below ground investigations • Finalise construction package produced in collaboration with Highways Team • Undertake trial holes • Undertake tree root survey • Develop construction programme with the City's Highways Term contractor. • Gateway 5 approval (2025) • Construction – start on site end of 2025 utilising City's Highways Term contractor

	Next steps St Peter Westcheap: • Undertake tree root survey • Undertake trial holes • Church approvals and planning permission • Seek approval of the design by the Diocese of London • Seek a Burial Licence • Develop construction programme with the City's Highways Term contractor. • Gateway 5 approval (exp. July 2025) • Finalise construction package produced in collaboration with Highways Team • Construction – start on site winter 2025 utilising City's Highways Term contractor **Requested Decisions:** It is recommended that the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee: I. Approve the budget adjustment/increase as per the Table 2 in Appendix 4 in order to fund the staff costs and fees required to reach the next gateway. (£31,000 proposed for Fann Street and £4,000 proposed for St Peters) see table 2. II. Approve the design of the projects as set out in this report. III. Approve the funding strategy for Fann Street as set out in Table 4 in Appendix 4 and note the estimated project cost post Gateway 5 (excluding risk) is £150,000 - £230,000. IV. Approve the funding strategy for St Peter Westcheap as set out in Table 4 in Appendix 4 and note the estimated project cost post Gateway 5 (excluding risk) is £180,000 - £350,000. V. Approve the Risk Registers in Appendix 2; and delegate approval of any future costed risk provision and its drawdown to Executive Director Environment should this be required at Gateway 5. VI. Grant authority to City officers to enter into regulatory agreements with the Diocese of London and the Rector of St Vedast to carry out works on church land. In keeping with the various statutory powers in place for agreement between the Diocese of London and the City of London; to grant care management and maintenance to the City Corporation of a schedule of churchyard and disused burial sites throughout the City.

3. Resource requirements to reach next Gateway

Table 2: Resources Required to reach the next Gateway		
Description	**Resources Required for Fann Street (£)**	**Resources Required for St Peter Westcheap (£)**
Env Servs Staff Costs	21,000	6,000
Open Spaces Staff Costs	2,000	4,000
P&T Staff Costs	-	15,000
P&T Fees	8,000	20,000
TOTAL	**31,000**	**45,000**

3.1. Additional fees and staff costs are required to reach the next gateway. This will include trial holes and other site investigations, as well as engagement with local occupiers and the church, project management and finalisation of design.

3.2. It should be noted the City is responsible for the care and maintenance of the Churchyard Peter Westcheap, in consideration of the same being used as a garden and open space by members of the public. This undertaking is consistent with various statutory powers in place for agreement between the Diocese of London and the City of London.

3.3. Further to this the City's responsibility does not extend to maintenance or repair of any drains beneath the churchyard, whether carrying surface water or otherwise nor for any downpipe, water supply, pipe, gas or electric mains or other apparatus.

3.4. Costed Risk Provision requested for this Gateway**:** None.

4. Design summary

Fann Street

4.1. The site is bounded by the Golden Lane Estate and opposite the Fann Street Wildlife Garden. Extensive residential engagement has been carried out as part of the project development prior to appointment of a landscape architect. Through this process residents were involved in an options assessment process to identify the preferred outcomes for the site and public realm enhancement.

4.2. The proposals are sited entirely within the public highway and the estate boundary will be retained. Further investigations will be undertaken to protect and retain the existing trees on the estate.

4.3. The site is within one of the City Greening and Biodiversity green corridor priority areas. Therefore, enhancement to greening has been identified as beneficial for both public and biodiversity benefit.

Proposal

4.4. The proposal includes three, connected planting beds which are to be set between a new area of permeable paving, to provide the existing and proposed greening with an improved catchment area for surface water.

4.5. The planting proposed will consist of 'flower-rich' perennials to provide high biodiversity value including a year-round provision of forage for wildlife (nectar, pollen, fruit and seeds). A dry shade planting palette will be developed with a horticultural landscaping consultant or City Gardens. A series of biodiversity enhancement measures will be reviewed including installation of 'bee posts', ground nesting invertebrate installation and interpretation, and loggeries, see appendix 3a Fann Street RIBA Stage 3 report.

4.6. The design provides an option to incorporate an innovative material such as 'HydroRock' as a water retention measure. These materials convey water beneath the permeable paving, allowing infiltration for any existing root systems and provide passive irrigation to the proposed planting. Implementation of 'HydroRock' or similar materials needs to be assessed and will be considered to be taken forward if the sustainability benefits are substantial. The benefits include the reduction of potable water use for the irrigation of the site, through re-use of surface water held within the material and increasing drought resilience.

Other considerations

Accessibility

4.7. The layout of these planting beds have been configured following an assessment of onsite desire lines and accessibility policies. Throughout the design, a minimum of 2 metre wide pavements have been provided. There are 3 existing single seats which will be replaced with new seats.

Security and anti-social behaviour

4.8. The design has taken into account reports of anti-social behaviour in the area through consultation with the City of London Police. To mitigate this further the proposed planting and levels retain site lines between the public highway and the housing estate. Whilst the new scheme provides a transition space that will delineate the boundary of the estate from the public highway.

Impact

4.9. The overall project is expected to have a positive environmental and social impact through improvements to the public realm in proximity to residents, local businesses and enhancement of local green infrastructure. There are expected to be some positive impacts on surface water management with a reduction

	in the volume of water entering local drainage systems. *Next steps* 4.10. The scheme will be progressed through the development of a construction pack, providing detailed construction designs. This will also include a construction programme which will be delivered by the highways term contractor. This will be funded through the Cool Streets and Greening programme of the CAS. ***St Peter Westcheap*** 4.11. St Peter Westcheap is the site of the medieval church of St Peter, Westcheap (now Cheapside) that used to stand on the corner facing Cheapside. The church was lost to the Great Fire of 1666 and was never rebuilt. What remains is an old churchyard garden at the corner of Cheapside and Wood Street. The site is accessed via Wood Street and has a linear railing and gate defining the boundary between the public highway of Wood Street and the garden enclosure. 4.12. The garden is characterised by concrete paviours, a trio of gravestones and a mature plane tree said to be the oldest in the City of London. The tree is one of the great trees of London and was once described as the most valuable tree in the world. The tree has a preservation order protecting it from being impeded by nearby buildings, building work or highway activity. There are also low-level ancillary planting beds in the centre and to the rear of the garden, flanked by eight benches. 4.13. The project is restricted to the boundary of the churchyard. It is accessed via a set of steps (two treads) and there is no level access provision into the garden. The garden has poor legibility, it is almost unnoticeable tucked behind a two-storey retail unit on Cheapside. The garden feels dated, restricted, uninviting, unkempt, attracting smokers and other visitors contributing to the build-up of litter. The space is locked at night, but there is some evidence of anti-social behaviour, possibly related to the night-time economy nearby. <u>Proposal</u> 4.14. The design of the new garden has been developed by architectural consultants with input from the City Gardens team, City Surveyor, City Engineers, City's Planning Authority as well as Diocese of London who own the asset managed by the City. See Appendix 6. 4.15. Given the relative simplicity of the scheme there is a single design option being developed. It is proposed to improve the garden by redesigning the space into a more user-friendly environment. Enhancements will include the following:

a) Carry out some light pruning to the plane tree canopy.

b) Replacing the concrete paviours with natural stone with semi-porous jointing to manage surface water run-off. Materials will be in keeping with the City's approved palette of materials in the City Public Realm Toolkit (January 2024).

c) Reconfiguring the planters, by increasing their volume and establishing robust, climate resilient plants that are low maintenance and encourage local biodiversity.

d) Existing benches will be replaced with new furniture, potentially utilising reclaimed timber in keeping with the City's approved palette of materials in the City Public Realm Toolkit (January 2024).

e) Improve signage within the garden.

4.16. It is believed these measures will improve the quality of the garden and encourage a wider spectrum of visitors, who will provide some natural surveillance discouraging behaviour that may be considered anti-social.

<u>Other Considerations</u>

Railings, Gate and Wall

4.17. The railings/gate to the garden and the low wall in which they are inset, are currently in a poor state of repair visibly damaged by the plane tree roots. Whilst the structure is clearly part of the garden enclosure, these elements fall outside this project scope. Repair of the railings/gate and wall are part of an ongoing cyclical works package being managed by the City Surveyor.

Historic Interpretation

4.18. Whilst there is an opportunity to incorporate historic interpretation into the design for the garden, this has been limited in the proposed design. More ambitious interpretations of the local history will be subject to identifying additional sources of funding. If successful, this will be reported at the next gateway stage.

Accessibility

4.19. It is proposed to retain the existing stepped entrance and levels. This is because works to provide level access into the garden would result in disturbing the burials and archaeology and damage the tree roots. Provision of ramped access in such a small space would also greatly reduce the useable garden area and prevent an increase in green coverage reducing sustenance to the plane tree. Various seating options will improve accessibility and provide opportunities for rest.

5. Confirmation that design solution will meet our SMART objectives	**Climate Action Strategy Objectives:** • The City of London Corporation and its assets are resilient to climate change • The Square Mile's buildings, public spaces and infrastructure are resilient to climate change • People in the Square Mile and beyond benefit from a clean, green and safe environment and job creation. **Fann Street** • The increase in additional greening will contribute to a wider network of green corridors providing connectivity and supporting access to nature. • This project at will enhance biodiversity through provision of 'flower-rich perennial planting' for pollinators and other wildlife. • The use of materials to capture surface water will enable to project to meet objectives to reduce water use and support drought resilient greening. • The increasing of greening within this location will provide benefits to local occupants including residents, businesses and community groups, supporting positive outcomes. **St Peter Westcheap** • The increase in additional greening will contribute to a wider network of pocket parks to provide respite and places to rest. • This project at will provide an improved environment for the large plane tree by providing a greater green volume to support root function and a planting palette that encourages for pollinators and other wildlife. • The use of materials to capture surface water will enable to project to meet objectives to reduce water use and support drought resilient greening. • The increasing of greening within this location will provide benefits to local occupants including residents, businesses and community groups, supporting positive outcomes.
6. Risk	The main risks for the two projects are as follows: a) Utilities and underground structures restrict the ability to implement the schemes. Response: Ground investigations including radar surveys have been carried out Fann Street. Further trial holes are needed to confirm underground conditions. b) Burial constraints/archaeology may affect the final layout of the garden and delay the work programme. Response: The necessary statutory approvals will be sought to obtain the permissions to carry out works on church land.

	c) Objections from local occupiers Response: Extensive consultation has been undertaken with local occupiers at both locations with positive responses and further engagement is planned as the designs are developed. d) Cost escalation as a result of inflation or other factors Response: initial cost estimates have been produced and the proposed cost range is sufficient to cover the project costs including maintenance of planting and paving. e) Diocese of London do not support design proposals Response: Regular meetings have been carried out as part of the project governance ensuring buy-in from stakeholders throughout the life of the project. Costed Risk Provision Utilised at Last Gateway: None Change in Costed Risk: None NB: It should be noted both projects will be allocated individual budget codes and unique project identifiers prior to the next gateway. Likewise associated project risks will be reported separately at the next gateway.
7. Procurement strategy	a) A procurement exercise will be undertaken to appoint consultants to provide technical advice on the design following standard procurement rules. b) All works will be undertaken by the City's highway term contractor FM Conway

Appendices

Appendix 1	Project Coversheet
Appendix 2	Risk Register
Appendix 3a	Fann Street General Arrangement
Appendix 3b	St Peter Westcheap General Arrangement
Appendix 4	Finance Tables (TBC with City Chamberlain)
Appendix 5	Fann Street RIBA Stage 3 report
Appendix 6	St Peter Westcheap RIBA Stage 3 report - Excerpt
Appendix 7a	Fann Street Test of Relevance (Equalities Impact)
Appendix 7b	St Peter Westcheap Test of Relevance (Equalities Impact)

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