

Committees: Streets & Walkways Sub-Committee (<i>for decision</i>) Projects & Procurement Sub-Committee (<i>for information</i>)	Dates: 9 December 2025 28 January 2026
Subject: St. Paul's Gyratory Transformation Project – Greyfriars Square Unique Project Identifier: 113377	Gateway 5: Authority to start work (Complex)
Report of: Executive Director Environment Report Author: George Wright, Transport and Public Realm Projects, City Operations	For Decision
<h1>PUBLIC</h1>	

1. Status Update	<p>Project Description:</p> <p>1.1 The project will transform the St Paul's gyratory. Largely unchanged since the 1970s, the designs will reorganise the traffic-dominated streets to create a new public space, introduce safer walking, wheeling and cycling routes, and retain access for buses and motor-vehicles. Closing the southern section of King Edward Street to traffic enables the City to create Greyfriars Square, a new 3,500-square-metre public space in the heart of the Square Mile.</p> <p>1.2 The project will be built in two phases. Phase 1 will improve streets to the south of the Museum of London 'rotunda' roundabout, starting in 2025 and completed by 2027. Phase 2 will improve the Museum of London 'rotunda' roundabout to be programmed at the same time as the Museum of London/Bastion House is redeveloped.</p> <p>1.3 This Gateway 5 report relates to the new public space, Greyfriars Square. Members approved a separate Gateway 5 report in February 2025 relating to highway layout changes required to remove the gyratory system.</p> <p>RAG Status: Green (Amber at last report to Committee)</p> <p>Risk Status: Medium (Medium last report to committee)</p> <p>Total Estimated Cost of Project (excluding risk): £19.24 million</p>
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	<p>Change in Total Estimated Cost of Project (excluding risk): No change from Gateway 5 report approved in February 2025.</p> <p>Spend to Date: £3,052,864</p> <p>Costed Risk Provision Utilised: 0</p> <p>Slippage: N/A</p> <p>Project Progress:</p> <p>1.4 Construction of the new highway layout commenced as planned in April 2025. The highway works have been progressing steadily with the new highway layout programmed to “go live” in September 2026. This will enable the closure of the southern end of King Edward Street and the construction of Greyfriars Square.</p> <p>1.5 The City has entered into a contract with a nursery to grow the plants and trees for Greyfriars Square in advance. This is particularly important for the plants and trees in the rain gardens as they need to be grown in a bespoke, non-standard growing medium.</p> <p>1.5 The RIBA stage 4 design package for Greyfriars Square has been finalised. It includes all the design details for the square including the planters, rain gardens, seating, play feature, lighting and the historical interpretation artwork, conveying the rich history of the area.</p> <p>1.6 Officers have continued to coordinate the design and highway construction works with the developer of 81 Newgate Street, the fitout contractor and the new occupier, HSBC.</p> <p>1.7 This report seeks Member approval for the RIBA stage 4 design proposals for Greyfriars Square as summarised in section 4 and the various appendices.</p>
<p>2. Next steps and requested decisions</p>	<p>Next Gateway: Gateway 6</p> <p>Next Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to undertake communication/engagement with local residents, businesses and stakeholders during the construction of the new highway layout. (Ongoing). 2. Prepare construction designs for Greyfriars Square (December 2025-April 2026). 3. Mobilise highways contractor and sub-contractors for Greyfriars Square construction (Spring/Summer 2026) 4. Continue coordination with developer of 81 Newgate Street, the fit out contractor and HSBC. (Ongoing).

	<p>5. Continue communication/engagement with utility companies regarding construction implications and affected apparatus (Ongoing).</p> <p>6. Liaison with nursery regarding the contract growing of the plants and trees (On-going).</p> <p>7. Undertake construction of Greyfriars Square (September 2026-April 2027).</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 RIBA stage 4 design package for Greyfriars Square as summarised in section 4 and appendices 4, 5 and 6 and the construction of the new public space;2. Approve an additional budget of £9,432,347 for the Greyfriars Square construction, from the agreed funding package as detailed in Appendix 2;3. Approve the revised total project budget of £19, 751,117 (including risk)4. Approve the revised Costed Risk Provision of £517,000 (to be drawn down via delegation to Chief Officer).																				
<p>3. Budget</p>	<p>To date, a total of £3,052,864 has been spent on the project from a total approved budget of £10,318,770. Additional resources to deliver the next stage of the project are listed below, with further details in Appendix 2.</p> <table><tr><th colspan="3">Additional resources required to reach the next Gateway</th></tr><tr><th>Description</th><th>Funding Sources</th><th>Amount (£)</th></tr><tr><td>Staff Costs</td><td rowspan="5">OSPR Capital Bid 2023/24; Community Infrastructure Levy Bid 2023/24; Section 278 81 Newgate Street</td><td>416.154</td></tr><tr><td>Fees</td><td>(200,000)</td></tr><tr><td>Works *</td><td>4,884,760</td></tr><tr><td>Maintenance</td><td>4,699,433</td></tr><tr><td>Costed Risk</td><td>(368,000)</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2">Total</td><td>9,432,347</td></tr></table> <p>.</p> <p>* Includes utilities costs.</p> <p>The staff costs include detailed design, supervision of construction, liaison with utility companies, planting of soft landscaping, legal advice, project management, communications and engagement.</p> <p>Costed Risk Provision requested for this Gateway: A reduced costed risk of £517,000 is requested for the whole</p>	Additional resources required to reach the next Gateway			Description	Funding Sources	Amount (£)	Staff Costs	OSPR Capital Bid 2023/24; Community Infrastructure Levy Bid 2023/24; Section 278 81 Newgate Street	416.154	Fees	(200,000)	Works *	4,884,760	Maintenance	4,699,433	Costed Risk	(368,000)	Total		9,432,347
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	project, as detailed in the Risk Register (Appendix 3) and summarised in section 7 of this report.
4. Design summary	<p>Development of RIBA Stage 4 public space design</p> <p>4.1 LDA Design were re-appointed in September 2024 to progress the RIBA Stage 4 developed design for Greyfriars Square. The lighting design team was re-appointed at the same time and a graphic design team was appointed to develop a package of historical interpretation interventions.</p> <p>4.2 The continuing design development has been overseen by a steering group comprising representatives from Historic England, Cheapside and Culture Mile Business Improvement Districts, St Paul's Cathedral, the 81 Newgate Street development team and HSBC, with input and support from officers in City Gardens, Cleansing, Transport & Public Realm, Highways, Environmental Resilience and Planning. Additional engagement in connection with the play feature was undertaken with the City Parent Carer Forum and the recommended design was co-produced with the Forum and is supported by them.</p> <p>4.3 LDA were provided the feedback received from Members of the Streets & Walkways Sub-Committee after the RIBA Stage 3 was presented to them in May 2024. This included the need to strengthen the physical barrier between the play feature and the carriageway on Newgate Street, ensuring the design deterred skateboarding and a request that the pavement should "tell the story" of the area's rich history.</p> <p>4.4 The steering group met on three occasions as the design was further developed and provided valuable input and feedback that informed the Stage 4 design being recommended to Members in this report.</p> <p>Revisions and additions to the approved RIBA Stage 3 design</p> <p>4.5 The recommended RIBA Stage 4 design is largely unchanged from the Stage 3 design approved by Members in May 2024. Following the committee feedback, the area on the northside of Newgate Street has been modified to remove gaps in the edging near the playground. This has been achieved by extending the seating on the east side of the Underground air vent and extending the planter and re-aligning the cycle parking on the west side of the vent.</p> <p>4.6 To integrate Christchurch Greyfriars Garden into the new space the Stage 3 design proposed the removal of the low wall around Christchurch Greyfriars that was built in 1990 to show the location of the original east and south walls of the church that were demolished when the gyratory was built. Changes in</p>

paving were instead used to demarcate the demolished wall. The stage 4 proposals include additional historical interpretation highlighting some of the rich history of the area.

4.7 The historical interpretation design has been over seen by a small group comprising Historic England, the Culture Mile/Cheapside BIDs and City officers. Details and illustrations of the proposed interventions can be seen in Appendix 6. In summary they comprise:

Christchurch Greyfriars east wall: An inscription stone based on the original proportions of the church's east window, containing an extract from a letter to The Times newspaper from 1944 suggesting that some church ruins should be preserved as war memorials.

Discovery stones in the nave: Eight inset stones conveying the history of the Christchurch Greyfriars site, including it being the burial site for three Queens of England.

Discovery stones in the square: Seven vertical granite blocks with a panel containing a mix of project information and historical information about the area. The stones will be placed amongst the planting, visible and readable from the paths, waiting to be discovered.

To ensure a consistent visual approach, a new enamel plaque for the Christ's Hospital statue will be produced and has been approved by the school. Consistent signage will also be provided for Christchurch Greyfriars Garden and the play feature.

Greyfriars Square: Stage 4 design summary

4.8 Greyfriars Square will deliver a new public space of approximately 3500m² in the heart of the City. It will provide a new and enhanced view of St Paul's 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 4 and 5 show General Arrangement plans of the proposed design and a selection of computer-generated images of the Stage 4 design.

4.9 Key features of the design are:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction 580m² of new planted areas to complement the 420m² of existing planting within Christchurch Greyfriars and the proposed 70m² of planting on private land 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. • The planting of 35 new trees to complement the existing eight trees retained within the project area. • The introduction of a range of seating and table types 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 “Allee Bridge Walk” - through the rain gardens. • A lighting scheme specifically designed for the new space that complements the lighting at 81 Newgate Street. • The introduction of power supplies to support occasional events or activities within the new space. • The introduction of a new drinking water fountain. • The removal of the low wall around Christchurch Greyfriars so the church is fully integrated into the new space. • The introduction of historical interpretation detailing the rich history of the area. <p>4.10 The Stage 4 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 through the wider St. Paul’s gyratory project area and will be protected where space permits. A Traffic Management Order will be in place to enable the City of London Police to enforce the cycling ban.</p> <p>4.11 The designs for new play feature and the Allee Bridge Walk have been reviewed and risk assessed by the play safety department of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA). The reviews conclude that both designs present “tolerably low risks to users, whilst offering considerable play value.”</p> <p>4.12 The design includes a security perimeter to protect the new space from unauthorised vehicles, which has been approved by the City’s Public Realm Security Board.</p>
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	<p>Maintenance</p> <p>4.13 Both the hard and soft landscaping will need to be maintained to a high standard and appropriate commuted sums are included as part of the project budget towards maintenance of the planting, the play feature, the seating, the lighting and for cleansing over a twenty-year period. This will include the provision of a new, daily, dedicated beat sweeper and a twice-yearly power wash. The total commuted sum cost estimate is £4.7m.</p> <p>Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)</p> <p>4.14 An independent transport and infrastructure consultancy, Steer, was appointed to undertake a full EqIA on the St Paul's Gyratory project proposals including the design for Greyfriars Square.</p> <p>The EqIA concluded that: "The St Paul's Gyratory Transformation Project is anticipated to yield positive benefits for both residents and visitors to the area. The creation of a new public space, equipped with an inclusive play area, alongside active travel enhancements across the project area can help to create a more inclusive and engaging environment for the community and visitors."</p> <p>The City Parent Carer Forum, LDA Design and City officers worked together to co-design the play feature which will result in a new, inclusive sensory/play space in Greyfriars Square.</p> <p>The full EqIA is included as Appendix 7.</p>
5. Delivery team	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transport and public realm– project management 2. Highways – detailed design and supervision 3. City Gardens – soft landscaping 4. FM Conway (term contractor) – construction
6. Programme and key dates	<p>On-going: Communication/engagement with local residents, businesses and stakeholders regarding construction implications (Ongoing).</p> <p>December 2025-April 2026: Prepare construction designs for Greyfriars Square.</p> <p>Spring/Summer 2026: Mobilise highways contractor and sub-contractors for Greyfriars Square construction.</p> <p>On-going: Coordination with developer of 81 Newgate Street and new occupier HSBC.</p>

	<p>On-going: Communication and engagement with utility companies regarding construction implications and affected apparatus</p> <p>September 2026-April 2027: Construction of Greyfriars Square.</p> <p>Spring 2028: Gateway 6 report (whole project)</p>
7. Risks and issues	<p>Risks</p> <p>7.1 The key risks relating to the construction of Greyfriars Square are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Unexpected utility diversions, alterations and/or technical difficulties impact on project delivery and/or costs.</i> The New Roads and Streets Works Act processes are being followed. Cost estimates have been provided by the utility companies and reasonable costs have been budgeted for. However, all utility works are subject to a “final measure cost”. A costed risk provision of £125,000 is considered prudent to account for this risk. • <i>Unforeseen technical issues, unforeseen delays and/or inaccurate or incomplete project estimates, including inflationary issues, lead to budget increases:</i> The budget estimates are considered robust and regular cost reviews will take place during the construction phase so that any unexpected cost increases can be effectively managed. However, there is currently a degree of uncertainty linked to the supply of York stone paving. It is considered prudent to allocate a £325,000 costed risk provision should unforeseen cost increases occur. • <i>High failure rate of contract grown plants in bespoke soil medium and/or plants are wasted due to construction delays/project overruns, leading to financial loss and cost increases.</i> The length of the contract grow provides time to test and finesse the soil medium but the risk remains that some species may adapt better than others. 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 may be charged by the nursery. A costed risk provision of £67,000 is considered prudent for a project of this scale. <p>Further information and more details on the identified project risks can be viewed in the Risk Register (Appendix 3).</p>
8. Success criteria	<p>Improved urban greening factor.</p> <p>Increase in on-street seating</p> <p>Increase in on-street dwelling opportunities</p>

	<p>Increase in facilities for children</p> <p>Improved pedestrian comfort levels</p>
9. Progress reporting	<p>Monthly updates on Cora with any issues requiring a decision being dealt with in an Issue Report. Periodic progress updates to key stakeholders, residents, businesses and Members.</p>
10. Legal and equality	<p>10.1 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) passage of public service vehicles (e) any other relevant matters <p>10.2 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).</p> <p>The project falls within the definition of major highway works under section 86(3) of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 ("the Act") and due to the location of utility apparatus it has triggered the provisions of section 84 of the Act. The City have been implementing the steps and procedures set out in the Act and the related Code of Practice when liaising with affected utility companies.</p> <p>Regard has also to be had to the relevant statutory guidance.</p> <p>10.3 Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 the public sector equality duty requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. <p>10.4 A full Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 7) has been undertaken and its key conclusions are detailed in section 4.14.</p> <p>10.5 Overall, the St. Paul's gyratory transformation project proposals represent a positive step towards creating a more inclusive and accessible urban environment, reflecting the City of London's policy and statutory commitment to improving accessibility and quality of life for all residents and visitors.</p>
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Appendices

Appendix 1	Project Coversheet
Appendix 2	Financial Information
Appendix 3	Risk Register
Appendix 4	Stage 4 General Arrangement Plans (Print outs will be available at the meeting and can be viewed in advance by contacting the report author)
Appendix 5	Stage 4 Computer Generated Images
Appendix 6	Stage 4 Historical Interpretation Proposals
Appendix 7	Equality Impact Assessment

Contact

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