

Committees:	Dates:	Item no.
Planning and Transportation Committee	24/02/2015	
Subject: Barbican Area Strategy Review : Summary of Public and Stakeholder Feedback.	Progress Report	Public
Report of: Director of the Built Environment		For Decision

Summary

This report summarises and presents key conclusions from the public and stakeholder information gathering exercise agreed with members in early 2014 and carried out between July and December 2014.

A review of the 2008 Barbican Area Strategy was approved by this committee in July 2013 and consultants were appointed in October 2013. The information gathering exercise has been inclusive but provides a broad understanding of issues and opportunities in the area. The resulting evidence base is intended to provide a robust foundation for developing the draft Area Strategy.

The information gathering exercise included both stakeholder and public engagement events. Key stakeholders were interviewed initially followed by themed stakeholder workshops in conjunction with guided tours of the area. Public consultation included a dedicated website and online questionnaire, printed questionnaires delivered to each Barbican and Golden Lane residence, public drop in sessions in the Barbican Centre and visitor surveys at both the Barbican Centre and Museum of London.

The results from the stakeholder and public information gathering exercises have now been summarised by consultants into an interim feedback summary. Copies have been made available to Members in the reading room. The summary has also been reviewed by officers and key findings are presented in this report for Members' consideration.

Table 1 – Financial summary: Spend to 13 January 2015			
<i>Item description</i>	<i>Approved budget (£)</i>	<i>Spend (£)</i>	<i>Balance (£)</i>
Consultants costs	191,439	176,156	15,283
Staff costs	107,639	56,740	50,899
Total	299,078	232,896	66,182

Recommendations:

1. The report is received and findings noted.
2. Members approve the use of five performance objectives as set out in this report in developing the Barbican Area Enhancement Strategy.

Main Report

<p>1. Reporting period</p>	<p>July 2014 – January 2015</p>
<p>2. Progress to date</p>	<p>An extensive public and stakeholder engagement process was developed in consultation with members and residents. The engagement exercise was carried out between July and December 2014.</p> <p>The stakeholder engagement began with nine one to one key stakeholder interviews. The interviews were intended to brief officers and consultants on possible key headline issues. Three guided walks were also held immediate prior to 8 workshops to provide workshop participants with an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the strategy area.</p> <p>Each stakeholder workshop was intended to identify key issues and opportunities from a range of perspectives and affected parties within the area. The workshops covered the following themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Members 2) Internal departments 3) Strategic transport 4) Barbican/Golden Lane estates 5) Cultural institutions 6) Heritage 7) Business leaders 8) Property developers <p>After the workshops, a stakeholder plenary session was held to brief all workshop participants on the main outcomes and check that the feedback had been interpreted faithfully.</p> <p>The public engagement consisted of a consultation period that lasted 6 weeks during which nine drop in sessions held in the Barbican Centre foyer. Participants were invited by CoL staff to contribute suggestions using printed questionnaires, sketch drawings on plans or enter responses on a laptop using an interactive map.</p> <p>The interactive map and questionnaire were also made available online and printed questionnaires were distributed to every residence on both the Golden and Barbican estates. Late responses were accepted from members of the public informally up until 30th September 2014.</p> <p>A summary of responses received is set out in Table 2. All feedback and comments were recorded in sufficient detail to ensure a level of responsiveness and transparency.</p>

Table 2 - Summary of response numbers

Consultation approach	Number responding
Interviews (key stakeholder)	29
Stakeholder walking tours	35
Stakeholder workshops (excluding plenary session)	71
Drop in sessions	120
Paper questionnaire	276
On-line questionnaire	235
On-line comments	333
Post cards	25
Direct emails	8
Visitor survey	331
Total	1265
Barbican visitor questionnaire	1583
Museum of London questionnaire	1405
Total	2988

An interim findings report has been provided by the consultants and made available to members in the members' reading room. The report includes 15 principle findings which cover all the points raised during the consultation process. These were as follows:

- *A mixed neighbourhood* – A variety of uses including housing, schools, leisure and sport centres, cultural institutions, livery companies, offices, shops and churches. A multitude of unusual buildings adjacent to public spaces give them a distinctive character and a level of complexity that is unusual for the City.
- *The Barbican's impenetrable edges* – The condition of the estate's perimeter. Extensive blank facades present an unfriendly arrival experience for visitors and make access to key cultural institutions more difficult for pedestrians.
- *Tranquillity and greenery* – valued peaceful places, green spaces and planting. The Barbican's interior green spaces, Thomas More and Speed garden, provide quiet oases away from traffic noise. Therefore any proposals will need to consider any risk of impacts on tranquillity for visitors and residents.
- *The Lakeside Terrace* – a successful civic space. This space represents a social heart of the Barbican estate and is an important part of the estate's appeal to many visitors and residents.

- *Unique condition of the high walks.* The podium provides vast amounts of open space but much of it is lacking in identity and function – a condition that is highly unusual in the City of London and contributes towards a disorientating experience for some visitors.
- *Complicated way finding, poor arrival experience* – a confusing environment lacking clear entry points. It was widely acknowledged that way finding through the area is problematic and signage to key destinations unhelpful. A new approach will be needed to address long standing way finding issues.
- *Limited and compromised north-south routes through the area.* Work by Space Syntax highlighted that a significant proportion of pedestrian movement was around the estate at ground level rather than through the estate at podium level. There may be potential to enhance existing access points into the Barbican estate at ground level.
- *Heritage value of the build environment* – demonstrating London’s layered history from Roman origins to present day. There is significant potential for future public realm proposals to interpret these layers of history. This would help contribute towards an impression that culture is important to the City.
- *World class cultural offer inadequately represented in the public realm.* If the City has aspirations for an internationally significant cultural hub, it’s important that the surrounding public realm helps to reinforce an impression that culture is important to the City.
- *Inconsistency in condition and upkeep of hard spaces within the estates.* Some of the hard spaces within are in poor condition and in need of maintenance or repair. Keeping the public spaces in good condition contributes to perceptions of quality and safety.
- *Beech Street* – a hostile and polluted pedestrian environment. Beech Street is a primary point of access for many visitors to the Barbican Centre yet provides a poor welcome to the Barbican estate and Barbican Centre.
- *A multitude of car parks and subterranean spaces that affect the public realm.* The abundance of car parks and associated vehicular entrances results in streets with

unengaging facades and a setting for cultural institutions that is dominated by vehicle infrastructure. These conditions contribute to an unwelcoming experience for visitors.

- *London Wall and Aldersgate Street* – a vehicle-centric environment no longer fit for purpose. London Wall and Aldersgate Street are considered hostile pedestrian environments to traverse. There is an opportunity to reconsider how best to use carriageway space that is no longer needed, due to reduced traffic volumes.
- *Compromised connections to surrounding areas and neighbourhoods.* Pedestrian connections to neighbouring areas are compromised, particularly by London Wall, Aldersgate Street and Beech Street, wide routes design for vehicle priority. This condition impacts on how convenient and safe the estates and key cultural institutions are to access from surrounding neighbourhoods and public transport.
- *Rapidly changing surroundings* – the impact of Crossrail and other planned development. Crossrail is expected to result in a moderate increase in the number of people using the streets and spaces around the estates. This may have road safety implications and mean a change in where crossings are needed on the surrounding road network and additional pressure at current crossing points.

Officers believe these findings are comprehensive and reflect back a general understanding to those parties and individuals who were consulted.

Five objectives have also been developed out of the fifteen themes:

1. Meeting the needs of infrequent visitors.
2. Meeting the needs of residents, regular visitors and workers.
3. Improving the quality of outdoor streets and spaces. Reducing road danger and retaining network resilience.
4. Preserve existing qualities and values of the estates, including the historic environment.
5. Enhance the presence of Cultural Hub.

With the approval of members, these objectives will be used to measure the success and performance of individual projects proposed in the draft strategy.

3. Next steps	Officers will consult with stakeholders and departments to make sure findings are fair and accurate. The following milestones have been set out:																				
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>Milestone</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>27 February 2015</td> <td>Draft Area Strategy delivered by consultants</td> </tr> <tr> <td>March 2015</td> <td>Internal review and consultation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14 April 2015</td> <td>Report to Planning and Transportation for approval to consult</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30 April 2015</td> <td>Report to Policy and Resources Committees for approval to consult</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7 May – 7 July 2015</td> <td>8 week public consultation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>July 2015</td> <td>Analysis of responses, officers working with consultants on final strategy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13 Sept 2015</td> <td>Report to Planning and Transportation Committee for approval to adopt</td> </tr> <tr> <td>24 Sept 2015</td> <td>Report to Policy and Resources Committees for approval to adopt</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15 Oct 2015</td> <td>Court of Common Council for adoption</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Date	Milestone	27 February 2015	Draft Area Strategy delivered by consultants	March 2015	Internal review and consultation	14 April 2015	Report to Planning and Transportation for approval to consult	30 April 2015	Report to Policy and Resources Committees for approval to consult	7 May – 7 July 2015	8 week public consultation	July 2015	Analysis of responses, officers working with consultants on final strategy	13 Sept 2015	Report to Planning and Transportation Committee for approval to adopt	24 Sept 2015	Report to Policy and Resources Committees for approval to adopt	15 Oct 2015	Court of Common Council for adoption
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In strategic studies of this nature, proposals sometimes identify unresolved tensions between the needs of different stakeholder groups. Once details of projects are known in the draft Barbican Area Strategy, any divergent needs or perspectives will continue to be closely monitored and addressed by CoL staff through individual projects.																					

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