

Committee(s):		Date(s):
Planning & Transportation	- For decision	13/09/2016
Streets & Walkways Sub	- For decision	27/09/2016
Subject: Moorgate Area Enhancement Strategy		Public
Report of: The Director of the Built Environment		For Decision
Summary		
<p>An area-based approach for the City's public realm is set out within the City Public Realm SPD, adopted in July 2016 (Appendix 1). Area Enhancement Strategies have been approved for all except 4 of the 16 City districts, one of which is the Moorgate area.</p> <p>Moorgate is undergoing significant change at present. There are a number of developments within the area that are recently completed, consented or currently under consideration (Appendix 2), many of which have an impact on the adjacent public realm. The creation of a new Crossrail station in Moorgate and Moorfields and associated development will lead to a sharp increase in pedestrian numbers, along with a likely increase in development pressure as a result of the improved connectivity. In addition to this, the emerging proposals for the Cultural Hub to the west mean that there is now an increasing emphasis on the quality of the walking and arrival experience.</p> <p>It is proposed to develop an area enhancement strategy for the Moorgate area in order to provide a framework for future public realm enhancements and address the needs of the changing area. There are a number of key issues that the strategy will cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New developments in the area would benefit from a clear and coordinated design approach to the adjacent public realm; • There is now a greater understanding of the implications of Crossrail on pedestrian flows that requires a review of footway capacity and key junctions; • There is a need to develop a greater sense of place around Moorgate, which is a Principal Shopping Centre, in order to enhance its future vitality and role within the City. Much of the area is also within a conservation area and Finsbury Circus is an Historic Park and Garden; • There is a need to improve the arrival experience and key walking routes between the Cultural Hub and both Moorgate and Liverpool Street stations; • There may be opportunities to create more green spaces and plant trees to enhance the environment and mitigate the impacts of pollution. <p>It is proposed to adjust the strategy boundary to include the whole of Moorgate and its side streets. This will enable a coordinated approach for the street and its junctions to be developed as well as improved connections between Crossrail and the Cultural Hub.</p>		

Recommendation: It is recommended that:

- Officers undertake the production of a Moorgate Area Enhancement Strategy at a total estimated cost of £80,000, funded from the 2016/17 TfL Local Implementation Plan allocation (£40,000) and the River Plate House (7-11 Finsbury Circus) Section 106 Agreement (£40,000).

Main Report

Background

1. An area-based approach for the City's public realm is set out within the City Public Realm SPD (adopted July 2016) with Area Enhancement Strategies already approved for the majority of the 16 City areas. The four areas that do not yet have a strategy in place are Moorgate, St Pauls, Holborn and Temple & Whitefriars. Of these, Moorgate is considered to be a priority due to the significant amount of change that the area is experiencing and its proximity to Crossrail and the Cultural Hub.
2. The Liverpool Street Area Enhancement Strategy, approved by Members in September 2013, contains guidance on the northern section of Moorgate, but does not cover the streets to the south, east and west. The Barbican & Golden Lane Area Strategy (December 2015) addresses some of the streets to the west of Moorgate by introducing the principle of a 'Moorgate Quarter' but this does not extend beyond Moor Lane.
3. The proposed Moorgate Strategy area will provide a critical link between existing strategies and will be the missing piece of the jigsaw in addressing public realm proposals in this area.

Current Position

4. Moorgate as a whole suffers from a lack of clear identity or sense of place. Although the area has one of the busiest stations in the City, is one of the City's Principal Shopping Centres and contains a number of designated heritage assets, the focus of the urban experience is on movement and transition, rather than as a place or destination.
5. There are a number of redevelopments in the Moorgate area that are either recently completed, consented or currently being considered (Appendix 2) with a general trend towards increased retail provision on Moorgate and the enhancement of east-west pedestrian routes along historic lanes. There is a clear need to develop a coordinated approach to the public realm which addresses the changing character of this part of Moorgate and identifies opportunities for improvements in the surrounding streets and spaces.
6. There is now a greater understanding of the likely pedestrian flows and comfort levels around Moorgate that will result from the opening of Crossrail. Findings from recent studies have revealed very low pedestrian comfort levels at the junctions of London Wall and Ropemaker Street post Crossrail

completion as well as poor accessibility. In order to deliver a safe and attractive public realm that will successfully accommodate the increasing pressures in this area, a review of the design and operational capacity of these junctions needs to be undertaken, with particular attention given to the wider changes to the strategic network such as the proposals at Bank Junction.

7. The emergence of the Cultural Hub and the identification of a number of projects within the Barbican & Golden Lane Area Strategy mean that further consideration must be given to the role that Moorgate will play as a gateway into the area, particularly for pedestrians moving west from the new Crossrail station, towards the Barbican and Cultural Hub.
8. Finsbury Circus sits between Liverpool Street and Moorgate and is one of the largest green spaces in the City. Crossrail are required to submit for approval under Schedule 7 of the Crossrail Act proposals for the reinstatement of the public realm that fall within the site area. Discussions are in progress to ensure that the works would be constructed to the City's specifications and standards. The proposed Strategy will enable officers to also consider opportunities for complementary improvements to connecting streets.
9. There is a general need throughout this area for an improved street environment and the predicted increase in pedestrian numbers will only intensify this position. In addition to increasing tree planting and the enhancement of townscape and public spaces, an improvement in air quality will be paramount to the future success of the area, particularly given that parts of it fall within the City's pilot Low Emissions Neighbourhood. The area is also vulnerable to flooding from surface water/sewer overflow and the potential for sustainable drainage measures will need to be taken into account.

Proposal

10. The creation of a Moorgate Area Enhancement Strategy will not only fill the current gap in public realm guidance and proposals, but will develop a strategy that addresses the increasingly important role that this part of the City will play in delivering an attractive, accessible and safe public realm, whilst accommodating significant increases in pedestrian numbers and delivering all of the functional requirements of the street network.
11. In order to develop a clear scope for the strategy, a review of the boundary line of the strategy area has been undertaken and it is proposed to include the northern section of Moorgate and areas to the east and west of the street. This updated strategy boundary will ensure that opportunities and changes are captured that may not have been fully resolved in previous area strategies, in particular around Crossrail, the Cultural Hub, Finsbury Circus and Moorgate as a Principal Shopping Centre.
12. The proposed strategy will also seek to address utilities and maintenance issues in any design proposals.
13. Given that much of the background data is already available, it is proposed that a streamlined approach to the production of this strategy is undertaken

with a shorter programme for delivery and a targeted consultation process. It is anticipated that the strategy would be completed, consulted upon and submitted to committees for adoption within 12 months.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

14. This project will contribute to the delivery of Key Policy Priority 1 from the City's Corporate Plan: Supporting and promoting the UK financial based services sector throughout the world for the benefit of the wider UK economy. This specifically mentions the need to seek continued investment in transport and other infrastructure projects and continue our support for key cross-London projects including Crossrail.

15. There are several Local Plan Policies that are of relevance to the Moorgate area strategy and these will be taken into account in the preparation of the document.

16. A new Moorgate Area Enhancement Strategy will principally aim to progress two of the key delivery themes from within the Departmental Business Plan 2016/19:

Future Key Places – To focus on key places in the City including supporting and enabling the development of a vibrant Cultural Hub in a world class setting.

Future Streets & Public Realm – To deliver a distinctive, attractive, inclusive and safe public realm in the City by:

- Upgrading busy key public realm areas including the Crossrail environs.
- Transforming traffic junctions to create calmer, safer, more attractive places in the heart of the City

17. The City has recently secured funding for a Low Emissions Neighbourhood, which partly falls within the proposed strategy area. Where possible, opportunities to complement this approach and improve local air quality will be explored as part of this process.

18. The City is currently developing a Noise Strategy which shall be considered during the development of proposals, particularly where there may be opportunities to enhance the acoustic environment to complement physical and visual landscape measures.

Financial Implications

19. The total estimated cost of the preparation of the strategy (including consultation) is £80,000. This estimate is based on the cost of a similar strategy that was recently produced for the Cheapside and Guildhall area. The proposed funding approach for the Moorgate Area Strategy is to utilise £40,000 from the 2016/17 TfL Local Implementation Plan allocation and £40,000 from the Local Community Facilities and Environmental Improvement Works payment from the River Plate House (7-11 Finsbury Circus) Section 106 Agreement dated 10 May 2013.

20. The funds from the S106 Agreement may only be expended on works and facilities within the area specified in the agreement. This only covers part of the Moorgate strategy area. Therefore, it is proposed that the rest of the strategy will be funded by the TfL Local Implementation Plan allocation for 2016/17.

Table 1: Estimated cost of the Moorgate Area Enhancement Strategy

Item	Estimated Cost (£'s)
Staff costs	40,000
Fees	40,000
TOTAL	80,000

Conclusion

21. Given the significant change and increasing development pressure in the Moorgate area, there is a clear need for a public realm strategy to provide a well-functioning and attractive public realm to accommodate increasing numbers of pedestrians and deliver a street level environment that is commensurate with a Principal Shopping Centre, key transport interchange and arrival point to the Cultural Hub.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Area Strategies Map
- Appendix 2 – Strategy Area and Development Activity

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Appendix 1 – Area Strategies Map



Appendix 2 – Strategy Area and Development Activity

