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1. What is the Garden Bridge?

The Garden Bridge will be a new public garden planted on a purpose built bridge over the River Thames that will link Temple Underground Station to the south bank.

Due to open in 2018, the Garden Bridge will provide an attractive new walking route for people visiting, living and working in London and will improve the capital’s pedestrian network. It will include trees, flowers and plants laid out in a series of landscapes, enriching London’s ecological diversity.

The Garden Bridge will create a new feature in the city skyline and will be a major new visitor attraction for London. It will be a landmark for the north bank and south bank, enhancing the surrounding area.

The scheme is promoted by the Garden Bridge Trust which is a new charity established to build and maintain the bridge. Transport for London (TfL) is supporting the Trust in seeking planning permission for the scheme, which has been designed by Heatherwick Studio, Dan Pearson Studio and Arup.

Two full planning applications have been submitted to Westminster City Council and the London Borough of Lambeth by TfL on behalf of the Garden Bridge Trust. An Environmental Statement has been prepared as part of these applications which describes the environmental impacts of the scheme; this document provides a non-technical summary of the Environmental Statement.
2. The Proposed Garden Bridge

Arriving from the north, people will be able to use either a ramp or steps from an enhanced Temple Place to reach an area of public open space on the refurbished Temple Station roof. From there lifts or steps will take people up to the bridge deck. To the west of Temple Station, on Temple Place, the existing listed Cabmen’s shelter will be relocated nearby on Surrey Street.

The bridge, which is 366 metres long and up to 30 metres wide, will support a flourishing garden formed of around 270 trees and landscaped beds. A network of paths will meander through different landscapes and open space. The bridge will provide new opportunities to enjoy views of the river and London’s skyline. It will offer an environment to inspire a contemplative and unhurried experience across the River Thames.

Two piers within the river will provide the structural support for the bridge as well as forming planters for more substantial vegetation. The main structure will radiate out from these piers and will be finished in a copper and nickel alloy, chosen for its high aesthetic appearance and anti corrosion properties.

Approaching the south bank, stairs will take people from the bridge deck down to a platform of open space on top of a new building. At each end of the platform there will be stairs to ground level. Lifts will also provide access between the bridge deck and The Queen’s Walk. The new building will be for a range of uses such as shops, cafes and garden maintenance facilities.

NB: These images are for illustrative purposes only and do not represent the final proposal. In particular the lift shafts are subject to further detailed design, in discussion with relevant stakeholders.
3. Evolution of Design

There were several key factors which influenced the design of the Garden Bridge. Chief amongst these were the need to ensure that boats could move freely underneath it, that traffic on Victoria Embankment will not be impeded and that important views are maintained, particularly of St Paul’s Cathedral.

These and other matters were discussed with numerous organisations from the outset, including the local authorities, the Environment Agency, English Heritage, the Port of London Authority and local landowners. Their feedback was fundamental in developing the design. It also influenced the way the environmental impact assessment has taken place.

The findings of the assessment have been important in feeding back into the design. These have affected considerations of: bridge design, access, lighting, construction management, planting mix and heights, ecological enhancement and safeguarding of heritage assets.

Alternative approaches to the design and construction of the bridge were considered during the evolution of the Garden Bridge. These concerned: architectural and engineering elements, construction methods and access routes, ecological and planting considerations, and relocation of the moored boats along Victoria Embankment.
4. Constructing the Garden Bridge

The main construction of the bridge will start in 2015 and will mainly take place from the river. Construction will start at the piers. Temporary dry working areas in the river will be formed around the piers and temporary walkways installed from each bank. The main structure will then be built out from the piers; sections connecting the piers to the landing points will follow; and the central section will be the final part of the bridge to be installed.

While a significant amount of material will be moved by barge, road transport will also be needed from the north and south. Access by road from the south will be either between ITV Studios and the IBM Building, or through part of Bernie Spain Gardens.

Construction will require temporary closure of Temple Underground Station for around six months, and a section of Temple Place will be closed to road traffic for the duration of the construction. It may also require short-term closure of The Queen’s Walk depending on the construction access route chosen. Other key elements will include loss of trees, introduction of tower cranes, landing stages in the river and piling activities.

Contractors building the bridge will apply best practice measures to ensure the risk of environmental impact from construction is minimised. To this effect a Code of Construction Practice, which sets out best practice, has been drafted in consultation with local authorities and other key organisations. These measures will continue to be reviewed and developed as the scheme progresses.
Constructing the Garden Bridge

Stage 1
1. Site establishment.
2. Construction walkways from land installed.
3. Dry river working area installed.
4. Piling of pier foundations.

Stage 2
1. Landwork begins.
2. Dry river working area removed.
3. Crane used to construct the bridge section by section.
Stage 3
1. Steelworks installed.
2. Piers connected to land.

Stage 4
1. Final elements including stairs and lifts installed from land.
2. Central bridge section installed by barge.
5. The Environmental Impact Assessment Findings

The environmental impact assessment has been undertaken in part to avoid or reduce negative environmental effects and to also identify and promote positive effects.

The assessment has considered the following aspects of the environment:

- Air quality
- Noise and vibration
- Transport
- Ecology (land and river)
- Water (scour, flooding and drainage)
- Archaeology
- Built heritage
- Landscape
- Visual effects
- Socio-economics

Access
The Garden Bridge will provide an important new pedestrian link between the north and south banks via a new high quality open space. Its location alongside Temple Underground Station and close to a network of bus routes will ensure its connectivity with the public transport network. However, a small number of public parking bays will be lost permanently. Temple London Underground Station will be closed for a short time during construction but with other stations nearby, people’s journeys will not be greatly affected. The north part of Bernie Spain Gardens could be closed temporarily depending on the access route chosen.

Effects in the river
There will be no permanent significant effects as a result of structures in the River Thames. Extensive assessment of existing and future flows has shown that changes will be minor. There will be no significant effects on river ecology (including fish) during construction of the Garden Bridge or once it is open. One construction option makes maximum use of the river for transport. The reduced river width and additional barge traffic of this option would cause occasional congestion in the summer when the river is at its busiest.
**Noise and vibration**
There will be no permanent effects from noise and vibration. During construction, occasional noise and vibration impacts are predicted at ITV Studios. There will be regular discussion with ITV to ensure that the risk of interference with their activities is minimised where possible. Vibration impacts at the IBM building on the south bank and the Walkabout bar on Victoria Embankment are also predicted and will be similarly addressed through regular engagement.

**New views**
Construction of the Garden Bridge would have a negative effect on some local views and on the local townscape. However, in providing a striking, well designed and iconic new structure over the River Thames, long term benefits will prevail. Conservation areas will generally be enhanced, particularly on the South Bank with its post-modern architecture. The bridge will offer new views to important historic structures including the listed Somerset House and Waterloo Bridge. However, it will also intrude into some other views of Somerset House. Overall the townscape along the Thames in this area will be enhanced by the Garden Bridge.

**Economic benefits**
The Garden Bridge will enhance the economic vitality in this part of London. Tourists and other visitors are expected in large numbers, helping to support the generation of helping to support the generation of around 135 jobs.

**Habitat creation**
The new garden will effectively extend and connect existing habitats on the north and south banks. The Garden Bridge will provide breeding habitat for birds and foraging habitat for bats. Specific measures to encourage invertebrates are included in the design.
Temporary Effects on the Environment

- Occasional noise and vibration at ITV studios
- Potential loss of open space in Bernie Spain Gardens
- North bank - change to views and townscape
- Occasional vibration at Walkabout bar
- Occasional vibration at IBM
- South bank - change to views and townscape
- Occasional river traffic congestion when river is at its busiest
- Change to riverscape
- Change to Southbank conservation area
- Increased employment from construction
Permanent Effects on the Environment

- Change in historic setting of Somerset House
- Loss of parking spaces
- Improved connectivity between north and south bank
- New views to appreciate Somerset House and Waterloo Bridge
- New high quality open space
- South bank - enhancement to townscape and views
- New opportunities to appreciate the South Bank Conservation Area
- Ecological benefits; new habitats created
- Enhancement to riverscape and views
- North bank - enhancement to townscape and views
- Increased employment opportunities
6. How To Find Out More

The Environmental Statement and other supporting planning documents can be viewed at the planning offices for Westminster City Council and the London Borough of Lambeth and can be downloaded via their websites. Any comments on the application should be made directly to Westminster and Lambeth either via their online commenting tool or at the addresses below.

Development Planning
Westminster City Council
Westminster City Hall
64 Victoria Street
London
SW1E 6QP
www.westminster.gov.uk

Planning
London Borough of Lambeth
Phoenix House
10 Wandsworth Road
London
SW8 2LL
www.lambeth.gov.uk

The Environmental Statement can also be downloaded via the Garden Bridge Trust website at www.gardenbridgetrust.org. Hard copies are available via a request to The Trust; a charge may be made to cover the cost of printing.