

Gainsborough Bridge

Public Access Strategy - Final

November 2020



Contents

Executive Summary	3
1.0 Introduction	5
1.1 Background	
1.2 Planning policy context	
2.0 Achieving use of the bridge by Gainsborough Primary School and the general public	8
2.1 Short-term interventions	
2.2 Future-proofing	
3.0 Who benefits from the opening up of Gainsborough Bridge for public access?	11
3.1 Local businesses	
3.2 Local schools	
3.3 Local residents	
3.4 Cyclists	
4.0 Enabling public access across Gainsborough Bridge	15
5.0 Stakeholder engagement on the Public Access Strategy	18
5.1 Stakeholder engagement	
5.2 Engagement results	
5.3 Review of Public Access	
5.4 Next steps	

Executive Summary

This document has been prepared to satisfy a planning condition relating to the delivery of a Public Access Strategy (GB.5) for Gainsborough Bridge (also known as Gainsborough Primary School Bridge) in Hackney Wick. After reviewing the community engagement results and assessing the wider benefits of the project, Hackney Council proposes opening Gainsborough Bridge to the public.

The Gainsborough Bridge planning decision notice issued by London Legacy Development Corporation (planning application reference 12/00261/FUL) and associated planning documents can be viewed at bit.ly/2EOnmHi

Planning Condition GB.5: Public Access Strategy

Prior to the opening of the bridge, a strategy which sets out how use of the bridge by Gainsborough Primary School and by the general public will be achieved (Public Access Strategy) including details of access from public areas of Hackney Wick shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. If the Public Access Strategy recommends that the bridge shall be open to the public it shall set out steps to ensure that it is open to the public.

The Public Access Strategy shall also address the following:

(i) If the Public Access Strategy recommends that the bridge shall not be open to the public it shall include specific dates upon which the Public Access Strategy shall be reviewed (Public Access Review) and a requirement to submit the results of each Public Access Review to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The purpose of the Public Access Review shall be to determine whether or not the bridge should be opened to public access.

If the initial Public Access Strategy does not recommend that the bridge should be opened for public access the first Public Access Review shall be undertaken and the results of that review submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval within six months of the completion of the bridge and thereafter further Public Access Reviews shall be undertaken at least every three years from the date of the first Public Access Review until such time as the bridge is opened for public access.

(ii) Not later than three years from the date on which the bridge is first opened to the public a review of the Public Access Strategy shall be undertaken to assess any impacts or effects of public access to the bridge and the results of this review shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval.

(iii) Arrangements for managing public access including any restriction on the hours of access, management and locking of gates on the bridge or on any potential public route and maintenance of areas accessible to the public.

(iii) [sic] Details of public consultation and engagement which shall be carried out. The Public Access Strategy shall specify that the results of any public consultation shall be included in the Public Access Review undertaken pursuant to subparagraphs (i) and (ii) of this condition.

(iv) The Public Access Strategy (as reviewed and updated) shall include consideration of the provision of stairs at the mid span point of the bridge to access the Lee Navigation public towpath.

The details of the Public Access Strategy (as reviewed and updated) and the recommendations of all Public Access Reviews as respectively approved by the Local Planning Authority shall be fully implemented.

Reason: *To ensure satisfactory access is achieved and reviewed in accordance with policy 2.18 of the London Plan and policy 26 of the London Borough of Hackney Core Strategy and proposals for Public Realm and Open Space Network in the Hackney Wick Area Action Area Plan.*

Summary of engagement results

A draft Public Access Strategy was prepared by Hawkins Brown in 2019. Local residents and businesses were asked to provide feedback on the document in early 2020.

The results of the community engagement can be viewed at www.consultation.hackney.gov.uk/communications-and-consultation/gainsborough-bridge

A total of 149 responses were received as part of the engagement process:

- 116 (81 %) respondents were in favour (agree/ agree a lot) of the opening of Gainsborough Bridge for public use
- 47 (32 %) respondents were parents of a child/ children at a local school
- Support among parents for the proposals to open the bridge to public access was 80.8 % (38) while 19 % (9) disagreed/ disagreed a lot
- The garden area was identified as an important space by some members of the community
- Wayfinding is required to improve the way local people navigate the area
- Some concerns around anti social behaviour as a result of Gainsborough Bridge being opened to the public
- Some concerns around increased cycle traffic
- A number of public realm improvements were identified to help improve the area

Although responses to the engagement show overwhelming support for the opening of Gainsborough Bridge, a number of important points and objections have been raised which are addressed in the final Public Access Strategy document that will be submitted to the LLDC.

These include:

- Confirming that the garden area will not be removed as a result of opening the bridge to public access and providing guidance on the likely adjustment required to allow public access: This information has been added to the final Public Access Strategy document
- Confirming that a Wayfinding Strategy has been prepared: This information is available in a separate document titled *Gainsborough Bridge Wayfinding Strategy*
- Confirming that a dedicated Community Safety & Principal Enforcement Officer will work with partners throughout the first year to monitor the impact of the opening of Gainsborough Bridge: This information has been added to the final Public Access Strategy document
- Confirming cycle management arrangements will be monitored to ensure that cyclists do not impact the enjoyment of local residents and pedestrians: This information has been added to the final Public Access Strategy document
- Confirming that additional public realm improvements will be explored at a later stage

This document addresses the key planning conditions that require consideration in the Public Access Strategy, including:

- How public access to the bridge will be achieved
- Identifying the beneficiaries of opening Gainsborough Bridge to the public
- Arrangements for managing public access (bullet point (iii))
- Consideration of the provision of stairs at the mid span point of Gainsborough Bridge (bullet point (iv))
- A public review of the opening of the bridge within three years from opening (bullet point (ii))
- Details of public consultation and engagement (bullet point (iii) [sic])

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

Gainsborough Bridge passes over the Lee Navigation canal between Wick Village estate and Gainsborough Primary School, and Here East on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (QEOP). In 2014 the current Gainsborough Bridge was built to replace a previous bridge in this location. The bridge is owned by Hackney Council and the Planning Authority for the area in which the bridge is located is the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC).

The bridge received planning permission from the LLDC in 2013. However, due to development taking place on the QEOP at the time, including the construction of Here East and the Mossbourne Riverside Academy, a review mechanism was built into the planning permission which restricted public access until these developments were completed. In 2014, the LLDC granted a partial discharge of the planning condition, allowing access to the bridge from Gainsborough Primary School only.

The opening of Gainsborough Bridge is part of the long term aspiration to improve pedestrian and cycle routes in the area. It is intended to reduce the severance that the canal creates between Hackney Wick and the QEOP,

encouraging sustainable transport to and from the park for leisure, education and employment purposes as opposed to people using private motor vehicles.

The bridge is currently only being used by Gainsborough Primary School, providing students with direct access to the sports facilities on the QEOP. The school access the bridge via a locked gate in the school playground and a locked gate on the QEOP side of the bridge. On the western side of the canal, local residents have created an informal garden area with planters, seating, and a barbecue area along the base of the bridge's threshold ramps and stairway. The garden can only be accessed by users of the garden group. It is kept locked with no public access to the garden or bridge. This land is registered as Hackney Council freehold ownership with no registered leases against the freehold title and no formal arrangements are in place for its current use as an informal garden area.

There are many opportunities for the future use of the garden area which align with the Mayor's manifesto commitments to invest in our green spaces so that they remain a well-managed amenity for all our communities to enjoy. This includes bringing forward proposals that better

connect green spaces to each other and to the wider public realm and network of green space in Hackney Wick such as Wick Green, Hackney Marshes, Wick Wood, QEOP, Mabley Green and other smaller green spaces across the Wick Village and Trowbridge estates. The space also provides an opportunity to engage local schools such as Gainsborough Primary School and Mossbourne Riverside Academy in food growing and gardening.

When the bridge was granted planning permission by LLDC in 2013, the LLDC attached a number of planning conditions to the permission including the requirements to produce and submit a Public Access Strategy before the bridge could be opened to the public. The purpose of this strategy is to assess how use of the bridge by Gainsborough Primary School and the general public will be achieved.

Here East and Mossbourne Riverside Academy have now opened, therefore Hackney Council, as owner of the bridge, is submitting a Public Access Strategy to the LLDC for approval in order to open the bridge to the public.

1.2 Planning Policy Context

The LLDC, as the planning authority for this part of Hackney Wick, assessed the Gainsborough Bridge planning application against all relevant national, regional and local planning policies and granted planning permission in 2013. Please see the planning committee report here: bit.ly/3nw2ZjK

The opening of the bridge is considered to meet the policy objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the London Plan, LLDC's Local Plan and Hackney's Local Plan, in particular in relation to healthy, safe and inclusive communities.

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

The NPPF says planning decisions should promote healthy and safe communities. Paragraph 91 sets out examples of how this could be achieved including by promoting social interaction including through "Street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods"; ensuring places are safe and accessible "for example through the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas"; and enabling healthy lifestyles through "safe and accessible green infrastructure" and "layouts that encourage walking and cycling".

The London Plan (March 2016)

Policy 2.4 of the current London Plan considered the legacy of the 2012 Olympic Games. This policy stipulates that planning decisions should support the on-going, accessible use of the new permanent facilities and venues within the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Policy 2.18 encourages linkages of green infrastructure, including across the Blue Ribbon Network, which Gainsborough Bridge would be a part of. The updated draft London Plan places a similar emphasis on objectives such as promoting mental and physical health and wellbeing and encouraging walking and cycling, which may be facilitated through improved local connectivity around the area.

London Legacy Development Corporation Local Plan (2020)

The vision for the area highlights objectives and policies addressing issues of connectivity, waterways and open spaces relevant to the Gainsborough Bridge. The plan suggests repairing movement networks by creating new streets, better pedestrian and cycle routes across the A12 and the waterways. It also encourages enhancements to the waterside environment and facilitating the provision of publicly accessible open spaces along the waterways.

Hackney Local Plan 2033 (July 2020)

LP33 is Hackney's new local plan, the key strategic planning document used to direct and guide development in the borough up to 2033. LP33 considers how to make better use of Hackney's waterways by improving the quality of green links and open space areas alongside the waterfront and improving accessibility to these locations. The plan also includes policies to improve accessibility and permeability throughout existing neighbourhoods to create more liveable and walkable neighbourhoods.

Policy PP6 sets out the strategic development principles for Hackney Wick and states that where appropriate, development should improve connections including to Stratford and Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Olympic Legacy Supplementary Planning Guidance (OLSPG)

The OLSPG includes development principles to help deliver an integrated and inclusive urban environment. Development principle 2.C: Connectivity and Transport sets out to remove and overcome barriers to movement and to ensure that existing and new communities across the OLSPG area are linked by a network of strategic and more fine-grained local connections.

The OLSPG also identifies local connectivity as a key issue for the liveability of an area, and that at the moment, such local movement across the Lea Valley is often constrained by waterways, major roads and other transport infrastructure.

Transport strategy

The opening of the bridge is part of the long term aspiration to improve pedestrian and cycle routes in the area. It is intended to reduce the severance that the canal creates between Hackney Wick and the QEOP, encouraging sustainable transport to and from the park as opposed to people using private motor vehicles. In the LLDC's Local plan, Objective 4 seeks to secure the infrastructure required to support growth and convergence by improving local connectivity, including delivery of new bridges and routes to maximise walking and cycling.

The Hackney Transport Strategy 2015-2025 sets out the Hackney Council's strategic transportation aims, objectives and priorities for the next ten years. This includes Hackney's

Walking Plan which presents Hackney Council's vision for walking in Hackney in 2025 encompassing health benefits, carbon reduction and improved air quality, cohesive communities, economic prosperity, quality of life and equality of opportunity. It supports the objectives set out by the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy as well as local priorities set out in Hackney's Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Plan and the Mayor of Hackney's 2014 Manifesto pledges.

Hackney's Transport Strategy also supports Hackney's Cycling Plan which outlines Hackney Council's commitment towards cycling and sets out a programme of actions for the period 2015 to 2025 to make cycling a normal, safe and attractive choice for travel and recreation for our residents and those that work, visit and pass through the borough.

2.0 Achieving use of the bridge by Gainsborough Primary School and the general public

2.1 Short-term interventions required to open the bridge for public use

Public realm improvements

In order to open Gainsborough Bridge for public access, a series of public realm interventions are proposed which would support the bridge's change of use from private to public. Considering the location of the bridge, between two more direct connections across the canal at Eastway and Wallis Road, its public use is likely to improve connections for local people rather than provide a primary route or shortcut for people travelling through the area from other destinations.

Public realm recommendations should therefore improve the experience of local users of the bridge, with a focus on catering for children travelling to school, parents with prams, elderly people and people with physical disabilities who may benefit from a safe and accessible connection across the canal.

Improvements will include:

- New signage on both sides of the canal to improve wayfinding
- Tree planting if feasible

Controlling / permitting access

The removal of the gates on either end of the bridge connection is crucial to introducing and maintaining public access. A clear width of 1.25m (minimum) is required at either end of the bridge and along the walkways linked to the stairwell and ramp on the western side of the bridge. This will require minimal adjustments to the current garden layout and the pathway will need to remain clear of obstruction at all times. The Freeholder, Hackney Council, will review the management arrangements for the garden so that it can continue to be used by local stakeholders once the gates are removed.

Wayfinding signage will be introduced near the entrance of the Wick Village estate, demonstrating the potential connections through the estate. Similarly, signposting where the bridge connects to the playing fields and by the garden area would also facilitate better orientation.



Eastern gate to Gainsborough Bridge



Gate to garden area



Entrance to Wick Village estate from Osborne Road/Berkshire Road

School security

Interventions such as screens to tackle overlooking of Gainsborough Primary School have not been encouraged as part of this strategy as clear sightlines across the bridge and along the winding route should be maintained to improve safety and the perception of safety. Historically, when the school was built, the canal was still heavily used for industry and a high wall would have protected pupils from pollution. However, newer schools along the canal such as Mossbourne Riverside Academy and Bobby Moore Academy have not got any screening in place, providing clear visual connections between the school play area and surrounding landscape and the canal.

The Council will work with Gainsborough Primary School to ensure that the current locking system is fit for purpose between the school playground and the bridge as part of the works to open the bridge.

Trial period to monitor usage

A requirement of the Planning Condition is for Hackney Council to submit a review of the Public Access Strategy no later than three years after the bridge is first opened to the public to assess any impacts or effects of public access to the bridge. The results of this review shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval.

Monitoring usage

The Council will monitor the use of Gainsborough Bridge for the first year of being open to the public and will work closely with local stakeholders and partners to monitor any negative impacts public access to the bridge may have on the local area.

A dedicated Community Safety & Principal Enforcement Officer will work with partners throughout the year to monitor impact and scope out improvements in relation to community safety, anti social behaviour and environmental crime including any wider public realm improvements as required.

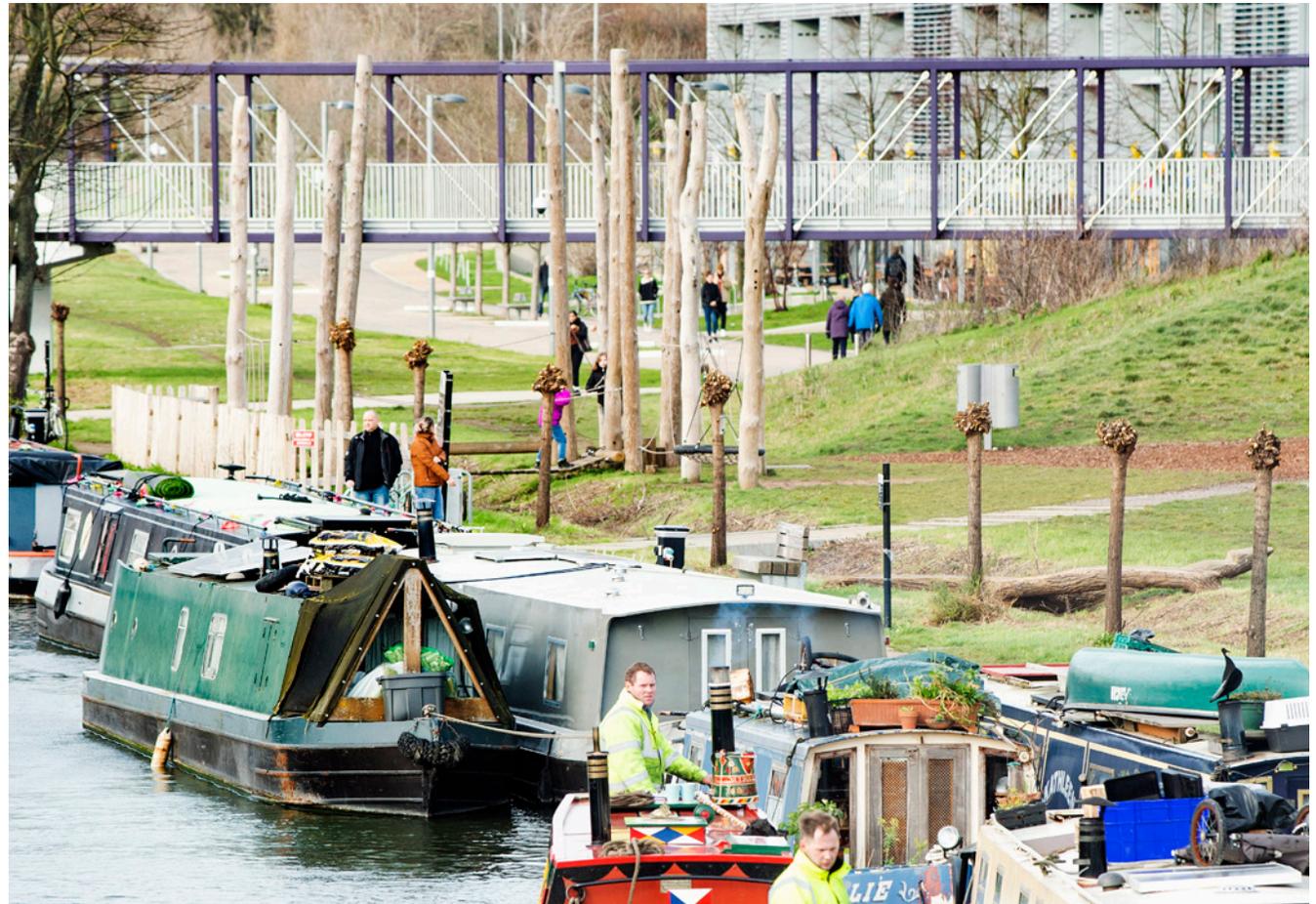
Mitigating anti social behaviour

Early engagement with local residents has identified a number of concerns about potential anti social behaviour associated with opening the bridge to public use. The Council's Community Safety & Enforcement team are able to deploy resources to this area with the aim of mitigating any negative activity, and by working closely with our partners at the Metropolitan Police through the weekly tasking process, Enforcement Officers can use tools such as Community Protection Notices and written warnings to remedy the nuisance caused.

The Community Safety and Enforcement Team and the Metropolitan Police's Safer Neighbourhood Team are also working with the Council's CCTV Team in order to better deploy resources. The Wick Village Tenant Management Co-operative (TMC) keeps a record of low level anti social behaviour on the estate and will be asked to provide regular updates to the Council during the trial period and beyond. The LLDC's Park and Village Security team will also support Hackney Council to monitor anti social behaviour incidents on the QEOP side of the bridge.

2.2 Future-proofing

The Hackney Wick Central Masterplan will introduce pedestrian connections from a new station exit from Hackney Wick station. The new street network will take pedestrians up towards Wallis Road and encourage direct connections across the bridge at the end of this road. There are no plans to connect the Masterplan area with Gainsborough Bridge along the canal, but this could be explored in the future if local residents and stakeholders were supportive of improving links to Hackney Wick station.



3.0 Who benefits from the opening up of Gainsborough Bridge for public access?

3.1 Local businesses

The LLDC Local Plan and Hackney Wick Central Masterplan highlights clusters of employment space and town centre uses (including shops and workspace) around the local estates and Hackney Wick station.

The opening of Gainsborough Bridge will enable easy and safe car free access for businesses and residents to be able to utilise facilities, green spaces, schools and job opportunities based on the QEOP, the new town centre around Hackney Wick station and at Here East.

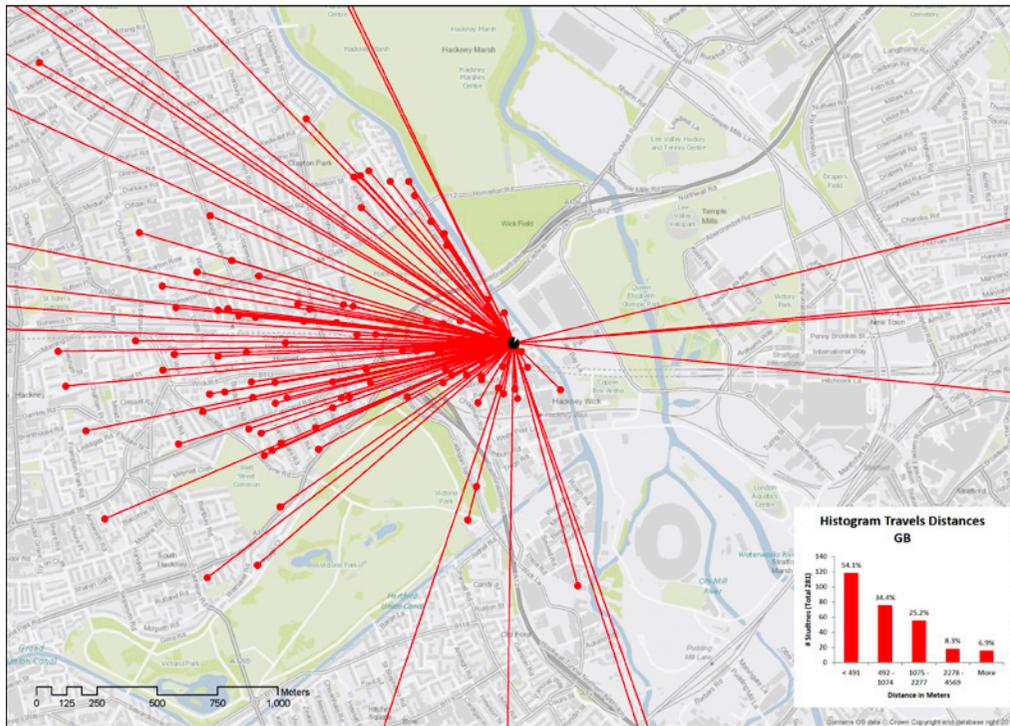
3.2 Local schools

The vast majority of all journeys within Hackney start and end with a walk, this is particularly true for the mode of travel to school for many children in the wider area. Mapping the mode of travel data for both Mossbourne Riverside Academy and Gainsborough Primary School highlights that many students who travel from residential areas around Homerton to the north-east of the Eastway and A12. (see maps on the following page).

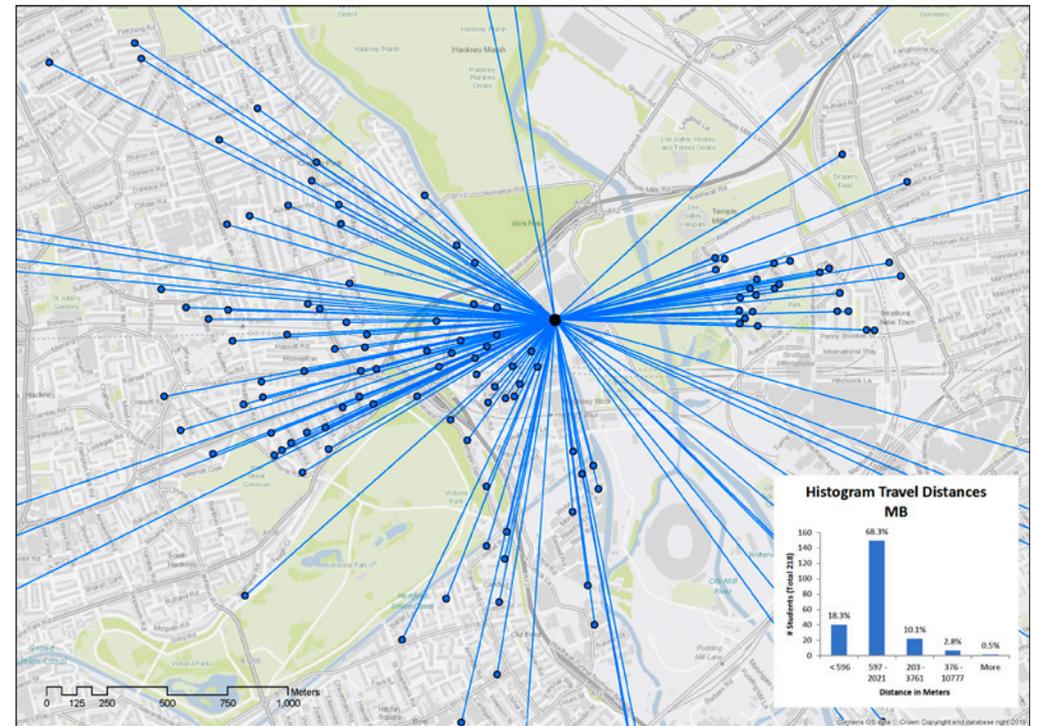
The A12 currently acts as a major barrier between these residential neighbourhoods in Homerton and the schools along the canal. Public access to Gainsborough Bridge could be beneficial for students at Mossbourne Riverside Academy, providing them with a quieter route through residential areas and away from traffic to walk to school. Many schoolchildren can also be observed cycling to school with their parents as there is substantial parking for children's bikes in Mossbourne Riverside Academy. As the bridge has a ramp on one side and a graded access on the other, it could provide these students with a new route to school with their bikes.

A key consideration when opening Gainsborough Bridge will be the use of the bridge for school activities in the playing fields at the same time as it being accessible to the public. This may have an impact on the daily procedures for the school and would have to be considered sensitively and in discussion with school representatives.





Origin of school children travelling to school at Gainsborough Primary School.
Reference: Hawkins Brown draft Public Access Strategy, 2019



Origin of school children travelling to school at Mossbourne Riverside Academy.
Reference: Hawkins Brown draft Public Access Strategy, 2019

3.3 Local residents

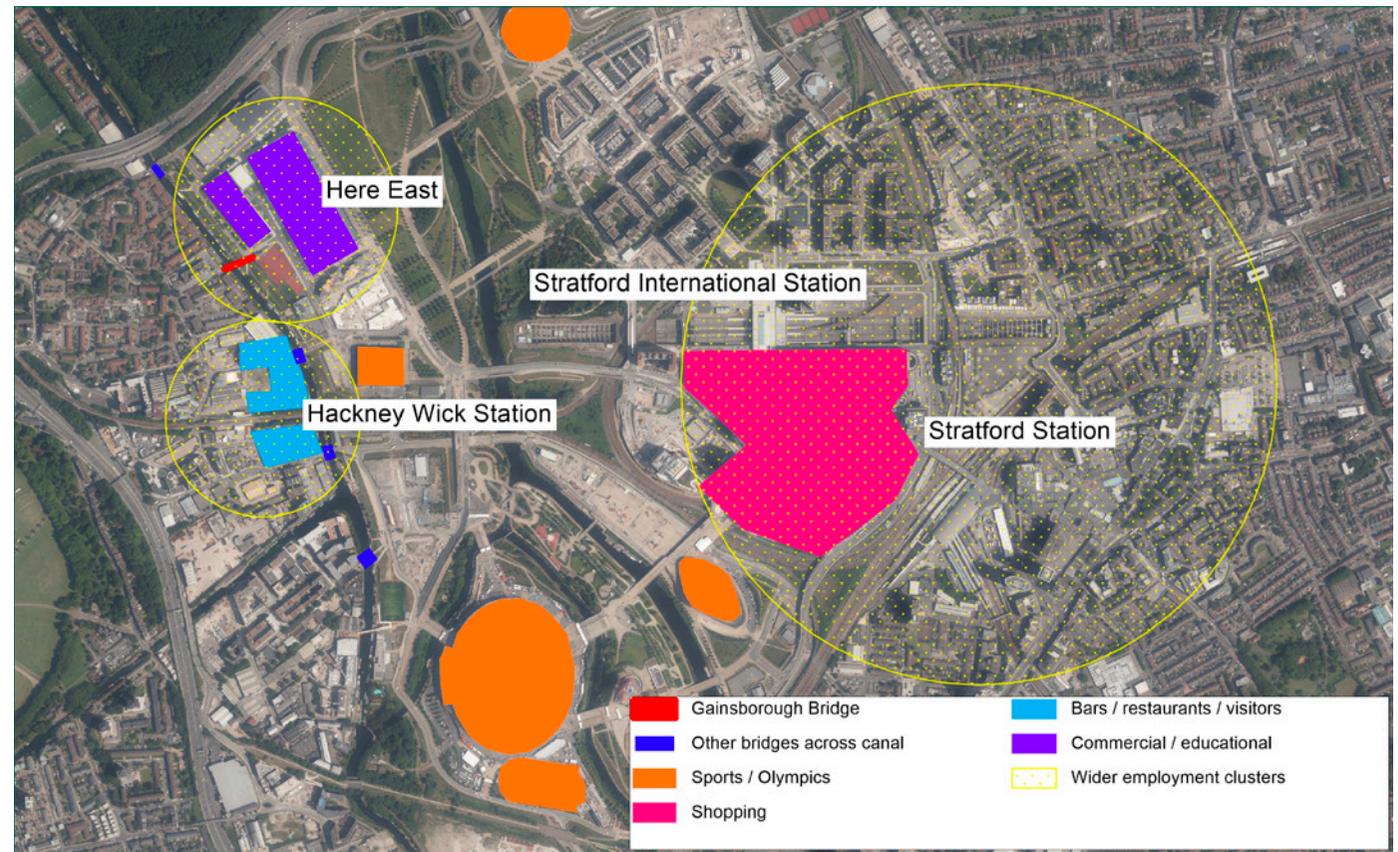
Although places like Here East, Queen's Yard, Victoria Park and the Olympic Park act as visitor attractions and destinations within the wider context of London, most amenity clustered around Gainsborough Bridge is of local importance. The bridge already connects Gainsborough Primary School to the playing fields on the other side of the canal. Connections along the canal to Mabley Green could also be improved as part of any wider public realm improvements.

Mapping the local connectivity from either side of Gainsborough Bridge allows for comparison of accessibility across the neighbourhoods with and without the bridge. In summary, the use of bridge improves access to the QEOP from the residential areas surrounded by the A12, railway line and the canal.

Most primary routes (corresponding with what is suggested in the LLDC Local Plan) encourage people to cross on either side of Gainsborough Bridge, walking along the Eastway or Wallis Road.

These roads provide more direct connections across the canal, along with better provision for pedestrian and cycle use.

Although originally intended to provide a route through Here East, the onward journey on either end of Gainsborough Bridge is convoluted and not particularly intuitive. The likelihood in this



condition is that only people more familiar with the area will feel comfortable using the bridge. The location of wayfinding signage will also have an impact on what the key pedestrian and cycle routes may be.

Such interventions could be used to deter people from using the inner routes through the residential areas, by emphasising more direct routes along the

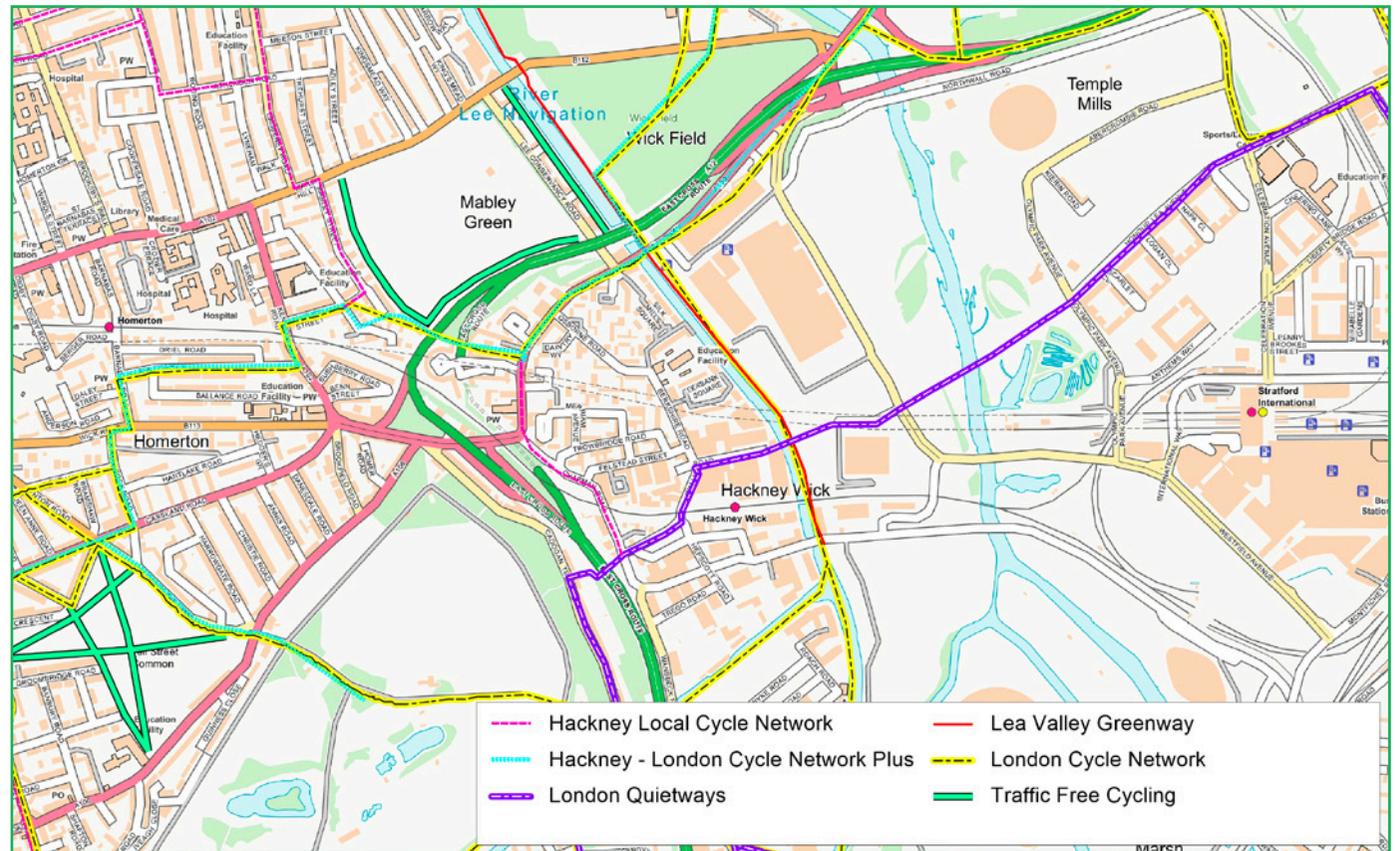
canal or across other bridges. Wayfinding signage can be clear about the residential area being on the other side and for destinations such as stations and green spaces to continue along the towpath on east-side of the canal.

3.4 Cyclists

There are no clear designated cycling routes through the residential area consisting of Trowbridge estate, Wick Village estate and Leabank Square. The towpath is popular with cyclists and there is a choice of alternative routes that provide north-south and east-west connections through Hackney Wick. Although Gainsborough Bridge has a ramp and a graded access, it is unlikely to provide any key cycling connections.

It may be beneficial for children cycling to school at Mossbourne Riverside Academy or at Gainsborough Primary School. Highways and cycle infrastructure improvements at Wick Road finish some distance from the bridge and provide direct onward connections across the canal via Wallis Road.

Cycle management arrangements will be monitored by Hackney Council to ensure that cyclists do not impact the enjoyment of local residents and pedestrians.



4.0 Enabling public access across Gainsborough Bridge

Hackney Council has overall responsibility for maintaining Gainsborough Bridge and the Council land either side of the bridge. If the LLDC approve the opening of Gainsborough Bridge to the public, Hackney Council will undertake the following enabling works within six months of receiving approval to enable unrestricted (24 hours a day) access to the bridge.

Providing access

The removal of the gates on either end of the bridge connection is crucial to introducing and maintaining public access.

As a part of the proposals to open the bridge, the locked gates on the eastern side of the bridge will be removed to allow public access to the bridge. In addition, the locked gates to the garden area will be removed to allow public access to the ramp and stairway on the western side of the bridge.

Garden area

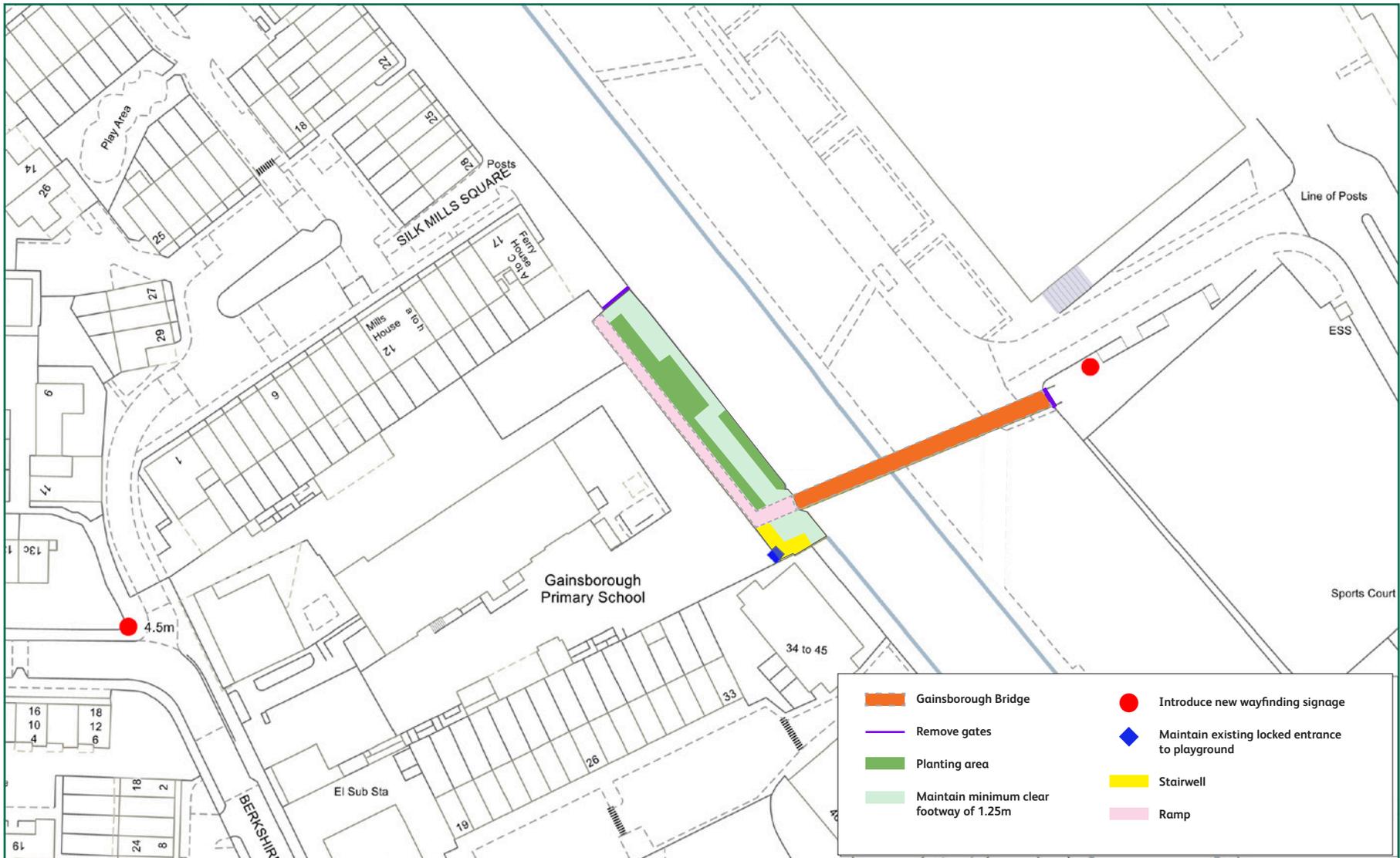
There is currently no public access to the bridge from the western bank where there is a garden area and a locked gate. There are no plans to remove the garden area which is within the Council's freehold ownership, but some adjustments will need to be made to make the entrance safe and accessible.



These adjustments will be undertaken in consultation with local stakeholders and will focus on ensuring that planting and garden materials do not impede access to the ramp or the stairwell that lead to the bridge.

A clear path of a minimum 1.25m width must remain clear and obstruction free at all times for

the full length of the walkway to the stairwell and to the ramp. In addition, management arrangements for the ongoing use of the garden will be developed in consultation with local stakeholders to ensure it can remain an accessible garden for all of the community to use.



Map showing how public access to Gainsborough Bridge will be achieved

Wayfinding signage

Wayfinding signage will be introduced near the entrance of the Wick Village estate and signposting will be installed where the bridge connects to the playing fields. There is also the potential to install signage by the garden area to facilitate better orientation.

Consideration of the provision of stairs at the mid span point of Gainsborough Bridge

Wick Village estate, Trowbridge estate and Leabank Square are all relatively insular in their layouts with limited through-routes. They do not provide direct pedestrian connections through and give little in the way of signage or wayfinding to direct people to alternative routes.

Along with a strong residential character, the difficulty of navigating through the residential area as a pedestrian contributes to the area's perception as private or not entirely accessible to the general public. This context sits immediately opposite the very public function of the towpath and the commercial functions facing the canal. Although Gainsborough Bridge provides connections across these quite different areas, there is a level of separation maintained by the

location of the access points for the bridge.

Even on the more public side to the east of the canal, the entrance to the bridge is from a raised level removed from the towpath. Therefore, proposals that suggest introducing a new stairway to directly connect the towpath to the bridge will create a confusing pedestrian experience leading people from a visible and overlooked public space to an insular and quiet residential area.

In order to maintain the role of the bridge as a secondary connection, it is preferable to maintain access to the bridge where it is currently located but supported by public realm improvements such as wayfinding.

A Public Access Review is required to be submitted to the LLDC within three years of Gainsborough Bridge opening to the public. The Review will further consider the provision of stairs at the mid span point of the bridge to the Lee Navigation public towpath. The provision of stairs at the mid span point of the bridge is not proposed as part of this Public Access Strategy document.

5.0 Stakeholder engagement on the Public Access Strategy

5.1 Stakeholder engagement

On 3 February 2020 the Council launched an engagement exercise with Hackney Wick residents and businesses to gather comments and feedback on the proposed Public Access Strategy to open Gainsborough Bridge to the public. The engagement ran until 27 March 2020 and the results can be viewed at www.consultation.hackney.gov.uk/communications-and-consultation/gainsborough-bridge

A letter was sent to 2,000 homes and businesses locally informing them of the consultation, outlining the proposals and how to provide feedback.

Residents and businesses were asked to respond by going online to Hackney Council's consultation hub, Citizenspace - www.consultation.hackney.gov.uk - to fill out a two page survey, or they could fill out a hard copy at Trowbridge Centre, Trowbridge Road, E9 5LD. Sealable envelopes and a dedicated postbox was available at the Trowbridge Centre for respondents to deposit their completed surveys.

A copy of the Public Access Strategy (A3 and A4 copies) was made available online on the consultation webpage and at the Trowbridge Centre for respondents to review. A press release was issued to local media and featured in the Hackney Gazette on 3rd February 2020.

Gainsborough Primary School also issued notices to parents via their school newsletter.

The main features of the Council's proposal were as follows:

- Open Gainsborough Bridge to public access, including pedestrians and cyclists
- Improve connectivity between Hackney Wick, QEOP and beyond via the opening of Gainsborough Bridge for public access

The Council was also interested to hear what other public realm improvements the local community might like to see in the area.

5.2 Engagement results

A total of 149 respondents provided feedback to the question: "To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to open the Gainsborough Bridge to public access?" The majority of respondents "agree a lot" with the proposal (110 - 76.3%), with a much smaller number of respondents who "agree" with the proposal (6 - 4.6%). Those who said "neither agree nor disagree" (4 - 3%) and disagree (1 - 0.8%) account for a very small number in comparison. Those who "disagree a lot" with the proposal represented the second largest respondent group (28 - 15.3%).

Respondents were asked to provide feedback on two open questions:

- What type of public realm improvements would you like to see as a part of the proposal?
- Do you have any comments on the overall proposal?

The feedback has been used to update the final Public Access Strategy and includes:

- Confirming that the garden area will not be removed as a result of opening the bridge to public access
- Confirming that a Wayfinding Strategy has been prepared
- Confirming that a dedicated Community Safety & Principal Enforcement Officer will work with partners throughout the first year to monitor the impact of the opening of Gainsborough Bridge
- Confirming cycle management arrangements will be monitored to ensure that cyclists do not impact the enjoyment of local residents and pedestrians.
- Confirming that additional public realm improvements will be explored at a later stage

5.3 Review of Public Access

The LLDC will undertake a three week consultation period once the Public Access Strategy has been submitted to inform their decision regarding the opening of Gainsborough Bridge for public use.

If the LLDC approve the opening of Gainsborough Bridge to the public, the Council will work with the dedicated Community Safety and Principle Enforcement Officer to engage with the local community as part of a review of the public use of Gainsborough Bridge. Within three years from the date on which the bridge is first opened to the public, Hackney Council will review the Public Access Strategy to assess any impacts or effects of public access to the bridge. The results of this review will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval.

5.4 Next steps

If the LLDC approve the opening of Gainsborough Bridge to the public, Hackney Council will engage local stakeholders regarding the use of the garden area and will commence enabling works within six months of receiving LLDC approval which will include removing gates, installing signage and ensuring that there is a clear and unobstructed path through the garden area so that there is unrestricted public access to Gainsborough Bridge.

