

Date:	22 June 2015
Classification:	For General Release
Title:	Baker Street Two Way Project
Report of:	Ben Denton, Executive Director Growth, Planning and Housing
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Councillor Robert Davis DL, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for the Built Environment
Wards Involved:	Marylebone High Street; Bryanston and Dorset Square; Regent's Park
Policy Context:	Westminster's City Plan: Strategic Policies (2013) emphasise the need to prioritise pedestrian movement and support sustainable transport options, reducing reliance on private motor vehicles thereby improving air quality and public health. Public realm enhancements and improvements around mainline stations are supported. The need to carefully manage freight and servicing to minimise adverse impacts is also acknowledged.
Financial Summary:	There are no financial implications arising from this report.
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an update on Baker Street Two Way project and appends the consultation documents that are part of the on-going public consultation on this project.

2. KEY MATTERS FOR THE COMMITTEE'S CONSIDERATION

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is:
- i. To provide an update on Baker Street Two Way project.
 - ii. To note views of Members in connection with this scheme.
 - iii. To note Members' views of potential further schemes.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A report was presented to the Environment Policy and Scrutiny Committee in September 2014 setting out the background to the major one-way systems and gyratories in the City, and the status of various schemes and studies being implemented and considered to replace some of these with two way working. One of the proposed two way schemes mentioned in this report, Baker Street Two Way, is now being formally consulted on. This report provides an update on this project and also provides a summary of other planned proposals for two-way schemes.
- 3.2 Baker Street and Gloucester Place, south of Marylebone Road, form part of the Strategic Route Network (SRN) managed by Westminster City Council. North of Marylebone Road, both streets are part of the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN) managed by Transport for London. Both streets are part of a one-way gyratory system and are relatively wide. As a result, traffic generally behaves as if negotiating an urban motorway. Footways, especially on east side of Baker Street are narrow and street clutter further reduces the available space. The pedestrian crossing facilities on most junctions along Baker Street and Gloucester Place and on Marylebone Road are inadequate. There is also a lack of safe cycling facilities on these two roads.
- 3.3 A significant improvement to the street environment on Baker Street and Gloucester Place can be achieved by removing the one-way gyratory system and re-introducing two-way traffic flow. This would greatly increase accessibility for all road users including local traffic and would also provide an opportunity to improve facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and bus passengers. The completion of Cross Rail and increase in rail services at Marylebone Station are likely to generate a significant increase in pedestrian footfall throughout the area between Marylebone Road and Oxford Street.
- 3.4 This project is being jointly funded by Transport for London, Portman Estate, Baker Street Quarter BID and others. The current projected cost of the scheme is £15 million. Although part of the scheme affects roads managed by Transport for London, Westminster City Council is leading on this project, with support from Transport for London, and will deliver the whole project on site, subject to all approvals.

4.0 OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 The aim of the project is to reduce the dominance of traffic along Baker Street and Gloucester Place which divides up the area and provide significant public realm improvement on Baker Street and Gloucester Place.

The evidence, covered in the reports to Cabinet Members, shows that one-way traffic down Baker Street and up Gloucester Place, which often resemble urban motorways, is at the heart of these problems. The wide carriageways encourage high traffic speeds, particularly during quieter periods of the day. When traffic volumes are highest during the peak periods, there is congestion southbound on Baker Street approaching Marylebone Road and Oxford Street and northbound on Gloucester Place approaching Marylebone Road. At junctions between Marylebone Road and Portman Square there is generally more 'green' signal time available for traffic on the wide approaches on the main roads, which results in spare, wasted capacity. This can lead to drivers accelerating aggressively between junctions. There is an opportunity to rebalance road space and traffic signal time to provide greater benefit to pedestrians and cyclists, while maintaining appropriate traffic capacity and discouraging high speeds.

Across the capital, many similar one way road systems are being successfully transformed into community friendly, safe and well planned two way streets.

By reintroducing two way traffic flow along Baker Street and Gloucester Place and complementary improvements to the public realm in the area, the project would make the whole area more pedestrian friendly and accessible and restore the unique Marylebone character.

4.2 The main objectives of the scheme are summarized below –

- Reduce the dominance of traffic by removing the one-way system in Baker Street and Gloucester Place, introducing a two-way pedestrian friendly environment on Baker Street; reduce vehicle speeds and thereby improve safety; reduce vehicle trip length by improving accessibility;
- Provide a significant improvement to the quality of public realm on Baker Street and throughout the study area and improve the environment for pedestrians by increasing available footway space, providing additional and improving pedestrian crossings facilities on Baker Street and Gloucester Place, reducing street clutter and alleviating barriers to pedestrian movement such as Marylebone Road;
- Improve public transport accessibility by providing bus access to Baker Street for northbound services and to Gloucester Place for southbound facilities, enhancing bus stops and connectivity between bus services, coaches and underground rail;
- Improve conditions for cyclists and provide a key cycle feeder between the proposed CSH11 route at Regent's Park to interface with the Westminster Cycle Grid;
- Ensure adequate kerbside capacity is maintained to provide effective loading, servicing and parking for local residents and businesses;
- To ensure that the scheme does not adversely impact on the traffic operation of Oxford Street, Marble Arch and Marylebone Road;
- Provide a safe environment for all road users.

4.3 As part of the feasibility design process, various options for improving cycling facilities on Gloucester Place were considered. These cycling facilities would complement the proposed Cycle Superhighway 11 on Portland Place and the proposed Quietway route on Harewood Avenue and Bryanston Square. These options are:

Option A - advisory cycle lanes on Gloucester Place with a minimum impact on traffic network operation and kerbside capacity.

Option B - a 3m wide segregated cycle facility throughout the length of Gloucester Place.

Option C - a 4m wide segregated cycle facility, which would ensure adequate capacity for future cyclist growth.

Option D - mandatory cycle lanes of 2m width for the majority of Gloucester Place. The hours of operation for these mandatory lanes, both northbound and southbound, could either be 7am to 7pm or morning and evening peak and will be decided after taking stakeholders and public opinion into consideration as part of the consultation process. At certain sections these lanes are proposed to be advisory keeping the kerbside activity/ residents' parking bays in mind.

Traffic modelling assessment was undertaken for these options to understand their impact on network capacity and resilience. This assessment showed that Options B and C were unlikely to provide sufficient traffic capacity for an acceptable level of traffic network resilience to be achieved. In addition, these options would result in significant loss of kerbside activity including parking, loading/unloading and drop off/pick up.

Option D was therefore recommended to be the preferred option which would be developed further and consulted upon. This option was accepted by the Cycling Commissioner of London and Deputy Mayor of London for Transport as the preferred option.

5. KEY FEATURES AND ASSOCIATED BENEFITS

- **Introducing two way traffic flow** would reduce the need for traffic to follow unnecessarily long routes around the road system, which should reduce journey times. It will reduce the volume of traffic having to make circuitous routes on residential streets to access and leave locations across the area, and reduce the amount of turning movements at junctions.
- **Improved facilities for cyclists** by providing more places to park bicycles and new cycle lanes on Gloucester Place to connect the area with the London Cycle Grid. New advanced stop lines at junctions would help make cycling in the area both easier and safer.
- **Proposed wider, less cluttered pavements** along Baker Street and at Dorset Square would help reduce pedestrian congestion and the risk of petty crime. This would be accompanied by improved street lighting and better signage.

- **Provision of up to 50 signal controlled crossings** in the area, many of them new, relocated or upgraded. Pedestrians would also benefit from wider crossings with shorter crossing distances and new crossings in six locations which would enable pedestrians to cross safely in any direction. In addition, straight across pedestrian crossings on Marylebone Road at its junction with Baker Street and Gloucester Place are proposed to replace staggered crossings. This will help to improve pedestrian amenity and safety and reduce crossing time.
- **Bus network** will be easier to understand, by locating northbound and southbound services on the same street, where possible. Bus stops could also be combined and relocated to more suitable positions.

6. WORK UNDERTAKEN

- 6.1 A feasibility design and associated traffic modelling has been undertaken to determine the feasibility of two-way working and to ensure that the project objectives are met without any adverse impact on resilience of the road network. The design and traffic modelling have been approved in principle by Transport for London. The feasibility report and drawings are included as background papers in the approved Cabinet Member Report.

7. CONSULTATION TIMELINE AND NEXT STEPS

- 7.1 Public consultation on the proposed changes commenced on 26th May 2015 for a period of ten weeks until 31st July 2015. As part of the consultation, public exhibitions will be held for people to attend and learn about the project. The consultation material is attached in Appendix A.
- 7.2 Later in summer 2015, Transport for London will also carry out a separate consultation on proposed changes to bus services, including new bus stop locations.
- 7.3 Should WCC and TfL decide to proceed with the scheme, there will be a second phase of consultation focusing on the technical details (Traffic Management Orders) in Autumn 2015. Then, in late 2015, Westminster City Council's Cabinet Members will consider the results of the consultations and make a decision on whether to proceed with detailed design and implementation of the scheme.
- 7.4 If approval is given to proceed with detailed design and implementation, the works on site are proposed to start in April 2016 and are likely to take eighteen months.

8. APPENDICES

- 8.1 Appendix A contains the current public consultation information
- 8.2 Appendix B updates the information on other relevant schemes reported to this committee in September 2014
- 8.3 Appendix C is an example of a two way scheme proposal in Perth, Australia for comparison

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact:

**Graham King, Head of Strategic Transport Planning and Public Realm –
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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Consultation documents

Appendix B - Summary of Two Way and Gyratory Schemes

Appendix C - Information on Two Way Streets in Perth, Australia

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1. Environment Policy and Scrutiny Report, September 2014**
- 2. Cabinet Member decision to undertake Consultation (and associated background papers), 20 March 2015**
- 3. Cabinet Member decision to commence initial design (and associated background papers), 12 November 2014**
- 4. Cabinet Member decision to undertake feasibility study, 23 October 2013**

APPENDIX A: Current Consultation documents

- 1. Consultation leaflet**
- 2. Drawings showing proposed scheme (3 nos.)**
- 3. Drawings showing existing and proposed permitted vehicle movements (2 nos.)**
- 4. Existing and proposed traffic flow table – listed by street**
- 5. Right turn options onto Marylebone Road**
- 6. Online questionnaire (paper copy)**