



City of Westminster

# Cabinet Member Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Cabinet Member for Environment and City Management
<b>Date:</b>	19 March 2019
<b>Classification:</b>	General Release
<b>Title:</b>	Baker Street Two Way Project – Response to petition on Dorset Square Coach Stop
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	Marylebone High Street, Bryanston and Dorset Square, Regent's Park
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Financial Summary:</b>	No financial implication
<b>Report of:</b>	Executive Director, City Management and Communities

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Baker Street Two Way project proposes to remove the one-way gyratory system and re-introduce two-way traffic flow on Baker Street and Gloucester Place while improving public realm and conditions for pedestrians, cyclists and bus users. Works for this project have been ongoing since July 2017 and as part of this project, the existing bus stop at Dorset Square is now being used by coaches. All TfL buses have moved to Baker Street after the two-way switch. A petition was submitted on 30 November 2018 by the chair of Dorset Square Trust and was subsequently presented to Full Council on 23 January 2019 by Cllr Dimoldenberg. This petition was to 'Work with TFL to move the airport/long distance coach stop off Dorset Square to a non-residential location' and was signed by 136 people on-line and an understood 300 people off-line.
- 1.2 This report responds to the issues raised in this petition.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Cabinet Member notes the receipt of the petition.
- 2.2 That Cabinet Member notes that responses have been provided to the issues raised in this petition and that the current position is that with regard to the location of the stop, this will not be considered further until the completion of the scheme and monitoring has taken place. The situation can then be reviewed again at this time. With regard to the issues around coach and behaviours of passengers, officers will continue to work with TfL to address some of these concerns.

## **3. Reasons for Decision**

- 3.1 Response to the issues raised in this petition has been provided. WCC and TfL continue to work with the residents to resolve concerns around coach operation and associated behaviour.

## **4. Background, including Policy Context**

- 4.1 Baker Street and Gloucester Place are part of the one-way gyratory system. The Baker Street Two Way project proposes to remove the one-way gyratory system and re-introducing two-way traffic flow. In addition, it also proposes to improve the public realm, improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists and improve public transport accessibility. This project is being jointly funded by Transport for London (TfL), Portman Estate, Baker Street Quarter BID and others.
- 4.2 Works on this project have been underway since July 2017 and are nearing completion. The switch to two-way working took place in February 2019 and all works are expected to be complete by June 2019.
- 4.3 A petition was presented to Full Council on 23 January 2019 by Councillor Dimoldenberg. This petition was earlier submitted by the chair of Dorset Square Trust on 30 November 2018. This petition was signed by 136 people on-line and an understood 300 people off-line. The support statement read as follows -

*‘We the undersigned petition Westminster City Council to “Work with TFL to move the airport/long distance coach stop off Dorset Square to a non-residential location”. A long distance coach stop has been moved from a non-residential part of Gloucester Place onto Dorset Square as part of the 2Way Scheme, despite our repeated objections to both WCC and TFL. Already the stop has changed the very nature of the heart of the conservation area. It causes major disruption for local residents as the coaches run 24/7 and are noisy and polluting. The engines run for the entire duration of their stop, up to 15 mins, with < 6 coaches/hr causing increased NO2 pollution to nearby residents. There is increased traffic in the Square, coach engine noise, automated warning messages, flashing lights,*

*noisy passengers, drivers, conductors, increased trespass onto private property, antisocial behaviour, rough sleepers, littering and use of the garden railings/road as a toilet. The north side of the Square is frequently blocked preventing emergency access. WCC and TfL are now threatening to install a large coach shelter and giant waste bins which will turn the Square into a coach station.*

*The coach stop must be moved off Dorset Sq to a non-residential area. Your signature is required as WCC and TfL are rejecting our reasonable and legitimate concerns out of hand.'*

## **5. Response to petition**

- 5.1 One of the objectives of Baker Street Two Way project was to improve public transport accessibility by providing bus access to Baker Street for northbound services. However, due to capacity constraints, it was decided that coaches will continue to use existing routes i.e. Baker Street for southbound coaches and Gloucester Place for northbound coaches. It should be noted that both these roads are strategic roads and part of the Strategic Route Network. The project is being delivered as a joint project by WCC and TfL and the section of Gloucester Place north of Marylebone Road is a TfL road.

In order to provide a much needed pedestrian crossing across Gloucester Place, near its junction with Marylebone Road, it was proposed to move some of the coach services to the bus stop at Dorset Square. Two-thirds of the services continue to use the coach stop at Allsop Arms and one third of the services now use the old bus stop on Dorset Square as a coach stop.

Temporarily, northbound TfL Buses were using Gloucester Place and using the suspended parking bays north of Dorset Square coach stop as a bus stop. After the two-way switch that happened last month, all TfL Buses have moved to Baker Street.

Please note that all objections/ comments received during the consultation process were considered. It should also be noted that the previous location of this coach stop was next to Marathon House which is a residential block. Dorset House, another residential block, was opposite this coach stop.

We recognise your concerns that there are differences in operation between long distance coaches and buses and have raised your concerns regarding engine idling, noise, flashing lights at night and coach operator and passenger behaviour with Transport for London (TfL). We will continue to work with TfL and yourselves in resolving these issues. TfL have affixed notices at the stop reminding users to be considerate to residents. They have also spoken to the coach operators regarding staff using steps of private properties.

Regarding your concern about pollution from long distance coaches, please note that over 83% of National Express coaches already meet the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) Euro VI standard. The small number of regional services serving the stop are currently Low Emission Zone (LEZ) compliant, but will become ULEZ compliant as new vehicles enter the fleet in the coming months. From April 2019, the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) will be introduced in central London. All coaches and buses will be included in it and will have to meet Euro VI standard.

Yellow box markings have been installed at the entrance to Dorset Square to prevent coaches from blocking this entrance. In addition the new bus stop has been marked which is 33m long to accommodate two coaches. The flag and post has been moved to the head of the marked stop and coach operators have been instructed to use the entire stretch of the stop to avoid blocking the entrance..

A large coach shelter was suggested to provide more space for passengers. If residents do not want, it will not be installed. With regard to the increased rubbish reported, an additional rubbish bin has been installed. The Council's Waste Management team has been alerted to this site and the bins are being emptied every morning Monday to Friday. The team have been asked to pay greater attention to the area around the coach stop.

All of Gloucester Place is residential in nature so it is hard to find a 'non-residential' area on that section of the road. This location is close to the tube station, train station and bus routes thereby improving interconnectivity between various modes of transport. It is on a section of footway with no direct doors and windows in front and has been used by TfL Buses 24/7 as a bus stop for many years.

A meeting was organised on 12th December 2018 which was attended by members, officers from WCC and TfL, coach operator and representatives of Dorset Square Trust and St Marylebone Society. Concerns of residents were discussed and actions were agreed to mitigate these concerns.

We will continue to engage with TfL and coach operators regarding coach behaviour and will continue to monitor the area following the two-way switch and scheme implementation.

## **6. Financial Implications**

This report has no financial implications.

## **7. Legal Implications**

- 7.1 In accordance with City Council's Constitution (Council Procedures (Standing Orders), and the Petition Scheme approved by the City Council on 19 May 2010, petitions are to be referred to the appropriate Chief Officer or Head of Service who shall advise the petition organiser, within 3 months or sooner where possible, of the City Council's response to the lodged Petition
- 7.2 Petition Schemes are governed by the provisions of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 ("The 2009 Act"). Sections 11 – 18 of the 2009 Act sets out the procedural requirements the City Council should have regard to when it receives a Petition. In essence, this requires the City Council, inter alia, to debate the subject matter in an open and transparent way, engage fully in the process by proper consultation with the petition organiser, and such other affected parties, and to appoint an Officer to "be called to account" (defined under the 2009 Act as a "Chief Officer" or "Head of Service") whose responsibility, it is to oversee the Petition process to ensure compliance with the 2009 Act and the City Council's Petition Scheme as provided for under the Constitution. The Petition Scheme sets out explicitly the actions and steps the City Council will undertake when a Head of Service is appointed accordingly.
- 7.3 The City Council when looking at any proposed amendments to resolve the issues highlighted in this report is obliged to consider the issues raised by the Petition in a fair, reasonable and proportionate way as part of the decision making process. This measured approach needs to be balanced against the City Council's general power of Competence under Part 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to improve the well-being of its area (the former power being under section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000).

## 8. Outstanding issues

- 8.1 None

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

**Anju Banga, Programme and Contract Manager**  
at 02076412666 or [abanga@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:abanga@westminster.gov.uk)

For completion by the **Cabinet Member** for *Environment and City Management*

**Declaration of Interest**

I have <no interest to declare / to declare an interest> in respect of this report

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: Councillor Tim Mitchell

State nature of interest if any .....

.....  
(N.B: If you have an interest you should seek advice as to whether it is appropriate to make a decision in relation to this matter)

For the reasons set out above, I agree the recommendation(s) in the report entitled

.....and reject any alternative options which are referred to but not recommended.

Signed .....

Cabinet Member for *Environment and City Management*

Date .....

If you have any additional comment which you would want actioned in connection with your decision you should discuss this with the report author and then set out your comment below before the report and this pro-forma is returned to the Secretariat for processing.

Additional comment: .....  
.....  
.....

If you do not wish to approve the recommendations, or wish to make an alternative decision, it is important that you consult the report author, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Strategic Director Finance and Performance and, if there are resources implications, the Strategic Director of Resources (or their representatives) so that (1) you can be made aware of any further relevant considerations that you should take into account before making the decision and (2) your reasons for the decision can be properly identified and recorded, as required by law.

Note to Cabinet Member: Your decision will now be published and copied to the Members of the relevant Policy & Scrutiny Committee. If the decision falls within the criteria for call-in, it will not be implemented until five working days have elapsed from

publication to allow the Policy and Scrutiny Committee to decide whether it wishes to call the matter in.

## **Appendix A**

### **Other Implications**

1. **Resources Implications** – no implication
2. **Business Plan Implications** – no implication
3. **Risk Management Implications** – no implication
4. **Health and Wellbeing Impact Assessment including Health and Safety Implications** – no implication
5. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – no implication
6. **Impact on the Environment** – no implication
7. **Equalities Implications** – no implication
8. **Staffing Implications** – no implication
9. **Human Rights Implications** – no implication
10. **Energy Measure Implications** – no implication
11. **Communications Implications** – no implication

Note to report authors: If there are particularly significant implications in any of the above categories these should be moved to the main body of the report.