



## **Streets and Walkways Sub (Planning and Transportation) Committee**

**Date:** TUESDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2016

**Time:** 1.45 pm

**Venue:** COMMITTEE ROOMS, 2ND FLOOR, WEST WING, GUILDHALL

### **Item No 5c**

### **Traffic in the City of London**

Item received too late for circulation in conjunction with the Agenda.

**John Barradell  
Town Clerk and Chief Executive**

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# Agenda Item 5c

Committee(s)	Dated:
Streets and Walkways Policy & Resources Committee Planning and Transportation Committee – For Decision	08/11/2016 17/11/2016 28/11/2016 or 30/11/2016
<b>Subject:</b> Traffic in the City of London	Public
<b>Report of:</b> Department of the Built Environment	For Decision/ For Information
<b>Report author:</b> Steve Presland, Transportation & Public Realm Director	

## Summary

This report discusses the current traffic situation in the City of London; recognising that it impacts upon the City's competitiveness. It acknowledges that current major infrastructure projects such as Crossrail and the Cycle Super Highway, along with the highest level of development activity for many years, have increased the demand on the highway network's capacity. Whilst not City wide, traffic congestion in certain areas has resulted.

The report recognises that delay to traffic is a London wide issue and alerts Members to an on-going London Assembly Transport Committee investigation into congestion which is considering causes and potential measures to reduce it. The City of London has contributed to the call for evidence for this investigation both through London Councils and in person, with officer representation at an expert panel.

This report considers a range of measures that might be introduced or strengthened to improve traffic flow. The main ways to improve traffic movement are summarised as managing our streets more effectively, spreading the length of time over which vehicles use the City and, most importantly, reducing the amount of traffic in the City to a level our community finds acceptable.

The report suggests a 3 pronged approach to congestion. Namely

- making representations for London wide policy change e.g. changes to the congestion charge
- developing a range of strategic and proactive measures to improve traffic flow in the short to medium term e.g. reducing the number and changing the time of goods vehicle arrivals, tackling perceived congestion hot spots such as Bank Junction.
- Reactive mitigation i.e. close monitoring of our network, speedy response to issues and robust enforcement

The full range of measures is summarised at appendix 2 along with an indication of consequent key impacts of each measure. The report seeks Member guidance on

political priorities and endorsement of an over arching objective of reducing over all traffic levels in the City.

## **Recommendation(s)**

Members are recommended to:

- Agree the next steps as set out at paragraph 41-45 of the report.
- Agree an overarching objective of reducing traffic in the City and that this should be emphasised in the next draft of our Local Implementation Plan (LIP).
- Agree sums of £50k and £40k respectively towards appointment of consultants to advance the City of London's approach to consolidation centres and appointment of a FTE post, on a 1 year trial basis, to investigate how better construction and servicing/delivery planning might alleviate City congestion.
- Consider Appendix 2 of this report and advise of any measures considered politically unacceptable.

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. As part of the recently introduced Chief Officer governance structure a group of Chief Officers has been formed to provide leadership in relation to place-making in the Square Mile. This group, known as the 'Place Steering Group', has identified three key themes regarding the physical factors that make the City competitive as a place to do business. These are Capacity, Connectivity and Character. The Policy and Resources Committee has requested a plan to tackle congestion in the City and this contributes to all three themes.
2. In considering vehicle movement it is recognised that our transport networks need to have sufficient capacity for the residents, visitors and workers in the City to move around safely and efficiently. The streets also need to support the delivery of goods and services. Our streets are fundamental to the character and working of the City.
3. The causes of congestion are well documented. Major infrastructure schemes such as Bank upgrade, Crossrail, Thames Tideway plus the needs and expectations of the utility companies all impact on traffic movement. In addition the increasing cycling numbers and the Cycle Super Highway, with the loss of network capacity that has resulted, compounds the problem. So does the current development boom, with over 60 building sites currently refreshing the highest amount of floorspace in the City since 2008.
4. In seeking to address the current imbalance between road space supply and demand, we must aim to:
  - accommodate projected growth in numbers of people in the City (1.15 million m<sup>2</sup> of office floorspace is planned by- enough for a further 58,000 workers)

- improve road safety, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists who are involved in 83% of all accidents
  - enable 'placemaking' - using our streets to support culture, provide 'third spaces' for people to meet and work, provide more greenery and ensure that our streets provide a world class setting for the City's wonderful buildings
  - improve air quality
5. The main ways to improve traffic movement will be
- to reduce the amount of traffic in the City to a level that our community finds acceptable
  - to manage our streets efficiently and employ smart technologies to enable efficient movement
  - to spread the length of time over which vehicles use the City
6. The most recently analysed data (2014) regarding traffic in the 'Square Mile' is shown at Appendix 1. From this it can be seen that cars and taxis make up almost 50% of traffic movements. However these sectors are difficult to tackle in the absence of London wide policy change. It is proposed therefore to initially seek to reduce goods vehicle movements in the Square Mile over which the Corporation can have direct influence. Together goods vehicles of various sizes make up some 22% of all traffic movements and their associated loading and unloading can also add to congestion.
7. To make sustainable any traffic reduction achieved the City needs to adopt a policy change that will actively discourage vehicle movement. Otherwise road space freed up (e.g. through bus rationalisation or reduced freight movements) will simply be replaced by new traffic movement thereby negating the benefit.
8. In addition to focusing on freight Officers are exploring a wide range of actions to help traffic flow more smoothly. For ease of reference and prioritisation these are set out at Appendix 2. It should be noted that each measure will have additional impacts and a preliminary assessment of what these might be is also set out. For example retiming freight to evenings and /or night deliveries may pose significant noise issues and would have to be considered within the City's developing Noise Strategy. Another example would be that a significant congestion charge uplift might reduce congestion but may otherwise negatively impact on businesses.
9. Officers also require political guidance as to whether there is in principle support for adopting the over arching objective of delivering an overall reduction in traffic on our streets. This would arguably have the biggest impact on congestion as well as improving air quality and safety. The alternative approach of simply making our streets work more effectively by careful

planning of street works, use of technology and better enforcement, has already been well tried. For example we now have technology such as SCOOT to manage traffic signals so as to optimise their sequencing and we already adopt a robust approach to enforcement of parking and loading restrictions. Of course that is not to say that more could not be done with additional resources. Examples could be stricter control of business' 'servicing and delivering plans' and developer's 'construction and logistics plans'. In addition, delivery of our freight strategy, including increased use of consolidation centres etc., may deliver some further network efficiencies. However in the absence of a clear policy of reducing traffic on our streets experience tells us that any vehicle movements saved may simply be replaced by new traffic.

10. Traffic congestion is, of course, a London wide issue and is currently the subject of a London Assembly Transport Committee investigation. The investigating committee will be looking at a number of the ideas set out at Appendix 2 and these are shown on the appendix. The investigation will also be looking into the general causes of congestion and looking to see if lessons can be learnt from other major cities. Members may feel some of the ideas set out in this report are better addressed through the work of the investigating committee. Most importantly, the Mayor of London is due to publish a direction of travel document. That document has not been issued at the time of writing. But, in speeches given by the Deputy Mayor for Transport great emphasis has been placed on modal shift i.e. moving personal travel from motor vehicles to walking and cycling.

### **Suggested City response to improving traffic movement**

11. The City of London's suggested response is set out below under the following 3 headings:-
  - Seeking London wide policy change
  - City's option for strategic change in the Square Mile
  - Reactive mitigation

#### **London wide Policy Change**

12. Opportunity has recently been taken to feed into the London Assembly Transport Committee (LATC) investigation into road congestion.
13. The City of London not only contributed to the London Councils response to the call for evidence but, given the unique nature of the City, officers also applied to give evidence in person to the Committee. This was granted and the Assistant Director of City Transportation represented the City sitting on an expert panel which was set up and quizzed by the LATC in early October
14. The LATC investigation is exploring a number of suggestions that if agreed could deliver real benefits to the City in terms of reduced congestion. Its investigations will consider a wide range of issues but those likely to be most impactful on the City include:

- Revision of the Congestion charge – expanding the geographical area covered and/or significant charge uplift
  - Usage based road pricing
  - Tolling for river crossings
  - How to reduce delivery vehicles on London roads
  - Improving bus efficiency
15. In providing evidence to the LATC all the above measures were broadly supported (subject to further detailed impact analysis).
16. In parallel to the LATC investigation it is proposed that the City of London makes representations to the Mayor of London, the GLA and TfL for the impact analysis and business case to be prioritised in relation to 4 specific measures. Namely
- Increasing the congestion charge significantly
 

The greatest reduction in City congestion was noted in 2003 when the Congestion Charge was first introduced. It is felt only a significant increase will be impactful and help in driving a retiming of deliveries across the City.
  - TfL limiting access to the City of London
 

Currently TfL operates active management of London's traffic signals. It currently regulates access into the 'Square Mile' through its signal management. TfL accept that the Cycle Super Highway has impacted upon network capacity and there is a clear case for the level of mitigation currently being applied by TfL to be reviewed.
  - Reducing Bus Numbers
 

2019 will see reduced numbers consequent to Crossrail. A further strategic document on buses can be expected from TfL in early 2017. In considering reduced bus movements the concern is that other traffic may simply replace any reduction. Therefore it is important that signal adjustments on bus routes are sought to remove the additional capacity at the same time as bus movements are reduced. This may have a neutral benefit on the bus routes themselves but should have the real benefit of delivering reduced traffic movement elsewhere on the network.
  - Bridge Tolls
 

Clearly a strategic issue for London but a real opportunity to generate income to offset escalating highway maintenance costs if the City of London receives all or some of the monies collected. At this stage it is understood that tolling could be delivered by extending our camera network and use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition.

## **City of London's options for strategic change in the Square Mile**

17. Much of what the City of London might do would need TfL support or approval. However, the following measures could be pursued if deemed politically acceptable.

### **Use of new technology-Smart City**

18. There are three main areas for use of technology.

- Illuminated signage warning drivers in real-time of City Congested areas and offering diversionary routing. They would however add clutter and may not be aesthetically pleasing and in some areas may be limited by planning requirements. Satellite navigation systems already utilise real time data therefore illuminated signage is not currently proposed.
- Speed censors. These could deliver alerts when congestion is developing in specific streets to facilitate a reactive response. They could also be used to better map, on a temporal basis, City Congestion and thereby assist in designing in solutions. The SCOOT traffic signal system could help as well. However, this system is yet to be activated in critical parts of the City.
- Parking bay censors. To identify vacant spaces thereby reducing driver 'sharking' looking for parking spaces. The use of sensors arguably has a valuable role to play in designing the future 'Smart City'. However it is considered that their use is better considered once the Place Steering Group has fully considered their value and also once the City's lighting replacement programme has concluded which it is expected will not be until 2019.

### **Zero Emission Capable (ZEC) Timed Closures**

19. A City wide day time ban of non ZEC vehicles would be highly effective both in terms of Air Quality and congestion but would be unlikely to readily receive TfL support. The enforcement of such a ban may also be challenging although the concept warrants further discussion with TfL. It should be noted that specific non ZEC vehicle bans such as that proposed at Beech Street may actually work to cause congestion by necessitating vehicle diversions for non compliant vehicles. Hence any such proposal would require detailed modelling and assessment prior to implementation, as is the case with Beech Street.

### **Freight Strategy/Consolidation**

20. The City of London's approved strategy includes a number of important strands based around TfLs 4'R' approach of Rerouting, Retiming, Remodelling

and Removing. Arguably the biggest impact here would be through the establishment of more consolidation centres to serve the City.

21. New towers in the Eastern City Cluster will require consolidation centres to be able to fulfil vehicle movement limitations required by their planning consent. This has generated much interest in consolidation in this area and work is currently being led and driven by the private sector. The aim is to deliver a major consolidation centre located outside of the City and if this can be achieved this will serve as an excellent model for others to follow.
22. Unlike in the case of new developments the establishment of a consolidation centre approach to service existing businesses is both time consuming and difficult to achieve. Officers are, however, working with the Cheapside BID to try to move its servicing and deliveries to a consolidation centre approach. As part of our investigation officers will also be meeting with Crown Estates and Westminster Council to see what lessons can be learnt from their work at Regent Street.
23. In addition to the above Guildhall facility management has been reviewing deliveries to explore the potential to take advantage of capacity within a local authority focused Camden Council Consolidation Centre. This will require a detailed cost benefit assessment and this work is ongoing.
24. Officers are also working within DBE to explore Planning policies which might, if agreed, in future limit servicing and deliveries to outside 7am-7pm unless via consolidation.

### **Construction Logistics Plan (CLP)**

25. The detailed analysis of routing and timing of vehicle movement is currently limited by resource. An additional officer could work to provide detailed checks to all CLPs to ensure vehicles are moved away from more polluted and congested streets and also give greater consideration to Road Danger Reduction. It is suggested this be explored on a one year trial to establish if such an approval can deliver the perceived benefits.

### **Loading Restriction Review**

26. A further review of loading restrictions could take place in areas known to be congested. However a comprehensive city-wide review was only recently concluded. That work has already limited further or removed the ability for goods vehicles to load on the recognised important traffic routes.

### **Increased Parking Charges**

27. If the congestion charge is not dramatically increased Members may consider a sizeable uplift in parking charges. Such a price increase would be aimed at reducing traffic but may result in an overall reduced usage of our car parks and a consequent loss of income. For example a 25% loss of income

(consequent to a 25% reduction in traffic volume) might equate to a loss of income in the region of £1.5M. Care would also be needed to ensure that our pricing remains competitive with NCP otherwise we may generate the loss of income with no reduction in traffic movement.

28. A report on car parks including charges is scheduled to be considered by the Planning and Transportation Committee in November of this year. That report includes proposals to increase and align charges across all car parks and it is therefore proposed that no further significant uplift be considered at this stage nor until the GLA review of the congestion charge be concluded.

### **Declassify A&B Roads**

29. This is currently being explored. Streets were declassified in the 1990's to remove them from commercially available maps. The purpose of declassification of our roads again would be to reduce SatNav systems using them to direct traffic through the City when moving across London. The appropriateness and effectiveness of this approach is being further assessed and if considered appropriate will be reported to Members in the new year.

### **Road Works**

30. In addition to the detailed planning that currently takes place to mitigate the impact road works have on congestion, DBE has appointed an additional person. The new employee will operate on a 1 year trial to work on liaising with major infrastructure projects e.g. Thames Tideway, Cycle Super highway (North Route extension), Crossrail, Bank Station Capacity Upgrade. They will also work closely with all neighbouring authorities to gain early intelligence of events that may impact congestion in the City. They will plan mitigation and seek to establish a central London Traffic Movement Forum to explore ideas on Strategic Mitigation.

### **Network Improvements to meet Future Needs**

31. The City Corporation has already made significant improvements to a number of previously congested and/or dangerous junctions. Recent examples would be Holborn Circus and Aldgate Gyratory.
32. Officers are also investigating how other congested junctions might be improved. Most recently a trial scheme is being developed for Bank Junction that, if approved, should deliver real reductions in average journey times across the centre of the City for general traffic and buses.
33. Pedestrian crossings can delay vehicles and pedestrians especially where heavily used by pedestrians. The recent successful trial at Ludgate Hill has demonstrated that signalised crossings can reduce localised traffic delay. It is therefore proposed to review all of the City's Zebra crossing points in 2017/18 to see if there is potential to both reduce localised congestion and improve safety.

34. In designing the City's streets to meet future needs it will be essential to not only address safety and traffic movement but also to design with the future in mind eg making appropriate provision for the potential use of autonomous vehicles.

### **City of London's Reactive Congestion Mitigation**

35. We now have an 18 month trial of a dedicated Congestion Officer looking to identify congestions across the City and deal with the cause. The officer uses the rapid deployment of Civil Enforcement Officers to deal with any parking issues, works with TfL signals team to adjust timings. She has a broad remit of monitoring, causation identification and resolution and produces a weekly report on her activity.
36. The officer also works closely with the highways team in assessing the impact of development in the City and how any consequent congestion might be minimised. With over 60 current active development sites in the City this is clearly a significant task. Members will be aware that officers have little to no control over the timing of such development although coordination is sought through regular liaison and persuasion.

### **Congestion Mapping**

37. Despite how it is often perceived, much of the City is rarely congested. Officers are working with TfL to utilise its traffic signal data along with City data to produce a temporal City Congestion Map. The map will be used to plan street activity to achieve efficiency of movement. It will also be analysed to see how deployment of our resources e.g. CEOs, road openings/closures, loading restrictions etc. might be further used to improve traffic flow.

### **Resources**

38. The City Transportation Service has recently been restructured. Within the new structure two new senior posts leading Network Management and Strategic Transportation have been created. These posts and their teams will, together, deliver much of the services required to improve traffic movement. However in the short term, despite a recent recruitment exercise, both teams are carrying significant vacancies.
39. A recruitment strategy review is currently being supported by our HR Business Partner. In the meantime it is proposed a sum of £50K be allocated to commission consultants to progress the City's Freight Strategy including the establishment of Consolidation Centres. It is hoped, assuming successful recruitment, City staff will take over this work from the consultants early in 2017.

40. It is also proposed that the service be allocated a sum of £40K to fund a FTE post that will undertake detailed examination of 'construction logistics plans', in relation to new development, to establish what impact this approach might have on mitigating City congestion.

## **Next Steps**

41. It is proposed that officers continue to support the LATC investigation into traffic congestion supporting the principles set out in this report.
42. It is also proposed that the City Corporation write again to The Mayor of London stressing the negative impact that congestion has on the City's competitiveness and pressing for urgent assessment of the impact analysis and business cases in relation to the four issues set out in paragraph 16 above.
43. Thirdly it is proposed that consultants be engaged within a £50K budget to take forward the City of London's Freight Strategy with a focus on promoting consolidation of deliveries both for the Guildhall and within the business community.
44. Fourthly that a FTE post be established for one year to focus on improving Servicing and Delivery Plans and Construction Logistic plans and that the effectiveness of this approach be reported in 12 months' time.
45. Fifthly that the Corporation Reactive Mitigation measures continue as set out in this report in paragraphs 35-36.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

46. To support and promote the City of London as the World Leader in international finance and business services.

## **Implications**

47. The £90K identified in this report to engage consultants and fund a one year trial in relation to Construction Logistics and Servicing and Delivery Plans will be met from compensatory savings in the directorates local risk budgets.

## **Health Implications**

48. Improvements to the City street network should aim to deliver both Road Danger Reduction and Air Quality benefits.

## **Conclusion**

49. Effective traffic movement across the City is essential to maintain the City's competitiveness. This report sets out a wide range of measures that could contribute to reducing congestion. The overarching objective however has to be reducing the total amount of traffic in the City at any one time as congestion only occurs when demand for road space outstrips supply. It is also recognised that our future street design will not only have to address movement but also other key factors such as improving Air Quality and reducing Road Danger. Furthermore any future designs will need to take into account developments in technology and be future-proofed where possible against possible innovations such as autonomous vehicles.

## **Appendices**

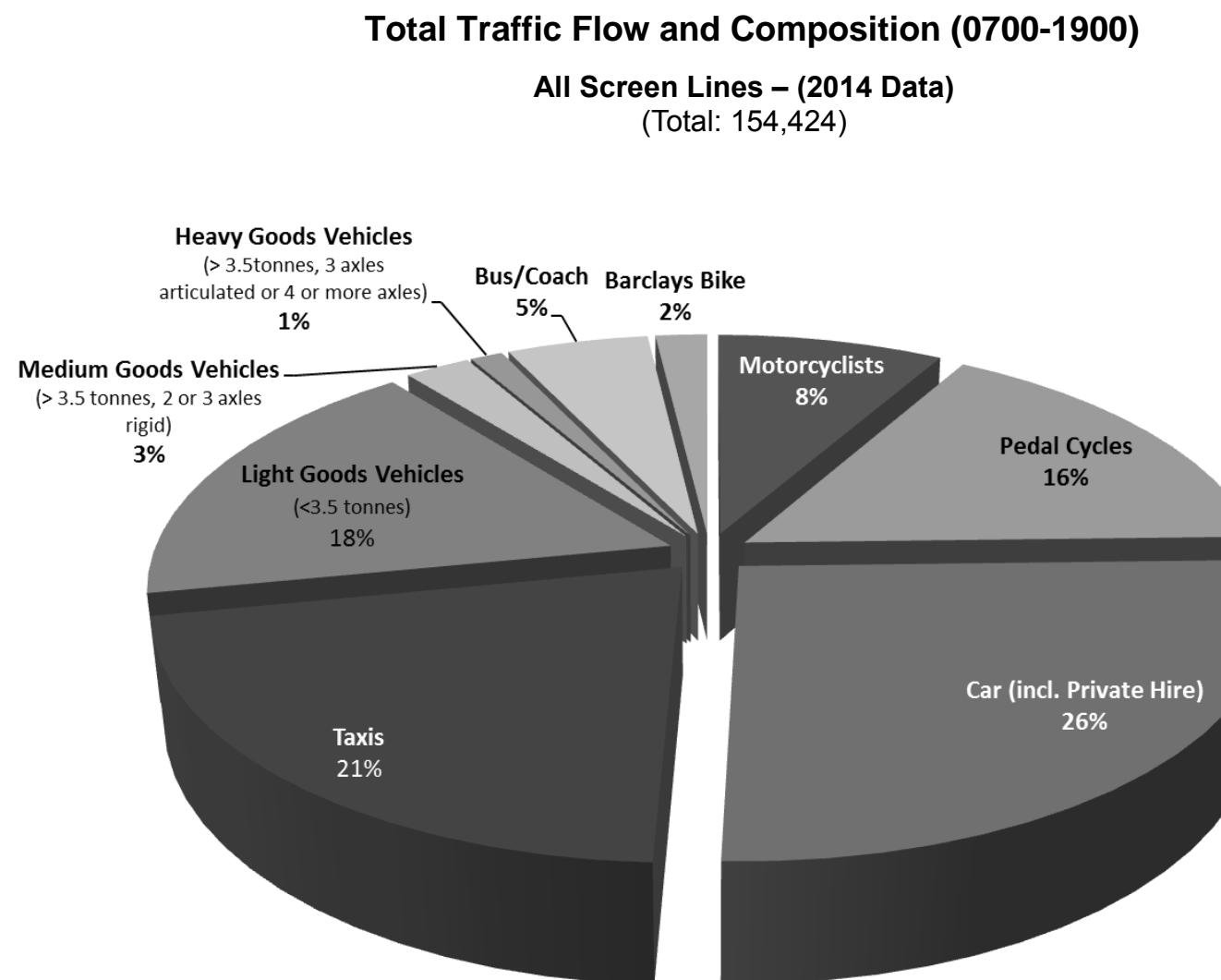
- Appendix 1 - Total Traffic Flow & Composition (0700-1900)
- Appendix 2 – Congestion in The City Table

## **Background Papers:**

[London Councils Submission to Transport Committees Review.](#) (link)

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## Appendix 2

### Congestion in the City

#### Key

+++	: high positive impact
++	: medium positive impact
+	: low positive impact
0	: no impact
- - -	: high negative impact
- -	: medium negative impact
-	: low negative impact

ISSUE	Congestion Impact	Cost Income = +	London Assembly Review included	Health & Wellbeing	Road Safety	Noise Strategy	Air Quality
<b><u>LOBBYING</u></b>							
Significant increase in Congestion Charge	+++	0	Yes	+++	+++	+++	+++
TfL Limiting Access to City	+++	0	No	+++	+++	+++	+++
Reducing Bus Numbers (reduce signal green time)	+	0	Yes	+	+	+	+
Bridge Tolls	++	+	Yes	++	++	++	++
<b><u>CITY STRATEGIC</u></b>							
Technology e.g. congestion alerts	+	--	Yes	+	+	+	+
Zero Emission Only / Timed Closures	++	-	No	++	++	++	++
Consolidation / Freight retiming	++	-	Yes	++	++	++	++
Servicing & Delivery Plans / Planning Policy Change	++	0	No	++	++	- / 0	++
Construction Logistics Plans	+	0	No	+	++	- / 0	+
Working with Neighbours / Congestion Forum	+	-	No	+	+	0	+
Loading Restriction Review	+	-	No	+	+	-	+
Increase Parking Charges	+	+	No	+	+	0	+
Declassify A & B Roads	+	-	No	+	+	+	+

<b>C. <u>REACTIVE MITIGATION</u></b>							
CEO Deployment	+	-	No	+	+	- / 0	+
Real Time Monitoring Officer	+	-	No	+	+	0	+
City Wide Congestion Mapping / Causation Analysis & Response	0 / +	-	No	0 / +	0 / +	0 / +	0 / +
<b>D. <u>OTHER</u></b>							
New Below Ground Roads	++	---	No	++	0	++	++
Park & Ride	+	-	Yes	+	+	+	+