

Committees: Corporate Projects Board <i>[for information]</i> Projects Sub-Committee <i>[for decision]</i> Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee <i>[for decision]</i> Port Health & Environmental Services <i>[for information]</i>	Dates: 28 June 2019 19 July 2019 22 July 2019 23 July 2019
Subject: Beech Street: Transport and Public Realm Improvements	Gateway 3 Complex
Unique Project Identifier: 10847	Issue Report
Report of: Director of the Built Environment Report Author: Aldo Strydom (City Transportation)	For Decision
<h1>PUBLIC</h1>	

1. Status update	<p>Project Description: The Project will address air quality issues in Beech Street by reducing or removing traffic. It also aims to deliver a vibrant street with high-quality public realm at the centre of Culture Mile.</p> <p>The purpose of this report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek Members' in principle endorsement of an interim scheme to be progressed to the next Gateway • Inform Members of work and findings to date <p>RAG Status: Amber</p> <p>Risk Status: Medium</p> <p>Total Estimated Cost of Project (excluding risk): £12M–£15M</p> <p>Change in Total Estimated Cost of Project (excluding risk): No change</p> <p>Spend to Date: £370,287</p> <p>Costed Risk Provision Utilised: 0</p> <p>Slippage: n/a</p>
2. Requested decisions	<p>Next Gateway: Gateway 4 Detailed Options Appraisal</p> <p>It is recommended that Members of the Streets and Walkways and Project Sub Committees:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve Option 2 for Two-way Zero Emission Street as an interim scheme on Beech Street.

	<p>It is recommended that all Committees note:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. If an interim scheme is approved, that officers will proceed with further developing options and outline designs in a Gateway 4/5 report to be bought back to Committees in ~October 2019, with work also continuing on investigating all closure options for the longer-term scheme. 3. Work and findings to date. 																																
<p>3. Budget</p>	<p>The project is funded through DBE Community Infrastructure Levy.</p> <p>There is no change to the previously approved budget which is set out below.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="564 692 1425 1541"> <thead> <tr> <th>Item</th> <th>Reason</th> <th>Funds/ Source of Funding</th> <th>Cost (£)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>PreEv P&T Staff Cost</td> <td>Staff costs</td> <td>CIL</td> <td>13,500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>PreEv Fees</td> <td>Surveys, consultancy fees, etc.</td> <td>CIL</td> <td>15,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Env Servs Staff Costs</td> <td>Staff costs</td> <td>CIL</td> <td>69,280</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DBE Structures Staff</td> <td>Staff costs</td> <td>CIL</td> <td>18,402</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P&T Staff Costs</td> <td>Staff costs</td> <td>CIL</td> <td>851,544</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fees</td> <td>Surveys, consultancy fees, etc.</td> <td>CIL</td> <td>777,636</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1,745,362</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>* It is likely that ~£91k of funding from the GLA for the previous Low Emissions Neighbourhood project will be made available to the Beech Street project and will be confirmed at next the Gateway Report.</p> <p>It is expected that the interim scheme will cost ~ £350k–£750k and that this can be accommodated within the current budget.</p> <p>Costed Risk Provision requested for this Gateway: 0</p>	Item	Reason	Funds/ Source of Funding	Cost (£)	PreEv P&T Staff Cost	Staff costs	CIL	13,500	PreEv Fees	Surveys, consultancy fees, etc.	CIL	15,000	Env Servs Staff Costs	Staff costs	CIL	69,280	DBE Structures Staff	Staff costs	CIL	18,402	P&T Staff Costs	Staff costs	CIL	851,544	Fees	Surveys, consultancy fees, etc.	CIL	777,636	Total			1,745,362
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<p>4. Issue description</p>	<p>1. A summary of the issues is captured below. More detail is contained in the 'Progress to date and findings' section presented in Appendix 2.</p>																																

Project objectives

2. Members have previously expressed their desire to accelerate the scheme so that the project objectives can be realised quickly. Officers have focused efforts on identifying measures that will address the following project objectives:

- A – Improve air quality by reducing NO₂ levels
- B – Improve the quality of the public realm to create streets and public spaces for people to securely admire and enjoy
- C – Improve pedestrian comfort levels

It is expected that any measures that address the above three objectives, will also address current safety concerns and thus also deliver project objective D (ensure buildings and public spaces are protected).

3. The Project is part of a programme of works that include the Podium Water Proofing project and the Barbican Refurbishment of Exhibition Halls 1 & 2. The Project will contribute to the successful outcomes of the refurbishment of the halls, as these are intended to have active frontages onto Beech Street.

Transport Strategy

4. It should be noted that Beech Street is designated as a *local access street*, as defined in Proposal 12 of the recently adopted Transport Strategy, and general through traffic should therefore be discouraged.

5. Proposal 29 of the Transport Strategy sets out the City's aim to create a local Zero Emission Zone (ZEZ) in the Barbican and Golden Lane estate and support the delivery of a Central London ZEZ in the next Mayoral term.

6. It is therefore intended to pursue ZEZ restrictions as an option for the project, in lieu of the Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) restrictions currently being investigated.

7. The mechanism for the delivery of the local ZEZ are the Healthy Streets Plans (Proposal 12 of the Transport Strategy), to assess how space is allocated between different users and uses of local streets. During the development of the Healthy Streets Plan for Barbican and Smithfield (which include the Barbican and Golden Lane estate area) an assessment of transport will be made across the area and any changes to the road network will be considered holistically.

8. The options for traffic restrictions on Beech Street as set out in this report align with the aspirations of introducing phased ZEZ restrictions, as described in the Transport Strategy. As this will be applied to one street and to avoid confusion, we have

deemed this approach a Zero Emission street restricting traffic to zero emission capable vehicles.

9. This approach has the added advantage of allowing all compliant vehicles to access the street, including the zero emission 153 bus route and will therefore not disrupt this service.
10. Cameras and an enforcement regime to administer the Zero Emission street will be required. It should also be noted that additional resources, including additional staff, will be required on an ongoing basis. However, it is expected that the cost of the additional resources will be met through enforcing the scheme.

TfL Engagement

11. Officers continue to engage with Transport for London (TfL) on achieving agreement for a directional and/or two-way traffic restriction on Beech Street. As part of the technical work to date and ongoing discussions, officers have identified opportunities to accelerate the project.
12. Initial investigations have concluded that there is a relatively small road network impact as a result of an eastbound closure, with an approximate 39% reduction in vehicles over current levels. However, the air quality improvements are similarly expected to be minimal.
13. A westbound or two-way closure is considered more challenging, due to the larger traffic flows and anticipated reassignment across the network, however the air quality benefits will be greater due to the corresponding reduction in vehicles travelling through Beech Street.

Interim scheme considerations

14. It should be noted that for any closure/restriction, unrestricted vehicle access will be required to the Barbican residents' car parks by non-compliant vehicles. Access to the Barbican Centre and Barbican Estate office from Beech Street will be available for compliant vehicles only. The Silk Street entrance to the Barbican Centre car park will still be available to non-compliant vehicles. The design will also allow for essential traffic such as emergency services to ensure these are not disadvantaged as part of the interim scheme.
15. The interim scheme will be delivered through means of an experimental traffic order and it is intended to establish and undertake a concerted communications strategy to provide clarity to motorists and the public as a whole, in order to minimise confusion in the run up to implementing an interim scheme.
16. Communications on the experimental traffic order will include engagement with Islington Council, TfL and other stakeholders

	<p>such as the taxi trade, businesses, residents and the Barbican, as well as a publicity campaign to communicate the details and launch of the scheme.</p> <p>17. Formal public consultation will take place during the first six months of the experimental traffic order, in line with the set statutory processes.</p> <p>18. It is intended that the interim scheme be the first step (i.e. Phase 1) towards delivering the longer-term project.</p>
<p>5. Options</p>	<p>19. There are three options for Members to consider, as described below. A high-level assessment of the options against the project objectives as well as other benefits and disbenefits have been undertaken and is presented, together with delivery costs, in Appendix 3. Officers recommend proceeding with Option 2 as the scheme which will deliver the greatest air quality benefits.</p> <p>20. It is intended to refine the chosen option and present the outcomes the next Gateway Report ~ October 2019. This report will include a full assessment of the road network and bus operation impacts together with detailed analyses of the costs, benefits and disbenefits.</p> <p><u>Option 1 – Eastbound restriction</u></p> <p>21. A range of eastbound restriction options exist, including no through traffic, buses only or Zero Emission street.</p> <p>Some benefits/disbenefits of this option include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Small–medium improvements in air quality ▪ Scope for improvements to public realm and pedestrian enhancements under the ‘no through road’ scenario (i.e. if the bus was rerouted) <p><u>Option 2 – Two-way Zero Emission Street</u></p> <p>22. Members may consider that air quality benefits should be maximised and that a two-way Zero Emission Street should be progressed as an interim scheme.</p> <p>Some benefits/disbenefits of this option include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Possible large improvements in air quality ▪ Limited improvements to public realm <p><u>Option 3 – “Do nothing” (progress long-term scheme only)</u></p> <p>23. Members may consider that an interim scheme is not desirable and that all efforts should be focused on developing options for the westbound closure or two-way closure.</p>
<p>6. Next steps</p>	<p>24. Should Option 1 or 2 be approved, the following tasks will be undertaken:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finalisation of baseline report, incl. outcomes of street user perception surveys ▪ Continued engagement with Islington and TfL in ensuring the scheme will be successful ▪ Submission of TMAN application ▪ Detailed design and cost estimating, including public realm design ▪ Liaison with Department for Transport to agree appropriate signage (<i>if applicable</i>) ▪ Procurement of cameras and establishment of an enforcement regime (<i>if applicable</i>) ▪ Planning for engagement and publicity campaign, incl. meeting stakeholder groups ▪ Submission of Gateway 4/5 Report ▪ Engagement and communications ▪ Scheme implementation <p>25. In the event that Option 3 is approved, officers will progress options for the permanent scheme that deliver all of the project objectives and continue to engage with Islington and TfL during the process. This will be followed by a Gateway 4 report with a recommended option.</p>
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Appendices

Appendix 1	Project Coversheet
Appendix 2	Work to Date and Findings
Appendix 3	Interim Scheme Options Appraisal Matrix
Appendix 4	Risk Register

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Appendix 1 – Project Coversheet

Appendix 2: Work to Date and Findings

Statutory approvals process and findings

1. Beech Street is located in close proximity to London Wall and Moorgate, both of which form part of the Strategic Road Network (SRN). As per the previous Issues Report presented in March 2019, as the “local traffic authority” the Corporation is required to submit a notification under the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMAN) to TfL, if a project is likely to affect the SRN, TfL Road Network, (TLRN) or bus operations.
 2. Officers have been working closely with TfL in assessing the impact of the vehicle restriction options for Beech Street. Strategic modelling for the various closure scenarios is now practically complete with the following options tested against future predicted vehicle flows (2021) to determine the expected traffic reassignment of the following:
 - a. eastbound closure
 - b. westbound closure
 - c. two-way closure. *
- * Due to the low volumes of ULEV/ZEZ compliant vehicles, at ~4%, this scenario has been modelled as a full two-way traffic closure
3. The modelling has confirmed that all three of the closure options will have an impact on traffic along London Wall, Aldersgate Street and Moorgate, as well as affect bus operations. Traffic will also reassign to neighbouring streets within Islington, most notably Old Street and Fortune Street/Whitecross Street – both of which are alternative east–west connections (to Beech Street).
 4. To determine the impact (of a project affecting the SRN) on journey times and congestion, traffic authorities in London follow TfL’s Traffic Model Auditing Process (MAP), which usually takes between 18–24 months. One advantage of this process is that it enables the surrounding network of traffic signals to be adjusted to reduce the amount of traffic congestion. This process needs to be completed, in addition with other activities such as consultation with affected stakeholders (i.e. LB Islington and local businesses), before approval is granted via the TMAN process.
 5. Officers have however been able to negotiate with TfL that an eastbound closure may be progressed by following a streamlined version of the MAP process due to the smaller traffic reassignment this causes.
 6. Based on the findings to date, approval for an eastbound “interim” closure is likely to be forthcoming in a quicker timeframe than either a westbound or two-way closure/Zero Emission street restriction and is an opportunity to deliver some of the project objectives in a shorter timeframe. Officers are however continuing to engage with TfL at various levels in exploring ways of accelerating the project in alternative approaches.
 7. Restricting eastbound traffic for the full length of Beech Street is likely to cause additional traffic on Fortune Street (located in Islington), as vehicles travelling south along Golden Lane will no longer be able to turn left onto Beech Street and will instead turn left onto Fortune Street. Officers meet regularly with counterparts from LB Islington and have discussed the likely need for a mitigating scheme along Fortune Street.

8. LB Islington are generally supportive of the City’s approach and both organisations will continue to work together to deliver both the Beech Street project and Islington’s Old Street Clerkenwell Road scheme. TfL have also expressed high level support for the interim scheme, and officers continue to work closely with TfL also. A monitoring strategy for the scheme is currently being worked up.
9. The interim scheme (i.e. Phase 1) would be delivered using an experimental traffic order, with monitoring undertaken to measure outcomes against the project objectives.
10. Traffic modelling work to develop the “long-term” scheme for a westbound closure or two-way closure will continue (Phase 2).

Air quality and bus services

11. Air quality modelling is currently being undertaken to determine what the air quality benefits (and disbenefits) will be for the various closure scenarios. The outcomes will be communicated in next the Gateway Report.
12. The route 153 bus which travels along Beech Street is a zero-emission bus. For the eastbound interim scheme, there is the option of either retaining or rerouting the service (via London Wall). However, rerouting the bus would be a lengthy process and is expected to take around 9–12 months to implement.
13. Rerouting the bus away from Beech Street increases the scope to widen footways and improve pedestrian comfort and the public realm. Officers are therefore continuing to liaise with TfL about the possibility of rerouting bus route 153 which will create opportunities for closing Beech Street to (all) through traffic in both directions. Surveys and user data have shown that this part of the route is lightly used, with boarding and alighting figures of less than one passenger per service for most of the day. This data is summarised in the tables below.

Table 1: Average weekday bus patronage – Bus stop BN (eastbound direction)

Period	Passengers alighting	Passengers boarding	Occupancy
AM (08:00–09:00)	0.1	0.7	6.4
Interpeak (12:00–13:00)	0.0	1.0	2.2
PM (17:00–18:00)	0.3	1.0	4.9
		Average	4.5

Table 2: Average weekday bus patronage – Bus stop BM (westbound direction)

Period	Passengers alighting	Passengers boarding	Occupancy
AM (08:00–09:00)	0.5	0.2	3.7
Interpeak (12:00–13:00)	0.8	0.0	1.9
PM (17:00–18:00)	1.3	0.0	3.8
		Average	3.1

14. Street user perception surveys have been undertaken in July. These results will be presented as part of the evidence base of use and reliance on the current bus route.

Alternative closure process

15. Officers have endeavoured to identify an alternative process for closing Beech Street to through traffic quickly and have considered the possible implications of seeking a traffic order closing all or part of Beech Street without completing the TMAN process as required by TfL. This is not recommended due to the requirements of the decision-making framework, as follows:

- d. A full or partial closure of Beech Street will require a traffic order, which must be consulted on. Neighbouring authorities likely to be affected must be consulted. Objections from all stakeholders must be carefully evaluated (sometimes involving an Inquiry)
- e. In making traffic orders and carrying out its traffic authority responsibilities, the City Corporation has duties to secure the expeditious, safe and convenient movement of traffic (having regard to effect on amenities) (S.122 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984), and to secure the efficient use of the road network, avoiding congestion and disruption (S.16 Traffic Management Act 2004). These duties require the impacts of proposals to be fully understood and mitigated. The TMAN process has been put in place by TfL to ensure that the impacts on traffic movements on strategic roads can be properly assessed, and therefore that the decision-making process is robust.
- f. Officers do not recommend proceeding with implementing any form of vehicle restriction before completing the TMAN process, as successful completion of this process helps to ensure compliance with the traffic authority duties outlined above.

Public Realm and Culture Mile considerations

16. Beech Street sits at the heart of Culture Mile and is part of the 'culture spine' identified in both the Culture Mile Look And Feel Strategy as well as the 'content principles' that are applied across the Culture Mile. The street links key cultural institutions such as the Barbican with the Guildhall School Of Music & Drama and proposed Museum Of London at Smithfield.

17. The covered roadway is a widely recognised, significant architectural feature in the area, but also one that is problematic particularly in terms of air quality, appearance and pedestrian experience.

18. Opportunities created through an interim scheme could see a temporary public realm commission that would be aligned with the programme of 'Look and Feel Experiments'. An opportunity therefore exists to significantly change public perceptions of the covered roadway, of Culture Mile and of the City's approach to public realm development and public engagement.
19. A creative, arts and design led commissioning approach that engages with ideas of environment, pollution, and sustainability supports the emergence of health and wellbeing as a key programming theme for Culture Mile in the future (several health and wellbeing organisations have joined the Culture Mile Network in recent months).
20. The Culture Mile Look and Feel Strategy was adopted in October 2018 and it sets out four key visions for public realm interventions:
- Form a Culture spine: Connecting institutions through a strong pedestrian identity
 - Take the inside out: taking the cultural activities out to the public spaces
 - Discover & Explore: connecting the area's rich cultural, social and architectural history
 - Be recognisable and be different: Creating a place where culture is produced as well as consumed, and where creative industries are supported.
21. To implement these principles within the Beech Street public realm, a set of spatial enhancements is proposed, encompassing different types of interventions, from addressing air quality to public art and place activation. A table listing these options are presented below:

Intervention type	Air Quality	Artistic	Pedestrian Safety	Pedestrian Comfort	Wayfinding	Features/Utilities
Description	Interventions which act as air filters, such as trees, moss plants and living walls	Interventions which supports the cultural programme, such as ceiling/ wall murals, cladding, lighting installations, roof installations, sound installations and special events,	Bike lanes, colourful crossings, barriers	Interventions which support the pedestrian wellbeing, such as lighting, colourful pallets, etc.	Enhancement of connectivity through signage and graphics	Additional elements to support the overall experience, such as coffee/food trucks, lockers, bike locks
Area type	Pedestrian Highway/ Walls	Walls/ Roof/ Pedestrian Highway	Pedestrian Highway	Pedestrian Highway/ Roof	Walls/ Pedestrian Highway	Pedestrian Highway

22. It should also be noted that the City Corporation's traffic management powers must be exercised having regard to its traffic management responsibilities (not to other City Corporation purposes). However, the wider context of the Culture Mile Look And Feel Strategy may be noted as background, and the objective to "Form a Culture spine" includes traffic management and related amenity considerations relevant to the City's traffic management responsibilities.
23. Opportunities created through an interim scheme could see a temporary public realm commission that would be aligned with the programme of 'Look and Feel Experiments'. An opportunity therefore exists to significantly change public perceptions of the covered roadway, of Culture Mile and of the City's approach to public realm development and public engagement.

24. A series of 3D sketches that give an indication of what Beech Street could look like in the future has also been produced and is included overleaf.

Appendix 3: Interim Scheme Options Appraisal Matrix

Beech Street Transport and Public Realm Improvements project				
Interim Scheme: Strategic Options Matrix				
	<u>Option 1: Eastbound restriction</u>			<u>Option 2:</u>
	No through road	Buses only	Zero Emission street	Zero Emission street (2-way)
Project objectives				
A – Improve air quality by reducing NO2 levels	✓	✓	✓	✓✓
B – Improve the quality of the public realm to create streets and public spaces for people to securely admire and enjoy	✓	—	—	—
C – Improve pedestrian comfort levels	✓	—	—	—
D – Ensure buildings and public spaces are protected	✓✓	✓	✓	✓
Impacts				
Road network impacts	*	*	*	**
Bus impacts	**	—	—	—
Transport Strategy (policy) considerations				
Policy 11 (reduce motor traffic)	✓	✓	✓	✓✓
Policy 12 (local access street)	✓	—	—	—
Policy 29 (Phased ZEZ introduction)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Financial implications				
Est. cost range (£)	350k–600k	350k–650k	350k–600k	450k–750k

KEY

✓✓✓	very positive
✓✓	positive
✓	slightly positive
—	neutral
*	slightly negative
**	negative
***	very negative

Appendix 4: Risk Register