

Committee(s)	Dated:
Streets & Walkways Sub	1 December 2020
Subject: Ludgate Circus – Objections to the Experimental Banned Left Turn from Ludgate Hill into New Bridge Street	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1c, 9d
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	£ N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Director of the Built Environment	For Decision
Report author: Gerry Lightfoot	

Summary

Pedestrians wishing to cross New Bridge Street at the Ludgate Circus junction have a long wait for the ‘green man’ phase. This has led to safety concerns concerning crowding on the footway and may have increased the number of pedestrians crossing informally or during the ‘red man’ phase.

In May 2019, Transport for London (TfL) made a presentation to the Planning & Transportation Committee on their scheme to address the safety concerns. Following detailed design by TfL, the City Corporation introduced an Experimental Traffic Order (ETO) that introduced a ‘no left turn’ restriction on all traffic turning left from Ludgate Hill into New Bridge Street in December 2019. The purpose of the restriction was to allow TfL to amend the traffic signals so that more time for pedestrians crossing New Bridge Street could be introduced.

Since the scheme has been implemented in December 2019, there have been no collisions or incidents reported involving pedestrians or other road users as a result of this change. However, as part of the ETO process, five objections have been received. Members are therefore asked to consider the objections and decide whether or not the experiment should be made permanent.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that:

1. Members agree to the making of a Traffic Order under section 6 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to make the experimental banned left turn for all vehicles permanent.
2. The objectors and TfL be informed of your decision accordingly.

Main Report

Background

1. Pedestrians wishing to cross New Bridge Street at the Ludgate Circus junction have a long wait for the 'green man' phase. This has led to safety concerns regarding crowding on the footway and may have increased the number of pedestrians crossing informally or during the 'red man' phase.
2. In 2017 a pedestrian crossing New Bridge Street south of Ludgate Circus was killed by a vehicle travelling northbound. Also, in 2017, a pedestrian was seriously injured when crossing at the junction by an HGV turning left from Ludgate Hill into New Bridge Street.
3. The role of highway authority for the junction is split between the City Corporation for Fleet Street and Ludgate Hill and Transport for London for Farringdon Street, New Bridge Street and Ludgate Circus itself. Transport for London is also responsible for the traffic signals in London.
4. In May 2019, TfL made a presentation to the committee of their solution to introduce new traffic signal timings along with a ban on all vehicles turning left from Ludgate Hill into New Bridge Street. The number of vehicles making this turn had been shown to be small and as such could be re-routed via Queen Victoria Street without significant impacts. Since the traffic restriction would apply on a City of London street, it required the City Corporation to make the necessary Traffic Order.
5. The existing exemption for buses to the banned right turn from Fleet Street into New Bridge Street was amended to be permitted during the night-time and to 'local buses' only, as it forms part of a night bus route. The time limit prevents buses, coaches and mini-buses making this turn during the day when most pedestrians are crossing and therefore limits safety risks. A plan of the proposals is shown in Appendix 2.
6. Members accepted the proposals and following detailed design by TfL, it was implemented in December 2019. The restricted turns were introduced on 14 December 2019 using an Experimental Traffic Order. This allowed the measures to be implemented and tested before making it permanent.

Current Position

7. Since its introduction in December 2019, there have been no collisions or incidents reported involving pedestrians or other road users, however it is

recognised that the number of pedestrians and vehicles using the junction since mid-March has been greatly affected by COVID-19.

8. The Experimental Traffic Order consultation (using press and street notices) for the above restrictions was carried out by the City Corporation from 7 December 2019 to 15 June 2020. As a result of this, five objections were received, all in relation to the inclusion of pedal cycles in the 'no left turn' restrictions. These are summarised in the paragraph below but are appended in Appendix 3. There have been no further objections since.
9. The objections had two common points. 1. not being able to join the Cycle Superhighway (CSH) to travel southbound and 2. that there were no suitable alternative routes. Both London Cycling Campaign and Sustrans believed there would also be some non-compliance by cyclists if this remained the case.
10. Prior to the scheme being introduced, alternative cycle routes were reviewed. There are three main alternative routes to join the CSH. These are shown in Appendix 2.
 - i. Continue across Ludgate Circus into Fleet Street then use Salisbury Court, Dorset Rise and Tudor Street. This route however was not available at the start of this experiment due to utility works on Tudor Street.
 - ii. Continue across Ludgate Circus and then taking the first left turn into Bride Lane. This is a very short diversion with very low traffic and pedestrian flows.
 - iii. Using a route via Ludgate Broadway, Blackfriars Lane and then Queen Victoria Street.
11. It is accepted that these routes would take longer (although very minor if using Bride Lane) than if cyclists were allowed to turned left turn at Ludgate Circus. During TfL's design process for this scheme, consideration was given to exempting cyclists. In order to do so it would have been necessary to introduce additional internal stop lines within the junction on both the main carriageway of New Bridge Street and on the cycle track. This would require the construction of an island with a traffic signal post to the immediate north of the pedestrian crossing on the New Bridge Street arm of the junction. TfL designers identified that providing an internal stop line whilst keeping the pedestrian crossing in its current location would not be safe because there would not be enough space for cyclists to stop safely at the signal without encroaching on the path of vehicles travelling from east to west. There would also be concern that approaching cyclists would not be able to see the traffic signal. Moving the pedestrian crossing further to the south is not feasible, within the scope of this scheme, due to the physical constraints of the location.

12. TfL have reviewed the objections, confirming that they support the making of the experiment permanent and will work with the City of London to ensure that appropriate alternative cycle routes are better signed.

13. A movement study of Ludgate Circus was carried out in November 2018 and replicated at the beginning of March 2020. An extract of the data has shown that the scheme has been very successful in that pedestrians using the New Bridge Street crossing has increased substantially from 7,251 to 9,769 pedestrians crossing daily. An increase of 2,518 or 35%. This is despite a reduction of over 3,400 pedestrians crossing the junction in 2020 (36,458) compared to 2018 (39,859). The number of pedestrians crossing informally (diagonally) has also reduced but by 1,704 per day (from 3,816 to 2112). A summary of the data can be found in the table below

Table 1: Average daily (7am – 7pm) pedestrian crossings

Crossing movement	2018	2020	Difference
1 Farringdon Street	13272	9670	-3602
2 Ludgate Hill	8210	6960	-1250
3 New Bridge St	7251	9769	2518
4 Fleet St	7310	7947	637
5 Informally (diagonally SE-NW)	3537	1200	-2337
6 Informally (diagonally SW-NE)	279	912	633
Total	39859	36458	-3401

Proposals

14. The current experimental scheme is proposed to be made permanent.

Options

15. Two options are available.

- i. The current experimental scheme could be made permanent; or

- ii. The current experimental scheme could be removed and Ludgate Circus returned to its prior state. This would involve TfL amending the signal timings, removing the extra footway widening and traffic signs...

Corporate & Strategic Implications

16. Strategic implications – This scheme is intended to address the pedestrian safety and crowding concerns at the junction. This aligns with the Corporate Plan 1 c: 'Protect consumers and users of buildings, streets and public spaces' and 9 d: 'Improve the experience of arriving and moving through our spaces'. It also supports the delivery of the Transport Strategy outcomes to make the City's streets great places to walk and to ensure people using our streets are safe and feel safe.
17. Financial implications – The costs of making a permanent Traffic Order are covered within existing local risk budget.
18. Resource implications – No additional resources are required to deliver the completion of the scheme.
19. Legal implications – The procedure for an Experimental Traffic Management Order has been followed and the experiment was in place for three months before the Covid-19 lockdown was introduced. It is unlikely that a High Court challenge would be made to a permanent Traffic Order.
20. Risk implications – There is a low risk of a legal challenge to the making of a permanent Traffic Order.
21. Equalities implications – No significant implications for people with protected characteristics.
22. Climate implications – None.
23. Security implications – None.

Conclusion

24. The experimental scheme introduced has significantly increased the time available for pedestrians to cross New Bridge Street with a 'green man' signal. This in turn has increased pedestrians crossing on this arm by a third and those crossing informally (diagonal) has declined. In light of these benefits and the relatively limited number of objections it is recommended that the experiment should be made permanent.

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Appendices

1. Plan of Ludgate Circus scheme
2. Plan of alternative routes
3. Consultation response report - redacted