

**Department of the Built Environment**

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# Bank Junction Improvements Project

## Communication strategy Gateway 4 to public consultation

3 November 2020

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## 1. Executive Summary

The Bank Junction Improvements Project is a major scheme that has been initiated by the City of London through the adoption of the Bank Area Enhancement Strategy 2013.

Following the need to improve safety at the junction in a quicker timescale than the rest of the project could be achieved, an experimental scheme was introduced in May 2017, known as Bank on Safety. This experimental scheme has changed the way the junction operates, but without altering physical aspects of the junction itself. A subsequent footway widening scheme to help improve compliance and provide pedestrian comfort relief was built in temporary materials and completed in August 2020 around the main part of the junction.

The longer-term project, All Change at Bank was placed on hold in Feb 2018 to facilitate the conclusion of the experimental scheme, which would impact the way the longer-term project would progress.

All Change at Bank looks to transform the area physically providing a better balance of pedestrian priority and traffic movement and creating a better place in the civic heart of the City. It was restarted in February 2019.

The Junction is surrounded by Grade I and ii\* listed buildings. It has effectively six arms of traffic feeding into a very wide junction. Whilst traffic volumes have been reduced to bus and cycle only Monday to Friday 7am to 7pm, delivered by the Bank on Safety scheme, there is still much that needs to be considered as to how this area will operate in the future.

Bank Underground station lies directly beneath the surface of the carriageway and exits surround the junction causing large volumes of pedestrians to emerge into relatively narrow footways. A station capacity upgrade is underway which will see a new station entrance on Cannon Street being delivered in 2022 and the capacity of the station increased significantly. It is the projects aim to facilitate the stations growth at street level as well as the general predicted increase of pedestrian movement in the City which is expected to grow by approximately 20% by 2030.

This document sets out the process for review of the communications plan, and the methods of communication to reach the public consultation stage of this project. It also outlines the responsibilities for delivering and approving these communications.

## 2. Introduction and background

### **About this document**

This document sets out the proposed communications strategy principles, the responsibilities and the approval process for the All Change at Bank Project progress to reach the public consultation phase for this project.

This document provides clarity as to how communications will be handled both internally and externally to achieve the communication objectives.

### **About the project**

The project had been on hold for a year and was formally restarted in February 2019. The project approach, prior to it being put on hold in February 2018, had been to investigate 4 specific variants of arm closure/restriction. Following the lessons learned from the experimental scheme, this approach was acknowledged as no longer the most appropriate way forward.

A report was approved in January/February 2019 to restart the project and to approve a direction of travel for the forthcoming design. It was agreed to:

*“Proceed with feasibility design of Strategic Option 2 (semi pedestrian priority with some vehicle movement) to a Gateway 4 report, on the basis that the proposed timescales for the project be tightened, and that Strategic Option 1 be retained as the Corporation’s longer-term aspiration for the junction. The next phase of work will investigate different options for highways alignment, design of public realm and vehicle mix to inform the Gateway 4 report;”.*

Strategic option 2 was looking at restricting further 2-3 arms of the junction and Strategic option 1 was looking towards achieving as close to a full vehicle restriction as possible with the greatest level of pedestrian priority and opportunity for Place improvements.

Work has been undertaken to investigate the different permutations, the opportunities those permutations may bring, the constraints of the junction which influence viability and the constraints of possible designs and their diversion routes. A (second) Gateway 3 report was presented to Members in April/May 2020 which explained this work and looked at five permutations in more detail. Three were agreed to be carried into more detailed feasibility work which concluded in a gateway 4 report in October 2020.

The gateway 4 was approved to develop in detail the proposed closure of Threadneedle Street, further restriction to traffic on Princes Street and Queen Victoria Street. Work is now being undertaken to develop this proposal for public consultation in Spring 2021, which this document sets out the communication intention to reach that stage. It does not include the plan for the public consultation phase. The public consultation methodology will be

outlined in the Gateway 4C report planned for February 2021 and a revised Communications plan for the public consultation phase will be prepared. This will enable us to plan appropriate events based on what social distancing requirements are still in place.

### **COVID-19 2020.**

In March 2020 a national lockdown was imposed to restrict the spread of COVID-19. This has been an unprecedented time whereby normal life has been severely restricted for many people. This has meant that from the project perspective, normal methods of stakeholder engagement and communication has not been possible as businesses in the City sent their workers home and to date have largely not returned to their offices. The work to date has not been communicated with as wide a stakeholder group as would have been intended.

The technical work has continued because of the pressure to substantially deliver the scheme by the end of 2022 when the Bank Station Capacity upgrade is due to complete. During the lockdown period temporary COVID-19 traffic measures were put in place across the country and there have been some negative responses that there was little consultation with frontages and residents as they were implemented under emergency powers.

This means that the project is facing a situation of publicly consulting on a scheme which restricts traffic movement further, when there is a view by some that perhaps there has been enough change to favour sustainable modes of transport in recent times. The messaging of the scheme needs to be clear, consistent and understandable.

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities for communications to Gateway 4**

### **Communication Roles and responsibilities**

**The Project Executive** is responsible for ensuring that communication with the Members and Chief Officers is maintained to their satisfaction and that information is fed back to the project team to action.

**The Project Director** will be the key interface with Chair, Chairman and Deputies of the relevant committees and will be the Chairman of the Stakeholder Working Group. The Project Director will sign off all documents before they are presented to any Stakeholder Working Group or the internal peer review group. It is also the Project Director's responsibility to sign off any formal correspondence that requires a more senior sign off than the Principal Project Manager. They will escalate any issues of note to the Project Executive. They will be responsible for feeding information back to the Project team for action.

**The Principal Project Manager** will oversee the Project team and monitor the development and delivery of key messages to stakeholder groups. They will be responsible for reviewing information that is being prepared to be sent to any external group and escalating any communications issues to the Project Director. They will review documents ahead of them being sent to the Project Director for final sign off. They are responsible for ensuring feedback is presented back to the project team from the Project Director and /or Project Executive.

**The Project Manager** is responsible for ensuring that the project team understand the key messages and know when they can communicate them. They are also responsible for overseeing the development of planned communications and to ensure that sign off of documentation is undertaken before it is released. When there is unplanned communication, the Project Manager should escalate this to the Principal Project Manager. They will also ensure that the communications officer for the project has all the information necessary to maintain any day to day queries that they may receive. It is the responsibility of the Project Manager to ensure that all written communications are produced accurately and in a timely manner (although not necessarily by the Project Manager). It is also the responsibility of the Project Manger to ensure that key stakeholder meetings are arranged at the appropriate points in the programme and conveniently scheduled.

**In terms of organisational responsibility:**

**Director of the Built Environment** will agree formal reports associated with the project (unless Delegated to the T&PR Director). General communication Information to the Director will be undertaken via the regular meetings with the Transportation and Projects Director. Briefings will take place when necessary.

**Transportation and Public Realm Director** will agree any direct written communication (including reports) to: City of London Committee Members, Senior TfL Directors and GLA Politicians. Will directly liaise with the Director on progress of the project communications.

**Assistant Director – City Transportation** will agree any direct written communication (including reports) to: City of London Committee Members, Senior TfL Directors and GLA Politicians. Also approve any large-scale changes to planned communications. Will directly liaise with the T&PR Director on progress of the project communications.

**Major Projects Group Manager** will agree reports to City of London Committees, and any written communication to City of London Members and external stakeholders that does not require escalation (ad hoc queries etc.) Also, Member briefing notes for the newsletter, articles for City View, City Resident etc. (if necessary) and the website content. They will be responsible for day to day progress update to the Assistant Director of City Transportation

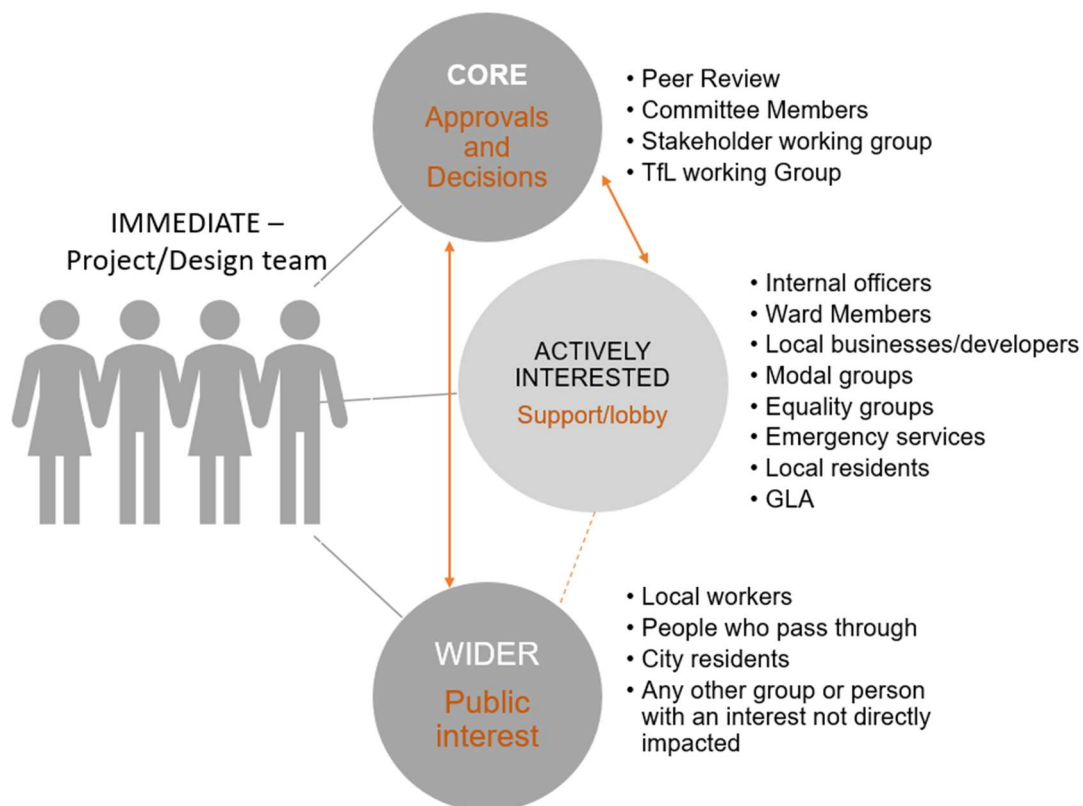
and the T&PR Director as necessary through meetings and appropriate communications means.

## 4. Stakeholders

### Grouping stakeholders

For the purposes of grouping stakeholders to simplify message planning; four broad stakeholder groups have been identified who have similar interests and needs. These groups are presented in figure 1.

Figure 1 - stakeholder groups



**Immediate: The Project/design team.** This group covers City of London Officers actively working on the project. This groups will require frequent information exchange, including what information can be passed outside of this group. The regularity of information sharing with this group will be more of a day to day level of activity.

**The Core: Approvals and decisions.** This group covers the Peer review group, the relevant Committee Members, stakeholder working group and the TfL working Group. This groups concern is around receiving information in a timely



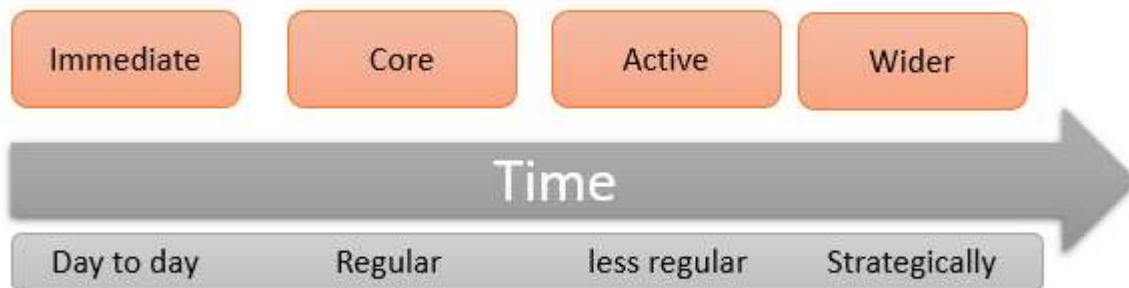
fashion that is relevant to them being able to make appropriate decisions and recommendations.

**The Actively interested: Support/lobby.** This group brings together those people and groups who actively take an interest in progress of the project. They ultimately will fall into one of two categories, supporters of the scheme or will lobby against the proposed changes. Information to this group will be less frequent and generally provide updates on progress and key milestones other than the occasions when we are seeking the group views on something.

**The wider public engagement** group essentially covers everyone else that might have an interest in the developments of the project at this stage, which includes all businesses within the impact area, residents and people who use the area for work or leisure. The frequency of communication with these groups will be periodic and specific when there are things that may be important for them to know about the progress of the project, or where their views are being sought.

The above groupings cover a broad-brush approach to communication planning. There are subsets within these groups where the delivery and the exact message will need to be tailored, however the information base will usually be the same to the whole group. Figure 2 provides an illustration of the regularity of messaging to each of the identified stakeholder groupings.

Figure 2 - regularity of messaging to stakeholder groups



A list of individual stakeholders (businesses) and associations are listed in Appendix B

### **Communication Boundaries**

The groupings are very specific as to their level of technical information and type of communication that is most suited to them. There are therefore boundaries that need to be observed by those working closely on the project.

Information should only be discussed with a stakeholder if the rest of that group can also be privy to the information. As a rule, if information leaks across to the

next grouping of stakeholders before the project is ready to communicate it, then there is a need for a reaction in order to keep control of the messages. Proactive planning of communication is therefore preferred.

## 5. Key messages

### **What 'story' are we telling?**

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 restrictions, the project has developed with out as much stakeholder engagement as would have been desirable in a project like this. On the positive side, there had been extensive engagement during the Bank on Safety experiment so much of the day to day access requirements are understood and already catered for within the base design. However, the stakeholders will not be aware of how far the All Change at Bank project has progressed.

During this phase of the project to reach the public consultation phase, the main points to communicate are:

### **What we have done to date:**

- Explain how the project has been approached
- Explain the process of narrowing to one option for detailed design purposes

### **Why we did that:**

- We took on board the information provided from the public consultation on the Bank on Safety scheme regarding what people wanted to see in addition to what had been done already. There were 3,730 respondents to the online consultation survey for the Bank on Safety scheme, so there was substantial information to draw from.
- Explain the approvals process a project of this scale is required to go through. Some options are just not viable at this point in time
- Explain the Time and Budget factors and the Bank Station Capacity upgrade timetable.

### **Where we are now:**

- We have the outline of a scheme that from a technical point of view we believe can work. This option offers the opportunity to create more space, better define traffic, cycling and pedestrian spaces which will contribute to improved safety.
- It has been assumed that the Bus and Cycle only restriction would stay in place on the remaining arms of the junction. We are undertaking some work on whether there are alternative modal mixes on the open arms

that could be considered. We will also be seeking views as to whether this restriction should be changed at all in terms of timing

- Seeking comments on possible design options for the public realm particularly in terms of equalities and how the new spaces balance the various needs.
- COVID-19 has changed the way people currently move and travel. Somethings may not go back to the way they were before, but there is no certainty of what this may look like. If we wait and do not make changes to complement the station capacity upgrade, there is a risk that travel and working patterns revert to somewhere near the old normal and the current layout of the junction will not cater for pedestrian volumes.
- Explain interdependencies with other projects and future vision for the City set out in the Transport Strategy and Climate Action Strategies?

#### **How stakeholders can be involved in the detail:**

- We are approaching 'Actively interested' stakeholders to better understand their day to day needs and aspirations of the area
- This will feed into the detailed design and help us understand the priorities for how the area needs to work, whilst maintaining flexibility.

#### **The purpose of communicating the above key messages**

- To build good working relationships across all stakeholder groups.
- To keep stakeholders, who are not involved in the day to day work or decision making, aware that progress is being made and what they can expect to see next and when and how to be involved.
- To ensure that those stakeholders responsible for decision making for the project have all the information they need to make the right decisions at the right times to keep the overall project on time and within budget and delivering the project objectives.

## **6. Channels of Communication**

There will be a range of communication channels used to engage with a wide variety of stakeholders. A selection of them are detailed below. It is assumed that conversations prior to Public consultation will be held in virtual mode because of the continuing threat of COVID-19 anticipating to last all winter.

**The Immediate Project/design team** will be kept updated through day to day contact of developing the project including organised regular team meetings emails, minutes etc. A regular wider team meeting will be held to keep informed of other things being planned on the network which may influence future milestones.

**The Core group** will be engaged through formal written documentation and meetings which will have a higher level of detail to assist with any decisions that are required. Channels may also include email, telephone and one on one meetings if appropriate to deliver specific details and ensure clarity.

**Actively Interested group** will be engaged through meetings as appropriate on the lead up to the consultation process. Email, telephone, letter, publications and project website are the other the main channels as appropriate. Due to the current covid restrictions, this group of stakeholders will be largely met on a one on one basis rather than holding large virtual meetings, ensuring that we pick up on individual concerns and points of interest at this stage. An update to local ward members will be issued ahead of the G4c report.

**Wider public interest group** limited information in this phase of the communications plan. On the lead up to the formal public consultation phase in March/April, information will be available on the projects website, and information to alert the wider public to the upcoming consultation placed in city publications such as City resident, Cityview and Ward newsletters (if their publication timings align). Notifications will be sent out as part of the next phase of the communications plan

## 7. Communication Plan

In Appendix A, a copy of the indicative communications plan is available to the end of February 2021 when a further plan on the delivery of the public consultation will become active. Communications planning needs to be dynamic and able to change depending on the situation and information available. This plan aims to set out how the key messages outlined in chapter 5 and how they will be delivered to the various stakeholders.

## **Appendix A: Communications plan**

Timing	Audience	Communication Objectives	Message	Channel
November and December 2020	<b>Project/design team</b>	To ensure project team are coordinated and on message  To ensure team are up to date with discussions outside of immediate group.	Understand where we are and what is coming next  Keep updated on other discussions and how this impacts next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress meetings</li> <li>• Project Working Group</li> <li>• TfL liaison –</li> <li>• Emails as appropriate</li> </ul>
	<b>Project Director and SRO.</b>	To ensure the latest progress is known so that the same message is given	Progress of the project and what is coming next	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular updates (meeting or email/one page progress report)</li> </ul>
	<b>Chairman&amp; Deputy of S&amp;W</b>	Appraised of latest position regarding design and engagement	Progress of the project and what is coming next	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates in committee planning meetings</li> <li>• Briefing notes as needed</li> </ul>
	<b>Core Stakeholders</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer Review group</li> <li>• Committee members</li> <li>• TfL Working Group</li> </ul>	To provide assurance and confidence in scheme proposals  To provide assurance that engagement is taking place  To feedback early issues ahead of consultation	Who is being engaged with and what the feedback has been	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer review meetings</li> <li>• Email updates as necessary</li> <li>• Continue working group meetings</li> <li>• Briefing notes as needed</li> <li>• FAQs document</li> <li>• informal RSPG review (TfL)</li> <li>• verbal updates at committee as necessary</li> </ul>
	<b>Actively interested stakeholder</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ward Members</li> <li>• GLA</li> <li>• Local business</li> <li>• Modal groups</li> <li>• Local developers</li> <li>• Equalities/inclusion groups</li> <li>• Emergency services</li> </ul>	To provide assurance that engagement is taking place  Seeking feedback on proposals to help develop the detailed design.  Next steps for public consultation	This is what we have done so far, and why  How stakeholders can be involved now  How stakeholders can continue to be involved with the public consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• letter/email to request interaction</li> <li>• Meetings</li> <li>• Website updates</li> </ul>

	<b>Wider public</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Businesses within wider area</li> <li>• Residents</li> <li>• Workers</li> <li>• Visitors</li> <li>• Drivers</li> </ul>	That a public consultation for the area is coming	That proposed change is coming That public consultation will take place March/April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website update</li> <li>• City resident magazine</li> <li>• Ward newsletters</li> </ul>
Timing	Audience	Communication Objectives	Message	Channel
January and February 2021	<b>Project/design team</b>	<p>To ensure project team are coordinated and on message</p> <p>To ensure team are up to date with discussions outside of immediate group.</p>	<p>Understand where we are and what is coming next</p> <p>Keep updated on other discussions and how this impacts next steps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress meetings</li> <li>• Project Working Group</li> <li>• TfL liaison –</li> <li>• Emails as appropriate</li> </ul>
	<b>Project Director and SRO.</b>	To ensure the latest progress is known so that the same message is given	Progress of the project and what is coming next	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular updates (meeting or email/one-page progress report)</li> </ul>
	<b>Chairman&amp; Deputy of S&amp;W</b>	<p>Appraised of latest position regarding design and engagement</p> <p>What is going to be in the G4C report, what decisions are going to be needed</p>	<p>Progress of the project and what is coming next</p> <p>What is going to be presented in the G4C to be put to public consultation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Briefing session – note and meeting as required.</li> <li>• Updates via Project/Director</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Core Stakeholders</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer Review group</li> <li>Committee members</li> <li>TfL Working Group</li> </ul>	<p>To ensure latest position regarding design and engagement is understood, and what decisions are needed</p>	<p>Progress of the project and what is coming next</p> <p>What is going to be presented in the G4C to be put to public consultation</p> <p>Outline decisions needed to be taken</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gateway 4C report</li> <li>Meetings</li> <li>Emails as appropriate</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Actively interested stakeholder</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ward Members</li> <li>GLA</li> <li>Local business</li> <li>Modal groups</li> <li>Local developers</li> <li>Equalities/inclusion groups</li> <li>Emergency services</li> </ul>	<p>Update on the progress of the Gateway 4C report and next steps are understood</p>	<p>Progress of the project and what is coming next</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meetings where appropriate</li> <li>Email updates</li> <li>Link to Gateway 4C when available</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Wider public</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Businesses within the area</li> <li>Residents</li> <li>Workers</li> <li>Visitors</li> <li>Drivers</li> </ul>	<p>That a public consultation for the area is coming</p>	<p>That proposed change is coming That public consultation will take place March/April</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website update</li> <li>City resident/view magazine (where timings allow)</li> <li>Ward newsletters (where timings allow)</li> <li>Other City communication channels that are available at the time of conveying this message – social media etc.</li> <li>Seek to promote through the Business improvement Districts and partnerships as appropriate.</li> </ul>



## Appendix B: Stakeholders and Associations

Below is an indication of the businesses/buildings and associations that we expect to engage with over the coming months (to the end of February 2021). Others maybe engaged with as the process develops.

Bank of England	Living Streets
Royal Exchange (Oxford Properties)	Transport for All
1-6 Lombard	London Cycling Campaign
The Mansion House	Taxi trade associations
The Magistrates Court	Royal National Institute for the Blind
1 Poultry	City of London Access Group
The Ned hotel	City Property Association
The Natwest Bank/Royal Bank of Scotland	Transport for London
Grocers Hall	London Underground
Cheapside Business Alliance	
Bloomberg	
The Mercers' Company	
Merchant Taylors' Hall	

A much wider stakeholder list will be developed as part of the public consultation phase for after the next Gateway (4c) report.