

Report – Planning & Transportation Committee

Pedestrian Priority Programme

To be presented on Thursday, 17th June 2021

*To the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons
of the City of London in Common Council assembled.*

SUMMARY

This report seeks approval in respect of the Pedestrian Priority Programme project, which is a three-year programme implementing pedestrian priority and pavement widening schemes across the Square Mile to enhance the comfort and safety of people walking.

The project has been scrutinised by your Planning & Transportation Committee and Policy & Resources Committee through their Streets & Walkways and Projects Sub Committee respectively. As the total estimated cost of the project exceeds £5 million, this Honourable Court is consulted on the project proposals and asked to endorse the recommendations agreed by your Streets & Walkways Sub Committee, Projects Sub Committee and Resource Allocation Sub Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

The Court of Common Council is **recommended** to: -

1. Approve the Pedestrian Priority Programme for progression.
2. Agree that all future decisions on the projects are delegated to the Streets & Walkways Sub Committee and Projects Sub Committee.
3. Note the total estimated cost of the overall programme at £6-8 million (excluding risk); including a total estimated cost of Year 1 of the programme of £2.5-£3.2million, with funding for the overall programme granted through the 2021/22 Capital Bid.

MAIN REPORT

Background

1. The Pedestrian Priority Programme is a three-year programme, running from 2021 to 2024, implementing pedestrian priority across the Square Mile to enhance the comfort and safety of people walking. The programme will directly help deliver targets for pedestrian priority and comfort levels in the Climate Action Strategy and Transport Strategy.
2. For Year 1, the programme will continue pedestrian priority interventions, where appropriate, that have been delivered as part of the COVID-19 transport response. This includes running experimental traffic orders where temporary

traffic orders have been in place and making pavement widening and other non-traffic measures permanent. The programme will also identify and deliver further schemes to introduce pedestrian priority and improve pedestrian comfort levels.

3. Pre COVID-19, pavement crowding was an issue in many parts of the City and, without change, was forecast to increase as the City's working population increased. Pavement crowding is still expected to be an issue in the future despite the impacts of COVID-19, including safely accommodating the increase in footfall resulting from new developments, particularly in the City Cluster.
4. This has implications for:
 - Safety – as people are often forced to walk in the carriageway and are at greater risk of being involved in a collision;
 - Accessibility – some disabled people will be uncomfortable and potentially excluded by too narrow or overcrowded pavements; and
 - Emissions reduction – the Climate Action Strategy identifies pedestrian priority and improved pedestrian comfort as necessary conditions for Net Zero by 2050.
5. The 2017 City Streets survey found that 84% of people thought the City's pavements were overcrowded, 60% thought that people walking were given too small a share of street space and 65% thought the needs of people walking were underprioritised.
6. Walking is the main mode of travel in the Square Mile. 90% of on-street journeys that start or finish in the Square Mile are walked, including walking to and from public transport. Walking is the most common form of transport for disabled Londoners, with 78% reporting that they walk at least once a week. 65% of disabled Londoners consider the condition of pavements to be a barrier to walking more frequently.
7. The key benefits of the Pedestrian Priority programme are:
 - An improved walking environment that provides adequate space for people walking which, along with improving the quality of the City streets and public realm, contributes to the continued success of the Square Mile as a global centre for business, place to live and visitor destination;
 - Improved safety of people walking by reducing conflicts with vehicles and making streets easier to cross;
 - A more accessible Square Mile where everyone will feel more able and confident to walk on City streets;

- Reducing the exposure of people walking to air pollution and contributing to overall emission reductions in the City; and
- Public Realm enhancements to improve the look and feel of the City and introduce greening and seating where appropriate.

Current Position

8. During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, temporary on-street interventions were implemented to enable social distancing and provide more space for people choosing to walk and cycle, as many pavements in the City were too narrow to allow adequate social distancing. This project reported to Planning and Transportation Committee given its high profile and relationship with other COVID-19, return to office measures.
9. A Gateway 6 report was taken to Planning and Transportation Committee in April 2021 seeking approval to close this project and retain some of the measures as experimental schemes across several programmes.
10. This Pedestrian Priority Programme will incorporate the largest portion of these on-street changes in its first year of delivery. The remaining retained COVID-19 changes will be incorporated into the Cycling Programme (where significant cycling improvements are required and there is limited scope or need for pavement widening) and the City Cluster Programme (where streets fall within this programme area).
11. The programme will co-ordinate projects where pedestrian priority schemes will be developed and delivered on individual or groups of streets (subject to approval and all necessary consents and orders being first obtained). The programme would see pedestrian priority and pavement widening interventions initiated annually over the three years.
12. A prioritisation exercise of all City streets was undertaken based on volumes of pedestrians, air quality, footway widths and road safety statistics, to provide a list of priority streets for the programme. The list of priority streets has been further filtered to those streets that already have COVID-19 measures in place, to be delivered in Year 1. This allows change to be delivered at pace for the first year of implementation and continue to provide space for people walking and cycling on their return to work to the City in mid-2021.

Proposed Schemes

13. This programme will:
 - For Year 1, consider the retention of the majority of the pedestrian priority interventions that have been delivered as part of the COVID-19 transport response. If approved, officers will start the process of assessing and

modifying the on-street interventions to explore whether their continuation should be promoted after the Temporary Traffic Orders expire;

- Deliver further schemes to introduce pedestrian priority and improve pedestrian comfort levels based on those ranked highest in the prioritisation exercise; and
- Look to incorporate Public Realm improvements and Climate Cooling and Resilience measures being developed via a parallel Climate Strategy funded workstream. This may include planting and pilot projects for trialling of new materials and Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SUDS).

14. The type of interventions required on each street to provide pedestrian priority will vary depending on the street context and level of change required, but could include a number of the following;

- Pavement widening
- Timed access restrictions for vehicles
- Bus and cycle gates/restriction of general traffic
- Changes to the street layout
- Changes to traffic flow/direction of traffic
- Traffic calming and carriageway narrowing
- Retention and expansion of planters and parklets temporarily where these are already colocated as part of the COVID-19 measures

15. For Years 2 and 3 these this might also include;

- Raised carriageways
- Public Realm enhancements including tree planting, greening, seating and paving improvements

16. For Year 1 interventions, the below streets will be progressed, which are also set out in this [map](#). All of these currently have temporary interventions in place as listed in the below table:

Location	Current measures - To be reviewed before implementation of any experimental traffic order
Pedestrian Priority Programme	
Chancery Lane between Carey Street & Southampton Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current restriction is “No motor vehicles” restriction (Monday to Friday between 7am – 7pm) except emergency services, refuse collection and local authority service vehicles. • Parking bay suspended in places • Planters and parklets

Cheapside east of Bread Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point “no entry” except buses, cycles, emergency services vehicles and London Buses incident response unit. • Planters and seating adjacent to point closure
Cheapside (east of King Street) and Poultry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “No motor vehicles restriction” (Monday to Friday between 7am – 7pm) except buses, vehicles accessing off street premises, for refuse collection, emergency services, local authority service vehicles and London Buses incident response unit.
Coleman Street and King’s Arms Yard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “No motor vehicles” restriction (Monday to Friday between 7am – 7pm) except buses, vehicles accessing off street premises, for refuse collection, emergency services and local authority service vehicles. • Parking bays suspended in locations to enable location of parklets • Pedestrian priority signage
King William Street & Abchurch Lane (south)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “No motor vehicles” restriction (Monday to Friday between 7am – 7pm) except buses, loading, vehicles accessing off street premises, for refuse collection, emergency services, local authority service vehicles and London Buses incident response unit. • Footway widening in locations
Lothbury, Bartholomew Lane, Threadneedle Street & Old Broad Street (south)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One way working, contra-flow cycling • Footway widening • Loading bays
Old Broad Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footway widening works retained and access/timing for servicing to be retained
Old Jewry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full closure (except for pedal cycles) on Old Jewry between Cheapside and Frederick’s Place • Remainder of Old Jewry from Frederick’s Place to Gresham Street converted to two-way
King Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One way working, contra-flow cycling • Footway widening • Loading bay in Gresham Street
Fleet Street, St Pauls Churchyard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footway widening (Fleet St) • Provision of cycle lanes in one or both directions

17. For Year 1, the intention is that projects will be first implemented using Experimental Traffic Orders. If the experiments are successful following further monitoring and public consultation, then approval to make Orders permanent would be considered by the Streets and Walkways and Projects Sub Committees.

18. The key stakeholders and consultees consist of:

- Occupiers and businesses
- City workers and residents
- City Business Improvement Districts and Partnerships
- Ward members
- Transport for London
- Emergency services

A [stakeholder engagement plan](#) has been developed and is available for Members' information.

19. A programme working party will be established with attendees from City Public Realm, Highways, Open Spaces, City of London Police, Planning and Climate Strategy.
20. A number of the interventions are likely to restrict vehicles or reduce road capacity for motor traffic. A full assessment will be undertaken on any scheme that significantly affects motor traffic, to understand the implications for local access and through traffic. Many of the schemes will begin as experiments, in order to gather data and further understand any impacts while traffic levels settle to a steady state post COVID-19.
21. Where appropriate, Transport for London will be engaged with and TMAN approvals sought on schemes where there is significant impact on the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN) or the Strategic Road Network.

Options Appraisal

22. A comprehensive assessment process was undertaken to prioritise streets most suited for inclusion in the programme. The exercise began by listing all streets in the City of London, taken from the streets gazetteer. Following this, all private roads and streets managed by Transport for London (TLRN) were removed, leaving 361 streets to be assessed.
23. Categories for assessment were then set, encompassing the following criteria (which aligned with the overall objectives of the programme), each street was provided a value in the following six categories:
 - i) A general officer 'sift', based on long term experience of the operation of City streets, scoring every street from 1 to 6, where 1 is high priority and 6 is low.
 - ii) Pedestrian morning peak forecast flows taken from the 2026 City of London Pedestrian Model.

- iii) Air Quality model values were taken from the London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (LAEI) 2016 emissions map. This data was used as it was the only source available which could provide a value for each street.
 - iv) The number of pedestrian and cyclist casualties per square metre was calculated for each street. This included casualties from the last 5 years only.
 - v) A value for the average footway width on each street
 - vi) A value for the narrowest footway width on each street
24. Following allocation of these datasets for each street, it was decided that a weighted average would be used to arrive at an overall 'score' for each street. In order to do this, a percentage of weighting was allocated to each category. A number of weighting combinations were tested to gauge the effectiveness of the methodology, before a final weighting was settled on, as below. The outcomes of these tests were assessed by an officer group for Transportation and compared against streets identified for interventions in the Transport Strategy and in the COVID-19 measures work that was completed in April 2020.

Category	Weighting applied
Officer scoring	15%
Pedestrian model flows	12.5%
Air Quality model	12.5%
Casualties per square metre	20%
Mean footway width	20%
Minimum footway width	20%

25. Applying this weighting resulted in a final list of streets prioritised in order of importance, which underwent a further round of 'sense checking' by officers. Many of the streets scoring in the highest priority were noted as being locations in which recent interventions have been undertaken either as part of the City of London's COVID-19 measures, or other ongoing programmes of work.
26. Next steps will review and refine the existing COVID-19 measures, which may identify various options for some of the measures. This methodology will be used to prioritise future year projects.

Funding

27. All funding for the programme is fully guaranteed, and the Year 1 budget envelope is estimated at £2.5 to £3.2million.

28. A capital bid for £6 million in 2021/22 annual capital bids process was successful and has been confirmed by this Honourable Court. Approval to draw on this funding for Year 1 interventions will be made by the Chamberlain via reporting to Resource Allocation Sub Committee to enable work to proceed to Gateway 3/4.
29. Furthermore, in December 2020, a report was taken to Planning and Transportation Committee to allocate Section 106 funding to a series of Transportation and Public Realm projects, which confirmed an additional £148,453 of funding to this project. The details of [these agreements](#) are available for Members' information.

Strategy Delivery

30. The programme will directly help deliver both the Transport Strategy and the Climate Action Strategy.
31. The related walking Transport Strategy outcomes are that by 2044, at least 55km of streets in the City (which equates to half of all streets) provide priority to people walking. All pavements will have a minimum Pedestrian Comfort Level of B+.
32. The Climate Action Strategy, which was adopted in September 2020, sets out that pedestrian comfort levels of A+ and an additional 20km of timed street closures are required to reach Net Zero by 2050. It also states that the public realm needs to be more climate change ready with more green spaces and urban greening.
33. The programme will also help deliver the Recovery Taskforce workstream: Accelerate our plans to make our streets safer and more accessible, prioritise people walking and improve the experience of cycling.
34. The Transport Strategy and Climate Action Strategy both have targets to significantly increase the amount of pedestrian priority streets and achieve high levels of pedestrian comfort across the Square Mile. The Climate Action Strategy identifies pedestrian priority and improved pedestrian comfort as necessary conditions for Net Zero to be achieved. Without this programme, it will be difficult for these targets to be realised.
35. Without a programme to co-ordinate any individual pedestrian priority schemes recommended, interventions may become disjointed and unaligned. Momentum may also be lost to generate the level of change to City streets that the Transport Strategy and Climate Action Strategy require.

Risk and Legal Implications

36. The main risk implications for the programme and associated schemes are:
- Resourcing: Not being able to deliver the number of schemes that is expected of the programme
 - The risk that traffic orders are not made following consideration of any objections and assessment of the experimental orders and their impacts
 - Engagement and external support: Issues with external engagement and buy-in
 - Legal Issues: Receiving legal challenges regarding the decision to proceed with agreed schemes
 - COVID-19: Unknown what permanent/long term change it will bring about for Central London and travel trends and behaviour that may impact the programmes objectives
 - Delays to release of central funding bid may impact progress of Year 1 programme
37. The overall value of this programme of work, and with a medium level of risk, puts the programme into the 'Complex' reporting route. Breaking this into individual years however puts this into the 'Regular' reporting route. For Year 1, each of the on-street changes will be amending the existing temporary changes which are on-street, and therefore the risk is reduced considerably. Some of the interventions will be modified slightly following further investigations, but these are not expected to be significant.
38. Further information is available on the above within the project [Risk Register](#).
39. In exercising traffic authority functions regard must be had to the duties to secure expeditious convenient and safe movement of traffic (having regard to effects 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).
40. The Equalities Analysis undertaken for the COVID-19 Transportation response will be reviewed and updated to provide a detailed assessment at the next gateway.

Conclusion

41. The Pedestrian Priority Programme is an important project which will directly help deliver targets for pedestrian priority and comfort levels in both the Climate Action Strategy and the Transport Strategy. The programme will deliver improvements to safety, accessibility and emissions reductions as well as improvements to the City's environment and public realm, and this Honourable Court is asked to approve the programme to enable this important work to continue.

Background Papers

[Gateway 2 Programme Proposal](#) – Report of the Director of the Built Environment

All of which we submit to the judgement of this Honourable Court.

DATED this 1st day of June 2021.

SIGNED on behalf of the Committee.

Deputy Alastair Moss

Chair, Planning & Transportation Committee