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Committees: Streets and Walkways [for decision] Operational Property and Project Sub [for decision]	Dates: 05 September 2022 26 September 2022
Subject: Beech Street Transportation and Public Realm project <i>(Phase 1 – Zero Emission Scheme)</i> Unique Project Identifier: 10847	Gateway 5 Complex Issue Report
Report of: Executive Director Environment Report Author: Kristian Turner – Policy and Projects, City Operations	For Decision
<h1 style="margin: 0;">PUBLIC</h1>	

1. Status update	Background: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In September 2021, the Beech Street zero emission traffic experiment concluded, and the street reopened to all traffic. 2. In December 2021, Members of the Streets and Walkways sub-committee considered a report on Beech Street setting out the findings of the zero-emission traffic experiment. 3. Members approved proposals to undertake public consultation for a permanent scheme on Beech Street based on the design of the traffic management restrictions of the experimental traffic order. 4. Members also agreed that an engagement exercise to gather views on area-wide issues and opportunities to inform the Barbican and Golden Lane Healthy Streets Plan (HSP) would be run in parallel with the consultation on Beech Street. 5. Officers have provided verbal updates at Streets and Walkways Committees through ‘outstanding references’ detailing the series of delays to launching the public consultation, initially due to the limited numbers of workers in the City as a result of COVID-19 Plan B measures, followed by an allowance for the pre-election periods for the City Corporation and LB Islington.
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	<p>This report:</p> <p>6. The purpose of this report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Members on the revised timelines for the public consultation and the ongoing discussions with LB Islington • Seek Member approval to consult on an amended (permanent) zero emission scheme <p>RAG Status: AMBER (Amber at last report to Committee)</p> <p>Risk Status: Medium (Medium at last report to Committee)</p> <p>Total Estimated Cost of Project (excluding risk): ~ £12M-15M (for Phase 1 and 2, see main report)</p> <p>Spend to Date: £1,907,666 (of a total project budget of £2,285,062 for Phase 1)</p> <p>Slippage: ~ 12-18 months</p> <p>Funding Source: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)/OSPR</p> <p>Costed Risk Provision Utilised: none to date</p>
<p>2. Requested decisions</p>	<p>Requested Decisions:</p> <p>Members of the Streets and Walkways sub-committee and Operational Property and Projects committee are asked to choose from the following two options to progress the project:</p> <p>1) Option 1 (recommended)</p> <p>Undertake public consultation on a revised (permanent) zero emission scheme on Beech Street which includes three sub options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Closing Golden Lane to all motorised vehicles at the junction with Beech Street and installing a right-hand turn ban at the Fortune Street / Whitecross Street junction (subject to the agreement of LB Islington)); b) Closing Golden Lane to non-zero emission vehicles at the junction with Beech Street and installing a right-hand turn ban at the Fortune Street / Whitecross Street junction (subject to the agreement of LB Islington). c) Keeping Golden Lane open at the junction with Beech Street to <u>all</u> vehicles. (Note that the left turn from Beech Street northbound into Golden Lane would only be available to zero emission vehicles).

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	<p>If sub option a) and b) above are not supported by LB Islington, it is recommended that the public consultation proceeds with sub option c) only.</p> <p>2) Option 2 – Close the interim project and progress instead with a longer-term area wide approach to managing traffic and addressing air quality on Beech Street and across the Barbican, Golden Lane and Bunhill areas in partnership with Islington</p> <p>Members are further asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note that funding is subject to the capital programme review and the final decision on whether to proceed will be dependent on the outcome of that review and approval by the Operational Property and Projects Sub Committee.
<p>3. Budget</p>	<p>Scheme Finance</p> <p>7. A total of £1,907,666 has been spent on the project to date. A breakdown of the spend profile can be found in Appendix 2.</p> <p>8. The current budget is £2,285,062 for Phase 1 (inclusive of costed risk).</p> <p>9. This report does not supersede previous delegation approvals to move funds between budget line items.</p> <p>Option Costs</p> <p>Option 1</p> <p>10. The overall budget allocation is estimated to be sufficient to develop and deliver the next steps to reach the next project milestone. This would be a January 2023 decision report on whether to make the scheme permanent or not. The budget, along with a costed risk register, will be re-assessed in advance of the January report.</p> <p>Option 2</p> <p>11. The current budget is sufficient to close the project. A Gateway 6 Report would identify the project underspend, currently in the region of £300k.</p> <p>12. The development of the Healthy Streets Plan for the Barbican and Golden Lane area is funded separately. The delivery of any projects emerging from this plan are unfunded and would be subject to availability of capital funding through the annual capital bid process.</p>

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	<p>Central funding Capital Bids</p> <p>13. It was always envisaged that once Phase 1 of the project to deliver the air quality improvements was delivered, that the second phase of the Beech Street Transportation and Public Realm scheme would seek to make substantial public realm improvements to transform the covered street into a vibrant link in the Culture Mile. This is within the approved scope of the Beech Street Transportation and Public Realm project as Phase 2, with work intended to start on this following the delivery of Phase 1.</p> <p>14. In March 2022 Court of Common Council approved a Capital bid for 2022/23 of £2.5M to fund finalising the permanent interim traffic scheme and make substantive public realm improvements on Beech Street and adjacent junctions (if a permanent traffic order to conclude Phase 1 is implemented). If the scheme is to be made permanent, a request to draw down this funding will be made in the January 2023 decision report (and is subject to the Corporation wide Capital Review process currently underway).</p>
<p>4. Issue description</p>	<p>This section details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the current situation on Beech Street with regards traffic and air quality • LB Islington’s position regarding Beech Street and the wider area • The options available to move the project’s public consultation forward <p>CURRENT SITUATION – MOVEMENT</p> <p>15. General traffic volumes in in the project area have increased since the conclusion of the Experimental Traffic Order but have not returned to levels measured in 2019. Cyclists’ numbers have increased overall since 2019, and pedestrian volumes have decreased, in keeping with patterns observed in the wider City</p> <p>16. Motorised traffic volumes in Beech Street have gradually increased following the conclusion of the experiment, measuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ~1,675 veh/day in November 2021 • ~7,500 veh/day in May 2022 (~80% of 2019 volumes)

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17. Cyclist volumes in Beech Street have increased by 13% on pre-scheme volumes
18. Pedestrian volumes in Beech Street have decreased by 43% on pre-scheme volumes
19. Motorised traffic volumes on Golden Lane have increased since the conclusion of the experiment, measuring:
 - 1,070 veh/day in September 2021
 - 1,860 veh/day in April 2022 (56% of 2019 volumes)
20. Cyclist volumes on Golden Lane have increased by 21% on pre-scheme volumes.
21. Motorised traffic volumes Fortune Street have increased since the conclusion of the experiment, measuring:
 - 262 veh/day in September 2021
 - 454 veh/day in April 2022 (40% of 2019 values)
22. Cyclist volumes on Fortune Street have increased by 15% on pre-scheme volumes.

CURRENT SITUATION – AIR QUALITY

23. Air quality (nitrogen dioxide, NO₂) on Beech Street is currently averaging 38 µg/m³ for the year to date, increased from an average of 31 µg/m³ in 2021 and an average of 29 µg/m³ in 2020
24. Air quality in Beech Street is influenced by the amount of traffic on the street and the general background air quality across central London, which has seen a marked improvement since 2020 due to a combination of factors:
 - Reduced traffic volumes due to changed working patterns
 - Improvements to bus and taxi fleet emissions
 - Expansion of the ULEZ
 - Uptake of electric vehicles
 - Seasonal variations (NO₂ tends to be higher in winter months)

UPDATE ON LB ISLINGTON POSITION

25. In May, Members of Streets and Walkways Committee received a verbal update on the on-going traffic discussions with LB Islington and the risk that public consultation would not begin until after the summer.

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	<p>26. Since the conclusion of the traffic experiment, officers have met frequently with LB Islington on both the results of the experiment and the City Corporation's proposal to move forward with public consultation.</p> <p>27. LB Islington have shared their experience of the parallel Fortune Street experimental traffic order which was funded by the Beech Street project. The Fortune Street experiment was designed to allow local buses and local residents access to properties on Fortune Street. The restriction proved to be locally contentious, some residents had lengthier car journeys to reach their destination which was partly exacerbated by the Old Street roundabout works.</p> <p>28. Therefore, mitigating solutions were used to give exemptions to residents and businesses across the Bunhill area, meaning they could continue to use Fortune Street eastbound.</p> <p>29. LB Islington found this exemption challenging to manage and costly to administer. Officers have therefore advised us they would not recommend to their Members reinstating the Fortune Street restriction in the same form.</p> <p>30. In addition, LB Islington have advised that, while recognising the need to address air quality on Beech Street, they are not supportive of further traffic changes on their streets in the area in the short term.</p> <p>31. This reflects concerns about local opposition and that any changes may only be in place for 18 – 24 months while an area wide approach is developed and implemented, resulting in confusion for people who drive.</p> <p>32. LB Islington remain supportive of working in partnership with the City Corporation on an area wide approach to improvements across the Barbican, Golden Lane and Bunhill neighbourhoods and are looking at what funding options could be available.</p> <p>33. LB Islington have lent considerable support to the Beech Street project to date, both with the Fortune Street experiment, supporting the City Corporation's traffic management application to TfL and accepting that some level of traffic would reassign onto Old Street.</p> <p>34. In July, the Chairman of Planning & Transportation met with Islington's Executive Member for Climate Change and</p>
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	<p>Transport to seek continued support for consulting on the Beech Street scheme.</p> <p>35. In summary, neither the City Corporation nor LB Islington wish to see traffic reassign onto residential streets in the Bunhill area if the Beech Street zero emission scheme is reinstated. However, LB Islington is unlikely to support further traffic restrictions on their streets to mitigate against this traffic and prefer to take a medium-term area wide approach. They have proposed an alternative solution if the Beech Street zero emission scheme was to be implemented in advance of an area-wide approach (Option 1c below).</p> <p>36. Discussions with LB Islington remain ongoing, and we continue to advocate for Options 1a and 1b as reasonable and moderate mitigating measures (as detailed below)</p>
<p>16. Options</p>	<p>37. In December 2021, Members were asked to approve proceeding with a consultation on Beech St (Phase 1) or whether to pause this work and proceed on a wider area-based scheme only.</p> <p>38. The Committee approved consulting the public on two options for the Golden Lane junction, having it closed to all motorised traffic and keeping it open to zero emission capable vehicles.</p> <p>39. This section provides detail on revised options for Members to consider and sets out the next steps for the recommended option.</p> <p>OPTIONS TO PROGRESS THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION</p> <p>40. Possible options for an amended design for the Beech Street zero emission scheme have been considered.</p> <p>41. At this stage Members are only being asked if Option 1a, 1b and 1c are agreed to go to public consultation in October or whether they would prefer to close Phase 1 of the project (Option 2) and allow air quality issues in Beech Street to be addressed in the longer term through the wider Barbican and Golden Lane Healthy Streets Plan.</p> <p>Option 1 (recommended)</p> <p>42. Undertake public consultation on a (permanent) zero</p>

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	<p>emission scheme on Beech Street which includes three sub options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Closing Golden Lane to all motorised vehicles at the junction with Beech Street and installing a right-hand turn ban at the Fortune Street / Whitecross Street junction (subject to the agreement of LB Islington).b) Closing Golden Lane to non-zero emission vehicles at the junction with Beech Street and installing a right-hand turn ban at the Fortune Street / Whitecross Street junction (subject to the agreement of LB Islington).c) Keeping Golden Lane open at the junction with Beech Street to <u>all</u> vehicles. (Note that the left turn from Beech Street northbound into Golden Lane would only be available to zero emission vehicles). <p>43. If sub-options <i>a</i> and <i>b</i> are not supported by LB Islington, it is recommended that the public consultation proceeds with sub option 1c only.</p> <p>44. It intended that this would proceed alongside the continuation of the Barbican and Golden Lane HSP project.</p> <p>Option 2</p> <p>45. Close the interim project (phase 1) and progress instead with a longer-term area wide approach to managing traffic and addressing air quality on Beech Street and across the Barbican, Golden Lane and Bunhill areas in partnership with Islington</p> <p>DETAILS OF RECOMMENDED OPTIONS FOR CONSULTATION</p> <p>Option 1a – Zero emission scheme based on the experiment</p> <p>46. Under this option, the design largely replicates that used during the experiment but with a different restriction on Fortune Street to prevent it being used as a through route for eastbound traffic moving through the area.</p> <p>47. It is proposed that a “no right-hand turn” sign would be placed at the eastern end of Fortune Street. Vehicles would not be able to travel south on Whitecross Street and onto Chiswell Street but must continue straight onto Dufferin Street and then left onto Bunhill Row, leading back to Old Street. Local traffic with a legitimate access need to the Bunhill area can still approach from the west, but eastbound</p>
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	<p>through traffic must use other routes.</p> <p>48. A much smaller area bounded by Errol Street, Bunhill Row, Whitecross Street and Chiswell Street is negatively impacted compared to the previous Fortune Street ETO (see Appendix 3). Traffic entering the area is only adversely affected if approaching from the west, traffic is unaffected if approaching from the south, north or east. Similarly, journeys originating on Fortune Street and Dufferin Street will have longer routes to the southeast but are unaffected if heading in other directions.</p> <p>49. While a final decision has not yet been taken, it appears unlikely that Islington will agree to Option 1a being included in the public consultation. As noted, this reflects concerns about local opposition and that any changes may only be in place for 18 – 24 months while an area wide approach is developed and implemented, resulting in confusion for people who drive.</p> <p>Option 1b - Zero emission scheme based on the experiment but keeping the Golden Lane/Beech Street junction open to zero emission vehicles</p> <p>50. As above but with the Golden Lane/Beech Street junction <u>open</u> to zero emission vehicles only.</p> <p>51. We have requested Islington share information from the Fortune Street ETO to determine how many people requested exemptions that live in the smaller affected area, to be able to compare the impacts of Options 1a and 1b to Option 1c, and we are awaiting this information.</p> <p>Option 1c – Zero emission scheme with Golden Lane / Beech Street junction open to all traffic</p> <p>52. Under this Option, the design of the zero-emission zone would prevent Beech Street being used by non-zero emission vehicles along the east-west axis but allow all vehicles to use Beech Street eastbound carriageway between Golden Lane and Silk Street. Any vehicle travelling south on Golden Lane would be able to turn left onto Beech Street.</p> <p>53. Zero emission vehicles would also be able to turn left from Beech Street onto Golden Lane.</p> <p>54. Based on the data we have and adjusting pre-scheme traffic counts to account for general lower traffic trends post</p>
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	<p>pandemic, it is broadly estimated that traffic on Golden Lane would increase to be in the region of ~3,000 veh/day. This is a similar pre-scheme level to the ~3,300 veh/day.</p> <p>55. This estimate is based on general traffic in the City remaining at 80% of pre-pandemic levels and assumes that most of the traffic that turns left from Aldersgate Street into Beech Street will reassign to Old Street→Golden Lane→Beech Street.</p> <p>56. It should be noted that this option could be viewed negatively by people in the Golden Lane area who have experienced significantly less traffic over the last 2 years.</p> <p>57. Islington view the increase in traffic on Golden Lane as broadly acceptable in the short term whilst work is done for a joint area wide scheme which could include a School Streets approach for Golden Lane</p> <p>AIR QUALITY MODELLING OF OPTIONS</p> <p>58. Whilst the current air quality results for Beech Street have NO₂ on or around the legal limits, this has been measured during the summer months which generally trend to having better air quality. Air quality measurements taken since the experiment ended are not indicative of the future NO₂ levels as relatively low amounts of traffic were on Beech Street over the winter months.</p> <p>59. Air quality modelling has been undertaken to estimate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Annual NO₂ over 12 months for the current Beech Street traffic volumes if nothing was doneii. Annual NO₂ over 12 months if the same zero emission scheme was reinstated (Option 1a)iii. Impact on annual NO₂ if the zero-emission scheme was reinstated but Golden Lane was kept open to allow southbound traffic to turn left onto Beech Street (Option 1b) <p>60. The modelling data estimates that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. if nothing is done and Beech Street remains open to all traffic, the annual average NO₂ over the next 12 months is estimated to be:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 39.4 µg/m³ on Beech Street (at the AQ monitor western end)
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 38.8 µg/m³ on Beech Street between Golden Lane and the western end▪ 29.4 µg/m³ on Golden Lane▪ 27.6 µg/m³ on Fortune Street <p>ii. If a modified zero emission scheme was installed, Option 1a/1b, the annual average NO₂ over the next 12 months is estimated to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 30.4 µg/m³ on Beech Street (at the AQ monitor western end)▪ 28.6 µg/m³ on Beech Street between Golden Lane and the eastern entrance▪ 28.9 µg/m³ on Golden Lane▪ 27.6 µg/m³ on Fortune Street <p>iii. If a modified zero emission scheme was installed, Option 1c, the annual average NO₂ over the next 12 months is estimated to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 30.4 µg/m³ on Beech Street (at the AQ monitor western end)▪ 31 µg/m³ on Beech Street between Golden Lane and the eastern entrance▪ 30 µg/m³ on Golden Lane▪ 27.6 µg/m³ on Fortune Street <p>For full air quality results at all locations, see Appendix 4</p> <p>NEXT STEPS</p> <p>61. Any decision on the making of any permanent traffic order could only be made in January 2023 at the earliest when Members would consider the results of the public (non-statutory consultation).</p> <p>62. The intention remains to engage with the public on their views of the wider area at the same time as the consultation on Beech Street.</p> <p>63. In the event that Members approve the recommended Option, the next steps are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare public consultation documents in consultation with LB Islington• Review and update the Equalities Assessment• Undertake a public consultation exercise• Analyse the public consultation results• Prepare a decision report on whether to make the order permanent
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Appendices

Appendix 1	Project Coversheet
Appendix 2	Finance tables
Appendix 3	Option 1a/1b affected area
Appendix 4	Air quality modelling results
Appendix 5	Option 1a, 1b and 1c detail

Contact

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