

Report – Planning and Transportation Committee

Gateway 4B Proposal: St Paul's Gyratory Transformation (Phase 1)

To be presented on Thursday 22nd June 2023

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

SUMMARY

The St Paul's Gyratory project aims to transform the streets and public realm between the old Museum of London site and St. Paul's Underground station through the partial removal of the 1970's gyratory. It is a priority project for delivery by 2030 as identified in the City's Transport Strategy.

The project is split into two phases. Phase 1 covers the project area to the south of the rotunda roundabout. Phase 2 focuses on highway changes on the roundabout and is awaiting the outcome of the Museum of London/Bastion House redevelopment which is currently at pre-application stage.

Your Planning & Transportation Committee, with the endorsement of the Operational Property & Projects Sub-Committee and following detailed scrutiny by the Streets & Walkways Sub-Committee, hereby proposes the progression of proposals relating to Phase 1 of the project, in accordance with the Projects Procedure (which requires, at Gateway 4B stage of any project exceeding £5million, the approval of the Court of Common Council to proceed).

Specifically, your Committee **recommends** approval to progress the design of one highway layout option (Option 1/1A, detailed further in the body of this report) and associated public space improvements. The recommended option is that which, of the three options considered by your Committee, delivers the largest new public space with the closure of the southern section of King Edward Street and the closure of the Newgate Street slip road. The proposal follows a public engagement exercise, in which over 2,500 people participated, and which demonstrated strong support for the proposed public space on King Edward Street and for measures to improve the environment for people walking and cycling. The estimated cost of Option 1 is £15 to £17m.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That this Honourable Court **approves** the progression of the project at Gateway 4B stage, on the basis of Options 1/1A as set out within this report (noting they will continue to be developed and progressed to public consultation), and noting the total estimated cost range of the project at £15-17 million.

MAIN REPORT

Background

1. The aim of the St Paul's Gyratory project is to transform the streets and public realm between the old Museum of London site and St. Paul's Underground station through the partial removal of the 1970's gyratory. It is a priority project for delivery by 2030 in the City's Transport Strategy.
2. The project is split into two phases. Phase 1 covers the project area to the south of the rotunda roundabout. Phase 2 focuses on highway changes on the roundabout and is awaiting the outcome of the Museum of London/Bastion House redevelopment which is currently at pre-application stage. This report relates to Phase 1 only.

Current Status and Options Considered

3. The project has been considered at Gateway 4 and committee approval obtained to progress the design of one highway layout option and associated public space improvements to public consultation. The Court's approval to continue to the next stage is now being sought.
4. Your Committee considered three concept design options in detail, all of which removed the gyratory system to some degree and create a new public space. Each option had a different highway layout for vehicles travelling through the project area and these layouts dictate the amount of new public space that might be created. Option 1 delivers the largest new public space with the closure of the southern section of King Edward Street and the closure of the Newgate Street slip road. The other options deliver a smaller public space through the closure of the Newgate Street slip road only.
5. Comprehensive traffic modelling is progressing with Transport for London to assess the impact of the proposed options on buses and the wider highway network. To date, this indicates that all three options are forecast to have an acceptable impact in traffic terms, although modelling suggests Option 2 has an overall impact on bus journey times which is likely to be unacceptable to TfL Buses.
6. Each of the three options were developed being mindful of the project's approved objectives:
 - To reduce casualties towards the Vision Zero target
 - Improve pedestrian comfort levels
 - To improve air quality by reducing NO2 levels
 - To create new public spaces
 - Improve the quality of the public realm to create streets and public spaces for people to admire and enjoy
 - To ensure buildings and public spaces are protected
7. Option design development also considered other important criteria including:
 - the impact on the wider highway network in traffic terms and bus journey times
 - how each assists the delivery of the City's strategies and initiatives including Destination City, the Transport Strategy and the Climate Action Strategy
8. Key elements of work undertaken include traffic modelling, public engagement, stakeholder management, highway layout design development and concept design development for the new public space.

9. The gyratory itself is part of the strategic road network as designated in the Traffic Management Act 2004. Traffic management approvals and TfL's support for these changes is essential.

Summary of options

10. The Options Matrix presented to your Planning & Transportation Committee provides more detail on each option and its assessment and is available (together with a large volume of additional supporting information considered in detail by your Committee) [here](#).

A summary of each option considered is set out below:-

11. **Option 1** offers transformational change across the project area. The partial removal of the gyratory system sees the introduction of two way working for all vehicles on Newgate Street and St Martin Le Grand to its junction with Angel Street. Comprehensive improvements for people walking and cycling are proposed including better crossing facilities and protected cycle lanes where space permits. The closure of the southern section of King Edward Street enables the creation of a large, new public space which, at just over 3000sqm, would be larger than Aldgate Square.
12. Option 1 proposes changes to bus stop locations, bus stands, coach and taxi bays as set out above. The proposed relocation of the bus stand for route 100 is supported by Bart's Hospital who have expressed concern about the impact the King Edward Street bus stand has on blue light response times.
13. The feasibility traffic modelling for Option 1 suggests the impact on the wider traffic network is within acceptable parameters with regards to queueing at junctions and the bus journey times. There are some small delays to bus journey times identified but it is anticipated that this can be reduced by further work to mitigate impacts by signal time changes in the more detailed traffic modelling that will follow. Overall Option 1 performs well in terms of bus journey times at this stage of its development for such a large-scale change.
14. An **Option 1A** has also been developed. It is the same as Option 1 except it proposes the introduction of two-way working for vehicles on Montague Street between its junction with the rotunda and Little Britain north. This option has evolved as an analysis of traffic movements suggests there is likely to be an increase in traffic using Little Britain south if the gyratory is system modified; something the project is actively seeking to avoid. Two way working on Montague Street as proposed could significantly reduce traffic on Little Britain south and shorten some blue light journeys to Bart's Hospital.
15. Option 1/1A has the potential to attract a significant external funding contribution from the developer of 81 Newgate Street.
16. Option 1/1A is the option which is **recommended** to the Court by your Committee *Estimated cost: £15-17m.*
17. **Option 2** was not supported by your Committee and is not recommended to the Court. This option proposed significant changes to the existing highway layout. It was less ambitious than Option 1 in terms of the scale of new public space, only creating about half of the space Option 1 offers.

18. This option involves partial removal of the gyratory, enabling comprehensive improvements for people cycling (including segregation where space permits) but more modest improvements for people walking. King Edward Street south remains open for northbound buses, cycles and emergency vehicles.
19. The traffic modelling suggests the impact on the wider traffic network is within acceptable parameters with regards queueing at junctions. However, some bus journey times are forecast to increase by 5-7 minutes in the AM peak which is likely to be unacceptable to TfL Buses. If this option had been progressed further mitigation to reduce this impact would have been required; however, your Committee noted that it might not have been possible to provide sufficient mitigation.
20. Option 2 creates a smaller new public space of approximately 1400m² through the closure of the Newgate Street slip road. However, King Edward Street northbound would remain open for buses and cycles from Newgate Street. Option 2 would not attract the external funding contribution from the developer.
Estimated cost: £11-13m
21. **Option 3**, also not recommended, proposed significant changes to the existing highway layout on Newgate Street with the introduction of two way working for buses and cycles with general traffic continuing to be able to travel westbound. However, it retained the core north-south gyratory movements on King Edward St and St Martin Le Grand. This option enabled some positive improvements for people cycling, modest improvements for people walking and less new public space than option 1 (1400m²), as King Edward Street south remained open for all vehicles.
22. The initial traffic modelling suggested the impact on the wider traffic network was within acceptable parameters with regards queueing at junctions and bus journey times. It did not perform as well as Option 1 in the PM peak but the indications were still broadly positive.
23. Option 3 created a small new public space through the closure of the Newgate Street slip road, but King Edward Street would remain open for all motor vehicles. This would impact on the enjoyment of the public space. Option 3 would not attract any external funding contribution from the developer. *Estimated cost: £11-13m*

Funding

24. An internal capital bid for £13,915,175 was approved by Policy and Resources Committee on 20 April 2023. This comprises £2.91 million of CIL funding with the balance from the On Street Parking Reserve.
25. Negotiations are on-going with the developer of 81 Newgate Street regarding a financial contribution to the project over and above the basic Section 278 works. The developer has provisionally agreed to make a contribution providing it is Option 1 (the full closure of King Edward Street between Newgate Street and Angel Street) that is approved for further development and secures all the necessary approvals to enable delivery/construction.
26. If formalised, the external contribution could enable the internal capital funding allocated to the project to be reduced overall after Gateway 5; once the scheme is fully committed to being built and overall construction costs are fully understood.

Stakeholder Feedback

27. A public engagement exercise took place during December 2022 and January 2023. Over 2,500 people participated, with strong support given for the proposed public space on King Edward Street and for measures to improve the environment for people walking and cycling.
28. Respondents had the opportunity to select features they would like to see in any new public space, with greening and seating receiving overwhelming support. This feedback has assisted the consultants appointed to prepare the concept design proposal for the new public space. Responses received have also helped inform changes to the design options for the wider project area. Liaison has also continued with key local stakeholders such as the Cheapside Business Alliance, St. Paul's Cathedral and Bart's Hospital. Discussions have also been held with colleagues working on Destination City and will continue.

Traffic modelling

29. A comprehensive traffic modelling exercise in partnership with Transport for London is on-going to assess the impact of the new highway layouts and revised vehicle routes on the wider highway network and on journey times. The primary objective is to ensure journey time impacts are within acceptable levels and reduced where possible.
30. The current modelling outputs for bus journey times (using an overall average of all bus route journey times) shows that option 1 results in a 0-30 second increase in journey times, compared to a 1-2 minute increase (option 2) or a 3-60 second increase (option 3).
31. The modelling exercise will continue over coming months and will form a key component of the formal TMAN approval for the recommended highway option in 2024.

Highway layout design development

32. The results and feedback from the public engagement exercise and the traffic modelling have helped inform revisions to the design options. These include improved provision for people cycling through the area, alterations to pavement and crossing widths. The locations of bus stops, bus stands coach and taxi bays are also revised.
33. It should be noted that since February 2022 the coach bays on St Martin Le Grand west and Angel Street (six in total) have been out of use due to the construction of 81 Newgate Street and this will continue until March 2025 at the earliest. Surveys undertaken in March 2023 at all the available coach parking sites within the City of London show that there is overall spare capacity for coaches to park. The survey found that whilst on-street coach parking is operating close to capacity, there are spaces available at the Tower Hill coach parking facility.
34. Further surveys will be undertaken during the summer peak period and site investigations will continue to identify potential new sites for on-street coach parking. The layout and demand of the coach parking at Tower Hill Park will also be reviewed during the summer period to help understand current capacity demand and usage at peak visitor times.
35. The highway layouts for each option considered proposed significant changes to the way the available public highway is utilised with a move away from a priority given to motorised traffic towards walking and cycling and the creation a new public

space. The increase in footway space represents the amount of carriageway space that would be converted to footway. The new cycle lanes will be protected wherever space allows. As can be seen in the below table, Option 1, which your Committee recommends to you, provides for the greatest increase in footway and public space.

Highway changes	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Increase in footway space	1436m ²	732m ²	1027m ²
New cycle lanes	819m	942m	781m
New public space	c. 3000m ²	c. 1400m ²	c. 1400m ²

Concept designs for the new public space

36. Concept designs have been developed for the project's new public space. The primary focus of the commission is a holistic design for a new public space on both King Edward Street and the Newgate Street slip road.
37. The tender brief stated design evolution needed to be underpinned by the objectives of the Transport and Climate Action Strategies and the Destination City initiative, with it also asked that Christchurch Greyfriars be sensitively integrated into the new space and the view of St Paul's Cathedral be enhanced when looking south down King Edward Street.
38. The feedback from the public engagement exercise has informed the design approach to the content of the square. A project steering group which includes officers, the developer of 81 Newgate Street and the Cheapside Business Alliance has overseen the design evolution and has also provided feedback at appropriate stages. Following a report presenting initial sketch designs, concept designs were produced based with particular reference to soft landscaping, the integration of Christchurch Greyfriars, public seating, the provision of a children's play area, flexibility to utilise the area as an event space (mindful of Destination City), provision for public art, security considerations, and appropriate lighting.
39. During the design development, officers became aware of a substantial amount of large granite blocks salvaged from the Thames Tideway works on Victoria Embankment and that this was potentially available to the project, and ways of incorporating the stone into the overall design, potentially as part of the playable landscape and informal seating, have been considered.
40. The project steering group reviewed and fed back on a concept option in late March, leading to the preparation of a preferred concept design for each option. Various views of the concept designs are available [here](#).

Key Risks with Taking The Recommended Option 1/1A forward

41. The impacts on bus journey times mean that the proposed option does not receive the required level of support and approval from TfL; crucially the TMAN formal approval which is required to proceed with the scheme to construction. The roads impacted are largely part of the strategic road network so it is essential that TfL support the proposals. Officers will continue to liaise with TfL Buses during the development stages of the scheme to ensure all mitigation measures to reduce impacts on bus journey times have been investigated.

41. A challenge on procedural grounds or an inability to resolve objections to a Traffic Order may result in additional legal costs, as well as delays to the overall programme. A costed risk provision has been made should additional legal costs be incurred.
42. It should be noted that the preferred option is not supported by Bart's Hospital due to concerns about increased traffic congestion affecting blue light response times. Officers have been in a regular dialogue with Bart's as the highway options have been developed and this will continue. Whilst levels of congestion are predicted to increase, junctions are predicted to operate within capacity. Much of the highway layout will be multi-lane that would allow vehicles to pull out of the way at busy times. Traffic queueing on Angel Street is not predicted.
43. The preferred option may result in an increase in motor vehicles using Little Britain south. There are mitigation measures that can be put in place to reduce this risk and these will be explored in more detail during the next phase of work. These include converting Montague Street to two-way working to its junction with Little Britain north which would also provide a more direct route for Bart's ambulances and service vehicles arriving from Aldersgate Street and London Wall.
44. Changes to coach parking arrangements may result in objections from the coach industry and key stakeholders such as St Paul's Cathedral. Most of the local coach parking provision in the project area has been unavailable since February 2022 due to redevelopment of 81 Newgate Street. Whilst the closure of the Museum of London should reduce overall demand, surveys undertaken in March 2023 showed that whilst on-street coach parking provision was operating close to capacity, there was surplus space in the Tower Hill coach park. The project will assess alternative on-street coach parking locations and, if feasible, consult on introducing these as part of the project.
45. The preferred option may negatively impact certain groups of people, particularly some disabled people and this has been highlighted in the Interim Equality Analysis considered by the Committee. It has been agreed with the Chair of the City of London Access Group (CoLAG) to present the preferred option to CoLAG members in the summer and involve Transport for All in facilitating a feedback session where issues can be identified and mitigation measures explored.
46. Specific technical challenges associated with this project include the location of utility infrastructure, the London Underground and the City's piped subway structures, which are situated under parts of Newgate Street, King Edward Street and St Martin's Le Grand. Dialogue is on-going with the City Structures team, London Underground and utility companies. This will continue as the preferred option is progressed.
47. Several elements of the project are still at a concept design stage. As design development progresses there may be issues that are more technically challenging than first envisaged. As a result, the project may require additional staff resources. A costed risk allocation has been included within the budget.

Next steps

48. The consultation scheduled for August/September 2023 will seek views from the public on the preferred highway layout, the concept design proposals for the new public space and the potential name of the new space.
49. There will be a mix of virtual and in person opportunities for people to directly engage, as well as project information towers and drop-in sessions in the project area. The project has built up an extensive database of local businesses, residents and interest groups and they will be invited to take participate in the consultation. Social media will also be utilised to target people moving through the project area.
50. The results of the public consultation and any subsequent design revisions will be brought back to your Planning & Transportation Committee in the form of a Gateway 4C report in late 2023. Statutory consultation on any necessary Traffic Orders to implement proposals will not be commenced unless authorised at Gateway 4C reporting stage. Whether or not any necessary traffic orders are made cannot be prejudged until the outcome of the consultation has been evaluated. It is anticipated that highway works construction may commence in early 2025.

Conclusion

51. Option 1/1A delivers improvements for people walking and cycling, a substantial new public space and key elements of the Transport and Climate Action Strategies and the Destination City initiative, whilst also attracting a significant external funding contribution. Option 1/1A is the option recommended to be taken forward to Gateway 5.
52. Whilst options 2 and 3 deliver improvements for people walking and cycling, the new public space is smaller resulting in much less greening. Neither option attracts the current external funding contribution that is on offer and your Committee therefore is not recommending these to you.
53. The Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee and the Operational Property and Projects Sub-Committee endorse this proposals.
54. The Court of Common Council is therefore asked to approve that the highway layout Option 1 (and its variant 1A) be progressed at Gateway 4B and presented for public consultation in terms of changes to the public highway for vehicles, changes to bus stop, coach bays, taxi bays, waiting and loading, and that the concept design proposal for Option 1 is presented for public consultation alongside the highway layout to seek further feedback on the development of the public space for further detailed design.

Appendices

Various public appendices setting out the finer details considered by your Committee can be found [here](#). The associated non-public appendix can be issued on request to the [Town Clerk](#).

The draft public minute of the Streets and Walkways Sub Committee meeting on 23 May 2023 can also be issued on request to the [Town Clerk](#).

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

DATED this 12th day of June 2023.

SIGNED on behalf of the Committee.

Deputy Shravan Joshi
Chairman, Planning and Transportation Committee