

Committee(s)	Dated:
Streets & Walkways Sub-committee	4 July 2023
Subject: TfL's proposals for Arthur Street	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 9, 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	£ 0
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Executive Director Environment	For Decision
Report author: Albert Cheung – Policy & Projects, City Operations	

Summary

Arthur Street at the King William Street junction has been temporarily closed since 2015 to facilitate the Bank Station Capacity Upgrade (BSCU) works. The BSCU has provided new northern line platforms and a new London Underground station entrance on Cannon Street which opened in February 2023. Since the start of the BSCU works in 2015, motor vehicle journeys that would have previously used Arthur Street have either rerouted, mostly likely to Blackfriars and Southwark bridges or transferred to other travel modes.

Transport for London (TfL) and City officers have been discussing options for the Arthur Street/King William Street and Arthur Street/Upper Thames Street junctions once the construction works for the BSCU are complete. The long-term closure of Arthur Street at its junction with King William Street provides an opportunity to consider proposals which retain this closure. There is also an opportunity to improve the Arthur Street/Upper Thames Street junction.

Proposals have now been developed by TfL who have also undertaken consultation on these. The proposals are expected to provide significant improvements for people walking and cycling and reduce road danger whilst maintaining access to all premises in Arthur Street.

TfL requires the City's approval to proceed with the Arthur Street/King William Street junction improvements, as the proposals requires the City to exercise its Highway Authority powers.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. Agree and support TfL's proposal as detailed under paragraph 10 of this report.
2. Agree to commence the promotion of a traffic order to close Arthur Street at its junction with King William Street to all vehicles except pedal cycles.
3. Authorise the Executive Director Environment to consider responses to the traffic order consultation and if they consider it appropriate, to make the Order.

Main Report

Background

1. Transport for London (TfL) has a Transport & Works Act Order (TWAO) to undertake works to upgrade the capacity at Bank Underground Station (BSCU). This government legislation has led to TfL to carry out works in Arthur Street and close the street at its junction with King William Street. The road closure introduced in 2015 has allowed a shaft to be constructed in Arthur Street. The works have delivered a new station entrance on Cannon Street, ticket hall, Northern Line platforms, new interchange tunnels and step-free access. The new station entrance opened in late February 2023.
2. As part of the BSCU planning consent/legal agreement, TfL is obligated to reinstate Arthur Street and must submit reinstatement details for approval by the City Corporation.
3. Since 2015, there have been two significant highway changes immediate to Arthur Street which directly impacts Arthur Street.
 - i. In April 2016, TfL introduced a cycle scheme (now known as Cycleway 3 or C3) on Upper Thames Street which has a junction with the southern end of Arthur Street. The cycleway consists of a segregated two-way cycle lane on the northern side of Upper Thames Street and modified the vehicular access arrangements into Arthur Street, from a left turn to a right turn only. To accommodate the scheme, the “green man” pedestrian crossing facilities on the eastern and southern arm were removed. The change in access arrangements was to remove the left turn hook collision risk to people cycling. However, with the BSCU works, TfL was anticipating that this junction design may need to be revisited once those works had finished. Additionally, following safety complaints from local users, TfL also agreed to revisit the pedestrian crossing layout.
 - ii. In spring 2022, TfL introduced an experimental traffic ban on London Bridge which also includes the northbound route on Fish Street Hill. This experiment extended the temporary ban which was first implemented in 2020 as part of their Covid pandemic transport response. The restriction bans all traffic except buses, cycles, motorcycles and taxis, Monday to Friday between 7am and 7pm. The experimental traffic order will expire on 27 September 2023 and a decision by TfL whether to retain the restriction indefinitely or remove it, will need to be made before this date. The timed traffic ban has improved the conditions for people walking and cycling, and bus journey times have improved.
4. It should be noted that TfL has also introduced an experimental scheme on the A10 Bishopsgate corridor which has a junction with King William Street/Gracechurch Street immediately north of London Bridge/Arthur Street.

This experiment consists of a series of bus gates which restricts access for general motor traffic along sections of the corridor. A decision to retain this experiment indefinitely or to remove it needs to be made by July 2023. Officers consider that the A10 Bishopsgate and the London Bridge experiments are integral to each other as together they control traffic which would otherwise migrate, at unacceptable levels, to City streets such as Cannon Street and Eastcheap.

Current Position

5. The City Corporation is the highway authority for Arthur Street. TfL is the highway authority for King William Street and Upper Thames Street including the junctions at the northern and southern ends of Arthur Street.
6. Prior to the road closure in 2015, Arthur Street operated as a two-way street. At its northern end, only buses were permitted to exit Arthur Street and then turn left into King William Street. All vehicles were allowed to access Arthur Street from King William Street but only from the northbound carriageway on London Bridge. At the southern end of Arthur Street, vehicles can exit onto Upper Thames Street in all directions but accessing it, motorised vehicles can only do so by turning right from Upper Thames Street or from Swan Lane, which is a cul-de-sac. However, throughout most of the construction period, access into Arthur Street was controlled by barriers managed by banksman.
7. The bus route 344 in the northbound direction has been on a long-term diversion (via London Bridge) since the temporary road closure in Arthur Street was in place. Before this service can return to Arthur Street, the left turn from Upper Thames Street into Arthur Street would need to be reinstated, which is likely to require significant junction modifications. In the southbound direction the 344 travels via Fish Street Hill and has therefore been unaffected by the BSCU works.
8. The main BSCU construction work was completed in February 2023, but some outstanding works remain. There is also a condition, which requires TfL to provide reinstatement details to be approved by the City.
9. Throughout the temporary closure of Arthur Street, officers are not aware of any significant negative impacts and with all the network changes taken place since then, it is now appropriate to consider whether it would be preferable to retain the closure and enhance it or rather simply reinstate Arthur Street to how it used to function. TfL and City officers have therefore been in discussions to explore the possibility of an alternative design for Arthur Street to improve conditions for people walking and cycling and to reduce road danger, in line with both City Corporation and Mayor of London Transport Strategies. There have also been discussions regarding improvements to the Upper Thames Street / Arthur Street / Swan Lane junction. As a result of these discussions, TfL has developed and consulted on proposals for both locations. Discussions regarding the remainder of the highway reinstatement details are ongoing.

Proposal

10. TfL's proposals are shown in Appendix 1, 2 and 3 but are summarised below:
 - i. The closure of Arthur Street to all vehicles except pedal cycles and emergency services vehicles at its junction with King William Street. This may provide opportunities to include public realm enhancements, seating, greening or tree planting which officers will continue to explore with TfL as the detailed design progresses.
 - ii. The permanent rerouting of the number 344 bus service (in both directions) to London Bridge. This would avoid the need for TfL to carry out potentially expensive and disruptive works at the Upper Thames Street/Arthur Street junction.
 - iii. Improvements to the Upper Thames Street / Arthur Street / Swan Lane junction. This consist of:
 - o New pedestrian crossings on the eastern and southern arms of the junction. The whole junction would then have "green" man crossing facility.
 - o A "straight across" crossing, replacing a staggered crossing on the western arm of the junction. This stagger crossing has previously been the subject of safety complaints by local users.
 - o A two stage right turn facility for cyclists on the north arm (Arthur Street) of the junction to allow people cycling to travel in all directions.
 - o Minor kerb line / road marking changes to facilitate vehicle access and egress from Arthur Street.
11. The proposals at both junctions are reliant on the rerouting of the 344 bus service out of Arthur Street but are not dependent on each other. If buses were retained both junctions would need to be radically redesigned to enable buses to turn left in and out of Arthur Street. In particular, the impacts at the Upper Thames Street may be very significant in both cost and traffic terms which would be unacceptable.

Traffic Considerations

12. The closure of Arthur Street at the King William Street junction has been in place since 2015. Due to the extended duration of this closure, users including those which accessed Arthur Street for servicing will be accustomed to using alternative travel options. This includes using alternative routes or other travel modes such as public transport.
13. Traffic data prior to Arthur Street being closed has been provided by TfL. This showed approximately 60 vehicles (one every minute on average) in the AM peak and 175 vehicles (three vehicles every minute on average) in the PM peak

used Arthur Street. Unfortunately, vehicle composition data is not available, but in the City, lorries (medium to heavy goods vehicles) make up nearly 5% of the overall traffic mix. Extrapolating this would suggest three and nine HGV's in the AM and PM peak hour respectively are diverted to other routes.

14. As there were only a few premises located in or off Arthur Street, most of the traffic is likely to have been using it as a through route to reach Upper Thames Street and other destinations further afield. The nearest alternative route to access Upper Thames Street is Southwark Bridge, which is only a relatively short distance to the west.
15. Prior to the temporary closure, TfL's traffic modelling indicated that traffic would disperse more widely, with less than half likely to use Southwark Bridge and slightly more than half using Blackfriars Bridge. This would lead to only a marginal increase in traffic on these bridges. The modelling did not identify any noticeable traffic reassignment to Tower Bridge. TfL's modelling summary can be found in Appendix 4. If TfL decides to retain the experimental London Bridge traffic restrictions, then most of the traffic that would reassign will need to use alternative routes anyway.
16. Although there is concern that the reassignment of HGVs to Southwark Bridge may be accelerating the deterioration of the bridge, the analysis above suggests that any impact from the proposed closure of Arthur Street is likely to be minimal.
17. Access to premises in Arthur Street remains available, but only from the westbound direction on Upper Thames Street. It is noted that these journeys may involve longer travelling times and distances, but this has been the case for the past eight years, and may continue to be so during the weekdays (except for taxis and motorcycles) if TfL decides to retain the London Bridge restrictions. Even if TfL decides not to retain the restrictions, it is expected that they will introduce protected space for cycling on London Bridge.
18. Previously, Arthur Street was used as a route for vehicles carrying abnormal loads but has not been available since 2015. As a result, vehicles carrying abnormal loads have had to use alternative routes and or options. If Arthur Street, was to remain closed, these alternative routes and or options would need to continue.
19. Arthur Street had a poor collision record. Officers have reviewed the collision data. Over a 5-year period up to the introduction of the temporary closure of Arthur Street, a total of 9 collisions resulting in injuries to 10 people (9 slight and 1 serious) were recorded. A summary of these collisions can be found in Appendix 5.
20. It should be noted that with the timed traffic restrictions on London Bridge, and if made permanent, collision rate at this junction is likely to reduce due to lower traffic flows. However, the safety risks would remain outside of the restricted hours (i.e. before 7am, after 7pm and during the weekend) especially at the peripheral periods where there is likely to be a build-up of motor traffic. The permanent closure of Arthur Street to motor vehicles would therefore

substantially reduce this risk particularly the left hook collision involving vehicles turning left colliding with people walking and cycling, as well as generally improve the perception of safety. London Bridge is a very busy route for people walking and cycling.

21. The number of people cycling in the City has been increasing, and this increase is expected to continue, as cycling connections to the City are improved and expanded, including those, such as Cycleway 4 (London Bridge to Greenwich), that connect to the City over London Bridge. Currently, approximately 500 people an hour cycle northbound on London Bridge in the AM peak. The safety risks at this location are therefore expected to be higher than at many other locations.
22. Officers have not seen any traffic modelling outputs relating to the proposed junction improvements at Upper Thames Street / Arthur Street / Swan Lane, however, no significant journey time impacts are envisaged but officers will continue to review the designs as this progress.
23. These proposals are not reliant on whether the London Bridge or A10 Bishopsgate corridor is retained or removed and can be progressed independently.

Bus route 344

24. The permanent rerouting of the bus route 344 (in both directions) from Southwark Bridge to London Bridge would leave Southwark Bridge, Upper Thames Street (between Southwark Bridge and Arthur Street) and Arthur Street without a bus service. This would affect those passengers along this route, requiring them to walk to London Bridge or use a different service on Cannon Street.
25. Data provided by TfL showed that 355 southbound and 439 northbound trips per day in the City would be affected. The northbound route has been using London Bridge since 2015 so if the route was reinstated, it would impact passengers on this diverted route. Therefore, the overall impact of rerouting the southbound route to also use London Bridge is expected to be low but it would benefit from the improved bus journey times on London Bridge, if TfL's experiment was to continue.
26. Having bus services running on the same street also improves service clarity and overall passenger convenience. The removal of buses from Southwark Bridge would free up kerb side space and provide an opportunity to extend the protected cycle lane on Queen Street Place, which could be progressed when opportunities allow. This would improve conditions for people cycling and reduce road danger.

TfL Public Consultation

27. In February 2023, TfL organised two briefings with ward Members and the Chairman/deputy Chairman of this Sub-Committee to discuss the proposals and the planned public consultation. Following this, TfL launched the public

consultation which ran from 27 February 2023 to 12 April 2023. To improve awareness of the consultation, they sent out leaflets to local occupiers, handed them out on street and had posters displayed at bus stops. A total of 463 responses were received. A summary of the consultation responses provided by TfL is detailed below and available in Appendix 6.

28. One of the consultation questions asked people how they thought the proposals for Arthur Street would impact on journeys into and through the area. 176 (43%) of respondents indicated that more people would choose to walk and cycle and 107 (26%) of respondents thought more people would choose to use public transport.
29. People were also asked what impact the proposals would have on various groups, with the majority of respondents thought the proposals would make it safer for pedestrians (200 or 64%), cyclists (201 or 64%) and people with mobility, sight or hearing impairments (144 or 47%).
30. The consultation also gave people the opportunity to provide general feedback on the proposals. Responses to this question was low but overall, there was mixed support to close Arthur Street to all vehicles except pedal cycles (11 in favour, 8 unsupportive and 11 requesting additional vehicle exemptions such as for taxis and motorcycles). There was also limited support from the feedback to reroute the 344 bus service (3 in favour and 34 unsupportive).
31. A total of 5 stakeholder (statutory consultee or local occupier) responses were received. One respondent was identifiable as a local occupier, and they were supportive of the Arthur Street road closure. The walking and cycling improvements were supported by a cycling group. Three other organisations also responded, one was not supportive of the road closure, another responded with an amendment that the road closure exemption should extend to allow taxis and one respondent was not supportive of the rerouting of the 344 bus.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic Implications

32. The proposals set out in this report aligns with Corporate Plan Outcome 1: People are safe and feel safe, 9: We are digitally and physically well-connected and responsive and, 12: Our spaces are secure, resilient, and well-maintained; the Transport Strategy; Climate Action Strategy, Air Quality Strategy and Destination City (by making our streets more welcoming and safer).

Financial Implications

33. None. All costs will be met by TfL.

Resource Implications

34. City officers will continue to engage with TfL which can be met from existing resources.

Legal Implications

35. The road closure would require the City Corporation to exercise its powers under Section 6 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to make a traffic order to prohibit all vehicles except pedal cycles from entering Arthur Street from King William Street. It is planned that the permanent traffic order would be in place before the temporary traffic order finishes. As part of this, statutory public consultation will be carried out and any objections considered by the Executive Director including consideration of whether a public inquiry should be held.
36. In carrying out its traffic functions, the City must have regard, inter alia, to its duty to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular traffic and other traffic (which includes pedestrians) - s.122 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984; and its duty to secure the efficient use of the road network (s.16 Traffic Management Act 2004). It is considered that these proposals have given due regard to these matters.
37. The highway works to close Arthur Street at its junction with King William Street span both the City's (Arthur Street) and TfL's (King William Street) highway. To allow TfL to work on the City's highway it will be necessary to enter into agreements to facilitate works at the junction via a Section 8 of the Highways Act 1980.
38. The proposals set out in this report does not impact on TfL's obligations to reinstate the highway under the obligations as set out in the TWAO, planning permission or legal agreement.

Risk Implications

39. The proposals set out in this report helps mitigate Corporate Risk CR30 – Climate Action and the Environment Department's ENV-CO-TR 001 Road Danger.

Equalities Implications

40. As a public authority, the City must have due regard to equality considerations when exercising its functions (section 149 Equality Act 2010).
41. TfL has carried out a pre-consultation Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) for the proposed Arthur Street with King William Street and Upper Thames Street junction improvements and a post consultation EQIA for the rerouting of the bus route 344. These have been reviewed by officers and are provided in full in Appendix 7 and 8.
42. The EQIA for the junction improvements identified no potential negative or adverse impact on people with protected characteristics or other inclusion groups but some positive benefits, particularly for people with disabilities and some age groups (due to improved pedestrian crossings). However, it is anticipated that the EQIA will need to be updated following the public consultation, which officers will continue to review.

43. The EQIA for the rerouting of the bus route identified potential impacts for most people with protected characteristics. This relates to people who currently use the bus stops will have a longer walk (up to 310m) to the nearest alternative bus stop.

Climate Implications

44. Measures to enable more people to walk and cycle support the delivery of the Climate Action Strategy.

Security Implications

45. None.

Conclusion

46. Since 2015, Arthur Street has been temporarily closed at King William Street to facilitate TfL's BSCU works. Due to the extended duration of this closure, users, including those which accessed Arthur Street for servicing have become accustomed to using alternative travel options and routes. The long-term closure of Arthur Street and the BSCU works, have provided an opportunity to consider proposals which retain this closure as well as to improve the Arthur Street/Upper Thames Street junction.
47. TfL, in discussions with officers, has now developed a proposal which retains the Arthur Street closure and improvements to the Arthur Street/Upper Thames Street junction. The proposals include the permanent rerouting of the bus route 344 (in both directions) from Southwark Bridge to London Bridge. These proposals are expected to provide significant improvements for people walking, cycling and reduce road danger whilst retaining access into Arthur Street. The rerouting of the bus service will improve route clarity, overall passenger convenience and utilise the journey time benefits from the London Bridge experiment, if it was to continue.
48. The public consultation carried out by TfL has shown that most respondents thought the proposals would provide benefits for people walking, cycling, accessibility and reduce road danger. However, some respondents wanted taxi/motorcycle access and the retention of the bus route. However, it is considered that the benefits of the proposals significantly outweigh the disbenefits and that Members are asked to support the proposals.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Concept design of the permanent road closure of Arthur Street at the King William Street junction
- Appendix 2: Proposed changes to bus route 344
- Appendix 3: Concept design of the junction improvements at Upper Thames Street / Arthur Street / Swan Lane

- Appendix 4: Modelling summary
- Appendix 5: Collision summary
- Appendix 6: Summary of consultation response
- Appendix 7: TfL's Equalities Impact Assessment for the proposed junction improvements
- Appendix 8: TfL's Equalities Impact Assessment the proposed rerouting of the bus route 344

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