

## Programmes and Investment Committee



**Date:** 13 October 2017

**Item:** Oxford Street Transformation Update

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### **This paper will be considered in public**

#### **1 Summary**

- 1.1 This paper provides an overview of the Oxford Street transformation project and an update on progress since the previous Programmes and Investment Committee submission in June 2017.
- 1.2 A paper is included in Part 2 of the agenda which contains exempt supplementary information. The information is exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 in that it contains information relating to the business affairs of TfL. Any discussion of that exempt information must take place after the press and public have been excluded from this meeting

#### **2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 **The Committee is asked to note the paper and related paper on Part 2 of the agenda.**

#### **3 Background**

- 3.1 The transformation of Oxford Street and the surrounding district is a key Mayoral objective, outlined in the draft Mayor's Transport Strategy, and is intended to create an iconic destination in the heart of London. To achieve this aspiration, TfL is working in partnership with Westminster City Council (WCC) to develop proposals to make significant improvements to Oxford Street and the surrounding district. The proposed Oxford Street transformation forms a central part of the Healthy Streets Programme approved by the Committee in March 2017. The Oxford Street project is a key part of the wider transformation of central London, with substantial public and private sector investment underway to maintain central London's national and international competitive position, in line with the priorities in the draft Mayor's Transport Strategy.
- 3.2 Located in the heart of the West End, Oxford Street is one of the world's premier shopping streets. Approximately 3.5 million people visit Oxford Street each week, making a significant contribution to the UK economy. The Bond Street, Oxford Street and Regent Street area alone currently contributes around £7.6 billion annually to the UK economy. Oxford Street is part of a thriving business district (retail across the district makes up some 27 per cent of employment with larger proportions in other sectors), and there are vibrant residential areas in every direction.

3.3 Nonetheless, there are a number of key issues with the existing environment which result in a poor pedestrian experience. These include poor air quality, regularly exceeding air pollution limits, a high frequency of collisions, numbering approximately 60 collisions a year on Oxford Street resulting in personal injury (June 2013 to May 2016), and severe overcrowding during the busiest parts of the day which can act as a deterrent to people with mobility issues using Oxford Street. With the introduction of the Elizabeth line in 2018 anticipated to significantly increase visitor numbers in the area it is vital that these key issues are addressed to improve the quality of the environment in the Oxford Street district and ensure its continued success for all.

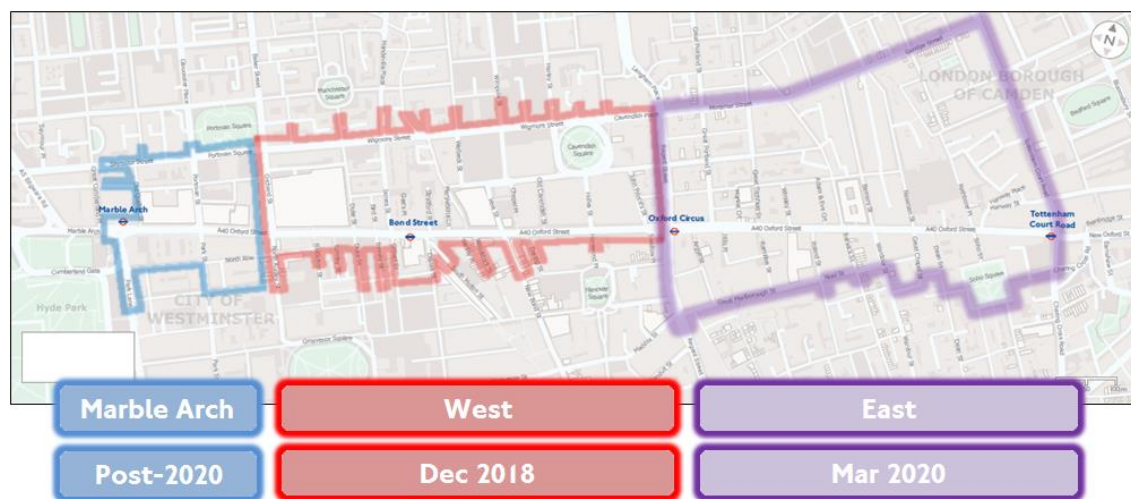
3.4 The scope for the proposed transformation of Oxford Street is for the length of the street from Marble Arch to Tottenham Court Road including improvements to adjacent roads and the wider Oxford Street District. In order to ensure improvements could be delivered prior to the opening of the Elizabeth line in December 2018, the project would be developed and delivered in three phases.

**Phase 1**, June 2018 to December 2018 – Oxford Street West (OSW): Section of Oxford Street between Orchard Street and Oxford Circus, including improvements to side roads and adjacent areas.

**Phase 2**, Early 2019 to early 2020 - Oxford Street East (OSE): Section of Oxford Street between Oxford Circus and Tottenham Court Road, including improvements to side roads and adjacent areas. This also includes the delivery of the wider walking and cycling strategy which covers both OSW and OSE.

**Phase 3**, Marble Arch: Section between Marble Arch and Orchard Street. It should be noted that the delivery of this phase is currently unfunded. We will be seeking feasibility funding within the revision of the current business plan.

**Figure 1: Overview of Project Scope and Delivery Phases.**



3.5 The Oxford Street project is part of a wider plan for the Oxford Street district and the West End as a whole, with significant sums of money being invested by various parties into a number of transformational projects including the Baker Street two way scheme, Bond Street public realm improvements and the Tottenham Court Road/Gower Street two way scheme.

- 3.6 At this stage, TfL has committed to funding only those works associated with changes to the transport network and any immediate measures required to facilitate the long term improvements to the public realm. This would include, for example, improvements in the surrounding districts where changes to bus movements or pedestrian and cycling accessibility would be required as part of the overall project delivery. Beyond TfL's contribution, the funding status of the Oxford Street project is largely dependent upon securing sufficient third party funding and we are working closely with WCC on this.
- 3.7 The project has £5.1m project authority covering both OSW and OSE. This authority formed part of the £439m Programme and Project Authority requested for the Healthy Streets Programme from the committee in March 2017. In August 2016, £0.7m project authority was granted to enable feasibility stage work to begin on the project. In April 2017, a further £4.4m project authority was granted, raising total project authority to £5.1m. Subject to the outcome of public consultation, the next project authority request will be in March 2018 to the Healthy Streets Portfolio Board to request construction funding for OSW and additional project authority for OSE. An Independent Assurance Review is currently ongoing for OSW as the project moves from feasibility into concept design stage. For OSE, the project is earlier in feasibility and anticipated to move into concept design in March 2018.
- 3.8 The governance structure reflects the strength of partnership working, the complexity of issues, and the wealth of interested parties. Oxford Street Transformation is regarded as a priority for the West End Partnership, a body incorporating the three major public authorities across the West End - WCC London Borough of Camden (LBC) and TfL - and a broad range of private sector partners, and includes resident representatives. Within the WEP structure there is an Oxford Street Strategic Board, which includes both the Deputy Leader of WCC, the Deputy Mayor for Transport and the Transport Commissioner, the relevant Cabinet Member at LBC, and the Chair of the New West End Company. Beneath this sits an Oxford Street Project Board, again with representation from the key partners. TfL and the local authorities are responsible for their own statutory obligations, and therefore there is also formal decision making within each authority. The governance structure and process for all key decisions on the final scheme, its public consultation and the programme for implementation remain with the local authorities.

## **4 Consultation**

- 4.1 The first stage of consultation on the proposed transformation of Oxford Street ran from 24 April – 18 June 2017. This initial consultation set out the vision for Oxford Street, the reasons for change and what transformation could mean for all modes and users. The Consultation findings report is due to be released in October 2017
- 4.2 As the first consultation did not set out specific options or impacts it is understandable that the above concerns were raised. The comments received are helping to inform the design development for a second consultation in November, subject to the agreement of Westminster City Council and through the joint governance arrangements, and is shaping the on-going stakeholder

engagement by allowing a focus on these issues which need to be addressed in more detail.

- 4.3 The second public consultation, subject to agreement by WCC, TfL and the joint WEP governance, will launch on 6 November 2017 and will run for six weeks until Sunday 17 December 2017. With time set aside for the analysis and review of all received responses, the plan would be to publish the report of this consultation, with an indication of our decision on the way forward in early March, prior to the 2018 pre-election period for local authority elections.
- 4.4 The second consultation will include detailed proposals for a single preferred highway option for OSW, public realm proposals for OSW and the surrounding district, and an indicative alignment for the new cycling route to the north of Oxford Street (detailed proposals for the cycling proposals will form part of the OSE consultation in 2018). The second consultation will also provide a high level overview of the OSE phase of the project ahead of its detailed consultation in mid 2018.

## 5 Preferred Option for Second Consultation

- 5.1 A number of options have been developed and considered for OSW. These include a variety of sub-options but can be broadly categorised as having two main design approaches:
  - (a) **Option One** looks to maintain end to end vehicle access on OSW, while reducing the numbers of buses, and restricting other access (e.g. taxis and servicing vehicles) to particular times (e.g. 10pm to 10am); and
  - (b) **Option Two** looks to remove end to end access on OSW, with some north / south movements maintained, transfer two bus routes onto an alternative alignment of Wigmore Street and facilitate servicing on adjacent roads to Oxford Street.
- 5.2 The selection of a preferred option for OSW and the surrounding district will reflect a number of areas of work that are still ongoing, but will take into account:
  - (a) the results of the first consultation;
  - (b) an appraisal of the two core options against the range of objectives and indicators selected for the project, including the Healthy Streets checklist;
  - (c) a comparison of the modelled impacts of reassigned traffic; and
  - (d) an initial Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) and assessment of accessibility issues.
- 5.3 Work is ongoing on all elements of the project to feed into the final decision on the single option for consultation which will be made by WCC, TfL and the joint West End Project (WEP) governance in October prior to the second consultation in November 2017.

## **6 Public Realm**

- 6.1 The public realm improvements for OSW would be delivered in two stages, a transition public realm scheme would come first in order to ensure delivery of OSW by December 2018. Then, subject to the outcome of WCC's Tax Incremental Funding (TIF) application, longer-term transformation public realm proposals would be delivered.
- 6.2 The transition public realm scheme would consist of high quality, relatively low cost proposals to coincide with the changes to traffic on OSW. The proposals which are being developed internally by TfL in advance of the November consultation will include a range of interventions and look to achieve a balance between improving the look and feel of the road without cluttering it so much that pedestrian comfort levels worsen. The intention is to retain and incorporate as many of the transition elements as possible into the permanent transformation designs, particularly in the surrounding areas.
- 6.3 TfL and WCC have jointly appointed consultants Burns + Nice to develop proposals for long-term transformation public realm improvements. Subject to funding, these transformational public realm works could start soon after the highway changes and "transition" public realm works are complete.
- 6.4 Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM) will be required as part of both stages of public realm improvements. Paragraph 8.5 provides an update on the design of HVM in the project.

## **7 Buses**

- 7.1 The current restructure of the inner London bus network will facilitate a 40 per cent reduction in bus flows on OSW. This reduction is in progress and will be complete by early 2018, leaving 76 buses per hour in each direction compared with 129 at the start of 2017.
- 7.2 A strategy for removing the remaining routes from OSW has been developed to support the proposed removal of traffic from Oxford Street in design option two. These proposed changes would see the early curtailment of most routes at locations close to OSW and the transfer of up to two bus routes from Oxford Street to Wigmore Street. Any changes to the bus services has important implications for accessibility both to and along Oxford Street, these are being taken into account in the wider accessibility work stream (see paragraph 8.6 for further details).
- 7.3 Both design options being developed for OSW will change bus routes locally and more widely to Oxford Street. These changes will form a key part of the narrative in the second consultation.
- 7.4 Proposals are in an earlier stage of development for OSE, though bus routing and standing arrangements are anticipated to pose unique challenges, with the securing of bus access through Fitzrovia likely to be a key issue.

## **8 Key Workstreams**

- 8.1 The following section provides an update on the key workstreams pivotal to the proposed Oxford Street transformation.

### **Freight and Servicing**

- 8.2 To determine whether there would be a requirement to provide service access as part of design option two, extensive video surveys and face to face interviews are being carried out with all existing businesses on OSW. The intention of the surveys is to identify which businesses currently receive deliveries via a front access on Oxford Street, rear access or loading dock, and which currently receive deliveries via their front access but have potential to utilise an alternative access point.
- 8.3 The surveys to date have found that businesses receiving larger deliveries tend to be serviced via a side street out of working hours with smaller deliveries more commonly made during the day from Oxford Street. However, of those businesses currently receiving deliveries on Oxford Street, the large majority have the potential to be serviced at an alternative location off Oxford Street.
- 8.4 Further study and engagement is ongoing with businesses, waste collection, cash and valuables in-transit operators and the emergency services to understand implications if the preferred option for consultation did not provide for service access for OSW. A wider freight management plan has also been developed working with the private sector, and which will eventually be applied across Oxford Street and the wider district.

### **Hostile Vehicle Mitigation**

- 8.5 TfL is working closely with the Council for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) and the Metropolitan Police Service to build HVM measures into the designs. The project team is investigating options to provide the best possible level of security on Oxford Street, while ensuring positive and attractive design supporting the public realm and enabling pedestrians to move comfortably through the area.

### **Equality and Accessibility**

- 8.6 Consistent with TfL's duties under the Equality Act 2010, equality impacts will be taken into account throughout the decision-making process and an independent consultant has been commissioned to carry out Equalities Impact Assessments at various stages of project development. They are also looking at some particular aspects of accessibility including: impacts on accessibility to and from the West End; impacts on accessibility within the West End and potential mitigation; design standards for an accessible streetscape in OSW and the surrounding area. Findings from the equality and accessibility work stream will be provided to the Committee in the next Oxford Street Transformation update in early 2018 following the completion of the second public consultation.

- 8.7 A specific accessibility site audit undertaken in July 2017 identified a wide range of existing issues affecting the ease of non-vehicular movement within the Oxford Street district. These include:
- (a) the need for high quality resting points and seating;
  - (b) the need for clear way-finding systems;
  - (c) a lack of pedestrian crossings across the wider district;
  - (d) inconsistency of type and quality of crossings;
  - (e) insufficient crossing times for people with mobility impairments;
  - (f) inconsistency of blister paving;
  - (g) pedestrian crowding levels, particularly at crossing points; and
  - (h) damaged infrastructure and uneven paving.
- 8.8 The proposed improvements to OSW would look to address all of these issues and deliver significant improvements to many aspects of general accessibility in the local area.
- 8.9 The independent consultants are also investigating the feasibility and applicability of a supplementary mobility service to minimise any negative impacts of removing traffic from OSW associated with design option two.

### **Air Quality and Noise**

- 8.10 Independent consultants have been commissioned to undertake air and noise modelling and extensive monitoring. To ensure that all stakeholders can make informed decisions, findings from the air and noise modelling will be included in the November consultation. TfL will also undertake extensive air and noise monitoring throughout the districts to provide a robust dataset. Monitoring equipment has already been installed on OSW and the surrounding areas to collect pre-scheme data and will also be used to monitor air quality and noise levels post-scheme. Findings from the air and noise modelling and monitoring will be provided to the committee in the next Oxford Street Transformation update in early 2018 following the completion of the second public consultation.

## **9 Oxford Street East**

- 9.1 OSE includes the section of Oxford Street between Oxford Circus and Tottenham Court Road and improvements to side roads and adjacent areas. Also included in the consultation and delivery of this part of the project is the wider walking and cycling strategy which covers both OSW and OSE.
- 9.2 The OSE proposals need to be closely aligned with the London Borough of Camden and their Tottenham Court Road/Gower Street two-way scheme in particular as well as the Crown Estate's aspirations to deliver significant public realm improvements for Regent Street.

- 9.3 As the delivery of OSE is proposed to take place in 2019 following the completion of OSW, the current strategy is to not implement a transition public realm scheme but instead to deliver the transformation urban realm proposals from the outset. This approach would minimise disruption and ensure efficiency in delivery, but is dependent on the success of WCC's TIF application.
- 9.4 The project team are currently developing design options in two broad themes;
- (a) partial traffic removal: pedestrian zone from Oxford Circus to the junction of Wells Street. East of Wells Street to Tottenham Court Road the street would accommodate limited vehicular traffic; and
  - (b) full traffic removal: Pedestrian zone from Oxford Circus to Tottenham Court Road.
- 9.5 The character of OSE and its surrounding area is different to the section to the west with the existing access to and from the area already quite limited. It is important to note that there are some side streets where access can only be facilitated via OSE.

## **10 Funding**

- 10.1 The TfL 2016 business plan allocated funding to OSW and OSE for works associated with changes to the transport network and transition improvements to the public realm on OSW.
- 10.2 The 2016 business plan contribution does not allow for:
- (a) longer term transformation public realm works;
  - (b) transitional public realm improvements to OSE;
  - (c) the delivery of the district wide cycling and walking strategy;
  - (d) Hostile Vehicle Mitigation; and
  - (e) delivery of any supporting mobility strategies or district management frameworks.
- 10.3 Funding for these elements is expected to be secured via a TIF mechanism which WCC is currently leading on with strong support from TfL. A bid through the Department of Communities and Local Government to Treasury will be submitted in September 2017 - requesting either special grant funding or business rate retention - to contribute to the Oxford Street proposals.
- 10.4 If the TIF application is partially or wholly unsuccessful then (assuming that a decision is taken to proceed with the proposals), TfL will review the scope of OSW and OSE to identify savings to deliver the essential supporting components.
- 10.5 Consideration is also being given to a funding strategy if the TIF application is partially or wholly unsuccessful. There are strong precedents for securing third party funding for schemes of this nature, including the £15m Baker Street project which is one-third private sector funded, and the Bond Street Project, which is 75 per cent funded by private sector voluntary contributions. Working with WCC, further funding will be sought from third parties, such as local retailers and land owners.



10.6 Alongside significant capital costs there are a number of operational costs associated with the proposals for Oxford Street. The extent of these costs and funding mechanism are as yet unknown and will be explored further as the project matures, but is likely to include:

- (a) **Management Plan** – WCC is the highway authority for Oxford Street, WCC agreement is required to deliver any improvement works. It is clear that a revised public realm, with the additional footfall expected from the opening of the Elizabeth Line, will require a different management regime. WCC holds these operational responsibilities and is developing a management plan, and negotiating with the private sector about ongoing contributions. No TfL funding has been on offer for these costs;
- (b) **Accessibility Service** – Neither TfL nor WCC are currently equipped to deliver and operate a mobility service for Oxford Street. As such, both financial and management resources may need to be sought from the wider West End community to implement any proposals if design option two is selected preferred design option and a mobility service is required; and
- (c) **Loss of Advertising Revenue** – The removal of buses from Oxford Street will significantly impact on the revenue from bus shelter advertising. Oxford Street is a flagship location for this form of advertising and its removal will lead to a substantial loss of annual revenue to TfL unless alternative forms of advertising can be agreed and incorporated in the project's design.

## 11 Delivery Timescales

11.1 Delivery timescales for the implementation of OSW remain challenging. The project does though remain on track to make the required changes to OSW by December 2018.

11.2 Consultation for OSE is currently planned to be undertaken in June 2018 following the local elections, with construction works proposed to commence in early 2019. The timescales are challenging, however, considering the multiple workstreams that need to feed into the final design and any changes in cabinet or ward members following the local elections. The project team is looking to secure stakeholder support for the scheme and consultation in March 2018 before the pre-election period.

*Figure 3: Indicative Oxford Street West Delivery Milestones*

<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Date</b>
Results of Consultation 1 Published	October 2017
Feasibility Complete	October 2017
Consultation 2	November 2017
Concept Design Complete	February 2018
Results of Consultation 2 Published	March 2018
Detailed Design Complete	May 2018
Start on Site	May/June 2018
Completion	December 2018
Opening of the Elizabeth line	December 2018

*Figure 4: Indicative Oxford Street East Delivery Milestones*

<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Date</b>
Decision on a single preferred option for development for consultation	January 2018
Feasibility Complete	March 2018
Consultation	June 2018
Concept Design Complete	August 2018
Results of Consultation Published	October 2018
Detailed Design Complete	December 2018
Start on Site	Early 2019
Completion	Early 2020

**List of appendices to this report:**

None

**List of Background Papers to this report:**

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