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| <b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>  | <b>WARDS:</b> Bloomsbury and King's Cross |
| <b>REPORT TITLE</b><br>Torrington Place / Tavistock Place route – Trial Traffic Scheme<br>(SC/2017/04)   |   |
| <b>REPORT OF</b><br>Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning  |   |
| <b>FOR SUBMISSION TO</b><br>Cabinet  | <b>DATE</b><br>22 February 2017           |
| <b>SUMMARY OF REPORT</b><br><br><p>In November 2015, the Council implemented an experimental traffic order (ETO) from Torrington Place to Tavistock Place introducing a trial whereby westbound motor traffic was removed and space was provided for cyclists to travel westbound on the south side of the corridor to improve the corridor for walking and cycling. This report summarises the results of the trial and the responses to the related public consultation (and comments received outside both before and after the formal process), held between 12 September and 21 October 2016, which sought views on whether the trial and street layout should be made permanent. The report seeks a decision from the Cabinet as to whether the experimental traffic order should be progressed with a view to it being made permanent, or allowed to lapse. If Cabinet decides to take steps with a view to the Order being made permanent, Cabinet is asked to note the prospect for implementation of further improvements and mitigation measures along the corridor if it is decided to make the Order permanent. In summary only therefore the steps proposed in the report are that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Council maintains the ETO therefore maintaining the current road layout as is and takes steps to progress towards making it permanent, but does not take a final decision as to whether to make it permanent, until it receives the further report at 3.</li> <li>2. A public inquiry is held to further examine the merits of the scheme.</li> <li>3. That once the inquiry has been held Cabinet is asked to look again at the scheme considering the results of the Inquiry and then to decide whether to maintain or remove it and, if they do maintain it, whether to make any changes/improvements to it.</li> </ol> <p>At all of the above stages we will be informed by both the results of the consultation and our equality duties.</p> <p>The proposals meet the objectives of the Camden Plan, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>creating conditions for and harnessing the benefits of economic growth</b>, by supporting growth in cyclists and pedestrians resulting from both local development and institutional expansion, and growth in the wider Borough; and</li> <li>• <b>investing in our communities to ensure sustainable neighbourhoods</b>, by improving the corridor for existing cyclists and pedestrians and encouraging</li> </ul> |   |

new cyclists and pedestrians.

### **Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information**

The following document(s) has been used in the preparation of this report:

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### **WHAT DECISIONS ARE BEING ASKED FOR?**

The Cabinet is asked to:

1. Note the assessment of the effects of the experimental trial layout as set out in Appendix C;
2. Consider the results of the formal consultation set out in section 8, comments received pre and post the formal consultation set out at 8.8 to 8.13 and the petition submitted by Bloomsbury Residents' Action Group mentioned at paragraph 8.10;
3. After having considered 1 and 2 above and the Legal comments of the Borough Solicitor set out in Appendix A and having, both when considering 1 and 2 above and at all stages throughout, complied with the Council's duties referred to in section 4 of this report, including reading and considering the Equality Impact Assessment at Appendix E and having due regard to the needs set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010:
  - (i) Approve the progressing of a permanent traffic order that has the sole effect of reproducing and continuing in force indefinitely (subject to a further decision by Cabinet as per (iv) below) the provisions of the experimental traffic order, subject to relevant statutory processes being followed as summarised in paragraph 3.7;
  - (ii) approve the holding and participation by the Council in a public inquiry conducted by an independent inspector who will report to the Council as set out in paragraphs 3.8 and 3.9;
  - (iii) agree to delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration and Planning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning, to take any necessary steps to progress (i) and (ii) above;
  - (iv) note that a further report will be brought back to Cabinet to include the Inspectors Report with a view to making a final decision on whether or not to make the Experimental Traffic Order permanent and deciding whether or not any potential improvements described as potentially a possibility should

be progressed further.

Signed: *David T. Joyce*

David Joyce  
Director, Regeneration and Planning

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> February 2017

## 1. WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT?

- 1.1 The London Borough of Camden is the traffic and highway authority for all roads in the borough which are not part of the Transport for London Road Network. In November 2015 the Council made an experimental traffic order (“ETO”) relating to the Torrington Place / Byng Place / Gordon Square / Tavistock Square / Tavistock Place corridor between the junctions with Tottenham Court Road and Judd Street (“the corridor”). It will expire in May 2017 unless it is extended by direction of the Secretary of State (SoS).
- 1.2 The ETO was introduced, [following approval by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning in July 2015](http://democracy.camden.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=1521) (<http://democracy.camden.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=1521>), to address issues related to high volumes of motor traffic passing along the corridor alongside large numbers of pedestrians and cyclists. This included looking at providing a safer and more attractive environment for people travelling by foot and bicycle, such as providing more space for cycling.
- 1.3 This report sets out an analysis of the trial scheme including the results of a public consultation. The consultation sought the views of residents, users of the corridor, local groups, institutions and statutory groups to inform a decision on whether or not the Council wishes to progress towards making the changes permanent (with improvements) or not. Further details of the consultation and responses are provided in section 8 of this report and Appendix C, which also includes details of post consultation engagement as set out in paragraphs 8.8 to 8.13. Information is also provided in Appendix B on comments received in the period between the trial being implemented and the public consultation
- 1.4 This report seeks a decision from the Cabinet as to whether the ETO should be progressed with a view to it being made permanent, or allowed to lapse (either with or without a request to bring forward some other and different Order).
- 1.5 If the decision is to allow the ETO to lapse, then the alterations to the street would need to be reversed.
- 1.6 If the decision is that the Council wishes to take steps with a view to the Order being made permanent, Cabinet is asked to note the prospect for implementation of further improvements and mitigation measures along the corridor. This would be following the receipt of the Inspector’s report after a proposed public inquiry and subject to a further decision by Cabinet.

## 2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY?

- 2.1 The corridor forms part of an important east / west cycle link connecting Marylebone, Fitzrovia, Bloomsbury, Kings Cross and Angel. The pre-trial street layout was a two-way protected cycle lane on the northern side of the street, with narrow pavements and a traffic lane in each direction. There is significant pedestrian and cycle demand along the corridor which is expected to increase in the future as a result of population and employment growth and development in the area.
- 2.2 As a result of the high demand the pre-trial layout suffered from a number of issues. During peak times there were frequently queues of cyclists extending between junctions. The narrow cycle lanes made it difficult to safely overtake and as a result there were instances of collisions between cyclists. The two-way cycle track was too narrow to cope with the volume of cyclists using the route. Thus it was likely that the existing width of the cycle track was a constraint on encouraging more people from cycling. Further the pre-trial road layout did not provide a safe and attractive environment for the large number of people walking in the area and had a poor casualty record, as set out in the July 2015 decision report. Finally, as part of the approval for the [West End Project](#) (<http://democracy.camden.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=122&MId=5156>) the Council decided to bring forward proposals for a trial to reduce the anticipated resulting impact of through traffic on local residents.
- 2.3 To address these issues and to progress one of the mitigation measures identified as part of the approvals given in January 2015 for the West End Project, the experimental traffic scheme was implemented in November 2015, removing motor traffic in the westbound direction along the corridor and making provision for a cycle lane in each direction on either side of the street. As the ETO is reaching the end of its duration a decision is needed as to whether steps should be taken towards making the ETO permanent. The alternative to this would be to allow the Order to lapse and have the street returned to its pre-trial layout with or without further proposals for an alternative future layout.
- 2.4 In the July 2015 report it was noted that as part of a permanent scheme the Council would look to make improvements to the corridor and these potential improvements were described in the public consultation material. If the Order were ultimately to be made permanent, the scope to progress some or all of these would then remain. The results of the consultation in relation to these potential improvements are presented so that Cabinet can gauge whether or not preserving the ability to consider formally bringing them forward at or after a final decision on the Order itself is an advantage or not. Individually and collectively there will be resource implications from a decision to progress with any

one or more of these improvements. Officers recommend that none are progressed (if at all) until after Cabinet has made its final decision on the proposed Order itself and considered the results of the Inquiry.

### 3. OPTIONS

3.1 The following options are available to the Council:

**Option 1** - Allow the experimental traffic order to lapse and return the street to its pre-trial layout;

**Option 2** – Progress towards making the experimental traffic order permanent;

**Option 3** – Progress an alternative scheme.

3.2 The ETO can only last for a maximum of 18 months and expires in May 2017. An ETO can only be extended by the SoS for a further 6 months at a time. This can only be done where the SoS is satisfied (i) that the extended order which the Council proposes to make has the sole effect of reproducing and continuing in force indefinitely the provisions of the existing ETO and (ii) that in consequence of causing a public inquiry to be held into the Order proposed to be made, the authority would be unable to make it so that it would come into operation before the ETO ceased to be in force. So, in relation to Option 2, the statutory processes mean that it is not at this stage open to the Council to include amendments to the ETO if it progresses towards making it permanent. An ETO can be made permanent without further notice and consultation if specific procedural steps have been followed throughout, but it seems that copy documents, which were stated to be on deposit once the ETO had been made, could not be inspected by the public at the due place and time at the start of the relevant period, so the safer course is to proceed with re-advertising and making provision for objections to be made in what would be the normal way if the shortened process is not followed..

3.3 Option 1 is not being recommended as it is considered that returning the street to its pre-trial layout is not a viable option because it would not address the issues that have been identified, as set out in section 2 and the July 2015 decision report. In order to address these issues, additional space needs to be provided for walking and cycling which, due to the width of the road, is not possible without significantly reducing space for motor traffic. Further, when asked “would you like the street to return to its pre-trial layout (two motor traffic lanes and one two-way cycle track)?” 79% responded no.

3.4 Option 3 is not recommended for the reasons set out in section 8 of the report and Appendix D.

3.5 It is recommended that Option 2 is progressed for the reasons set out in section 4 of this report and appendices C, D and E.

- 3.6 It is also recommended that as part of Option 2 Cabinet agrees that the Council voluntarily hold (and fully participate in) a public inquiry.
- 3.7 If Option 2 is agreed, certain statutory processes will need to be followed such as advertising the proposal to make the ETO permanent and allowing a period for objections. If objections are made (and not withdrawn), a public inquiry will need to be held. Relevant approvals will also have to be secured from TfL.
- 3.8 Given the widespread interest in the ETO and its effects, and the divergent views received about the scheme, officers recommend that the Council should engage the public inquiry process in any event. It is known (for example) that some organisations appear to be strongly opposed to the trial and could be expected to make formal objections, but whilst that would trigger an inquiry, it would start the processes necessary to convene the inquiry, at a date later than if the Council decided voluntarily that it should be held. The holding of a public inquiry voluntarily, would enable consideration of objections by an independent Inspector and would voluntarily opening up the ETO to public scrutiny. A decision to hold a public inquiry voluntarily would enable the Council to apply to the SoS for an extension of the current ETO with a view to keeping the current layout in situ. This is recommended in light of officers' view that returning to the pre-trial layout undesirable.
- 3.9 A public inquiry would ordinarily be limited in scope to considering formal objections received, but the scope of a voluntary inquiry could allow the Inspector to review the merits of the trial scheme as a whole. If a public inquiry is held, the Council will need to take account of the Inspector's report. Therefore, if this option is approved, officers propose to submit a further report to Cabinet for consideration of next steps in light of the Inspector's recommendations.
- 3.10 The public consultation material referred to various potential improvements (as well as seeking views generally on the merits of the scheme as a whole). Some of these would need further processes before implementation and could not be taken forward under the proposed permanent Order mirroring the terms of the current ETO. Notwithstanding this, in this Report and its Appendices officers discuss whether bringing forward any or all of the improvements would be an advantage flowing from making the ETO permanent.

#### **4. WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS?**

- 4.1 The reasons for the recommended decisions are outlined below.

##### *Policy Considerations*

- 4.2 The recommended option would further the aims and objectives of the Council's approved plans and strategies and also sub-regional plans and policies.
- 4.3 [Camden's Transport Strategy](http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/transport-and-streets/transport-strategies/camdens-transport-strategy-2011/) (CTS) (<http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/transport-and-streets/transport-strategies/camdens-transport-strategy-2011/>) seeks to encourage sustainable and active modes of transport and reduce impacts of motor traffic on the environment. Policy 1.3 of the CTS adopts a road user hierarchy. This is used as a tool in developing projects and identifies pedestrians and cyclists as the priority road users.
- 4.4 These policies are consistent with the Mayoral policies, "*A City for all Londoners*", (October 2016), which sets out the Mayor's intention to encourage cycling and walking on 'Healthy Streets'. Healthy streets aim to "reduce traffic, pollution and noise, create more attractive, accessible and people-friendly streets where everybody can enjoy spending time and being physically active, and ultimately improve people's health". Healthy Streets also emphasise making cycling easier and safer in London. Further the Mayor states his intention to complete a cycling grid and the Tavistock Place / Torrington Place corridor is a key east-west corridor in the proposed Central London Cycling Grid.
- 4.5 Concerns about the quality of London's air and its impact on public health are well documented. Appendix F refers to studies, findings and recommendations discussing the health and air quality benefits associated with high quality infrastructure. These studies etc. support officers' recommendation to retain the trial layout and progress potential improvements, should they be taken forward in the future.

#### *Consultation and technical information*

- 4.6 A substantial public consultation exercise was undertaken in relation to the scheme. This received over 15,000 responses, the highest number of responses for any Council-led public consultation.
- 4.7 The results show that of the verifiable responses 79% supported retaining the current street layout, with improvements, whilst 21% did not support the proposals, and 1% expressed no opinion. In response to the question whether people would want the street returned to its pre-trial layout, 79% responded no.
- 4.8 A total of 2,208 respondents were identified as residents (people living within the borough). Of these 73%, supported keeping the trial street layout. Responses have been broken down and analysed by postcode area, which shows that in postcodes closest to the corridor, (WC1H, WC1X, WC1E, WC1N and WC1B), there is majority support for keeping the trial street layout. WC1B is the exception. Full details of



the consultation responses and officers' analysis are set out in Appendix C, including what is considered to be a verifiable response, and Members' attention is drawn to this.

- 4.9 Over 7,500 respondents provided comments on aspects of the proposed scheme. Issues arising out of the consultation include safety concerns relating to two key signal junctions on the corridor, the Judd Street / Tavistock Place junction and Bedford Way / Tavistock Place junction. Concerns have also been raised regarding conflict between pedestrians and cyclists using the shared space area at Byng Place. In response officers are investigating measures to address these and will implement these as soon as they are considered feasible and practicable. At the traffic signals this may mean allowing cyclists to go through the junctions at a different time to motor traffic. At Byng Place it could mean providing additional delineation between cyclists and pedestrians. These modifications do not require changes to the ETO and can therefore be progressed, under delegated powers, ahead of a decision on the proposed permanent Order. Officers are also aware of concerns relating to the potential confusion relating to signage for the southern cycle lane and are reviewing potential options for modifications to it. Further explanation is provided in Appendix C.
- 4.10 To assess the effects of the experimental traffic scheme a range of data has been collected, both before and after introduction of the trial. Data has been collected on the number of people walking and cycling, on traffic levels and air quality. The then available data was summarised in the longer consultation leaflet. This information is attached to this report as part of Appendix C.

#### *Statutory duties / Legislation*

- 4.11 The Council has a duty under section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 ("RTRA 1984"), so far as practicable, to exercise its functions under that Act to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway. In performing this duty the Council must have regard to:
- (i) the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises;
  - (ii) the effect on the amenities of any locality affected (including the importance of regulating and restricting the use of roads by heavy commercial vehicles), so as to preserve or improve the amenities of the areas through which the roads run;
  - (iii) the National Air Quality Strategy;
  - (iv) the importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and of securing the safety and convenience of persons using or desiring to use such vehicles; and
  - (v) any other matters appearing to the authority to be relevant.

- 4.12 Under section 39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, the Council is required to prepare and carry out a programme of measures designed to promote road safety, to carry out studies into accidents arising out of the use of vehicles, to take such measures as appear to the Council to be appropriate to prevent such accidents, including giving training and advice and other measures taken in the exercise of its powers for controlling, protecting or assisting the movement of traffic on roads.
- 4.13 A traffic regulation order may be made where it appears to the authority to be expedient to make it for one or more of the purposes set out in the RTRA 1984: please see the summary of those provisions below and the text of them set out in Appendix A. Officers consider that, having regard to section 122 of the RTRA 1984, it would be expedient to progress the recommended Order for the following purposes set out or referred to in section 1 of that Act:
- for avoiding or preventing danger to persons or other traffic using the road;
  - for facilitating the passage on the road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians);
  - for preventing vehicular traffic using the corridor, or using it in a manner, which is unsuitable having regard to the existing character of the road;
  - for preserving the character of the road where it is specially suitable for use by persons on foot;
  - for preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs; and
  - for improving air quality in the borough by, among other measures, implementing the Council's Clean Air Action Plan.
- 4.14 The Council also has a responsibility under the Environment Act 1995 to take steps to reduce air pollution. As in much of central London, the EU Objectives for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) are exceeded within Camden. Although currently meeting EU Objective levels for particulate matters (PM), Camden is working to reduce PM levels as there is no safe level for PM.
- 4.15 As a result of failing to meet these Objectives within Camden, the whole of the Borough has been designated an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) since 2000. This requires the Council to take action to reduce air pollution levels, and to monitor pollution levels across the Borough. As a result, the Council has a regularly updated Clean Air Action Plan which currently has over 60 actions aimed at reducing pollution levels. The Council also has a monitoring network capturing AQ data from across the borough.

### *Equalities*

- 4.16 Members when taking decisions, must when carrying out the Council's functions comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This means that Members must pay due regard

to the matters set out in section 149. This is a personal duty and is set out and explained in the Borough Solicitor's comments in Appendix A, which Members must consider. In order to assist Members to pay due regard to these matters, an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been prepared and is attached as Appendix E. Notwithstanding the summary in the following paragraphs, all Members must carefully consider this assessment. In addition in particular reference to disability the Council has a duty under section 29 of the Equality Act (set out in the EIA) not to do anything that constitutes discrimination (or victimisation or harassment) in the exercise of a public function, and a duty to make reasonable adjustments. The EIA is also important material in this regard. Cabinet Members should also bear in mind relevant parts of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (these are referred to in more detail in the EIA).

- 4.17 The EIA identified particular negative impacts on certain protected groups including in particular the disabled and the need to make changes to ensure the proposal would not discriminate and / or that all appropriate opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations would be taken. The strategy for measures to mitigate negative impacts includes incorporating some suggestions made as part of the public consultation, such as investigating ways to improve delineation between cyclists and pedestrians on Byng Place and improve visibility for cyclists and pedestrians on zebra crossings along the corridor. Monitoring will also be undertaken including traffic flows and air quality together with the impacts of High Speed rail link 2 (HS2) construction traffic to inform possible and appropriate mitigation measures to address displaced traffic. The operation of the loading bay on Torrington Place will be monitored in terms of level of use and the interaction between loading vehicles and cyclists, to assist in making a decision on whether or not it should be enlarged. Ongoing engagement with groups representing people with protected characteristics would be undertaken including with RNIB and Guide Dogs on all scheme proposals in the area as well as at the detailed design stage for Torrington Place / Tavistock Place route – Trial Traffic Scheme, should further improvements be taken forward.

#### *Summary of reasons for recommendation*

- 4.18 For all the reasons given above, it is considered that in reaching the recommendation officers have complied with all of the Council's duties. Further that, on balance, the Order which is recommended for progression towards approval represents the best overall option taking into account the need to address previous issues and deliver against the project objectives given the site constraints.
- 4.19 Progressing the Order towards approval is in line with the CTS as this will reallocate space in favour of the active, sustainable modes of walking and cycling thereby improving the quality of the environment

for existing users whilst encouraging people to take up these modes. Encouraging such changes will not only deliver environmental and personal health benefits it will also mean less traffic on the road, which will have positive impacts for those journeys that have to be made by motor vehicle (for example, emergency vehicles, servicing vehicles and those journeys for which other modes are not possible), resulting in more efficient use of the limited carriageway space. Continuing the current trial traffic arrangements, compared to the alternatives suggested, will also serve to reduce through traffic on the corridor: modelling predicts that most traffic will reassign to the TLRN and SRN, rather than local roads. This will keep traffic to the most appropriate routes and will improve the pedestrian environment. Reasonable access to premises is maintained under the trial layout, although it is recognised that, with the westbound traffic movement removed, some journeys may take longer, particularly during peak hours.

## **5. WHAT ARE THE KEY IMPACTS / RISKS? HOW WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED?**

- 5.1 As outlined in paragraph 3.2 the Council would need to seek permission from the SoS to extend the duration of the existing ETO whilst the public inquiry process is carried out. There is a risk that the SoS refuses permission to extend the ETO (or fails to respond in time). In either case, the Council will be obliged to remove the works associated with the ETO and either go through the necessary legal processes to implement a further scheme on a permanent basis, or once the road has been put back to its pre ETO layout allow that to continue indefinitely.
- 5.2 Should the road need to return to its pre-trial layout the issues previously identified would not be addressed and issues relating to a lack of capacity and safety would remain - at least until the Council pursued some other scheme. In addition, the trial, which was identified as a measure to address some of the predicted traffic impacts of the West End Project (WEP), would not be implemented. Therefore the predicted increase in traffic on Torrington Place, between Gower Street and Tottenham Court Road, resulting from the implementation of the WEP would not be mitigated and residents at this location would be likely to experience an increase in traffic.

## **6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN AND WHEN FOLLOWING THE DECISION AND HOW WILL THIS BE MONITORED?**

Should the recommendations be approved by Cabinet, certain statutory processes will need to be followed, such as advertising the proposal and allowing a period for objections; relevant approvals will need to be secured from TfL. Officers will also proceed to make arrangements for the proposed voluntary public inquiry.

- 6.1 Officers are aware of the level of interest in this scheme and the concerns expressed by residents and others in relation to its impact. As with all schemes there will be continued monitoring of the impacts and the monitoring completed to date will be ongoing. Officers will seek to progress any improvements, modifications or mitigations identified, subject to the need for Council approvals, funding and statutory processes.
- 6.2 Members will be aware consultation has been undertaken on other schemes in the area, including proposed schemes for the junction of Judd Street/ Euston Rd/ Midland Road and for Brunswick Square. It is likely that recommendations for these schemes will be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport Planning at a later date.

## 7. LINKS TO THE CAMDEN PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 7.1 The proposals would meet the objectives of the Camden Plan, including:
- **creating conditions for and harnessing the benefits of economic growth**, by supporting growth in cyclists and pedestrians resulting from both local development and institutional expansion, and growth in the wider Borough; and
  - **investing in our communities to ensure sustainable neighbourhoods**, by improving the corridor for existing cyclists and pedestrians and encouraging new cyclists and pedestrians.

## 8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 A formal public consultation was held from 12 September to 21 October 2016. The council used a comprehensive range of methods to make sure that the consultation was widely publicised and that as many local people as possible were informed of, and able to take part in, the consultation. Leaflets were delivered to residents and businesses in the consultation area, as set out in Appendix C, a total of 12,240 addresses. As well as delivering letters, a large number of posters were displayed at bus stops and on the streets, information was provided at local libraries, and drop-in sessions were held at the Town Hall on 22 September and 12 October 2016. Furthermore, Councillors and officers attended public meetings, adverts were placed in the local press, articles were published in the Camden magazine, and awareness was raised through the Council's Facebook and Twitter services.
- 8.2 During the consultation officers were made aware that some residents had not received the consultation material. When this became known officers responded by delivering the consultation material by hand the same day or the next day.
- 8.3 Officers are also aware of campaigns undertaken by other organisations (both for and against the proposals), particularly the

Licenced Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA) and Imperial Hotels Ltd. (who have expressed opposition). These campaigns also leafleted local homes and road users with their own materials to encourage people to respond. BRAG also held a community planning day. Camden Cyclists (formerly Camden Cycling Campaign) undertook activities to raise awareness of the Council's consultation. Details of some of the other campaigns are provided in Appendix G.

- 8.4 A total of 15,096 verifiable responses were received from residents, local businesses and employees and others who use the route. Overall, 79% of respondents were in favour of retaining the current layout (with the potential improvements), 21% were against, and 1% had no opinion. In response to the question whether people would want the street returned to its pre-trial layout, 79% responded no. Further details regarding the consultation responses can be found in Appendix C.
- 8.5 Statutory consultees were consulted in relation to both the ETO and also the potential permanent scheme. Responses have been received from a number of organisations, such as University College London, London Cycling Campaign, Wheels for Wellbeing and RNIB. The emergency services have been contacted several times since the implementation of the trial. There was ongoing liaison with the Metropolitan Police Traffic Management Unit in advance, during and after the trial being implemented. They welcomed the proposals, but raised some concerns which officers worked with them to address. A response was received from the Camden Ambulance Station based at Cressy Road (NW3), who objected to the trial being made permanent. They had concerns about the impact on their response times. Further details are provided in appendices B and C.

#### *Consideration of alternative options*

- 8.6 A number of consultees expressed a preference for one or more different overall schemes and these have been evaluated by officers. Detail on the results of the evaluation can be found in Appendix D. In summary, the alternative put forward to have two-way traffic with with-flow cycle lanes does not meet desirable minimum standards for footway, cycle lane or carriageway widths nor would it meet the scheme objectives. The suggested alternative to make a short section two-way (Bedford Way to Byng Place) does provide sufficient road width to accommodate the cycle lanes and two-way traffic, however it does not leave any room to provide improvements for pedestrians achieved by widening the footway and the section by Tavistock Square currently has narrow footways and would greatly benefit from footway widening. A suggestion has also been made that the one-way vehicular traffic flow should be reversed so that it runs in a westbound direction. A modelling exercise was undertaken to assist in assessing the impact of the current trial layout and reversing the flow. This showed a greater level of reassignment to more local roads. For these

reasons, officers recommend that the alternatives suggested should not be progressed further.

- 8.7 Officers recognise that the alternative options put forward are not necessarily wholly counter to the Council's policies and objectives. However, officers it is consider that the recommended option meets them more fully and provides the best overall benefit in all the circumstances.

*Pre- consultation comments*

- 8.8 In addition to responses during the public consultation, the Council also received approximately 1,500 comments in the period between the trial being implemented (November 2015), and the formal public consultation being launched in September 2016. These are summarised in Appendix B.

*Post consultation engagement*

- 8.9 Following the end of the formal consultation period officers and Councillors continued to engage with interested parties and held a number of meetings to discuss the scheme and their response to the consultation. Some of this post-consultation engagement was done through regular meetings that officers have with organisations, such as with representatives of the taxi industry, however others were dedicated meetings.
- 8.10 On 20 December 2016, Bloomsbury Residents' Action Group (BRAG) presented a petition to the Council. The petition has 1,083 signatures and calls for the Torrington Place / Tavistock Place trial traffic scheme to be abandoned on the basis, as was said, that the trial has a negative impact on the day to day lives of residents who live close to the corridor. Details of the petition are provided in Appendix H.
- 8.11 Members should note that the BRAG petition is not a response to the Council's public consultation. However, the petition is mentioned in this Report as it relates to the same issue. Members should note that BRAG did submit a response to the public consultation and that this has been taken account of in the analysis of responses to the public consultation.
- 8.12 The Council went to considerable effort to ensure that the consultation was widely known about and to encourage as many responses as possible. Whilst people who live within the Borough have been categorised as 'residents' in officers' analysis of the consultation responses, this overall category of consultation respondents has been broken down by postcode area. The breakdown shows that 1,009 respondents were residents in the WC1 postcode area. Of these, 56% (564 respondents) were supportive of the current trial layout.

8.13 Members should be mindful of the difference between a public consultation and a petition. Through a public consultation the Council invites interested and affected members of the public and stakeholders to express their views on a particular matter – whatever these views may be. By contrast, a petition is offered to members of the public for signature, and subsequently submitted to the Council, by an individual or organisation unconnected with the Council, as a means to endorse a particular view. Whilst some petitioners may have previously seen the Council's consultation material on the same topic, information presented in association with an invitation to sign a petition could be less complete.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (comments from the Borough Solicitor)**

9.1 Detailed comments of the Borough Solicitor are attached in Appendix A which all Members should carefully consider before coming to a decision on the recommendations.

## **10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (comments from the Director of Finance and others as appropriate such as AD (HR) )**

10.1 Funding for the prospective improvements, should the Order be made permanent and the potential improvements progressed, would be via the TfL funding for the Central London Cycle Grid. Funding for the Central London Grid has been confirmed within the current TfL Business Plan and £1m has been provisionally allocated for this scheme. Should the final costs exceed £1m further funding would need to be discussed and negotiated with TfL.

10.2 As mentioned above, officers recommend that the Council voluntarily holds a public inquiry. This represents a cost to the Council (which could well be largely unavoidable as the result of an inquiry being triggered in any event by formal objections being made). The costs will need to be met within the Directorate's existing resources and managed accordingly. The overall costs cannot be predicted with any certainty and will vary largely according to how long the inquiry lasts and the extent and nature of the Council's engagement of external professional expertise (such as expert witnesses and legal representation). Early indications are that the costs of an Inspector may also fall on the Council and, if so, could well be approximately £1k a day (and the possibility that they would decide that a specialist assistant is required at additional cost cannot be ruled out). The efficient running of the inquiry would assist in managing costs and ultimately the overall duration of the inquiry. This would be facilitated by engaging an experienced team of external professionals, but there would be additional costs there. If (on a pessimistic assumption) the inquiry lasts for say 6 months, it has been suggested that it could readily cost over £100k. However there are so many variables that even this generalised figure can only be a very broad indication.



- 10.3 There will be resource implications in terms of officer time associated with the public inquiry, the extent of this will be determined by how the process is managed.

**REPORT ENDS**

## **11. APPENDICES**

- Appendix A – Legal Implications (comments from the Borough Solicitor)
- Appendix B - Pre-consultation stakeholder feedback
- Appendix C - Consultation responses: results and discussion
- Appendix D Highway layout and traffic assessment of Alternative Scheme Proposals.
- Appendix E Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)
- Appendix F Public Health, Physical Activity and Air Quality supporting information
- Appendix Gi Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA) campaign
- Appendix Gii Camden Cyclist Campaign
- Appendix H Details of the BRAG petition