
Secretariat memorandum

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Gyratory systems update

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To update members on progress on the reversion of London's gyratory systems to two-way operation.

2 Background

- 2.1 The removal of gyratory systems in London has been a priority for London TravelWatch since 2012. Our previous 'Users Transport Priorities' document says:

'Gyratory systems and some one-way streets are problematic for all transport users and the Mayor must speed up work to remove them.'

- 2.2 London TravelWatch supports the removal of gyratory systems because it enables shorter and more direct bus routes. This means passengers are more likely to be able to get to their travel objective, understand routes better and understand where they may board and alight. It enables more direct cycle journeys to the places cyclists want to get to. Two-way operation is safer for pedestrians because motor vehicles travel more slowly and are not travelling in an unexpected direction. The sense of severance by traffic is said by some to be less.

3 Present proposals

- 3.1 Since 2012, there has been more progress on gyratory removal than expected. This has been due to a number of factors including our work to promote this. Regeneration schemes, the Mayor's Roads Taskforce and the review of dangerous junctions have all prompted a good number of schemes to be initiated. Below is a summary of what we know about various proposals. This is not a definitive list and some details are unclear about some of the schemes.

- i) Tottenham Hale gyratory – this scheme, promoted as part of the regeneration of Tottenham Hale and is now all but complete;

- ii) Stratford gyratory – this scheme is being promoted as a regeneration scheme for the traditional high road
- iii) Tottenham Court Road – this scheme has been both a regeneration and bus priority proposal for many years. It also responds to the huge rise in pedestrian numbers associated with the Crossrail station;
- iv) Wandsworth town centre gyratory – a town centre regeneration scheme in consultation;
- v) Baker Street – a long term aspiration of Westminster councils. This scheme is the subject of consultation and if approved would considerably improve bus services and allow two-way cycling on streets that are presently one-way.
- vi) King’s Cross gyratory - this scheme is subject to a first stage consultation. The proposal goes a long way to reverting many of the streets in the area to two-way operation.
- vii) Hammersmith gyratory -there is a longstanding aspiration to tackle this gyratory system, but the volume of traffic is very high and the junction very complex. There are no public proposals except the provision of cycling facilities across part of the system;
- viii) Vauxhall Cross – this regeneration scheme is a response to huge housing development proposals in the area of Nine Elms. Presently the bus station will be remodelled, but essentially remain on the footprint there is today. A cycle superhighway proposal has proceeded separately from the gyratory removal which means some synergies have been lost;
- ix) Purley Cross Gyratory - improvements to the quality of public realm and better access through the area for bus passengers and other road users;
- x) Nags Head – a cycle superhighway proposal. TfL’s website suggests will be subject to consultation later this year;
- xi) Archway – a scheme to ‘peninsularise’ the gyratory system to create a public space in front of the station;
- xii) Stoke Newington Gyratory - an upgrade of the existing road layout to make it safer and more easier accessible for pedestrians and cyclists
- xiii) Tulse Hill Gyratory – a shorter-term scheme to improve road safety ahead of a longer-term scheme.
- xiv) Victoria Circus – improvements to the local area for pedestrian and cyclists to support the major upgrade at Victoria Station.
- xv) Swiss Cottage – this scheme is presently under consultation and will mean two-way general traffic, but allow buses to utilise a bus and cycle only road northbound.
- xvi) Highbury Corner – a peninsularisation scheme that will create a public space in front of Highbury and Islington station.

4 London Travel Workplan and discussion

- 4.1 The workplan suggests that London TravelWatch conducts a series of case studies in order to promote gyratory removal. However, to some extent, this has been overtaken by events and many gyratory removal schemes are in train.
- 4.2 Officers have visited a local councillor and met with council officers involved with gyratory removal projects. There is a clear theme in those cases (at Tottenham Hale, Tottenham Court Road and Stratford). All of these schemes and others from the list above are promoted by local communities and councils primarily to

support regeneration. There is a sense that normal two-way traffic is slower, the street less inhospitable, and that severance is reduced because crossing the road or walking and cycling along a two-way road feels easier, safer and more pleasant. It is apparent that gyratories are not proposed for removal primarily to facilitate bus movement.

4.3 However, in the case of Tottenham Hale, there is some disappointment that the severance issue is not addressed, because pedestrian crossings facilities that were assumed to be implemented as part of the schemes don't materialise in the final scheme. This is because of concerns about the movement of motor traffic and the impact of loss of traffic capacity due to the reversion to two-way operation.

4.4 Whilst the programme of gyratory removal is proceeding at a pace, our project to study this issue is only progressing slowly. Further work should focus on making the case for the benefits of gyratory removal to bus services and passengers.

5 Recommendation

5.1 London TravelWatch notes and supports the programme of gyratory removals.

6 Legal powers

6.1 Section 248 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 places upon London TravelWatch (as the London Transport Users Committee) a duty to consider - and where it appears to the Committee to be desirable, to make recommendations with respect to - any matter affecting the functions of the Greater London Authority or Transport for London which relate to transport (other than of freight).

7 Financial implications

7.1 There is no financial implication for London TravelWatch because of this report.