SUMMARY OF REPORT
This report summarises the responses to the public consultation on the traffic and public realm proposals of the West End Project. The report is being presented to Cabinet for a decision on the way forward for this large-scale, strategically important project. The project delivers the Camden Plan objective Creating conditions for and harnessing the benefits of economic growth, delivering major investment in the improvement of a significant residential and commercial area. It also contributes to Investing in our communities to ensure sustainable neighbourhoods by significantly reducing traffic impacts, improving conditions for walking and cycling and providing several new high quality public spaces.

Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information
The following document(s) has been used in the preparation of this report:
- Great Queen Street, Comparative Study, JMP, 2011.
- Taxicard usage data, 2013-14

WHAT DECISIONS ARE BEING ASKED FOR?
1. Cabinet to note and have due regard to the results of the public consultation in the report (Appendices A, B and C);
2. Cabinet to give approval to proceed to detailed design and implementation of the project as described in the report, specifically agreeing those matters listed in Appendix D, subject to achieving funding from various contributing partners and compliance with statutory requirements as the project is progressed;
3. The Leader to delegate further decision making for this project to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning including but not limited to those decisions listed in Table 6.1;
4. Cabinet to delegate to the Assistant Director of Environment and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning those decisions listed in Table 6.1 subject to any further delegation of decision making by the Cabinet Member;

Signed by:  
Director of Culture and Environment:  
Date: 8th January 2015
1 WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT?

1.1 This report sets out the results of the extensive public consultation on the West End Project proposals, the single largest public realm and transport investment that Camden has ever proposed and currently the Council’s highest priority major project. The aim is to reduce traffic, improve road safety, make the area better for walking, cycling and people using buses and create new public spaces delivering a better area for residents, businesses and visitors.

1.2 The proposals would deliver a radical transformation of the Tottenham Court Road area, making it safer and more attractive for residents and visitors, creating new public spaces and providing a good public realm to attract and sustain business. The project would involve replacing the one-way system with two-way streets, introducing some protected cycle lanes and more trees. It would reduce congestion and pollution across the area, improve road safety, widen pavements, improve pedestrian crossings and make bus journeys quicker. It involves significant innovation, addressing long standing issues around how space is used in Central London, moving uses around, and altering the use by times of day and days of week.

1.3 There has been very extensive public and stakeholder consultation and the report outlines a number of amendments in response to the comments that have been received in the public consultation and makes recommendations for the implementation of the proposals. These changes strengthen the overall project.

1.4 While the overall benefits delivered by the project are significant, it is inevitable in the sharing of the limited street space between uses that there will need to be compromises. Almost all uses will need to compromise from their “ideal” situation, as the proposals seek to strike a balance between those competing uses. What this balance achieves is a significant shift of space towards public realm, walking and cycling at a time of rising demand. Nevertheless these interests will also need to compromise on some aspects. The amended proposals represent the best balance that can be achieved to meet the various demands.

2 WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY?

2.1 Camden’s Transport Strategy 2011 (CTS) sets out the future direction for transport in the borough, outlines the challenges that are faced and how these will be addressed. The CTS includes a programme of schemes, including the West End Project, to address key objectives which include improving road safety and air quality, encouraging sustainable healthy travel, developing high quality accessible public spaces and streets and supporting Camden’s growth and regeneration.

2.2 The West End Project was prioritised in the CTS as:
   - The Tottenham Court Road / Gower Street area is one of the worst ten locations in the borough for collisions with 259 casualties in total in the last three years (01/08/2011 to 31/07/2014), of which 36% involved pedestrians and 27% involved cyclists.
   - Tottenham Court Road has one of the worst pollution levels in the borough (along with Euston Road and Finchley Road) for particulate matter and oxides of nitrogen.
   - The predicted increase in the number of pedestrians with the opening of Crossrail will make Tottenham Court Road busier than Heathrow airport and the area needs to be safe and welcoming.
   - Traffic in the area has reduced by 30% since Charing Cross Road was closed in 2007 (for the Crossrail works) and the Council would like to retain this level of traffic reduction to achieve long term air quality, road safety and public realm benefits.

2.3 Extensive feasibility studies were undertaken in partnership with TfL as well as engaging with local groups, Camden Cycling Campaign, Crossrail, Inmidtown, The Fitzrovia Partnership, London First and the City of Westminster. Over thirty different traffic and
cycling options have been investigated to assess the impacts and benefits. Three options, including the Council’s preferred option and two proposed by the Greater London Authority (GLA), were then the subject of detailed traffic modelling and an assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of each against an agreed framework which included the Council’s and TfL’s priorities. Following this assessment, the decision was made to take the Council’s preferred option forward to public consultation as this was most in line with the Council’s policies and the scheme objectives. Further detail on the rationale for discounting other options is set out in Appendix E.

2.4 This report is necessary to transparently outline the work that has been undertaken to develop the current proposals and to secure the Council’s commitment to progress the development of this project through to implementation.

Proposals

2.5 Officers then developed the proposals for public consultation. The full details are set out on the Council’s website www.camden.gov.uk/westendproject and are summarised in Appendix D.

3 OPTIONS

3.1 Having regard to the results of the consultation, officers consider there are four main options for Cabinet to consider:

- Option 1 – As recommended in Recommendations 2, 3 and 4, implement the West End Project proposals subject to amendments as set out in Appendix D.
- Option 2 - Implement the West End Project proposals subject to amendments as set out in Appendix D but allow taxis to use the full length of Tottenham Court Road.
- Option 3 - Do not implement the West End Project proposals in full but only those aspects that are strongly supported and do not require the one-way system to be removed such as the public spaces in the St Giles area, at Alfred Place, Huntley Street, Windmill Square, and Whitfield Gardens.
- Option 4 - Do not implement the West End Project proposals in full but only those aspects that are necessary to provide more space for pedestrians as a result of Crossrail, including St Giles plaza, the closure of St Giles High Street, pedestrian improvements on Denmark Street and the diagonal crossing at St Giles Circus.

3.2 A ‘do nothing’ option in not considered appropriate for the reasons set out in paragraph 2.2.

4. WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISION?

4.1 The reasons for proceeding as set out below reflect the major policy objectives delivered by the project, taking advantage of the unique opportunity to leverage substantial external investment to improve traffic and public realm across this substantial area. It also reflects the results of the very extensive consultation work, and the support shown. As noted, the scheme would involve compromises and balance but it would deliver:

- a huge positive impact in the local quality of urban realm,
- a safer and more attractive environment for walking and cycling,
- improved road safety,
- significant benefits for bus users,
- several new areas of high quality public realm including the first new park in the West End for many decades
- a reduction in exposure to poor air quality
- an innovative approach to managing competing needs for freight in central London
- an opportunity for sustaining local business
4.2 It is recommended that the West End Project proposals be implemented, as set out in section 2.4, with two exceptions. The proposals are recommended for approval as they meet the objectives of a number of Council strategies as outlined below. Tottenham Court Road is identified as an Opportunity Area for development of jobs, homes and other facilities in the London Plan (GLA, 2008) and the proposals would support that development as well as contributing to several objectives in Camden’s Core Strategy. The proposals also support the Council’s policies in the Camden Transport Strategy to encourage walking, cycling and public transport use and reduce road danger. The proposals meet the objectives of the Mayor of London’s Vision for Cycling in London (GLA, 2013), and the Roads Task Force (TfL, 2013), by providing more space for the increasing number of cyclists, making it safer, transforming the environment for walking, cycling and public transport, and improving the urban realm. The rationale for selecting the proposals for public consultation is included in Appendix E.

4.3 At public consultation, the West End Project proposals were supported by 59% of people who responded (further information is included in Appendix A). 77% supported the proposals for the plaza at St Giles Circus, 59% supported the proposals for Tottenham Court Road, 64% for Gower Street, 85% for New Oxford Street, 77% for the new public space at Princes Circus and 80% for the new park at Alfred Place. For further detail on the results of the extensive public consultation, see Appendix A for a summary of the results and a discussion of the outcomes, Appendix B for comments from individuals and Appendix C for comments from statutory groups, local groups and organisations.

4.4 Permitting taxis to use the full length of Tottenham Court Road (Option 2) is not recommended as this would increase the volume of traffic on Tottenham Court Road by up to 24% compared to option 1, increase levels of pollution and road danger and would therefore worsen conditions for walking and cycling and reduce journey time benefits for buses. Options 3 and 4 are not recommended as they would not deliver many elements of the wider scheme that are supported, would provide limited benefits for pedestrians and the public realm and no benefits for cycling. The Council has secured £32m funding to date for the project. Not proceeding with the main proposals would be a missed opportunity.

4.5 There are two aspects of the project that were not supported by the majority; the proposed loading hours on Tottenham Court Road (Q8b) and taxi access on Tottenham Court Road (Q8d). Officers also received petitions against the project and the predicted increase in traffic on Torrington Place from Gordon Mansions Residents’ Association and Ridgmount Gardens Residents’ Association. Further details on comments received in relation to these issues can be found in Appendices B and C and the rationale for recommendations relating to all concerns and proposals is included in Appendix A.

4.6 The amendments to the proposals following consultation, included in the recommendations of the report, are set out in Appendix D, the proposed parking and loading changes in Appendix F, the proposed traffic movement changes in Appendix G and the proposed Torrington Place trial scheme at Appendix H.

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

5.1 The key risks and impacts are:

Transport for London does not approve the scheme

5.2 Transport for London have been involved at every stage of the project’s development, including use of a TfL traffic model, and auditing of the modelling results. This has acted to use valuable TfL expertise and to ensure that all parties are agreed on the likely impacts of the project. TfL have now also agreed a funding contribution, and the Surface Transport
Road Space Performance Group has considered the overall impacts of the project and has no objection. Detailed agreement is needed on construction arrangements, which is work in progress but the scheme as a whole is now agreed for progression.

**Westminster Council does not approve the re-introduction of the right turn at Cambridge Circus**

5.3 Westminster City Council will be consulting on a public realm scheme for Cambridge Circus in early 2015 including the re-introduction of the right turn at Cambridge Circus which is necessary for Tottenham Court Road and Gower Street to be made two-way. There is a risk that the scheme is not approved by Westminster Councillors, following public consultation, or that there is insufficient funding to implement the scheme. Camden officers would work with Westminster officers to seek approval for the right turn element of the scheme, even if the full public realm scheme were not taken forward.

**Insufficient funding**

| Table 5.1 Scheme cost and funding (£000s) |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| **Cost**        | **Available funding** | **Funding gap** |
| £41,170         | £32,915           | £8,255           |

Notes:
1. The above figures include the existing LBC Capital commitment of £2m and a TfL commitment of £10m.
2. The figures also include a commitment from Inmidtown Business Improvement District to meet the funding gap for the Princes Circus public space proposals by investing a total of £1.5m for public realm improvements, representing £1.3m for Princes Circus for seating, improved lighting and natural stone paving based on the Council’s architects’ concept, and £200,000 towards New Oxford Street.
3. The costs currently include substantial amounts for out of hours working, structural elements below the highway. These may be reduced by further detailed design and works programming discussion with TfL.
4. Additional developments are known to be coming forward in the area which will also be expected to contribute, and discussions are also ongoing with other stakeholders about further contributions.

5.4 Table 5.1 above sets out the current best estimates for the project overall. Detailed design is required to finalise costs, the degree of restricted hours working that would be required for highways works, and the element of structural works required. This is likely to significantly reduce the overall costs. There is currently an estimated funding gap of up to £8.25 million, depending on elements such as the degree of night working required, the materials used and structural works required. These elements could only be fully costed after the detailed design stage. Further financial contributions are also being sought.

5.5 There is still a risk that, even with reduced costs and increased contributions, there would be insufficient funding to cover the whole project to a high specification of materials and as a result, not all of the elements could be implemented or a lower specification of materials used. If a funding gap were to remain, the key elements of the project would be prioritised, taking account of comments from the public consultation, or elements would be implemented with a reduced quality of materials and funding secured to date. In addition, to reduce the funding gap, contributions would be sought from stakeholders. It is proposed that, subject to a decision in February as part of the overall budget setting, Camden contribute an additional £2m of capital funding to the project. This would mean a total investment from Camden of £4m, to leverage a project of £40m of investment in transport and public realm across a wide area of the borough. Officers are confident that additional funding would be secured, given the £32 million funding already obtained and the support of London First and the Inmidtown and Fitzrovia Partnership Business Improvement Districts.
Disruption during construction

5.6 The impact on residents, businesses, visitors and traffic during construction would be managed as far as possible and works would be phased very carefully to keep roads open and traffic moving and to minimise any negative impacts. However, it should be noted that it is inevitable that as part of the works to implement the scheme, should it be approved, there would be some impacts. Officers are of the view that the impacts would be proportionate to the scale of the scheme and that the significant benefits of the scheme would justify the disruption caused during construction.

Insufficient time to implement proposals

5.7 There is a risk that the proposals would not be implemented in time for the opening of Crossrail in 2018. If the project were approved, detailed phasing work would be undertaken to ensure that key elements of the project, e.g. St Giles Circus and the southern section of Tottenham Court Road, could be completed in advance of the new services starting.

Impacts following construction

5.8 Given that it is impossible to predict traffic levels with complete certainty there is at least the possibility that the volume of traffic could be higher than predicted by traffic modelling. This situation is unlikely as traffic modelling is typically quite conservative. Experience has shown that some trips “disappear” or are dispersed over such a wide area, it is not possible to detect an increase in displaced traffic. However, funding would be allocated for before and after monitoring of traffic volumes to be carried out in order to assess the impact of the scheme and where possible and appropriate, measures to address adverse impacts would be investigated and implemented.

Pavement widening on TCR is insufficient to cope with increase in passengers from opening of Crossrail.

5.9 The proposals ensure that the pavements on Tottenham Court Road would be as wide as possible whilst allowing two-way traffic and safe space for cycling. Pedestrian volumes, crowding and the provision of crossing facilities would be monitored over time to assess the impact of the changes. Officers would consider any potential amendments, should an issue be identified.

Loading provision is inadequate

5.10 The quiet loading trial would be reviewed after 6 months in terms of feedback from both businesses and residents in terms of hours, but also level of provision and locations of bays. Where specific businesses have identified issues with loading bay proposed locations these have been addressed, where possible, as set out in Appendix F.

Provision for specific user groups and stakeholders is insufficient

5.11 The cycle lanes proposed are as wide as possible given the highway layout and predicted volumes of traffic. The numbers of cyclists using the lanes, as well as the conflicts between cyclists and other road users, would be monitored and addressed if necessary and possible. The number of taxi ranks and their size would be increased under the proposals and further discussion would take place regarding their hours of operation. Their usage would be monitored.
Equalities

5.12 The impact on protected groups, including in relation to age and disability, of the proposals and in particular of restricting taxis from using the whole length of Tottenham Court Road, 8am to 7pm, Monday to Saturday has been assessed and officers are of the view that the positive impacts of the scheme outweigh the negative impacts. Mitigation measures have been recommended as part of the amendments to the proposals, such as providing additional taxi ranks on side streets, more seating on Tottenham Court Road, and more Blue Badge disabled parking and pay and display parking in the vicinity of the hospital. An equalities impact assessment is attached at Appendix J.

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

6.1 Following the decision, if the recommendations were approved, officers would undertake detailed design of the West End Project proposals to be approved by the Assistant Director of Environment and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning. Officers would then progress securing all the necessary statutory approvals to implement the scheme. A communications strategy would be developed including publicising the availability of the decision report, and setting out the next steps including communicating the construction phases and highlighting the key changes.

6.2 Detailed post implementation surveys would be undertaken after twelve months assessing changes in traffic, road safety and air quality as well as compliance with the restrictions, complaints, feedback from freight and passenger transport organisations and TfL.

6.3 If the West End Project proposals were approved, a number of additional decisions would be required to progress the scheme and monitor its performance. The decisions are listed under the recommendations in Appendix D and summarised in the table below, together with whether they would be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning or the Assistant Director, Environment and Transport. It is considered that most decisions could be delegated to the Assistant Director, Environment and Transport, in consultation with Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning. However, officers are mindful of the impacts of decisions on stakeholders, including the local community, and for that reason, some decisions are recommended to be taken at Member level to build in an additional level of transparency. Should circumstances change, it may be appropriate to take some of the other decisions listed at Member level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision</th>
<th>Ref. in the report (para no.)</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Further decision to be made by:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>(a)</td>
<td>12 (Appendix D)</td>
<td>Agree the detailed design of Alfred Place park</td>
<td>Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>14 (Appendix D)</td>
<td>Agree the detailed design of Whitfield Gardens</td>
<td>Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning</td>
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</table>
7. LINKS TO THE CAMDEN PLAN OBJECTIVES

- Creating conditions for and harnessing the benefits of economic growth

7.1 The proposed improvements to the urban realm would help to unlock the area’s potential, boosting business and creating new public space for the community and visitors to enjoy.

7.2 Research shows that better streets result in higher market prices. Research carried out by the Centre for Architecture and the Built Environment (Paved with Gold, 2007), showed that for the high streets in the case study in London, an improvement in street design quality can add an average of 5.2 per cent to residential prices and an average of 4.9 per cent to retail rents.
7.3 The Council commissioned its own research into the public realm works on Great Queen Street (Great Queen Street, Comparative Study, JMP, 2011), and using the methodology of the Paved with Gold report, found that the estimated total uplift in the value of residential properties within 50m of the improvement to the public realm was between £4m and £25.9m, and the estimated total retail uplift was £2.2million.

- Investing in our communities to ensure sustainable neighbourhoods

7.4 Reducing traffic in the area and improving conditions for walking, cycling and using public transport as well as increasing and improving public space would make residents feel safer and more connected to their neighbourhoods. Making the area safer and more attractive as well as providing new public spaces will benefit the local community, improving quality of life and boosting the local economy.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 Early engagement was carried out with Area Action Groups, residents’ and local amenity groups, local businesses, taxi representatives, Westminster City Council, Transport for London, Camden Cycling Campaign, London First and Inmidtown and the Fitzrovia Partnership Business Improvement Districts to raise awareness of proposals.

8.2 The public consultation was held between 9 June and 1 August 2014. The consultation material is available at www.camden.gov.uk/westendproject. The consultation was primarily conducted on-line, with a video to help explain the project, with hard copies of the consultation material available upon request. In total, leaflets were distributed to 7,990 addresses, with a follow up questionnaire during the consultation period to encourage more people to respond. A total of 32 local groups and 44 statutory organisations as well as ward Councillors, were contacted by email or post. In addition, 235 leaflets were distributed to Westminster businesses and residents and 9 to local groups. Westminster Councillors were also contacted. Camden Council’s website and the wearecamden site were used to promote the consultation. The Council placed posters in bus shelters, advertisements in local newspapers and street notices to raise awareness. An exhibition was held at the Building Centre on Store Street which was staffed twice during the consultation period.

8.3 Officers also continued to engage with residents’, local amenity groups and local businesses. In addition, officers were challenged to improve the proposals for walking and cycling, and so a working group was set up to address specific issues such as the cycling facilities proposed for Gower Street, the access to Endell Street (as a key route to Waterloo Bridge) from Gower Street via Princes Circus, and improving east-west cycle routes including a possible new link from Capper Street to Howland Street, across the Tottenham Court Road. The working group included representatives of the Camden Cycling Campaign, Living Streets, Travelwatch, Campaign for a Liveable London, urban design consultants and walking and cycling bloggers. The results of the discussions held with the working group are incorporated into Appendix A.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (comments from the Borough Solicitor)

9.1 The Borough Solicitor has been consulted and his comments are incorporated into this report.

10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (comments from the Director of Finance)

10.1 This report asks for Cabinet to note the consultation and to agree to delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Environment and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning to progress further detailed design work
for the West End Project, subject to funding and statutory processes needed for implementation, such as the statutory TMO process.

10.2 The costs estimated to date for the implementation of the West End Project are between £35.5m and £41.2m, depending on the detailed design. As indicated in paragraph 5.4, the full funding has not yet been confirmed. £32m has been identified for implementing the project in the financial years 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18 from a combination of sources including Section 106 agreements, inmidtown Business Improvement District, TfL and the Council’s own funding (as identified in the 2013/14 Revenue Estimates and Council Tax Cabinet report, February 2013). There are a number of ways in which the shortfall could be addressed including: accessing additional partner contributions such as through Section 106 funding as developments arise and funding from third parties; reducing the scope of the project through deferral or deciding not to proceed with some of the elements; or through the use of lower specification materials, which could be assessed at the detailed design stage. It is proposed that these decisions be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning and the Assistant Director for Environment and Transport as part of detailed design, as set out in Table 6.1.

10.3 Should the Cabinet approve the report and the implementation of the West End Project, and there be insufficient funding raised to cover the shortfall, there would be a risk that either the specification of the materials would have to be changed and / or that not all elements of the scheme would be taken forward, as mentioned above. However, the project would be planned to ensure that the work delivered were matched against the funding available; this is complicated by some funding being specifically attached to certain works.

10.4 If the recommendation to implement the West End Project were accepted, the construction of the project would be carried out in a number of discrete build stages. The award of the contract for the first build stage (up to a value of £5million) would be subject to a benchmarking process and would be covered by the existing procurement strategies presented to the Council’s Cabinet in February 2014 on the London Highways Alliance Contract (LoHAC) and in September 2014 on the tendering of the highways works term contract (these reports are available on the Council’s website at http://democracy.camden.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cld=122&MId=4646 and http://democracy.camden.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=122&MId=5153 respectively). The award of the remaining build stages would be covered by existing procurement strategies, if it were carried out by the term contractor. If any elements were tendered outside the term contract, this would follow due process depending on the contract value.

11. **APPENDICES**

Appendix A: Headline consultation results and discussion
Appendix B: Comments from individuals
Appendix C: Comments from local groups, statutory groups and organisations
Appendix D: Detailed proposals and amendments
Appendix E: Options considered
Appendix F: Plans of proposed changes to pedestrian and cycle crossings, waiting and loading restrictions and bus stop locations
Appendix G: Plan of proposed changes to traffic movements
Appendix H: Proposed Torrington Place trial
Appendix J: Equalities impact assessment

REPORT ENDS