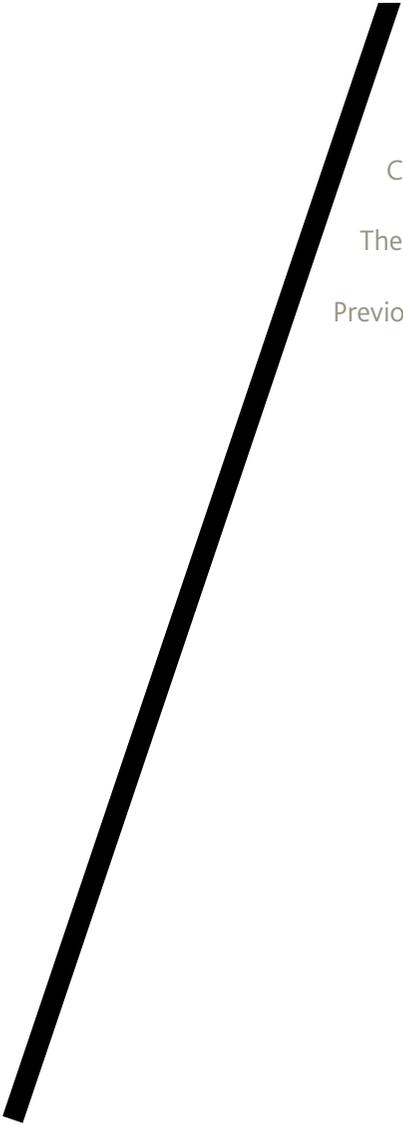


BAKER STREET QUARTER

Urban Realm & Transport Study



| Revision | Issue Date: | Prepared by: | Approved by: |
|----------|-------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 01 | 11.11.11 | Lindsay Oliver | Jon Akers Coyle |
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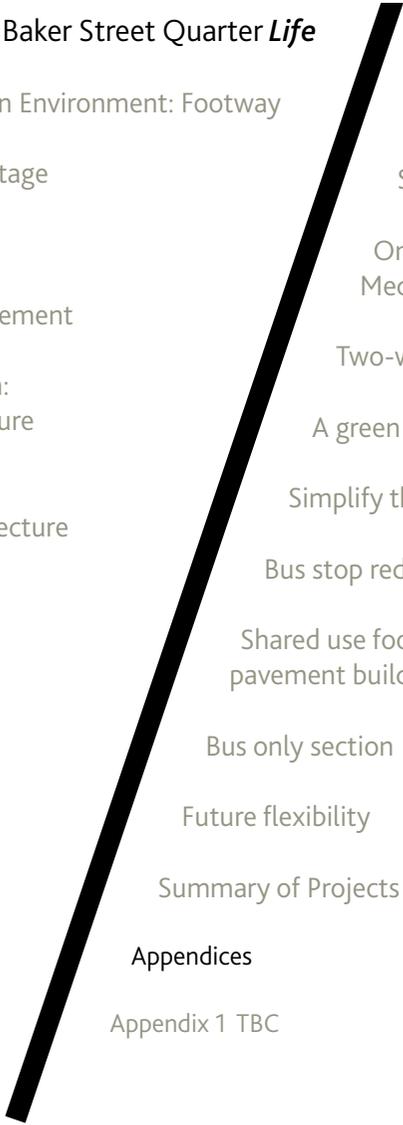
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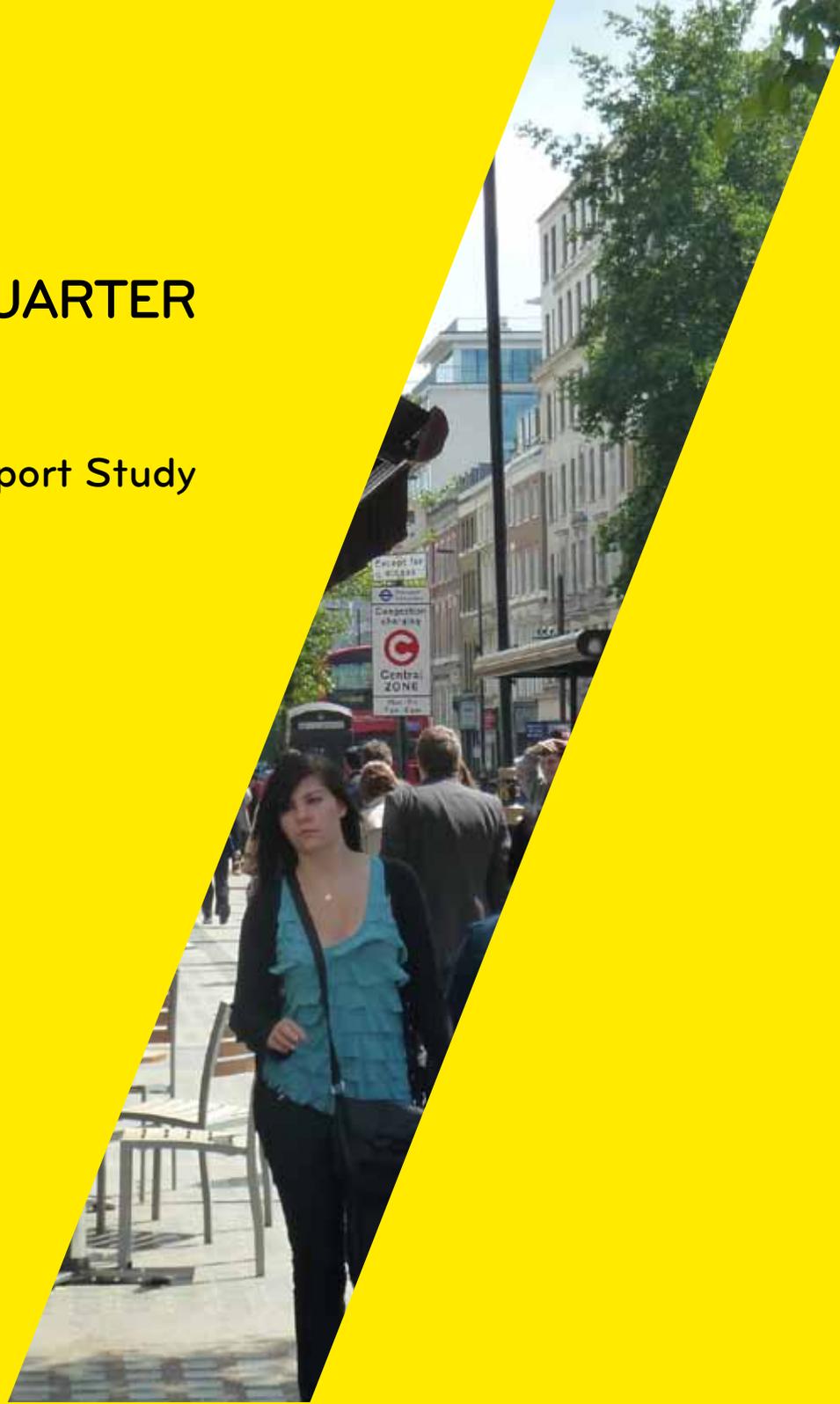
Summary of Projects

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Appendix 1 TBC

BAKER STREET QUARTER / INTRODUCTION

Urban Realm and Transport Study



The Baker Street Quarter commissioned Gillespies and SKM Colin Buchanan to undertake a strategic review of the Baker Street corridor between Oxford Street and Marylebone Road. This high level study carried out over the summer of 2011 has explored the following aspects:

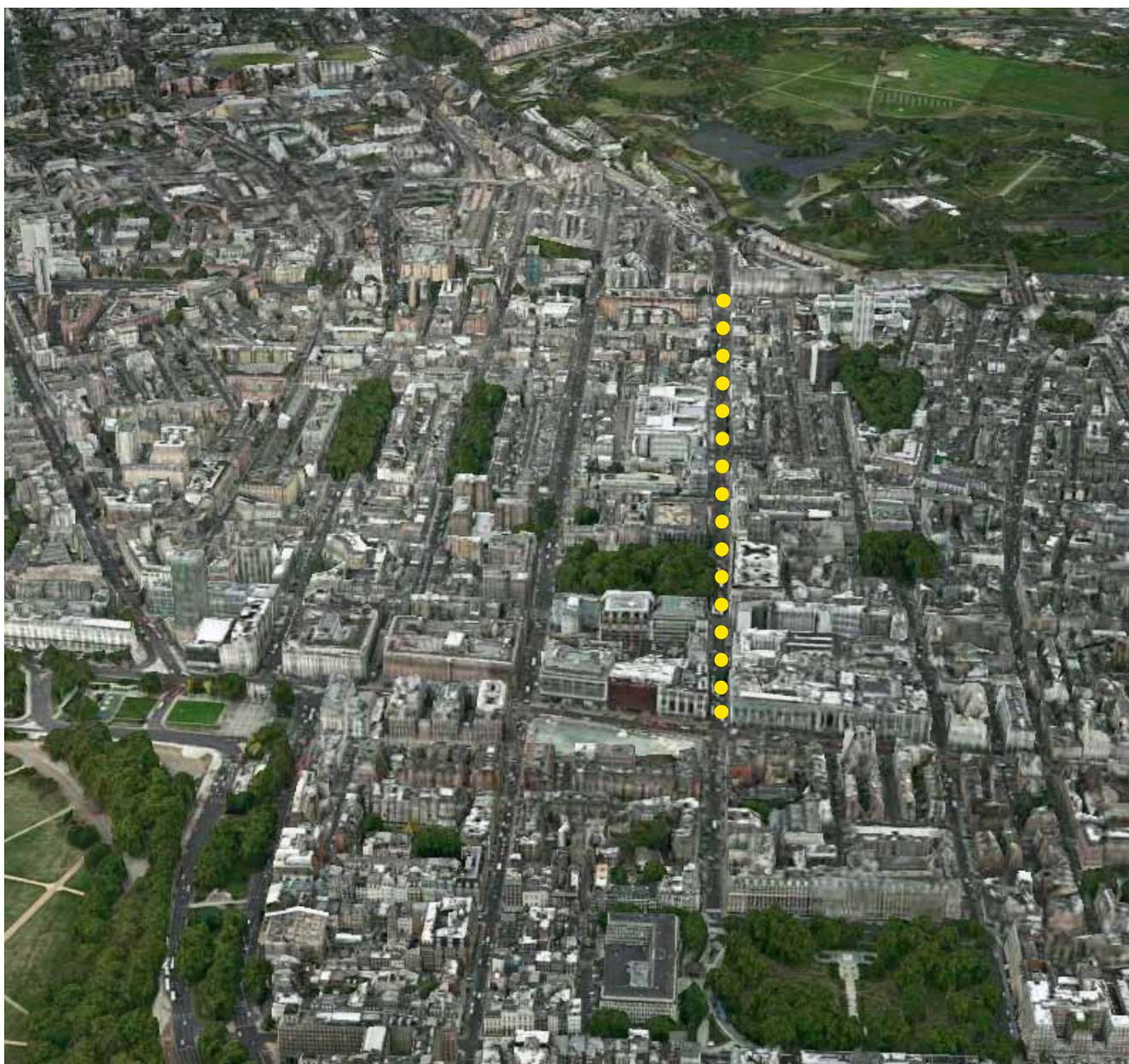
- › Exploration of urban context and character
- › Investigation into traffic systems and vehicle movement along this corridor, with particular consideration given to both enhanced one-way working and two-way traffic scenarios
- › Investigation into the pedestrian environment, safety and comfort
- › Exploration into the future greening of this street

This report

The existing character, scale and activity of the Baker Street Quarter is presented within this report, and accompanying technical appendices, as a baseline assessment of the area's current contribution to the London street scene.

Strategic Visioning

A series of opportunities are further presented that seek to reinforce the Baker Street Quarter as an area of strategic importance and landmark street in Central London. Options for change are considered, presenting traffic based solutions in response to the perceived need to re-balance Baker Street to make the area a more vibrant, successful and characterful destination to commercial, residential and visitors alike. This strategic approach identifies a series of projects and interventions that, either as short term improvements, or longer term aspirations, can present a suite of initiatives that will underpin a coordinated transport and public realm approach to the revitalisation of the Baker Street Quarter as one of London's premier landmark destinations



Aerial photo highlighting Baker Street

Context

Baker Street connects Portman Square and Oxford Street to the south to Marylebone Road and onwards to Regents Park to the north. It forms a central spine running through The Portman Estate in particular. There are a number of key nodes and destinations that serve the Baker Street catchment.

Anchored by key transport nodes:

1. Baker Street LUL Station
2. Marylebone LUL and Mainline Station
3. Bond Street LUL Station
(with future Crossrail introduction 2016)
4. Marble Arch LUL Station

Destinations & Attractions

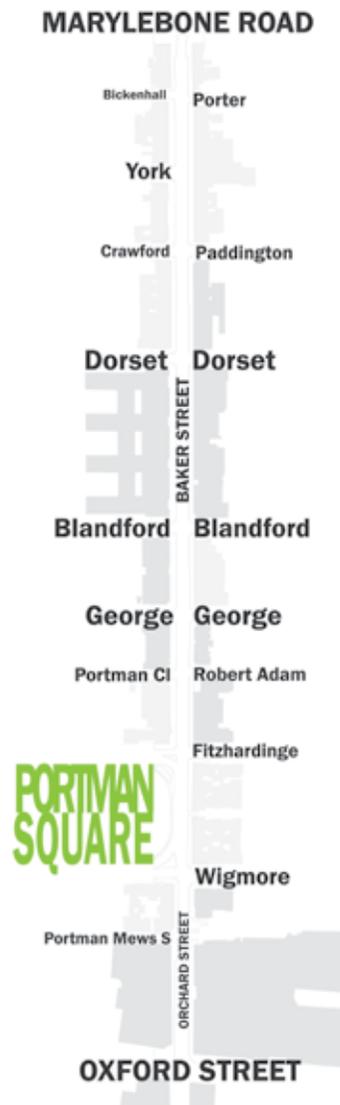
5. Oxford Street
6. Regents Park
7. Hyde Park
8. University of Westminster
9. Wallace Collection
10. Madame Tussauds and Planetarium



Context Plan

The Street

Baker Street was planned and created approximately between 1750 and 1800 as part of the highly disciplined and formal layout of the Portman Estate which expanded from Portman Square in a grid pattern spreading north and west during the Georgian era.



Historic plan of Baker Street 1793



Historic Baker Street photo



Baker Street from above 1993



Baker Street today



Previous Studies

A public realm strategy was prepared for The Portman Estate by Gehl Associates in April 2008. It assessed the current situation and quality of the Estate in terms of pedestrian and streetscape environment and provided a series of strategies and priority projects that could be implemented in order to rebalance the use of the public streets and spaces in favour of pedestrians.

The report identified a number of significant streets and squares which should play a greater role in defining the identity and connectivity of the Estate. Of particular note and relevance to this study was the realisation of Portman Square and Baker Street as key contributors to public life. The Gehl report explored further the potential that these individual spaces could offer, underpinned by a series of strategies, which included;

- revealing these hidden assets to reinforce a local identity and create an hierarchy of links and destinations
- reducing through traffic
- creating strong entrances to the district
- improving the walkable environment
- creating a visually more appealing and beautiful environment

Progress since 2008 in delivering some of the above strategies has been good. Led by The Portman Estate in close collaboration with City Of Westminster, term engineering contractors West One (with assistance provided by both Gillespies and SKM Colin Buchanans), a series of urban realm improvements have started to establish the identity of the Portman Village, particularly to the south west of the Estate. These improvements, including New Quebec Street in particular, and the use of a Westminster palette of high quality yorkstone and distinctive granite setts, has extended the earlier reclamation of space that started in Old Quebec

Street in 2007. The result is that a strong and distinctive identity is being forged. Further improvements to other exclusive side streets, such as Chiltern Street, are planned thus expanding attractive retail brand and character further within the Estate.

Hidden assets are also being revealed. Portman Square is currently undergoing streetscape improvements to enhance its appeal and setting as the heart of the Portman Estate and anchor to Baker Street. Perimeter pavements have been doubled in width in many cases following traffic lane reduction and a new landmark development to the south of the Square has introduced a balance, activity and quality to the built frontage.

The above improvements have resulted in part from recent adjacent building developments, with many large corporate and commercial tenants providing a welcome confidence and reassurance to the ongoing appeal and character offered by The Portman Estate. Along Baker Street itself, the positive impact of development change has improved a number of plots, creating greater presence and vibrancy at the ground floor and improving the pedestrian environment greatly.

Such public realm improvements therefore offer a baseline of quality and aspiration that may inform future public realm enhancement schemes, such as those along Baker Street that are presented in this report.



Granite setts to raised table crossings

There are still a number of challenges faced by the area however. Footway quality and materials are of a basic and worn standard along many streets. The gateway experience on entry to the district at the major street junctions with Oxford Street, Edgware Road and Marlybone Road needs careful consideration to promote the presence and location of the area. Vehicular traffic tends to dominate in many streets, and in the minds of many pedestrians and visitors. There are few places to pause and appreciate the area through the provision of seating and resting places.

It is hoped that a review of the potential of Baker Street will go some way to addressing these outstanding challenges.



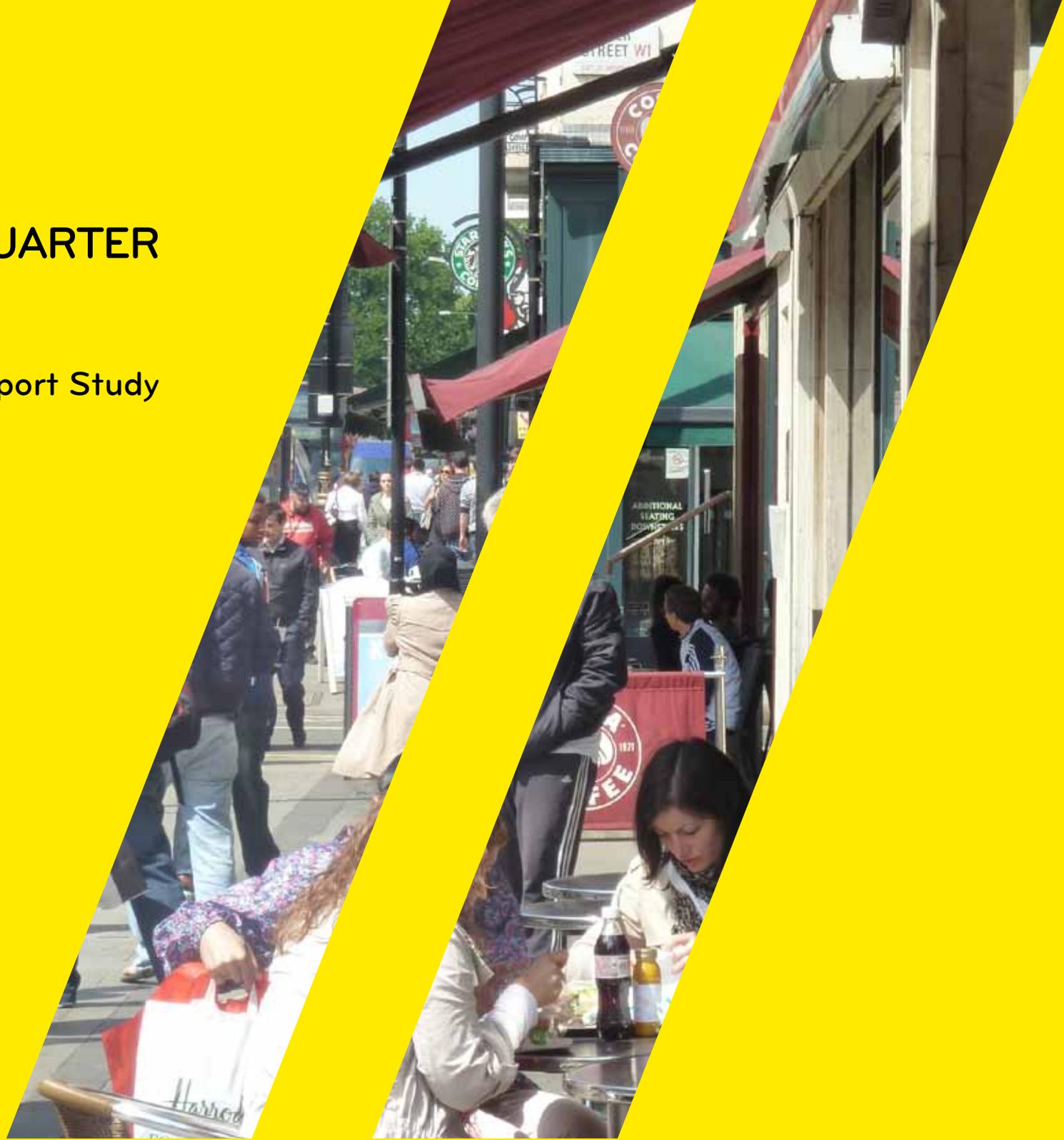
Resin bound gravel surrounding Portman Square

BAKER STREET QUARTER / LIFE

Urban Realm and Transport Study

The life of a street- its activity, character and atmosphere - is determined by the many interactions of all its users and functional requirements along its length. As a primary conduit of movement, for both vehicles and pedestrians, the balance and coexistence between such users can determine the appeal and sense of invitation that the street may offer. As a linear display of trade and commerce, the street offers a diverse array of choice and opportunity. The amalgamation therefore of movement and pause, commerce and opportunity, will define the rhythm and life of a street.

It is the purpose of the following existing analysis to determine these defining characteristics, assess their contribution and challenges and propose areas of opportunity and improvement to enhance the prominence of Baker Street and its contribution to the wider urban form.



Pedestrian Environment: Footway

The footway presents a street of two halves;

- › The western pavement, generally wider, more organised with a greater proportion of concrete flag paving (ASP) providing a scale and rhythm to the street.
- › The eastern pavement, of lesser material quality through extensive asphalt surfacing and generally narrower in width, suffering from points of pedestrian congestion created by street furniture, tree planting and the required presence of the southbound bus shelters.

The western pavement is in general the wider pavement, ranging in width from 3m to over 5m adjacent to the most recently redeveloped plots. The benefits this width brings relate to;

- › Good pedestrian comfort and capacity, with general levels of safety equalling or exceeding Westminster standards
- › Well organised and decluttered street furniture arrangements, maintaining clear pedestrian pathways between building forecourts and kerb side furniture zones
- › The available pavement space to plant and maintain mature tree planting

The eastern pavement width ranges from 2-4 metres. Generally laid to asphalt, this pavement has many obstacles such as advertising boards within the private forecourt to retail units, outdoor tables and chairs, bus shelters, phone boxes and trees which at certain locations along the street lead to stress and congestion to pedestrian movement. It has been observed (and explored in greater detail within the



Newly installed ASP slab paving



Tired concrete slab paving with private forecourt delineation



Tired asphalt surfacing

technical report) that this eastern pavement attracts most footfall and may benefit from better signage to support movements from Madame Tussauds and Underground station connecting to Oxford Street.

- ASP
- ASP poor condition
- Asphalt
- Resin bonded



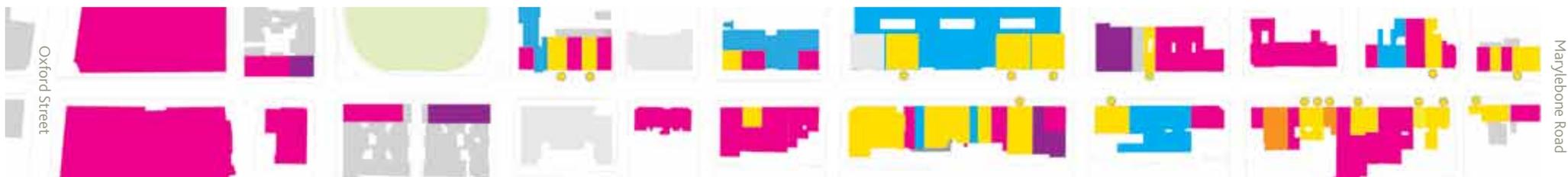
Active Frontage

An assessment of the groundfloor uses reveals the variety in scale and attractions presented along the length of Baker Street. This highlights the grain and character of the street. The mix of floorplates, from the smaller retail and dining premises to the north beneath the mainly historic facades to the larger commercial and office facades captured within the more recent developed blocks, highlights the gradual transition in scale and intensity along the street.

The smaller more independent premises answer the ever present demand for choice required by the proximity of the University of Westminster, Baker Street underground station and popular tourist destinations at the Planetarium and Madame Tussauds and are supported by a bustling street environment despite the pavement widths. Towards the middle of the street, the larger commercial blocks present, in places, limited active frontage to the street with units more dedicated to servicing the office clientele, thus creating quieter, less active streetscape environment. Recent new developments have, through planning requirements however, begun to introduce more outdoor dining use which is injecting vital new life and animation at the heart of the street.



- Retail
- Office
- Restaurant/Cafe
- Restaurant/Cafe with seating
- Attraction
- Bank

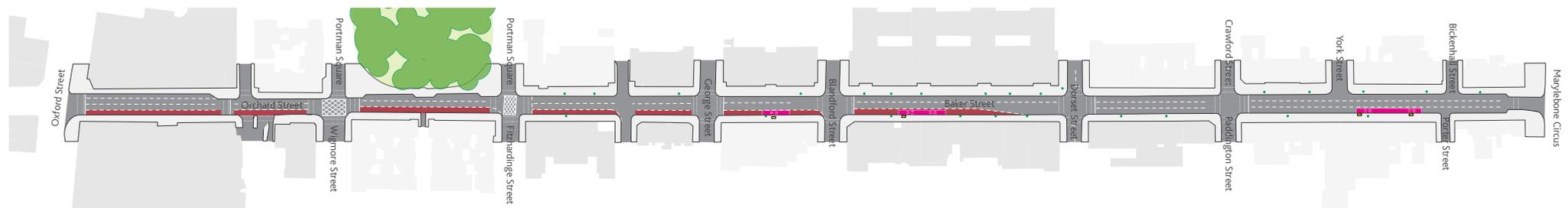


Traffic

Baker Street/ Orchard Street forms part of a large one-way system and carries traffic travelling southbound, with northbound traffic using Gloucester Place to the west. Whilst three traffic lanes are typically provided, these are often reduced to two effective lanes when bus stops, loading and parking bays are occupied, and from Dorset Street south to Oxford Street a bus lane operates from Mondays to Saturdays.

Site observations indicate that this corridor has high proportions of bus and coach traffic as this is one of the main coach routes into central London to London Victoria Coach Station. High volumes of taxis have also been observed mostly due to Baker Street's strategic importance, and close proximity to Marylebone Rail Station, Baker Street Underground Station, Oxford Street and Marylebone High Street.

Baker Street is a wide straight carriageway with spare capacity throughout most of its length and throughout the day and night. As a consequence, traffic frequently travels at high speed between the junctions. Coaches in particular have been observed to travel at speed on a regular basis with long views to traffic signals potentially encouraging acceleration.



Pedestrian movement

The footways along Baker Street were assessed for their capacity – both in terms of the width from kerb line to building frontage (actual widths) and the widths once the impact of obstructions such as telephone boxes, bus stops, guard railing and other furniture was taken into account (effective widths).

The majority of footways provide around 4 – 5m actual width, which is considered sufficient in the majority of cases. The upgraded footways in the vicinity of 55 Baker Street are more than 6m wide in places and provide a high quality environment and the opportunity to use the footway for seating, cycle docking and other local uses.

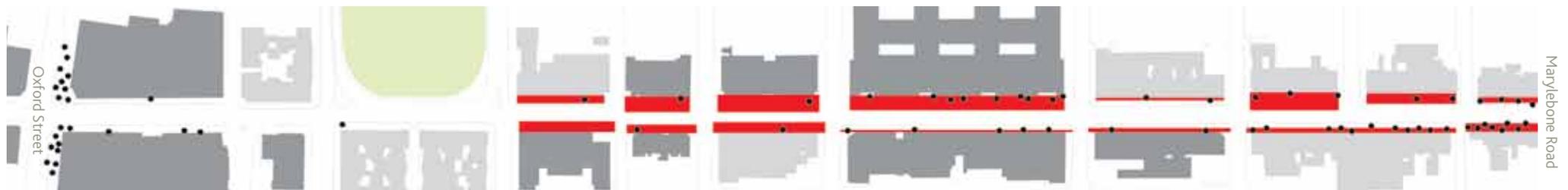
Narrower footways, less than 3m in places, are to be found on the eastern side of Baker Street. Whilst these may not fall below the “absolute minimum” that would be considered acceptable, once street furniture is taken into account, the effective widths are much lower. This is particularly evident on the eastern footway with effective widths in some locations falling to less than 1m. These narrow footways create localised congestion where they coincide with significant movement “generators” such as bus stops and recent/ongoing developments.

The diagram below identifies those footways that suffer from congestion and narrow widths, and also illustrates how pedestrian movement (from onsite observations and technical analysis) appears to decrease along and towards



the southern end of the street which is closely linked to proximity to public transport stops (train, tube and bus), decline in number of destinations and footfall generators and blank building facades. The net result appears that Baker Street at present does not fulfil its role as a primary pedestrian connector between the anchors of Oxford Street and Marlyebone Road.

- • • Intensity of people
- Effective footway widths



Built contribution: Heritage architecture

Baker Street was planned and created between approximately 1750 and 1800 as part of the highly disciplined and formal layout of the Portman Estate which expanded from Portman Square in a grid pattern spreading north and west during the Georgian era.

It formed a key connection between the Roman highway of Oxford Street and the newly created New Road, laterly Marlyebone Road. Many of the plot developments started from the south to gradually enclose and define this street.

It is therefore the buildings themselves which help define the character, activity and ambition of a street. Baker Street is covered in part by Conservation Area status. Thus there are a number of elegant period buildings dating from the Georgian development, particularly to the northern end of the street that offer a grandeur and heritage character. These characterful elevations of stock brick and white stucco provide a familiar and distinctive 'London' character to the street.



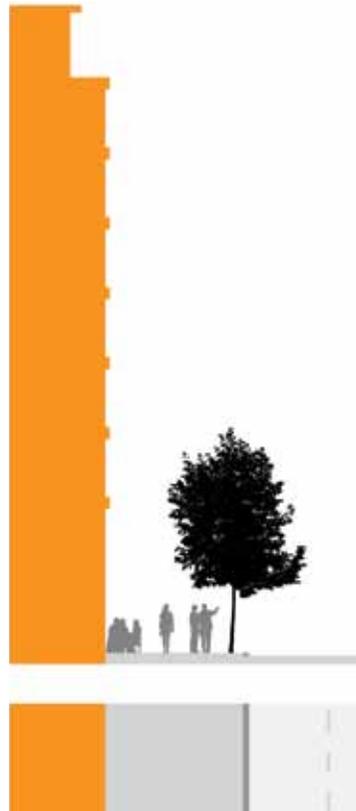
Section: Illustrative scale of heritage elevations

- Heritage architecture
- Portman Estate Conservation Area



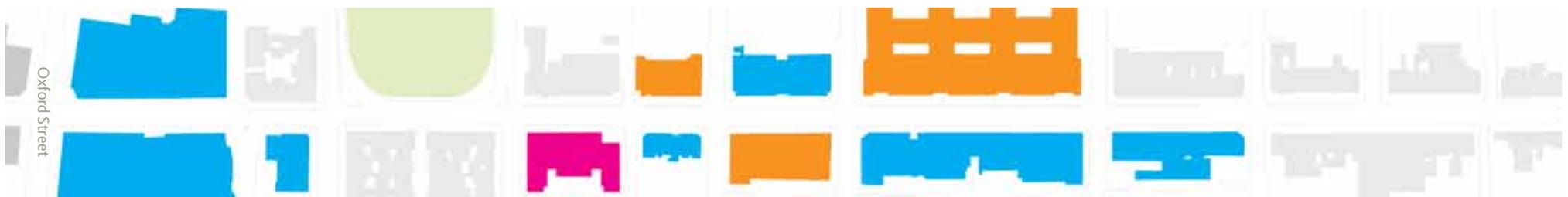
Built contribution: Contemporary architecture

Outside of this conservation boundary, there are a number of more recent twentieth century development blocks offering retail and offices at ground floor and residential use above. Development change has been undertaken on a number of these blocks, as either refurbishment or rebuild, to introduce a contemporary architectural character. Recent developments introduce a contemporary character to the middle and southern part of Baker Street, notably No 55 (former Marks and Spencer company offices), and present attractive facades and flexible floorplates to encourage new commercial tenants. Not only do these new developments provide a useful injection of footfall and quality to the street, but their contribution to the adjacent streetscape is creating a considerable improvement.



Section: Illustrative scale of contemporary elevations

- Recent development
- Under development
- Other buildings outside of the conservation area



Green Appeal

The Baker Street Quarter presents a relatively green character.

The striking presence of the overhanging trees contained within the historic Portman Square, (the classic English Garden Square set one street back from the bustling Oxford Street) effectively 'bookends' the southern end of Baker Street. The urban greenery extends northwards through the regular (albeit 'broken') grid of street tree planting.

Onsite observations have noted the presence of two predominant tree species along the street, both offering a lasting contribution to the perception of an inviting and pleasant green street.

The species of tree are outlined and identified on the plan below:

- › **Alder** (*Alnus cordata / glutinosa*), a characterful and tall tree, currently providing a canopy height of approximately 15m. Overtime, these trees have grown away from built elevations to 'lean' into the street, providing in places a green tunnel effect.
- › **London Plane** (*Platanus acerifolia*), a more familiar tree to London's streets, tolerant of the demands of the urban microclimate, and generally more recently planted in association with redeveloped building projects. These trees at present are generally 12m in height although will mature to double this height and may well mature to a similar leaning form as their neighbouring Alder trees.



- Birch (*Betula*) x 1
- London Plane (*Platanus*) x 6
- Alder (*Alnus*) x 19



Summary

Baker Street presents a number of issues and challenges related to use, vitality and function along its length. The points outlined below are presented as a summary of the current 'streetlife' of Baker Street and capture both the physical constraints and perceptions of the street, as experienced from on site observations and desktop analysis. Further analysis is contained within the accompanying Traffic report from SKM Colin Buchanan.

Issues

- › Wide carriageway and disproportionate space given to vehicular traffic
- › High traffic speeds and division caused by traffic density
- › Narrow footways
- › Noise and Pollution
- › Inactive frontages along Orchard Street
- › Tide marks between new public realm and areas in need of improvement
- › Bus routings, space between bus stops and catchments

Perceptions

- › Street dominated by vehicle traffic infrastructure
- › Busy bus and coach route
- › High volumes of taxis
- › Poor pedestrian and cycle connectivity
- › Mixed public realm quality and lack of continuity
- › Lack of trees and green space
- › No reason to pass through it
- › A long walk to nearest attractions

Problems

- › Congested footways
- › Under-utilised carriageway space, yet protected as a strategic through-route
- › Barriers to movement and street clutter
- › Lack of cycle facilities
- › Parking demand on Sundays and pedestrian visibility



Uncertain gateways / entrances to Baker Street



Poor quality materials and interfaces between public and private



Poor quality pedestrian crossing points



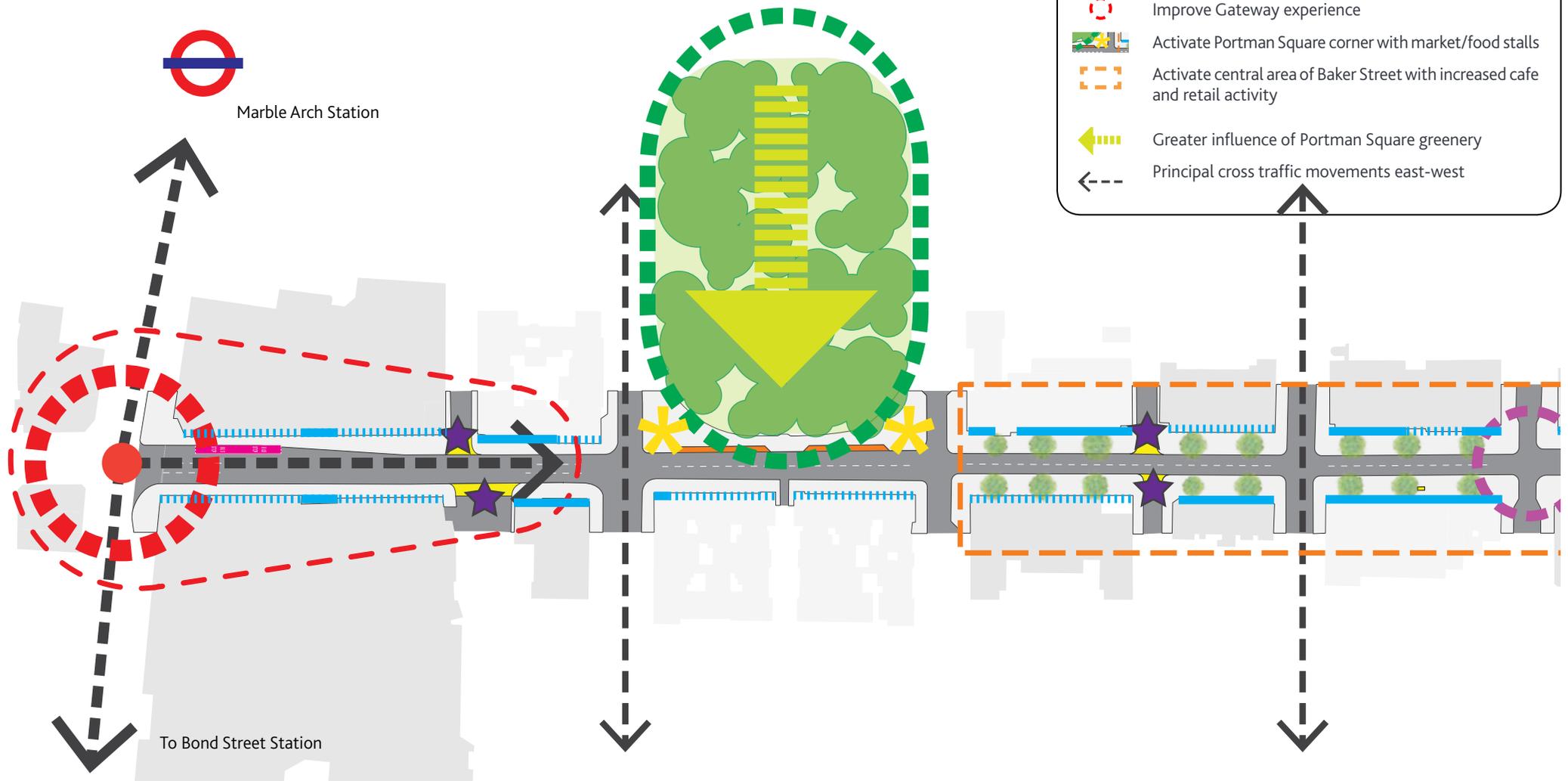
Narrow pavements and congestion



Perception of wide, dense lanes of traffic

Summary

Opportunities for improvement



Legend

-  Active frontage
-  Inactive frontage to be addressed
-  Parking lay-by
-  Raised pedestrian level crossing
-  Improve pedestrian cross movements
-  Improve Gateway experience
-  Activate Portman Square corner with market/food stalls
-  Activate central area of Baker Street with increased cafe and retail activity
-  Greater influence of Portman Square greenery
-  Principal cross traffic movements east-west



Street tree planting to create a green boulevard



Improved wayfinding at key junctions



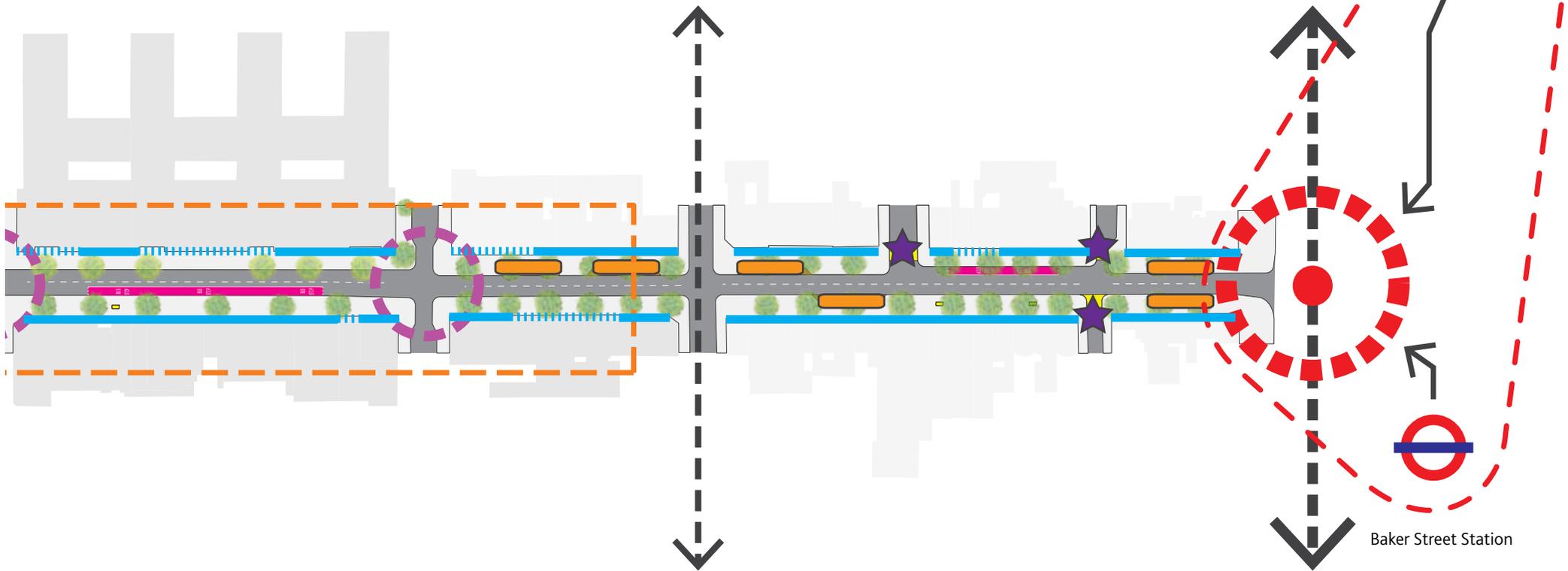
Shared footway parking and loading pads



Raised pedestrian crossings



Activate corners with possible market stalls



BAKER STREET QUARTER / VISION

Urban Realm and Transport Study

The opportunity exists to reinforce Baker Street as an important strategic connector and landmark street within Central London. The following vision section considers these opportunities for change, presenting traffic based solutions in response to the perceived need to re-balance the Street to make it a more vibrant, successful and characterful destination to commercial, residential and visitors alike.

This strategic approach identifies a series of projects and interventions as quick wins and short, medium and long term improvements and offers a suite of initiatives that will underpin a coordinated transport and public realm approach to the revitalisation of Baker Street as one of London's premier landmark streets.



One way enhancement scheme - short term

A low cost initiative that could be started at an early opportunity would be the de-cluttering of the street, rationalising street furniture and localised footway buildouts and side street crossovers. This would allow for more efficient pedestrian circulation and improvement of the overall streetscene, which provides public realm, and thus economic, benefit. This would involve a detailed street audit, thorough review of all infrastructure and appropriate redesign.

Immediate quick wins:

Pavement decluttering exercise

to create clearer, safer and more welcoming streetscape

Carriageway surfacing dressing

to create and complete the urban boulevard character

Pavement upgrade from asphalt to concrete flag paving (ASP)

to introduce a scale, rhythm and uniform quality to the entire street, to include paved private forecourts

Short term benefits

Beyond the immediate quick wins, further short term options would be to improve pedestrian amenity by reducing pedestrian crossing distances and ensuring that designated crossing points are provided along the desire lines. Short term options will allow for more efficient pedestrian circulation in areas of high pedestrian demand potentially sharing space between parking/loading and footway functions and also act as measures to begin to address the link and place functionality of the street.

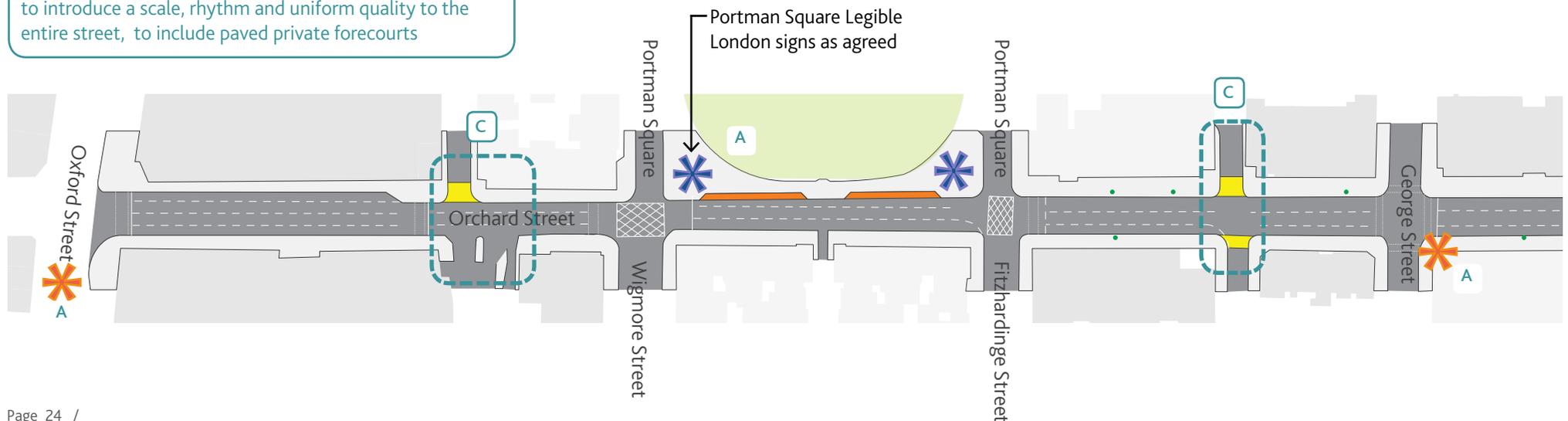
As these immediate and short term measures are unlikely to affect the operation of Baker Street to any great degree, they are unlikely to be subject to any significant (TfL) approvals procedures, and could be delivered without delay (subject to the 2012 Olympics).

Such further short term options are summarised in the adjacent boxes and the diagram below:

Signage replacement strategy



- Replacement of the traditional signage at Crawford St & Marylebone Road
- New wayfinding signage at Blandford Street, Portman Square and Oxford Street
- A focus on orientation to Baker Street from the key East – West entry routes





Raised table crossings to side streets



Wide uncluttered footpaths



Upgrade paving to provide uniformity to entire street

Footway build-outs and shared use B

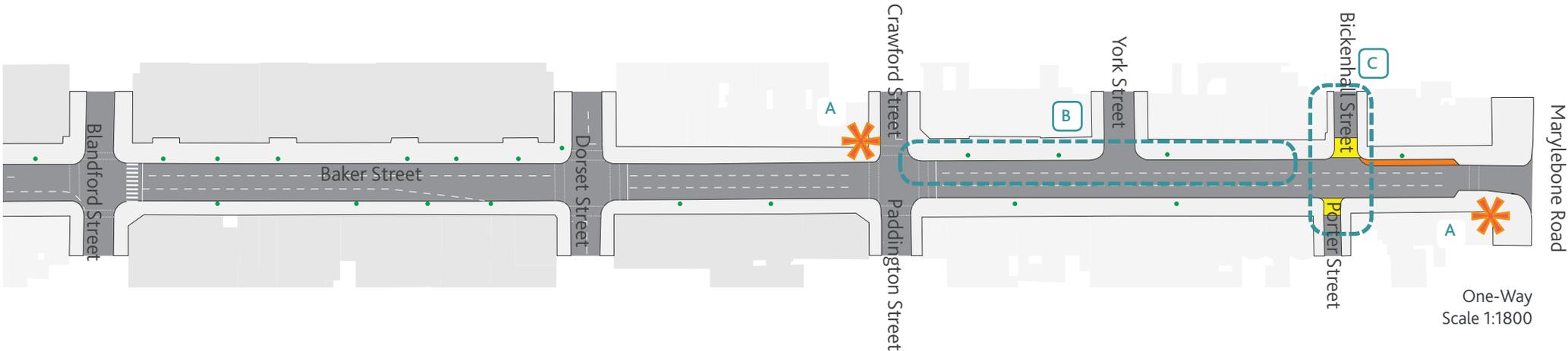
Introduced on western footway either side of York Street

Granite sett infill or tarmac anti-slip surface treatment (inkeeping with Portman Square proposals) will visually reduce the perceived carriageway width and, when not in use, may provide informal extension to pedestrian space.

Raised table crossings to side streets C

to improve pedestrian flow along predominant direction of movement at:

- Porter Street
- Bickenhall Street (to include footway buildout)
- Portman Close
- Robert Adam Street



One-way enhancement scheme - medium term

Medium term options seek to introduce more significant interventions that are more costly, and would be likely to result in some impact on the operation of the street (while retaining the one-way traffic management arrangement).

These medium term options (summarised in the adjacent boxes and on the diagram below) address the overall public realm issues of the street while having minimal impact on network wide operations and thus are aimed at being highly deliverable. These options would significantly change the characteristics of Baker Street by rebalancing the street and providing more space for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.

Medium term benefits

Betterment

Medium term initiatives re-allocating roadscape and simplifying streetscape

Benefits this brings

- Reducing traffic speeds and increasing road safety
- Improving conditions and ease of movement for pedestrians
- Streetscape enhancement with minimal alteration to and impact on traffic management and bus operations
- Providing capacity for outdoor uses & future growth in pedestrian trips
- Re-balancing and changing character of the street
- Synergies and flexibility allowing conversion to two-way in future
- Higher quality urban realm

Reduction to two lanes of traffic D

South of Paddington Street
Carriageway width reduced to 8.3m on average

Reallocating roadscape and reducing the majority of Baker Street to one running lane for general traffic with a public transport lane (for buses, cyclists, taxis and coaches).

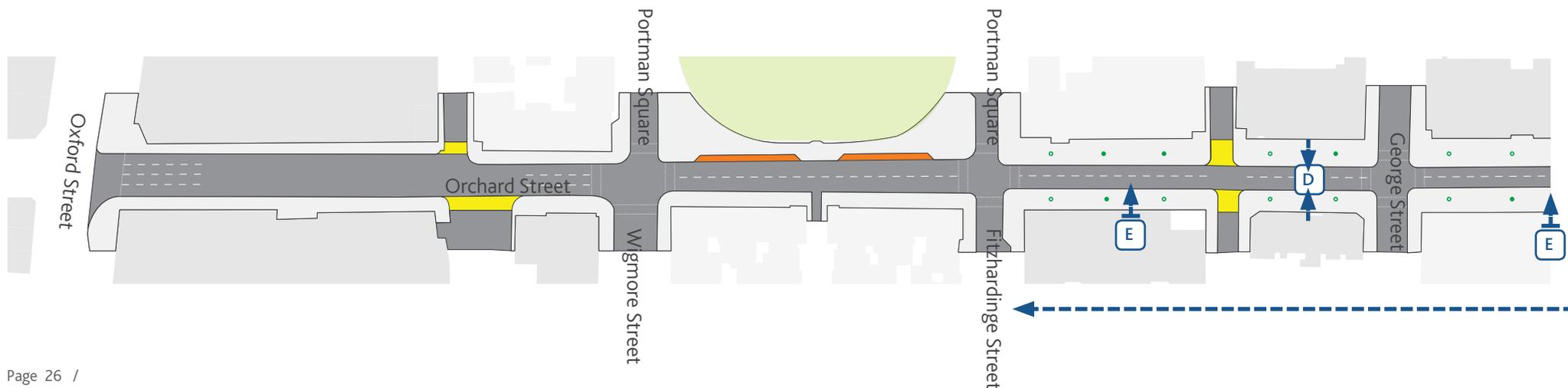
Widened eastern pavement along Baker Street E

Average pavement increase of between 1.5-2m
Will provide much needed pavement width and improved pedestrian comfort and safety levels

Simplify the streetscape F

Raised junction crossings, with potential traffic signal removal and diagonal crossings at the following junctions:

Blandford and Baker Street
Dorset and Baker Street



New tree planting ● Existing ○ Proposed

To enhance the distinctive green appeal of the street to create and complete the urban boulevard character

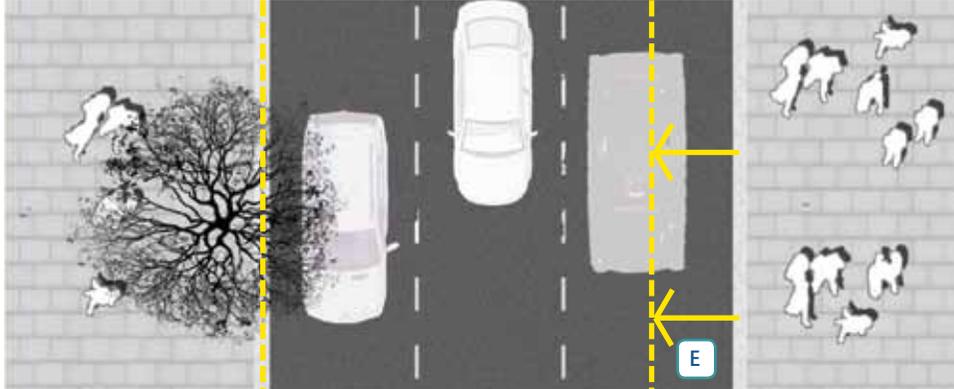
Shared use footways & pavement build-outs G

Will allow the establishment of defined loading & parking bays (2.2m wide bays, approximately)
Granite sett infill or tarmac anti-slip surface treatment (inkeeping with Portman Square proposals) will visually reduce the perceived carriageway width and, when not in use, may provide informal extension to pedestrian space

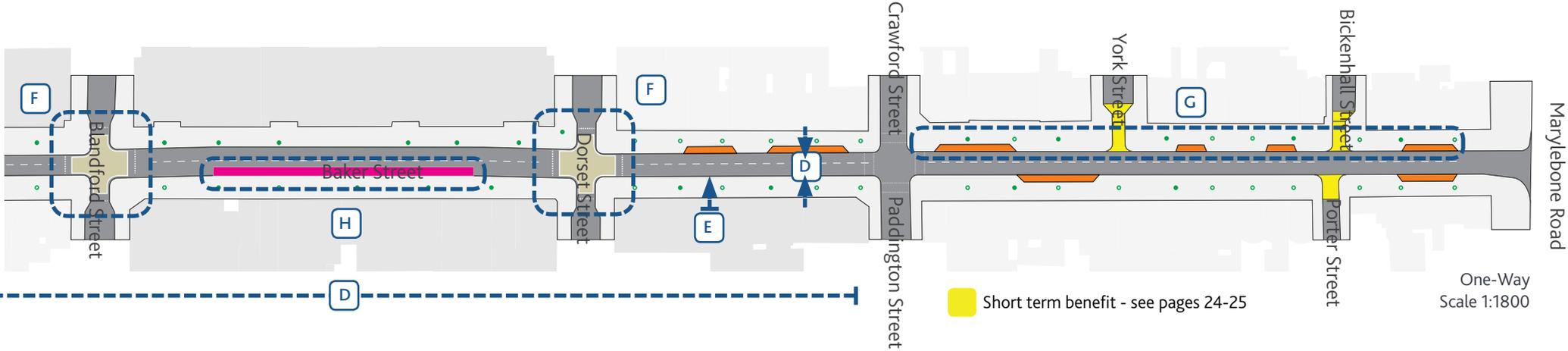
Bus Stop redistribution H

Relocated southbound bus stop opposite No. 55 Baker Street
Removes congestion at northern end of the street and creates a better distance between stops from Marylebone Road to Orchard Street.
Encourages activity and destination towards the heart of the street.

Existing three lanes, one way

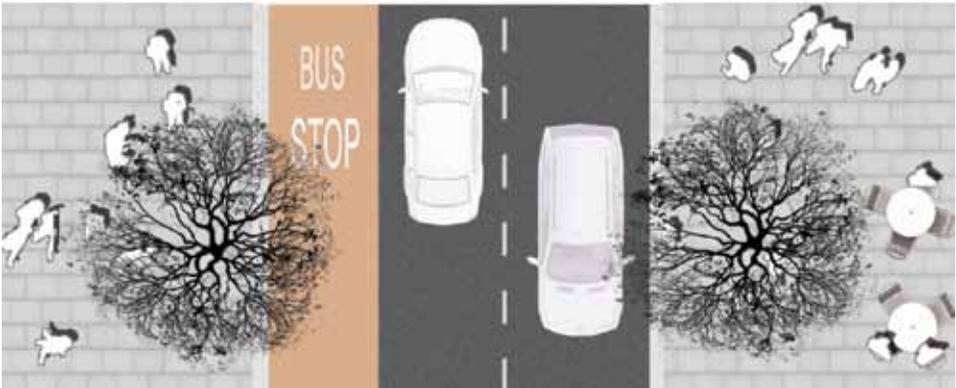


Proposed one-way enhancement

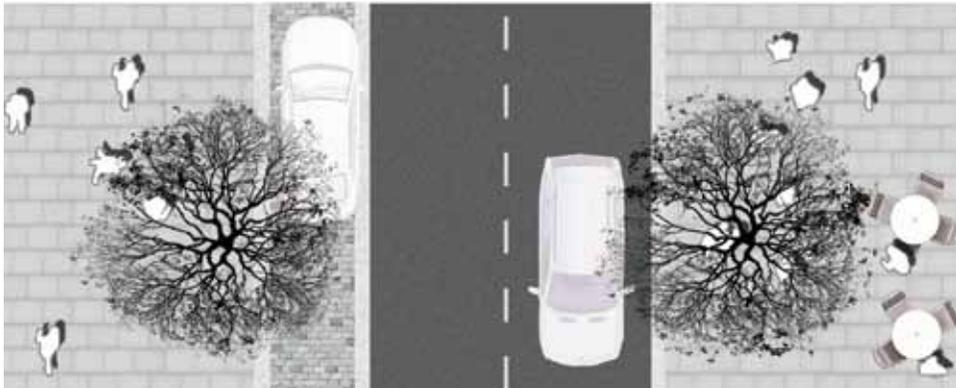


Short term benefit - see pages 24-25

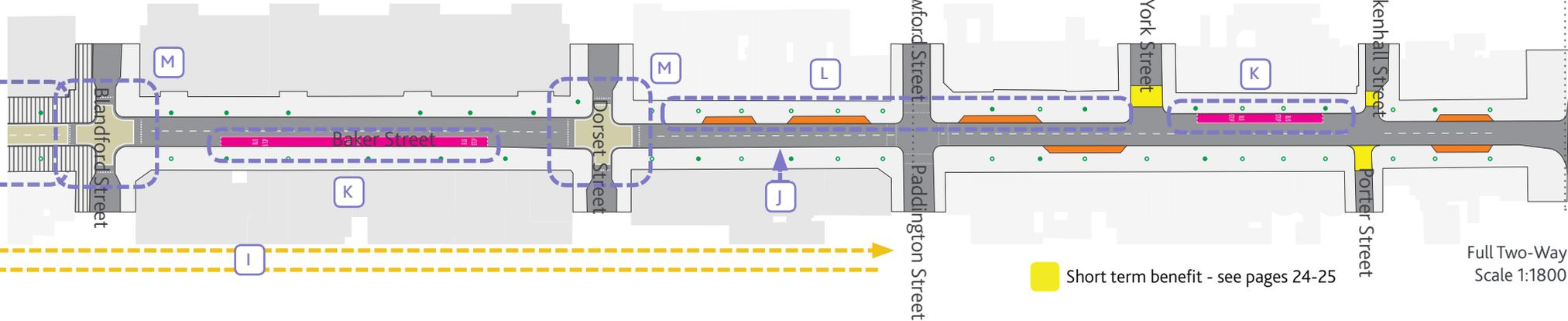
One-Way
Scale 1:1800



Proposed two way working with north bound bus stop



Proposed two way working with defined loading bay and pavement buildout

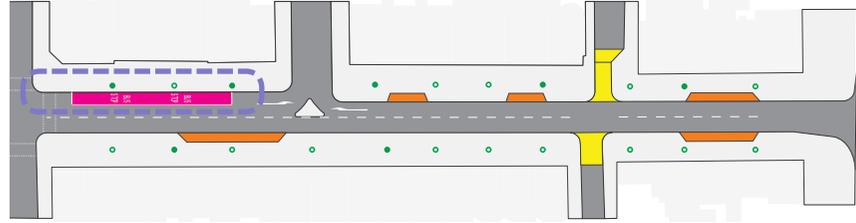


Bus Stop redistribution

Repositioned northbound bus stops from Gloucester Place to Baker Street south of York Street and north of Portman Square.
 Rationalisation and removal of southbound bus stops.
 Relocated southbound bus stop opposite No. 55 Baker Street

Reduction to two lanes of traffic south of Paddington Street

Carriageway width reduced to 8.3m on average
 Traffic island at Baker Street / York Street



Short term benefit - see pages 24-25

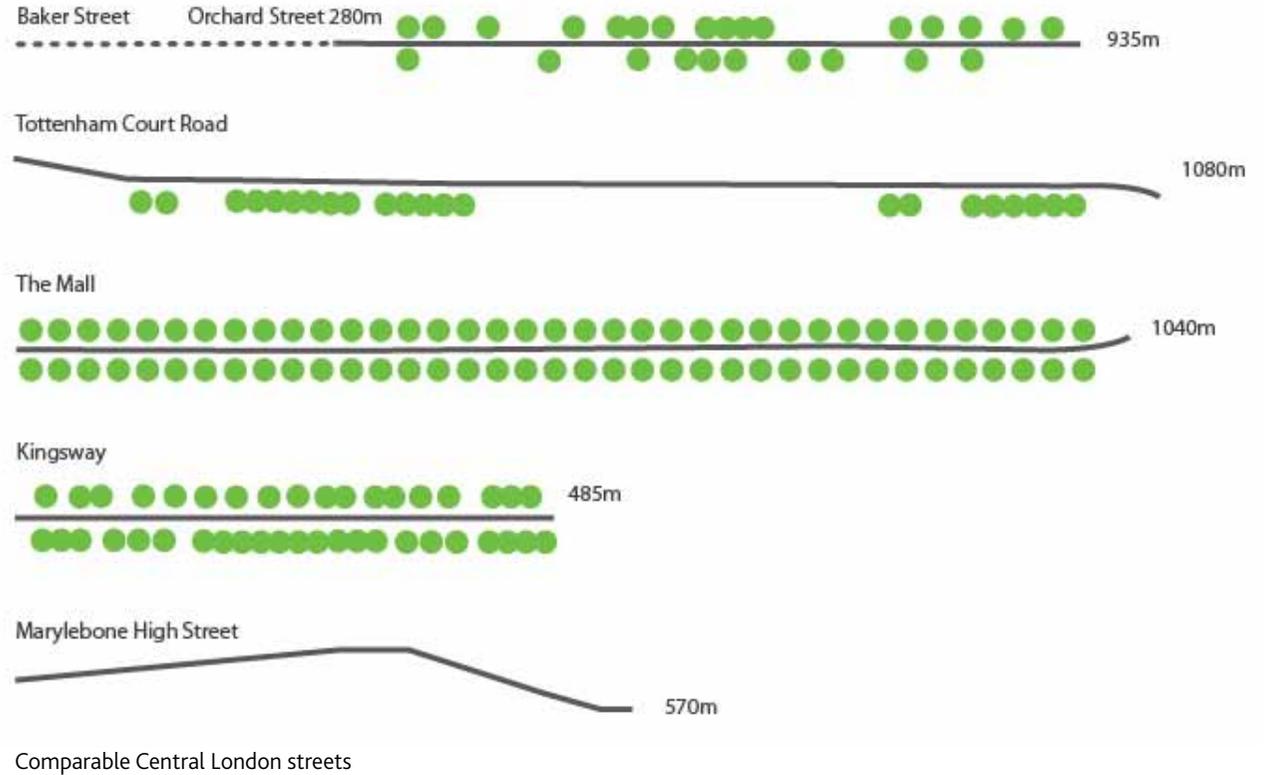
Partial Two-Way
 Scale 1:1800

Full Two-Way
 Scale 1:1800

A Green Boulevard

The opportunity of pavement increase, as presented by the one way enhancement scenario (medium term) and applicable to the longer term two way working proposals, significantly releases space to consider the enhancement of the 'green appeal' of Baker Street. Considered positioning of new trees on both sides of the street can develop a green boulevard along the entire length of Baker Street, anchored by Portman Square and connecting northwards towards Regents Park. In doing so, Baker Street can become known for its green character and become one of the few planned green boulevards of Central London and set itself apart from many of its direct and adjacent streetscape competitors as a pleasant and welcoming address with an enhanced and distinctive appeal.

The adjacent diagrams highlight how the planting of 34 new trees (subject to underground constraints) on an already existing grid can establish this new boulevard vision.



Tottenham Court Road



The Mall



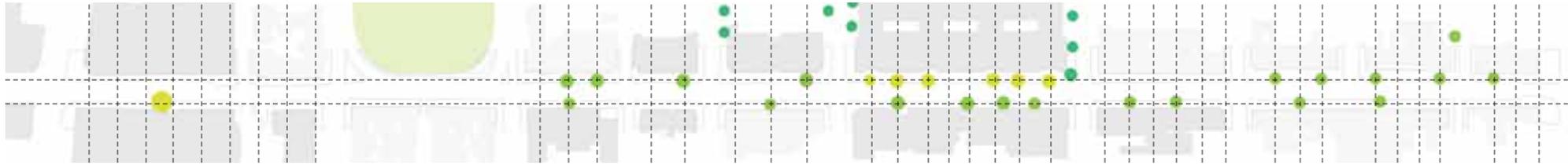
Kingsway



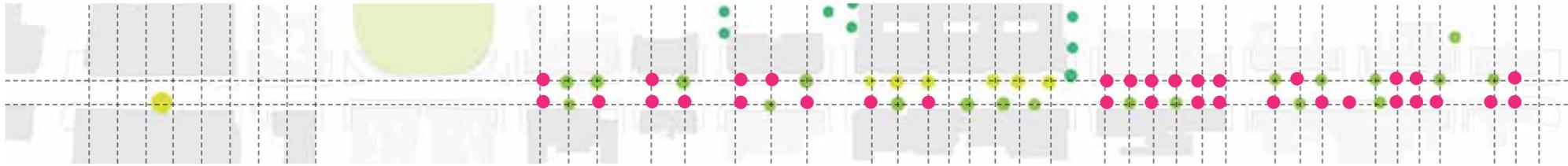
Marylebone High Street



Location of existing trees



Establishing a tree planting grid



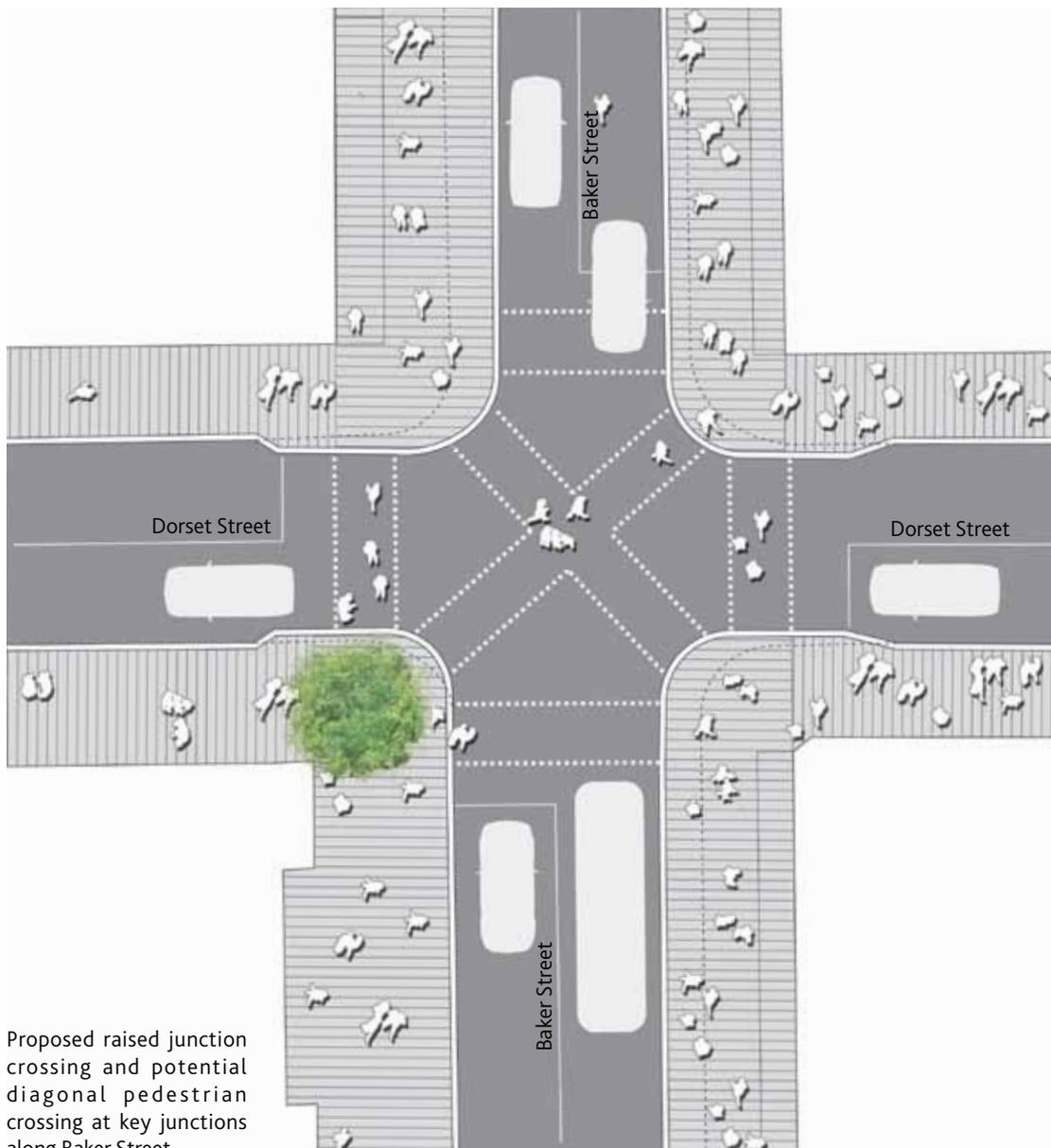
Identifying locations within the grid for new tree planting

Simplify the streetscape

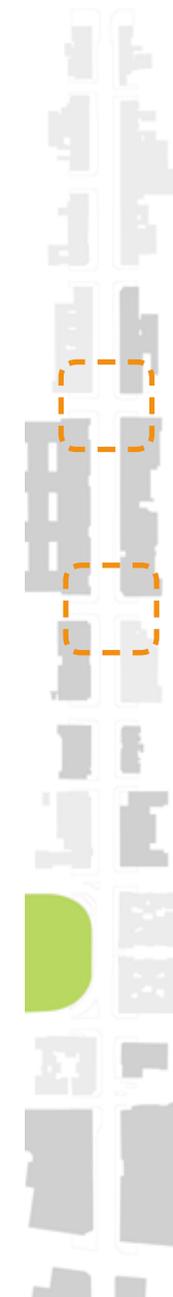
Raised junction crossings, with potential traffic signal removal and diagonal crossings may be considered at the following junctions:

- Blandford and Baker Street
- Dorset and Baker Street

Such improvements in either the medium term (one-way enhancement) or longer term two-way working scenario will aid all-movement pedestrian crossing patterns and respond to perceived desire lines. In doing so Baker Street can become more responsive to pedestrian needs.



Proposed raised junction crossing and potential diagonal pedestrian crossing at key junctions along Baker Street



Key location plan



Proposed raised table and diagonal crossing at junction of Baker Street and Dorset Street

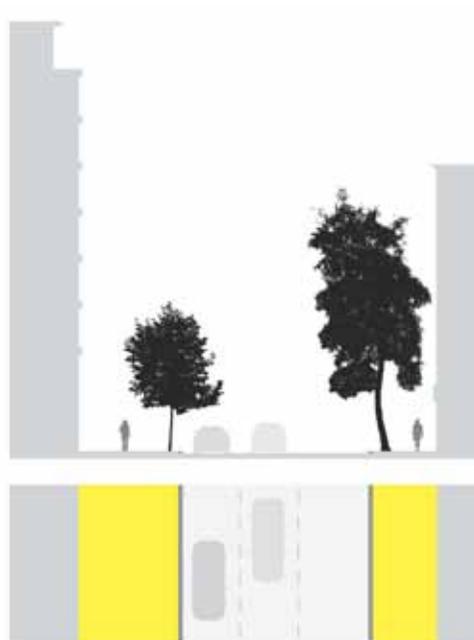


Existing Baker Street - Dorset Street junction

Bus Stop redistribution

Rationalisation and removal of southbound bus stops to the north of Baker Street will release vital footway space for pedestrians. Relocation of this southbound bus stop opposite No. 55 Baker Street on the eastern side of the street will create a destination and footfall generator in the heart of the street to serve the office and retail units.

The proposed Eastern kerb line build out is maintained with carriageway width allowing vehicles to overtake at bus stops.



Existing 3 lane Baker Street



Proposed 2 lane Baker Street with relocated southbound bus stop



Key location plan

New tree planting

Extended Pavement

Two way traffic



Existing 3 lane Baker Street with narrow pavement and congested street furniture

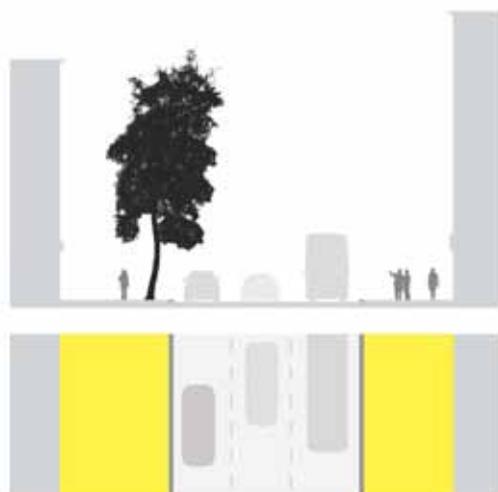


Proposed 2 lane Baker Street with relocated southbound bus stop and increased pavement space

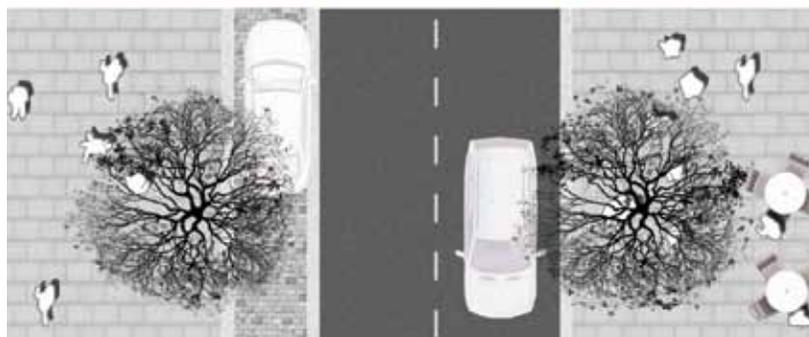
Shared Use footways & pavement buildouts

Maintaining the provision of on street parking and loading bays for delivery is critical in serving the functional needs of Baker Street. However the accommodation and incorporation of these lay-bys within the language of the pavement footway will present a more unified streetscape

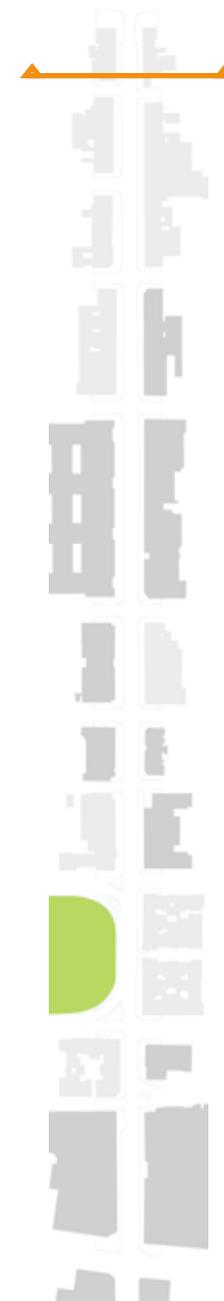
Defined loading and parking bays of approximately 2.2m in width are possible in both the medium term (one-way enhancement) or longer term two-way working scenario. Granite sett infill or tarmac anti-slip surface treatment will visually reduce the perceived carriageway width and, when not in use, may provide informal extension to pedestrian space.



Existing 3 lane Baker Street



Proposed 2 lane Baker Street with shared use footways along the western pavement



Key location plan

New tree planting

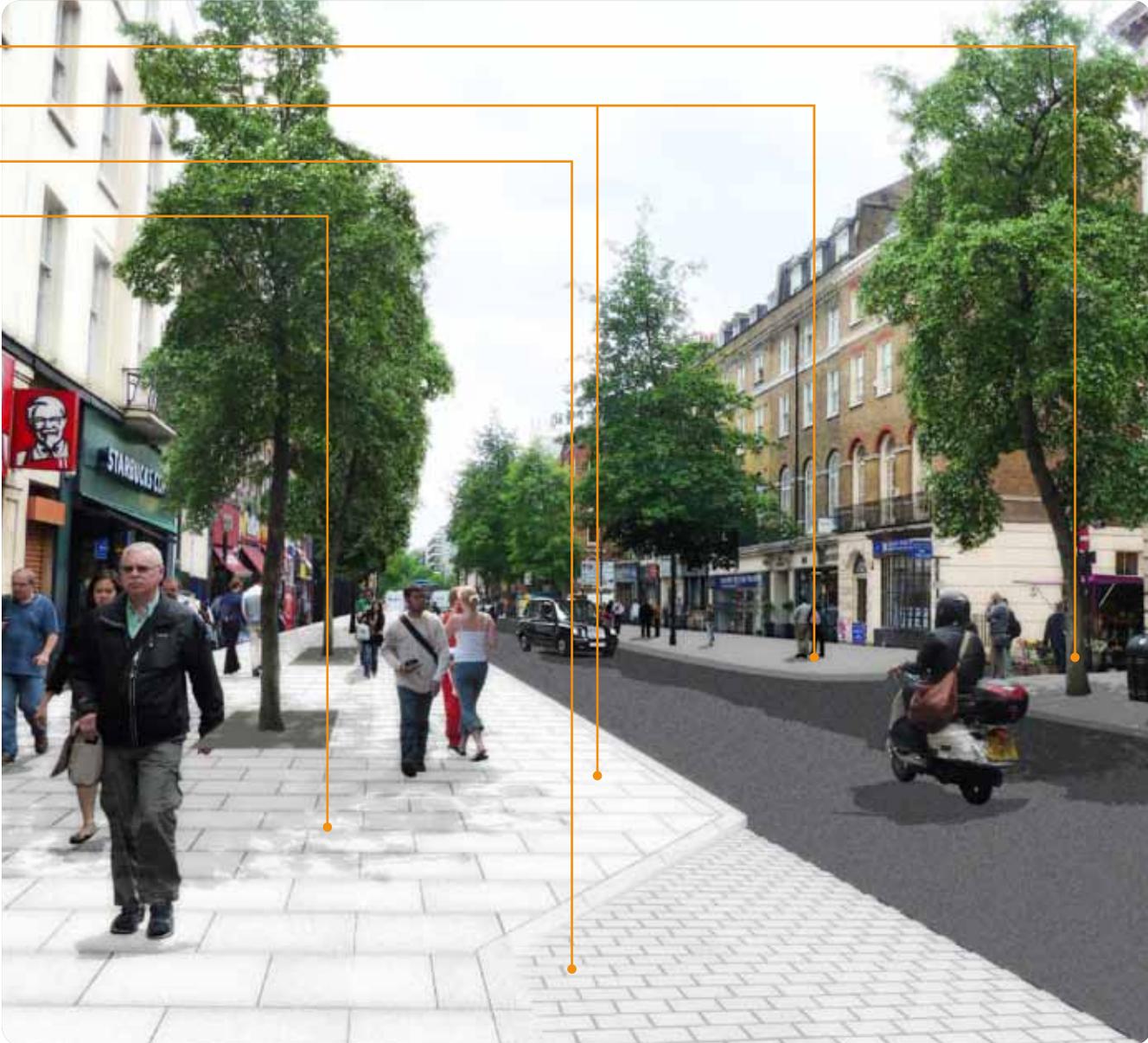
Extended Pavement

Settled loading bay

Decluttered streetscape



Existing 3 lane Baker Street (eastern footway before Porter Street)

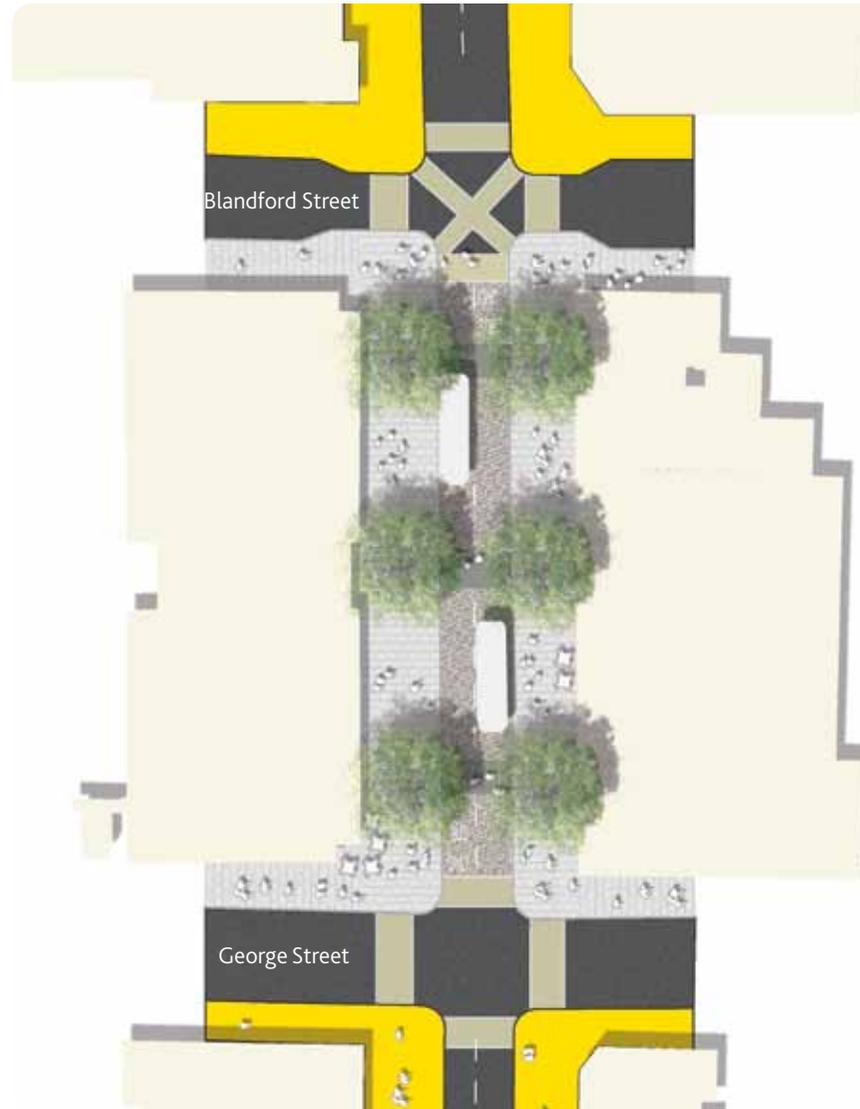


Proposed 2 lane Baker Street with shared use footway on the eastern footway before Porter Street following southbound bus stop relocation

Pedestrian zone

As part of the proposed two-way working proposal and the need to reduce traffic speed and vehicular traffic density along Baker Street, there is an opportunity to invest in the public realm character in the heart of the street with the creation of a pedestrian zone between George and Blandford Street junctions. This intervention would introduce traffic calming measures to allow buses and cyclists only to pass through. Potential level surfacing may also be introduced to define a new pedestrian priority zone. Private vehicles would be required to turn off Baker Street on approach to this zone, thus reducing traffic speed and density in the middle of the street (refer to technical traffic study report).

Maintaining improved footway widths established in the medium one-way enhancement proposals, this paved space can be furnished with new tree planting, street furniture, signage and ground floor retail activity to establish a central 'node' or destination along Baker Street.



Key location plan



Proposed pedestrian zone along Baker Street between George Street and Blandford Street



Existing Baker Street - George Street junction

Future flexibility

The proposed traffic and urban realm strategies present a range of scenarios for the rebalancing of Baker Street, to create a more inviting, vibrant and successful landmark street in Central London.

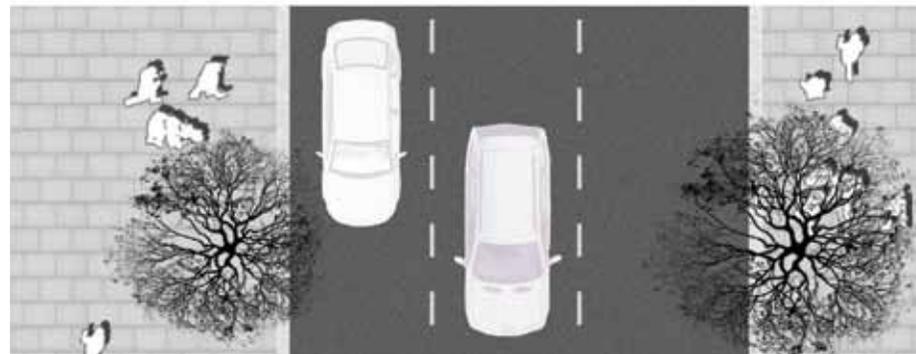
Throughout the design and consultation process, the Gillespies and SKM Colin Buchanan team has been keen to design in future flexibility along the length of the street, such that in the future any initial short term improvements to pedestrian and traffic movements are not redundant and may in the course of future traffic changes, remain in place and not be sacrificial. Much of this consistency stems from the desire to establish viable pavement gains and kerb realignments.

The following diagrams present the future flexibility inbuilt within the Baker Street vision if an enhanced one way scenario were to change to accommodate the potential two way traffic proposals.

Common and consistent elements:

There is consistency in proposed kerb line and pavement widening. This allows the introduction of new tree planting and general street furniture and lighting columns to be considered with confidence. One particular reason to allow this common kerb line relates to the proposed relocation of south bound bus stops, particularly in the current one way scenario to be located directly opposite the redeveloped No.55 Baker Street. This critically releases pavement space to safer standards to the northern end of the street.

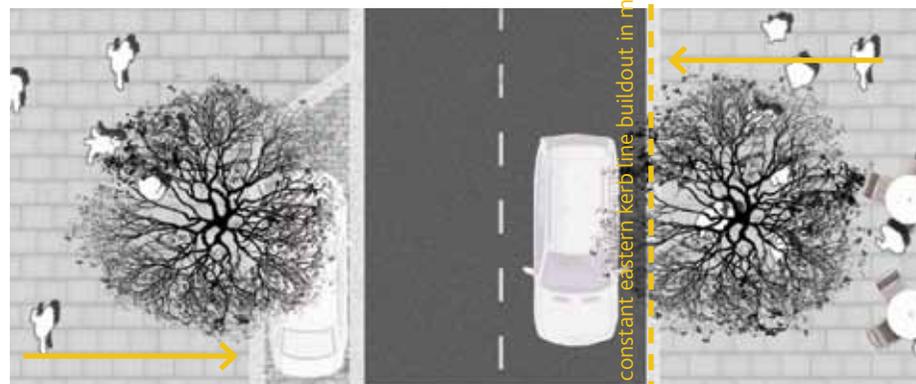
Existing one way, 3 lane working scenario



Potential carriageway narrowing with eastern pavement buildout and constant eastern kerb line



Potential carriageway narrowing with shared use footways



Summary of Options

Three streetscape options have been explored for Baker Street which would significantly change its characteristics, increasing footway space and improving pedestrian connectivity and amenity.

The short to medium term options would optimise carriageway space to better meet demand and reduce through traffic. Shared space parking and loading areas would reduce potential conflicts with southbound traffic. These options would not require any signalling changes, significant traffic management or major changes in bus operation. Traffic speeds are also expected to fall due to side friction from the reduction in carriageway space and commensurate streetscape and public realm improvements.

Conversion to a two-way option has been considered, with initial assessments having been made concerning traffic management measures, traffic re-assignment calculations and junction capacity assessments.

At this stage, the partial two-way option (identified on page 29 of this report) is the recommended long term traffic management strategy subject to further consideration of the impact on traffic and bus operations; a number of key junctions would become over-saturated in the full two-way option and this is not recommended.

Careful consideration has been given to potential synergies and flexibility between the options to allow conversion from one option to another in the future. It would therefore be feasible to implement the one-way option, with its lane reduction, widened pavements particularly to the eastern side of the street and new tree planting, with a view to implementing conversion to two-way operation in the future which would require detailed traffic modelling. In this way Baker Street can achieve a successful rebalancing of use and movement into the future and enhance its distinctive character as one of Central London’s greenest, more pedestrian friendly and better connected landmark streets.

| | ONE WAY ENHANCEMENT | | TWO WAY |
|---|---------------------|-------------|-----------|
| | Short term | Medium term | Long term |
| Pavement decluttering exercise | ● | ○ | ○ |
| Carriageway surfacing dressing | ● | ○ | ○ |
| Pavement upgrade from asphalt to concrete flag paving (ASP) | ● | ○ | ○ |
| Signage replacement strategy | ● | ○ | ○ |
| Footway build-outs | ● | ○ | ○ |
| Raised table crossings to side streets | ● | ○ | ○ |
| Reduction to two lanes of traffic (consistent kerbline) | | ● | ● |
| Bus stop redistribution (relocate southbound bus stop) | | ● | ● |
| Widened eastern pavement along Baker Street | | ● | ● |
| Simplify the streetscape | | ● | ● |
| traffic signal removal | | | ● |
| pedestrian diagonal crossings | | | ● |
| raised table junctions | | ● | ● |
| Shared Use footways & pavement build-outs | | ● | ● |
| New tree planting | | ● | ○ |
| Pedestrian zone | | | ● |

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