

Seven Dials – Decision Report

Safe travel in Camden Scheme

London Borough of Camden

Safe Travel in Camden - Seven Dials Decision Report

London Borough of Camden

QA RECORD:

DOCUMENT REF	7000TR01	Rev	1.0
DRAFTED BY	Ramsay Do	Date	3 June 2020
CHECKED BY	Jason Suffiad	Date	3 June 2020
APPROVED BY	Jason Suffiad	Date	3 June 2020
ELECTRONIC LOCATION	B:\Library\Document Templates\2019 Rebrand\Report Template V4_4.Docx		

This document has been produced by Norman Rourke Pryme for London Borough of Camden for the provision of the REPORT TITLE. This document is for the purpose of the intended recipient only. No liability will be accepted for unauthorised distribution to any third party without written agreement in advance.

CONTENTS

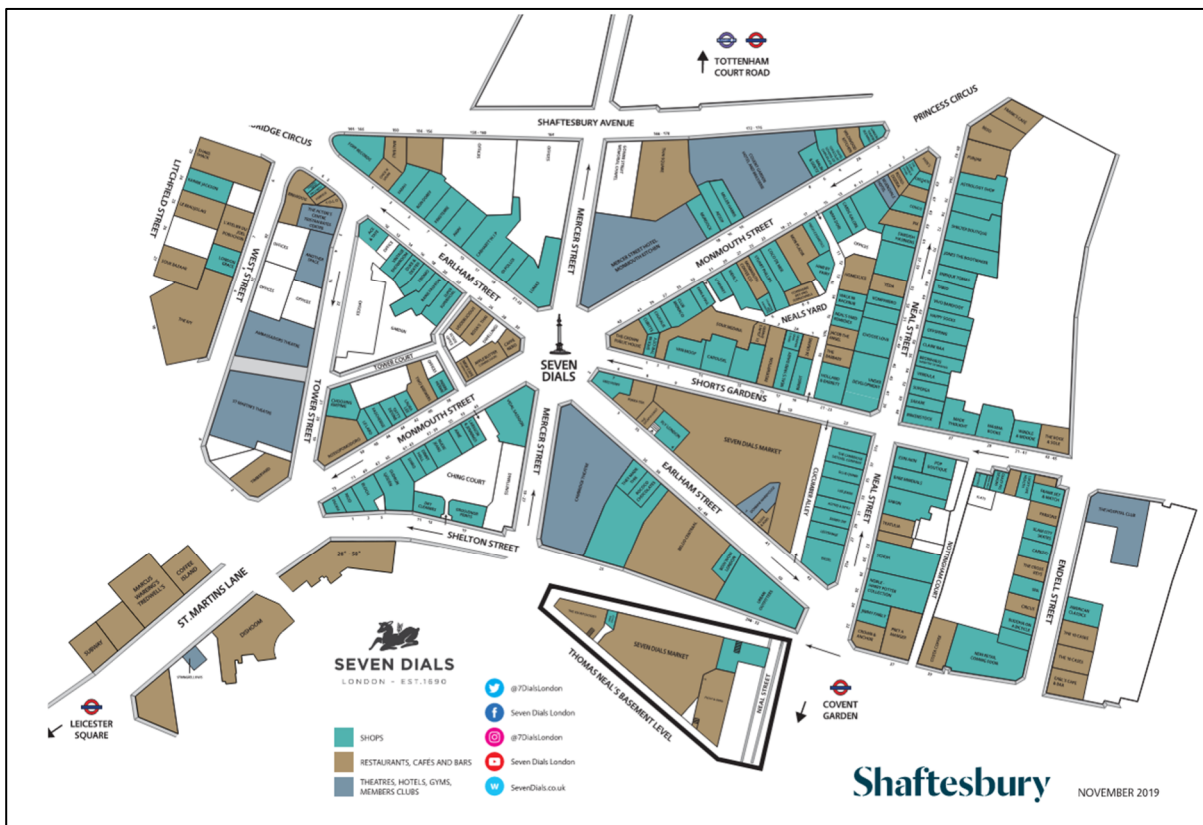
1	Introduction	1
1.1	Introduction	1
2	Proposed scheme & Design	2
2.1	Footway Widths	2
2.2	Road Closures And Through-Motor Traffic Direction Changes	2
2.3	Parking Bays	4
2.4	Market Stalls	5
2.5	Neal’s Yard	6
2.6	Dockless Bike Hire and Public Cycle Storage	6
2.7	Fit with criteria	7
2.8	Proposed implementation method	9
2.9	Cost and funding source	9
2.10	Notification/letter drop area	9
3	Next Steps	10
3.1	Next steps to progress scheme	10
	Figure 1.1: Map of Seven Dials area (<i>source – Shaftesbury PLC</i>)	1
	Figure 2.1: Map showing Seven Dials area with inadequate footway width for social distancing with the exception of Shaftesbury Avenue and Neal Street	2
	Figure 2.2: Map of scheme timed closures and reversing direction of traffic	3
	Figure 2.3: Proposed streets available for parking in blue with Scheme in place	5
	Figure 2.4: proposed egress and ingress routes for Neals Yard	6
	Table 2.1: Proposed Change in Number of Resident Parking Bays for The Seven Dials Area	4
	Table 3.1: Fit With Criteria	7
	Appendix A: Parking Permit Information – Seven Dials	
	Appendix B: Stakeholder Correspondence	

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 The proposal set out in this report seeks to respond to the safe travel and transport needs of people in Camden in light of Covid-19. A scheme for the Seven Dials area has been developed which responds specifically to the immediate and developing issues surrounding safe travel for all modes of travel in what is a busy mixed-use Central London location. Seven Dials is home to over 150 independent retail and restaurant / café businesses as well as three hotels, three theatres, hundreds of office workers and over 150 residential apartments (www.sevendials.co.uk).
- 1.1.2 Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak public realm improvements being discussed with Camden Council in order to improve pedestrian safety and amenity as Seven Dials suffers from rat-running traffic whilst also being a busy commercial location with high pedestrian footfall.
- 1.1.3 The vast majority of buildings in seven dials are owned and leased by Shaftesbury plc. Due to this level of ownership Shaftesbury provide 24-hour, 365-day security provision as well as other estate services and regular communication with occupiers and stakeholders. This level of control will ensure any measures introduced can be managed and communicated throughout the area

FIGURE 1.1: MAP OF SEVEN DIALS AREA (SOURCE – SHAFTESBURY PLC)



- 1.1.4 The following elements have been assessed for this scheme to allow for safe travel in this area

2 PROPOSED SCHEME & DESIGN

2.1 FOOTWAY WIDTHS

2.1.1 According to University College London study, roads with an average of at least 6m of non-road space are considered adequate for the public to adhere to social distancing guidelines. The streets within Seven Dials area do not have enough footway width to adhere to social distancing guidelines as shown in Figure 2.1. below. For further information please refer to <https://www.underscorestreets.com/social-distancing>.

FIGURE 2.1: MAP SHOWING SEVEN DIALS AREA WITH INADEQUATE FOOTWAY WIDTH FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SHAFTESBURY AVENUE AND NEAL STREET



2.2 ROAD CLOSURES AND THROUGH-MOTOR TRAFFIC DIRECTION CHANGES

2.2.1 To allow for adequate footway widths for pedestrians and cyclists, the scheme will have timed closure points to through-motor traffic on the following roads around Seven Dials:

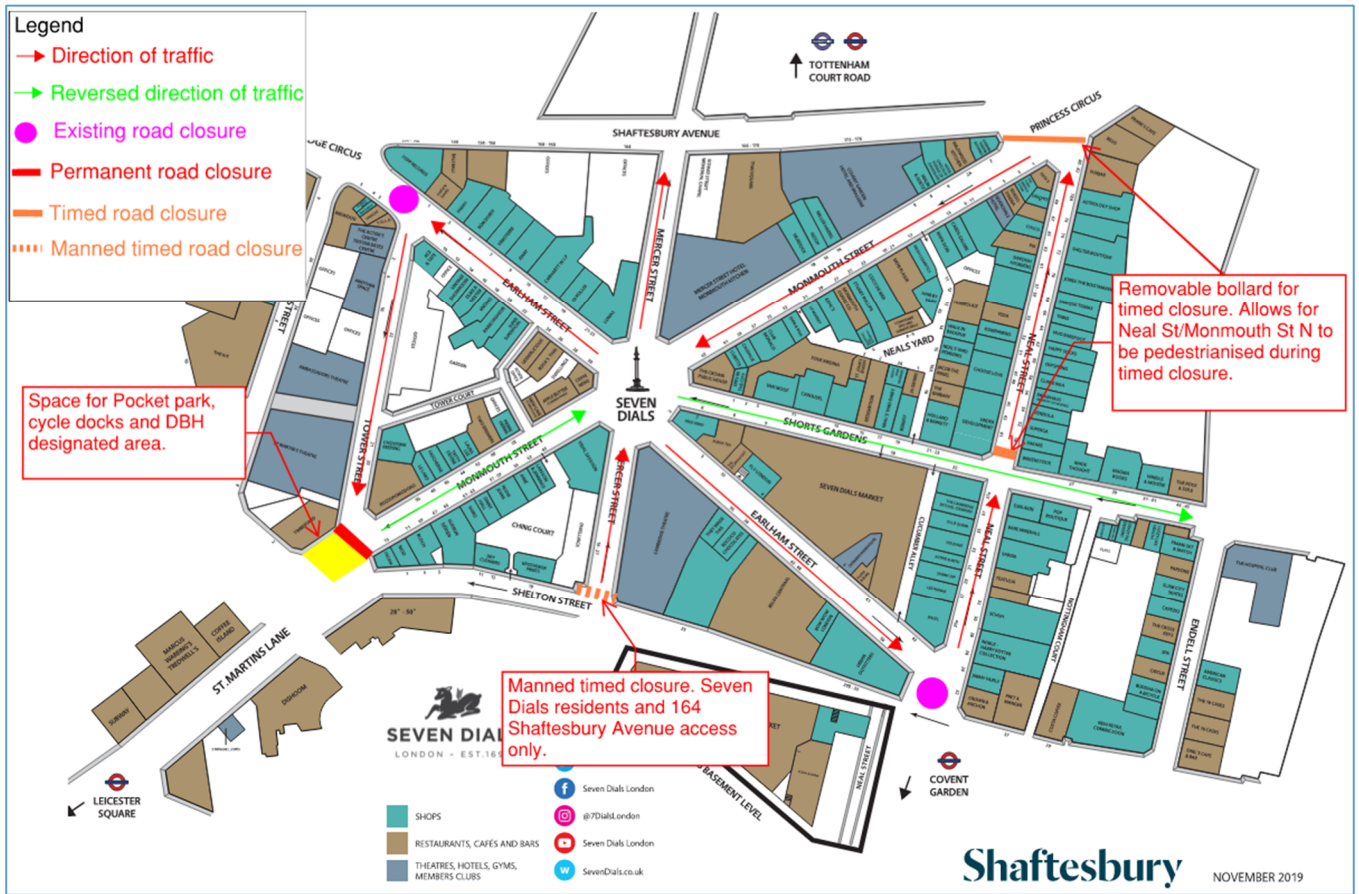
- Monmouth Street entering from Princes Circus;
- Resident only access from Mercer Street South at Seven Dial roundabout; and
- Neal Street north of Short's Gardens.

2.2.2 A permanent closure point is proposed at Monmouth Street preventing access to Upper St Martin's Lane.

2.2.3 The scheme reverses the direction of traffic for Shorts Gardens from Seven Dials roundabout to Endell Street and Monmouth Street South from Tower Street.

2.2.4 Commercial vehicle access to 164 Shaftesbury Avenue Building on Mercer St North will be allowed via the resident only access from Mercer Street South.

FIGURE 2.2: MAP OF SCHEME TIMED CLOSURES AND REVERSING DIRECTION OF TRAFFIC



- 2.2.5 Commercial vehicle access to 164 Shaftesbury Avenue Building on Mercer St North will be allowed via the resident only access from Mercer Street South.
- 2.2.6 Figure 2.2 displays permanent road closure in red, timed road closures in orange (dashed orange for resident only access), existing road closures in magenta and green arrows showing reversed direction of traffic. The scheme will prevent the north to south rat-run route along Monmouth Street and south to north rat-run route along Mercer Street.
- 2.2.7 The timed closures will be controlled by droppable and/or plug-in bollards and Seven Dials security team. The Seven Dials security team operate 24 hours a day 365 days a year and are very familiar with managing road closures as in the past the area has had occasional closures to facilitate events and the installation of decorations. Pedestrians and cyclists will be able to travel through at all times. This measure will reduce the rat running traffic at Mercer Street and Monmouth Street and allow for adequate width for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 2.2.8 The proposed closure at Mercer St South will be manned by the Seven Dials security team during the timed closure period to allow for resident access and commercial vehicle access to 164 Shaftesbury Avenue (via Mercer St North) only.
- 2.2.9 The proposed closure period will be from 10:00am-6:00pm, 7 days a week.
- 2.2.10 A swept path analysis for a 10.2m refuse vehicle overlaid on an OS base map was undertaken to check the amended traffic movements due to the reverse direction of traffic on Monmouth St and Shorts Gardens. The following two turning movements are considered tight and may require some minor modifications to adjacent road furniture to allow for the turns (e.g. removal of bollards close to the kerbs):

- Right turn movement from Neal St onto Shorts Gardens; and

- Right turn movement from Shorts Gardens onto Endell Street.

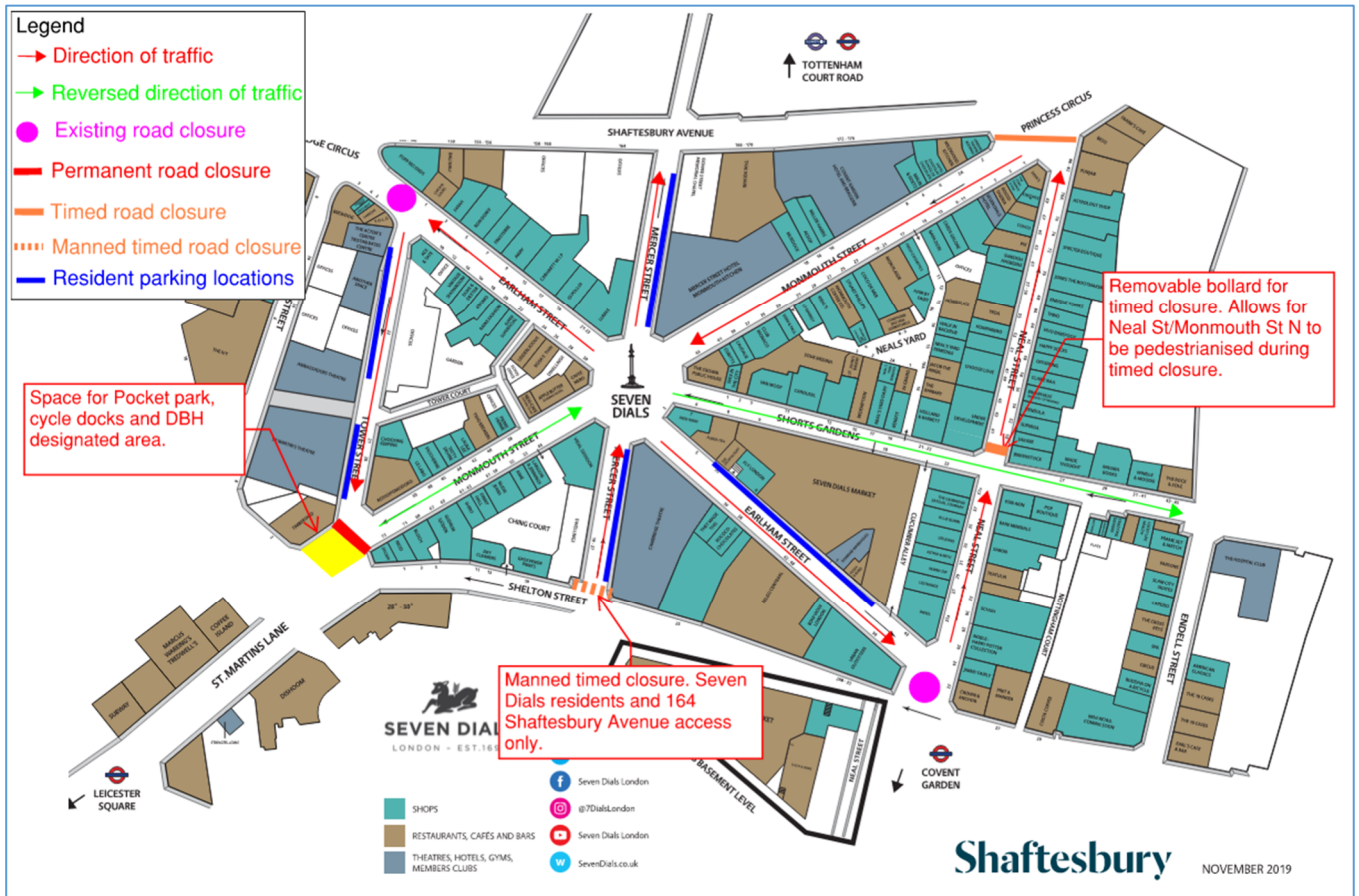
2.3 PARKING BAYS

- 2.3.1 By closing the above-mentioned roads to through-motor traffic, a consolidation of parking bays will be required to maintain adequate parking for residents.
- 2.3.2 An overall count has 47 resident parking spaces available in the current status with 46 active resident permits for Monmouth Street, Earlham Street, Mercer Street, Shorts Gardens, Neal Street and Tower Street.
- 2.3.3 Refer to Table 2.1 for proposed change in number of resident parking bays for the Seven Dials area controlled by Camden and Appendix A for further breakdown of total resident parking spaces, active resident permits, and active business B permits for each street within Seven Dials

TABLE 2.1: PROPOSED CHANGE IN NUMBER OF RESIDENT PARKING BAYS FOR THE SEVEN DIALS AREA

Street Name	Existing Resident Parking Bays	Proposed Resident Parking Bays	Total Change
Monmouth Street	16	0	-16
Earlham Street	5	13	+8
Mercer Street	5	13	+8
Shorts Gardens	17	0	-17
Neal Street	0	0	0
Tower Street	4	9	+5
Total	47	35	-12

FIGURE 2.3: PROPOSED STREETS AVAILABLE FOR PARKING IN BLUE WITH SCHEME IN PLACE



2.3.4 Resident parking bays are proposed on the following streets:

- Mercer Street South (6 bays);
- Mercer St North (7 bays);
- Tower Street (9 bays); and
- Earlam Street (13 bays)

2.3.5 The scheme will have a reduction of 12 resident parking bays in the area with the opportunity to explore additional parking bays on Endell Street and Shelton Street.

2.3.6 These bays will have full access during the day via Mercer St South and egress via Shorts Gardens. This access will be marshalled locally, and residents will have to be able to show their address to enter the zone during restricted hours.

2.3.7 Monmouth Street and Shorts Gardens have narrow street widths and thus removing the resident parking bays will have a positive impact on the overall total-non road space available for pedestrians and cyclists to travel safely.

2.3.8 Loading bays are proposed for Monmouth St South outside of timed closures as a location for deliveries/unloading of goods.

2.4 MARKET STALLS

2.4.1 The proposed resident parking bays and traffic movements along Earlam Street are dependent on two key factors:

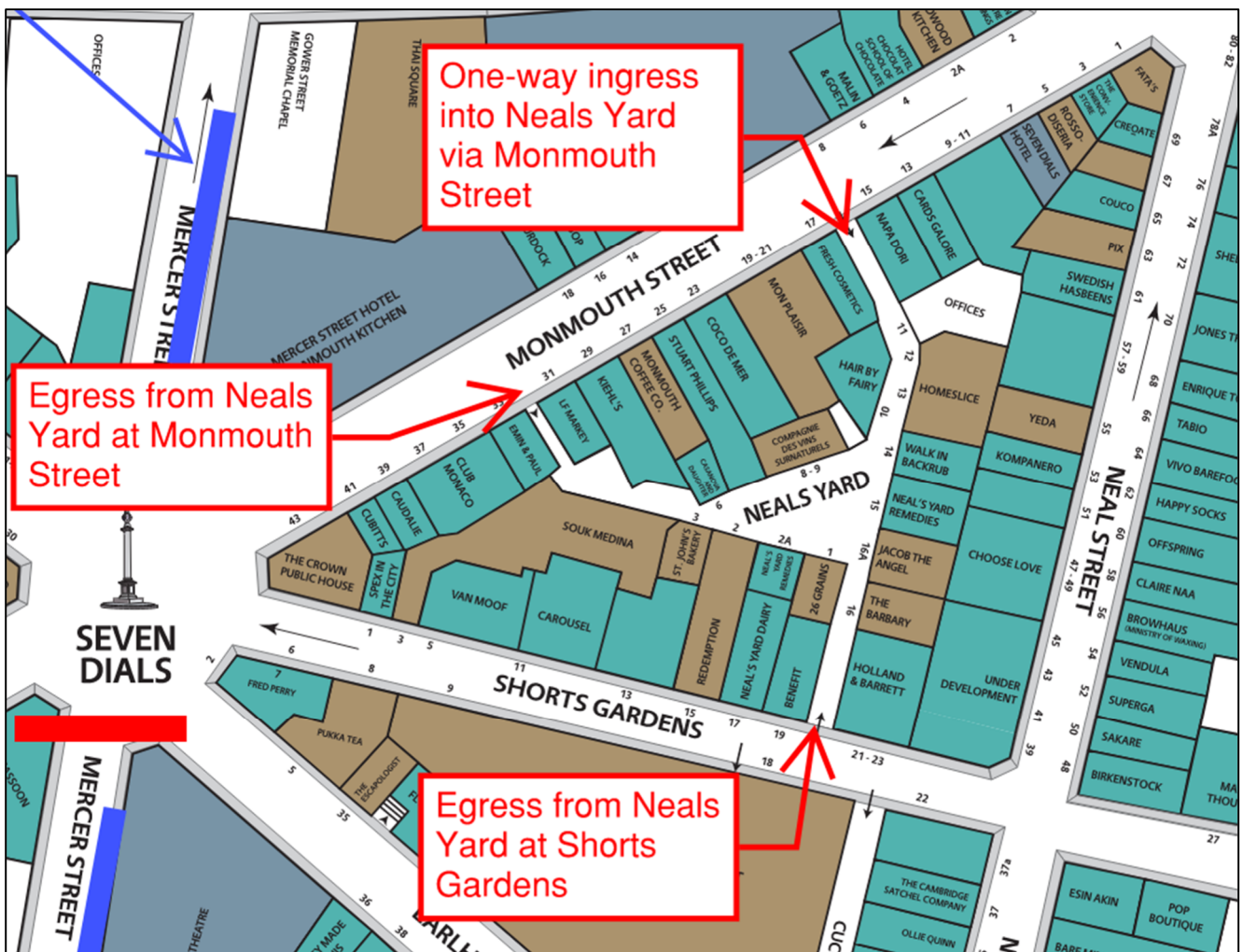
- Tower Street contains trader permit parking bays which will need to be converted into resident parking bays.
- Traders wishing to trade on Earham street can only do so at the far western end of the street on the permanently pedestrianised zone west of Tower Street. This may require casual traders to have just one pitch instead of two, to ensure there is enough room for social distancing and resident vehicle access on Earham Street.

2.5 NEAL’S YARD

2.5.1 Neal’s Yard is a small pedestrian only space within Camden Public Highway. This scheme will implement the following measures to suit social distancing guidelines:

- As the alleyways are narrow, the scheme will introduce a one-way system for ingress into Neal’s Yard via Monmouth Street. Two egress points are proposed at Monmouth St and Shorts Gardens
- The informal seating and planters will be removed on a temporary basis until social distancing measures are no longer needed.

FIGURE 2.4: PROPOSED EGRESS AND INGRESS ROUTES FOR NEALS YARD



2.6 DOCKLESS BIKE HIRE AND PUBLIC CYCLE STORAGE

- 2.6.1 An opportunity is available to promote cycling by allowing for designated areas for dock-less bike hire (DBH) within Seven Dials. The closed area at the southern end of Monmouth can be utilised as a public cycle storage area by installing Sheffield cycle stands for regular cyclist users and designating part of the area as DBH docking area as shown in Figure 2.2.
- 2.6.2 The docking area for DBH will require a surface suitable for docking (i.e. flat) and can be accessed with social distancing guidelines being met.

2.7 FIT WITH CRITERIA

2.7.1 Table 2.2 below details the fit with criteria of the scheme:

TABLE 2.2: FIT WITH CRITERIA

Criteria	Notes
Pre-existing engagement/ requests from stakeholders	<p>Providing improvement for Seven Dials has been an aspiration for Camden and public and private stakeholders in the area. Seven Dials is part of London’s West End and Theatreland, typically popular with visitors. Along with residents, market stalls and a multitude of businesses in operation it is expected that the footfall will return to this area. Traffic data shows rat-running traffic running in two directions through Seven Dials (Monmouth Street and Mercer St). Measures to reduce traffic and improve pedestrian safety have been actively discussed between Shaftesbury plc and Camden Council recently and as part of these measures various traffic and footfall studies have been undertaken.</p> <p><i>Provides evidence of a certain level of support/demand for interventions, especially where there is data showing current/historic “rat-running” traffic</i></p>
Policy fit	<p>This scheme relates to the existing Seven Dials Cycling and Walking Improvement Scheme which was deemed appropriate by Camden. In addition to promoting cycling and walking, the scheme is in accordance with Camden’s transport strategy (specifically objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7).</p> <p><i>Scheme being proposed fits policy background identified in section 1, where existing broad support for typology of interventions from prior consultations has been established</i></p>
Footway width	<p>Footways in general are narrow around Seven Dials with less than 6m total width of non-road space, limiting ability to safely socially distance without stepping onto the carriageway. Additional footway width will be essential for areas around Seven Dials that will have queues outside businesses, creating pinch points on all streets.</p>

Criteria	Notes
	<p><i>Streets with narrow footways/pinch-points, where social distancing of 2m is not possible, should be prioritized for wider footways/traffic reduction measures to enable safe walking/cycling. This includes both residential streets, high streets outside supermarkets, and other locations where this problem is likely to arise e.g. entrances to parks and green spaces which can be narrow, and schools and other locations where large numbers of people can gather</i></p>
<p>Traffic flows, speeds & “rat-running”</p>	<p>Seven Dials is a mixed-use area with residents, sitting in the heart of London’s West End. Traffic data shows a high flow of vehicles rat-running at Seven Dials (Monmouth Street and Mercer St) as well as high pedestrian footfall. Implementing this scheme will enable walking & cycling with social distancing.</p> <p><i>Streets (especially residential/local) with either current high existing traffic flows/speeds, or historical high flows/speeds (which conditions may revert to when lockdown eases) should be prioritized for interventions to make those streets safer, and enable walking & cycling with social distancing, both now and moving forward. This is particularly the case on residential streets historically used as ‘ratruns’ to bypass main road routes.</i></p>
<p>Maintaining safe access to green space</p>	<p>Although this scheme does not provide access to green space, the Seven Dials will provide space for people to relax away from traffic in an area with limited nearby green space (e.g. Monmouth Street area where there is no entry allowed for through-motor traffic).</p> <p><i>Streets which facilitate access to green space and are therefore likely to enable and facilitate high levels of physical activity via walking and cycling during and after lockdown conditions, will be prioritized for traffic reduction measures.</i></p>
<p>Safe Routes to Schools</p>	<p>N/A to scheme</p> <p><i>Streets with schools on will be prioritised, to ensure the safety of children and parents travelling to/from those schools (and ability to walk/cycle to those schools) when lockdown restrictions ease and wider car journeys potentially increase at the same time</i></p>
<p>Safe point-to point trips and key destination locations</p>	<p>Seven Dials is a retail destination as well as being on an important walking route from Tottenham Court Road Station and wider Covent Garden. This scheme will facilitate safe walking/cycling routes around Seven Dials and on A to B routes to and from other destinations in the West End. The scheme will support the local economy and enable safe return to work to the numerous businesses in Seven Dials, which tend to be smaller independent businesses supporting the local economy and protecting jobs.</p>

Criteria	Notes
	<p><i>Schemes which facilitate safe walking/cycling routes to access high streets, essential services and hospitals/NHS facilities. Where schemes provide safe routes to high streets/commercial centres these initiatives will have a co-benefit of supporting the local economy</i></p>
<p>Deliverability & impact on other services</p>	<p>The scheme is not on a bus route and the measures can be implemented whilst allowing refuse vehicle access and emergency service/local access to all streets in the ‘cell’ of streets.</p> <p><i>Extent to which measures can be rapidly implemented, and which do not have undue impact on emergency services and refuse collections. No modal filters are proposed on streets which are bus routes under “phase 1” schemes, to avoid undue impact on bus services.</i></p>

2.8 PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

2.8.1 If approved, the proposed scheme will be implemented as an experimental scheme under section 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (experimental traffic orders).

2.9 COST AND FUNDING SOURCE

2.9.1 Scheme to be costed, local landowner Shaftesbury to contribute towards the cost of the scheme and resources for marshalling the zone.

2.10 NOTIFICATION/LETTER DROP AREA

2.10.1 Letter drop area to be as shown in Figure 1.1. Shaftesbury will also assist by notifying their residents and businesses.

3 NEXT STEPS

3.1 NEXT STEPS TO PROGRESS SCHEME

- 3.1.1 **Resident parking bay reductions** – Changing operations in the area will reduce the amount of resident parking bays from 47 to 35 in the Seven Dials. An approval of resident parking bay reductions from Camden is required to progress the scheme.
- 3.1.2 **On-street cycle storage capacity opportunities** – In addition to 2.6.1, parking bays in the area can be utilised for on street cycle storage capacity to promote cycling. With the public returning to the area, more commuters will be utilising cycling as a mode of transport. Between 6-10 cycles can be stored in one vehicle parking bay which can alleviate the pressure on cycles being left on the footway and congesting walking space.
- 3.1.3 **Market stalls on Earlham Street** – This is a critical element for the functionality of the scheme for through-motor traffic accessing resident parking at Tower St and access to Upper St Martin’s Lane. Confirmation on the number of stalls, location of the stalls and reduction in traders permit parking on Tower Street is required.

APPENDIX A: PARKING PERMIT INFORMATION – SEVEN DIALS

Road Name					
Monmouth Street					
Restriction Type	Parking Spaces	Total Resident Parking Spaces	Active Resident Permits	Active Business B Permits	Permits Ratio Residents + Business B
resident permit holders only	13	16	7	0	44%
paid-for / permit holders	0				
loading / resident permit holders	2				
paid-for / resident permit holders	0				
permit holders only	1				
resident permit holders only (street)	0				
trader / permit holders	0				
trader / resident permit holders	0				

Road Name					
Earlham Street					
Restriction Type	Parking Spaces	Total Resident Parking Spaces	Active Resident Permits	Active Business B Permits	Permits Ratio Residents + Business B
resident permit holders only	5	5	9	0	180%
paid-for / permit holders	0				
loading / resident permit holders	0				
paid-for / resident permit holders	0				
permit holders only	0				
resident permit holders only (street)	0				
trader / permit holders	0				
trader / resident permit holders	0				

Road Name					
Mercer Street					
Restriction Type	Parking Spaces	Total Resident Parking Spaces	Active Resident Permits	Active Business B Permits	Permits Ratio Residents + Business B
resident permit holders only	5	5	4	0	80%
paid-for / permit holders	0				
loading / resident permit holders	0				
paid-for / resident permit holders	0				
permit holders only	0				
resident permit holders only (street)	0				
trader / permit holders	0				
trader / resident permit holders	0				

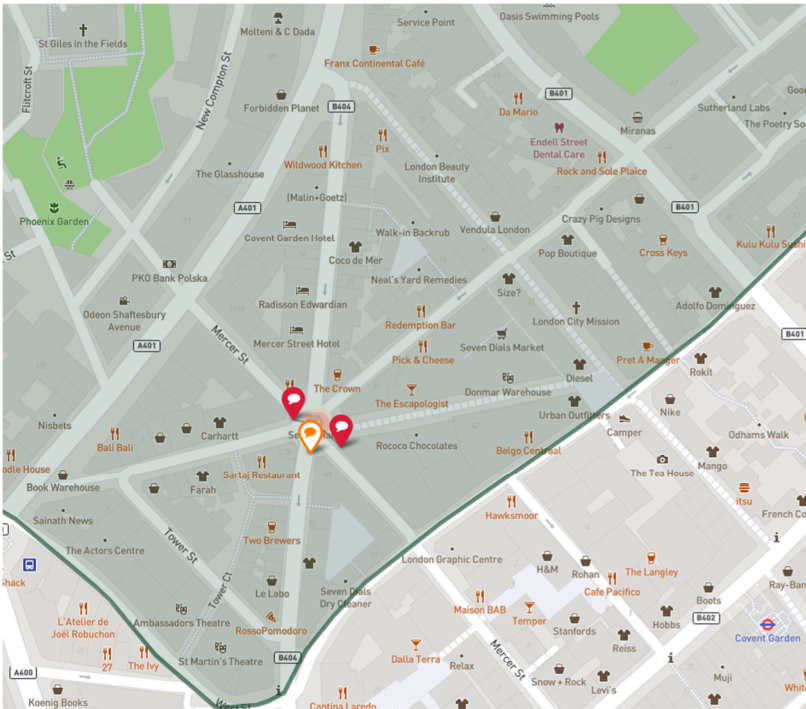
Road Name					
Shorts Gardens					
Restriction Type	Parking Spaces	Total Resident Parking Spaces	Active Resident Permits	Active Business B Permits	Permits Ratio Residents + Business B
resident permit holders only	14	17	14	0	82%
paid-for / permit holders	0				
loading / resident permit holders	3				
paid-for / resident permit holders	0				
permit holders only	0				
resident permit holders only (street)	0				
trader / permit holders	0				
trader / resident permit holders	0				

Road Name					
Neal Street					
Restriction Type	Parking Spaces	Total Resident Parking Spaces	Active Resident Permits	Active Business B Permits	Permits Ratio Residents + Business B
resident permit holders only	0	0	11	0	N/A
paid-for / permit holders	0				
loading / resident permit holders	0				
paid-for / resident permit holders	0				
permit holders only	0				
resident permit holders only (street)	0				
trader / permit holders	0				
trader / resident permit holders	0				

Road Name					
Tower Street					
Restriction Type	Parking Spaces	Total Resident Parking Spaces	Active Resident Permits	Active Business B Permits	Permits Ratio Residents + Business B
resident permit holders only	4	4	1	0	25%
paid-for / permit holders	0				
loading / resident permit holders	0				
paid-for / resident permit holders	0				
permit holders only	0				
resident permit holders only (street)	0				
trader / permit holders	0				
trader / resident permit holders	0				

Controlled Parking Zone					
CA-C					
Restriction Type	Parking Spaces	Total Resident Parking Spaces	Active Resident Permits	Active Business B Permits	Permits Ratio Residents + Business B
resident permit holders only	298	321	351	#N/A	109
paid-for / permit holders	0				
loading / resident permit holders	12				
paid-for / resident permit holders	2				
permit holders only	9				
resident permit holders only (street)	0				
trader / permit holders	0				
trader / resident permit holders	0				

APPENDIX B: STAKEHOLDER CORRESPONDENCE



What is the place you have marked on the map?
Seven Dials

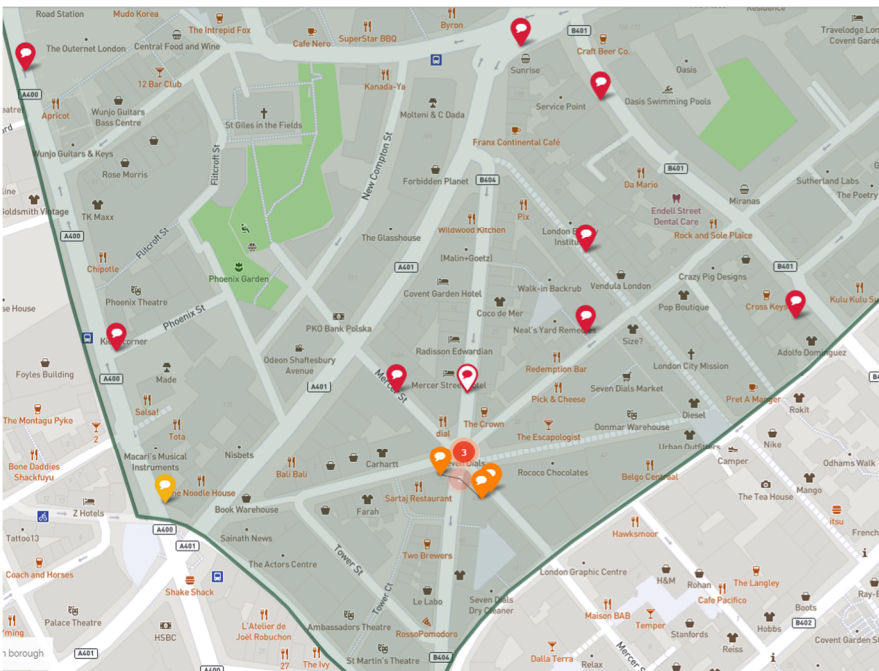
What is the issue(s) have you identified at this location?

What temporary measures could help safe travel and social distancing here?

Do you have any other comments?
 Please remove through motor traffic from the Seven Dials area (except for timed delivery and resident access) to allow for adequate social distancing by shoppers, and space for outdoor restaurant tables.

Would you like to see these potential COVID-19 Safe Travel measures made permanent?
 Yes

16 people agree with this comment.



4 days ago

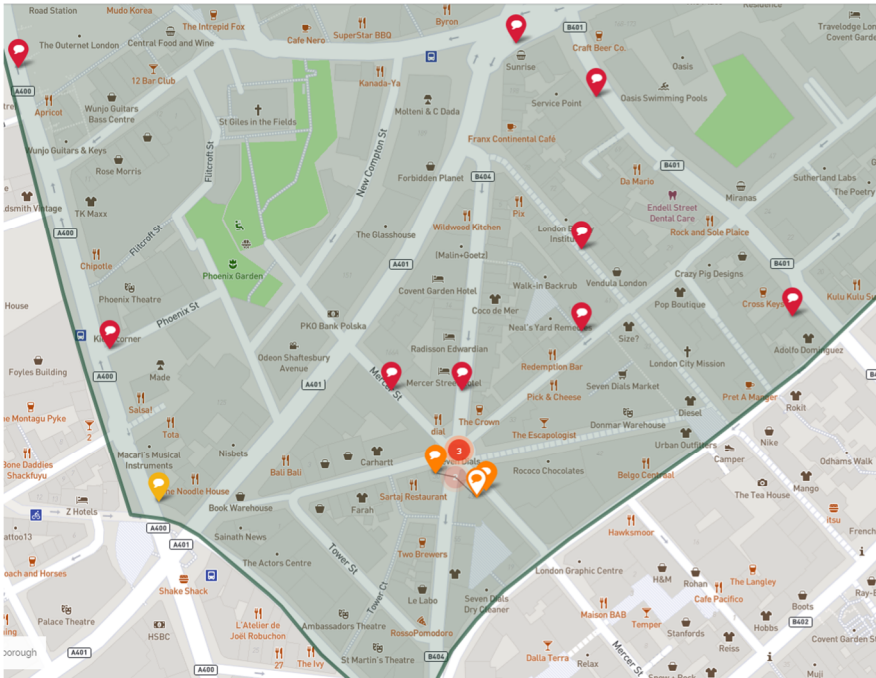
What is the issue(s) have you identified at this location?

What temporary measures could help safe travel and social distancing here?

Do you have any other comments?
 Monmouth Street through Seven Dials to Upper St Martins Lane is a ratrun to Trafalgar Square. By reversing this section of Upper Monmouth Street, the ratrun would be removed. Traffic could still get to Seven Dials via Endell Street and Shorts Gardens, but the use of Seven Dials as a ratrun would be eradicated.

Would you like to see these potential COVID-19 Safe Travel measures made permanent?
 Yes

1 person agrees with this comment.



5 days ago

What is the issue(s) you identified at this location?

High volumes of traffic **Rat Running traffic**

Do you have any other comments?

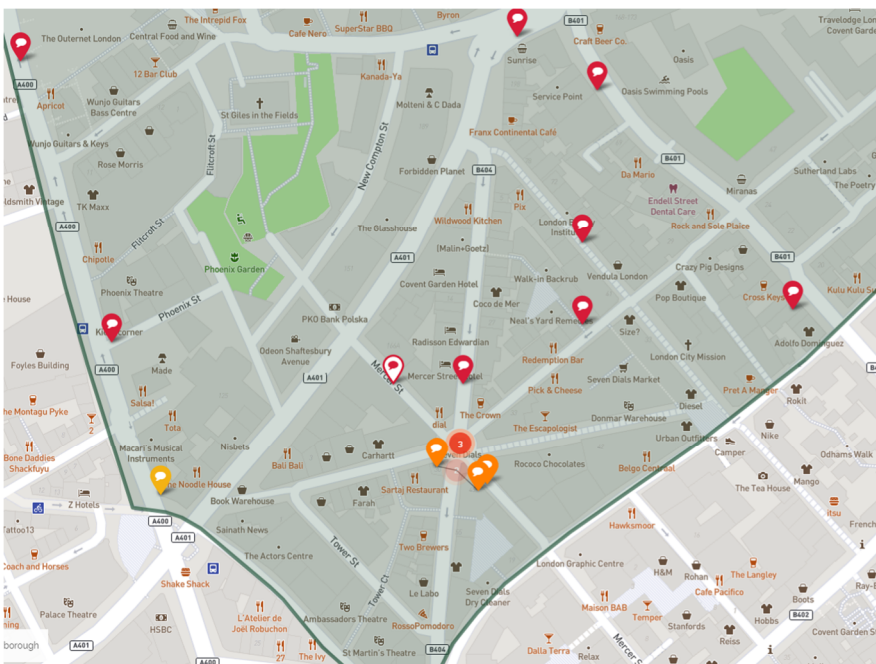
I am writing on behalf of the Seven Dials Trust which I chair. We pedestrianised Neal Street some years ago & it was taken over by street traders, musicians etc & we (with Camden) changed it into a loop system which removed the through traffic which works very well. We have a number of possible traffic management schemes as the best solution is to remove through traffic & rat runs & what remains is very lower volume. Pedestrian streets may be fashionable but they do not work in high density mixed use streets (and the same went for Soho's ill fated pedestrianisation of Old Compton Street which became an outdoor bar). We will put the various proposals we have onto our website <https://www.sevendials.com/publications/other-publications> in the near future. Monmouth N or S could be reversed as could Mercer South (Westminster end). info@sevendials.com

Would you like to see these potential COVID-19 Safe Travel measures made permanent?

I will need to see how it works

2 people agree with this comment.

Agree **Share** **Share**



5 days ago

What is the place you have marked on the map?

Mercer Street & Seven Dials

What is the issue(s) you identified at this location?

Rat Running traffic **Pollution from traffic jams**

What temporary measures could help safe travel and social distancing here?

Reduce through traffic on this road **Change the one-way system**

Do you have any other comments?

This is a good opportunity to change the one-way system so that there is no benefit to using Seven Dials as a cut-through for thousands of taxis and vans every day. The build-up of traffic causes so many issues for people living, working and trying to run businesses in the area.

Please don't pedestrianise any streets, though! As we know from past experiments, removing traffic completely leads to a crazy free-for-all, with everything from illegal trading to more open drug dealing & daytime street drinking. It also prevents residents being able to get food delivered, their window cleaners or plumbers being able to park, and anything else that requires some limited, legitimate motor transport to the area.

Would you like to see these potential COVID-19 Safe Travel measures made permanent?

I will need to see how it works

10 people agree with this comment.

Agree **Share** **Share**

16 days ago

What is the place you have marked on the map?
seven dials

What is the issue(s) you have identified at this location?
High volumes of traffic High Vehicle Speeds Lack of pedestrian crossing
Lack of cycle parking Lack of space on footpath Rat Running traffic
Lack of safe cycling facilities

What temporary measures could help safe travel and social distancing here?
Close this road to through traffic Add cycle parking

Do you have any other comments?
Long overdue opportunity to close Seven Dials to traffic. Narrow pavements, false sense of safety as a pedestrian - cars and taxis dominate space. Reduce pollution, make safer for pedestrians and cyclists by closing road to through traffic.

Would you like to see these potential COVID-19 Safe Travel measures made permanent?
Yes

5 people agree with this comment.

Agree Share Share

Comments from Camden Safe Travel Common Space supporting the reduction to the high volumes of traffic in Seven Dials and removing rat-running from the area. **Source -** <https://camdensafetravel.commonplace.is/comments/5ebc6e51e9ab97001065ea29> -

London

57 Webber Street,
London, SE1 0RF

✉ london@nrpltd.com
☎ +44 (0)207 654 7280

Exeter

Alba Court, Emperor Way,
Exeter Business Park,
Exeter, EX1 3QS

✉ exeter@nrpltd.com
☎ +44 (0)1392 266880

Bristol

4 Colston Avenue,
Bristol, BS1 4ST

✉ bristol@nrpltd.com
☎ +44 (0)117 387 8910

Truro

Penstraze Business Centre,
Truro, TR4 8PN

☎ +44 (0)1872 562054

Prague

Sokolovská 100a
186 00 Praha 8, Karlín,
Czech Republic

☎ +420 222 350 099