



City of Westminster

Westminster City Council

City Hall
64 Victoria Street
London SW1E 6QP

16th January 2026

Transport for London

5 Endeavour Square
London
E20 1JN

Subject: Westminster City Council Response to TfL Consultation on Oxford Street West Pedestrianisation

Dear Andrew Miles,

Westminster City Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to Transport for London's consultation on the proposed pedestrianisation of Oxford Street (west).

The Council's preference for its own previously developed transformation plans is a matter of long-standing public record and our views on matters of principle were clearly articulated in our previous consultation response:

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/media/document/oxford-street-transformation-westminster-city-council-response>

However, we recognise that the decision has been taken to proceed with these plans and offer these comments in the spirit of trying to make the scheme work for our residents and local businesses.

We recognise the ambition to transform one of London's most significant retail and cultural destinations. The Council remains committed to working in partnership with TfL, the MDC, NWEA, local resident associations and other stakeholders, subject to ongoing engagement on the emerging proposals, to ensure that any scheme delivers a balanced outcome that reflects both local priorities and national objectives while maintaining a high level of Council services.

Our response to the consultation has been informed by a comprehensive review across all Council service lines. Our teams know the area intimately, having been responsible for this street since 1965. Detailed commentary is set out in the accompanying appendix. But to realise the Mayor's objectives with pedestrianisation, including improved safety and an enhanced public realm, it's going to be vital that Westminster, TfL, the MDC and NWEA work closely together to address operational, economic, and community considerations. Key points raised in our review include:

- **Security and Public Safety:** There needs to be a clear strategy for hostile vehicle mitigation and crime prevention to manage the obvious risks associated with higher footfall expected on Oxford Street. We expect TfL to work closely with the Metropolitan Police Service, NWECC and Council enforcement teams, with a clear structure for governance and agreed resourcing for day-to-day management, particularly around anti-social behaviour, unlicensed trading and street performance. This needs to have a 24/7 focus and not be restricted to shopping hours.
- **Accessibility and Inclusivity:** The public realm design must ensure universal access, including compliant tactile paving, rotating cones, dropped kerbs and safe crossing phases. Step-free desire lines between Tube entrances/exits, bus stops and taxi ranks should be prioritised. The Council supports early action on delivering properly step-free access at Oxford Circus and Marble Arch stations.
- **Bus Network and Connectivity:** The Council opposes the proposed changes to Routes 7 and 94. These are key routes used by Londoners to get to, and along, Oxford Street and currently provide direct access from Lancaster Gate, Bayswater and Hyde Park to Oxford Circus and Piccadilly. TfL should maintain full running of these routes or provide alternative direct links. Central London buses have been much reduced since the pandemic and TfL should consult widely before reducing connectivity yet further.

We would like TfL to consider alternatives to Marylebone Lane South for buses avoiding the pedestrianised section of Oxford Street. Welbeck or Wimpole Street would seem better adapted. If buses are run along Great Portland Street, the junctions with Mortimer and Great Castle Streets need attention to ensure pedestrian safety.

We also need early sight of TfL's plans for movement along Oxford Street. How is it proposed that people get between Selfridges, IKEA and the Tottenham Court Primark if there are only half as many buses as they have today?

We would like to see detailed modelling outputs, journey time reliability and contingency plans for diversions during roadworks. Where do the buses go if Wigmore Street is blocked? George Street can't take buses and we're lacking other East/West routes.

Any floating bus stop proposals must comply with DfT guidance, and "Shared Use Bus Boarders" should be avoided.

- **Traffic and Servicing Impacts:** We need further clarity on likely traffic displacement from Oxford Street onto the neighbouring, largely residential streets. We are particularly concerned about the impact on North Audley Street, Grosvenor Square and Cavendish Square. We need to see plans for servicing and waste collection of the Oxford Street buildings and how this will be managed without adversely affecting local businesses and residents. The Council notes the need for innovative solutions such as timed loading windows and potential use of virtual loading bays to manage demand and reduce congestion on side streets. We are keen to see progress made on the GLA and WCC's agreed priority of delivering a step change in freight consolidation to reduce the number of vehicle movements not only to Oxford Street

but the wider central activities zone (CAZ), which could help mitigate pressures on surrounding roads.

We would like to see confirmation from the emergency services that access to Oxford Street and surrounding streets will not be impeded by the pedestrian scheme and associated traffic changes.

- **Climate Resilience and Thermal Comfort:** Public realm design should incorporate measures to mitigate heat and improve comfort, including shade-giving trees, canopies, high-albedo paving, water points and green infrastructure. It also needs to consider sustainable drainage systems to relieve the sewer network and reduce the risk of flooding.
- **Air Quality and Noise Mitigation:** We need TfL to detail how it proposes to mitigate the air and noise impacts of the expected traffic displacement, give a clear timetable for upgrading the bus to all electric, outline the street cleansing regime including timing and put in place an extended monitoring programme to manage impacts on the wider area.
- **Public Toilets and Rest Facilities:** Given projected footfall, accessible public toilet provision (including changing places) will be essential. We would like to see a clear delivery plan with funding and cleansing arrangements agreed in partnership with landowners and NWECC.
- **Economic and Workforce Considerations:** The programme should safeguard access to jobs, support SMEs to adapt to new operating models, and embed local employment and skills opportunities across construction, cleansing, security, stewarding and long-term operations - maximising social value and alignment with Westminster's Fairer Economy priorities. The Westminster Employment Service, which has a long history of finding high quality local people to work with our large employers can play a critical part in this.
- **Public Art and Cultural Activation:** The Council supports curated, high-quality cultural interventions that enhance place identity while safeguarding movement, heritage views and operations. We would like TfL to set out the governance for curation, maintenance and de-installation, and coordinate footprints with transport and servicing infrastructure.
- **Environmental and Public Realm Standards:** Materials, cleansing regimes and maintenance plans must meet high standards to ensure Oxford Street remains an attractive and sustainable destination. Given higher footfall and food/entertainment uses, surface specification (low-porosity materials, protective sealants) and daytime cleansing access will be critical to managing staining and litter.
- **Transport Integration:** Bus re-routing, taxi rank provision and cycling infrastructure require careful coordination to maintain connectivity and minimise disruption. Designs should avoid pedestrian - cycle conflict (e.g., floating bus stops in high-footfall locations) and ensure bus stops are safe, well-lit and equipped with seating and 'Countdown' information. Redundant bus infrastructure needs to be removed promptly to avoid confusing bus passengers and reduce street clutter that adversely affects accessibility.

- **Cycling:** We note that cycling will not be permitted at any time along the pedestrianised section of Oxford Street. We believe TfL should reconsider whether cycling should, at least, be allowed before 11am when there are few shoppers present. However, when Oxford Street is blocked for cyclists, TfL urgently needs to produce an alternative East/West route, noting that Wigmore Street will now have significantly more traffic and won't be suitable.
- **Cleansing, Waste and Collections:** Pedestrianised areas demand higher-frequency cleansing and increased bin capacity, with strategically located waste aggregation points and integration between street cleansing and commercial collections. Constraints on daytime vehicle access will require revised waste windows and storage solutions for businesses - particularly small retailers - with consideration of limited back-of-house space. The Council would welcome early agreement on exemptions (e.g., morning collection extensions) and assurance that north-south routes remain operable for refuse vehicles without blocking. We would be keen to work with the MDC, NWECC, TfL and others to explore how the new constraints on waste collection access could be used to help encourage waste consolidation to reduce the number of vehicle movements for collection and multiple on-street refuse set-out practices.
- **Bus Network and Stops:** The removal and re-routing of remaining services off Oxford Street require careful attention to journey time reliability (we note that bus speeds are likely to slow on some routes) and to the design of new stops and stands on Wigmore Street, Margaret Street, Orchard Street and adjoining roads. Stops should include shelters, lighting and real-time information to support confident use - especially at night and for people with sensory impairments - while stand locations should avoid conflict with loading and cycle facilities.
- **Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity:** There are multiple mobile "not-spots" along Oxford Street. With expected increases in peak footfall, a coordinated digital approach is advised, including the deployment of neutral-host small-cell solutions on lighting columns and integration with the wider streetscape strategy to reduce clutter while improving user experience for all operators.

We also note the importance of aligning these proposals with other major public realm programmes - including Regent Street, Haymarket and Piccadilly Circus - to ensure a coherent movement strategy across the West End. Traffic modelling should account for displaced flows and turning movements around Oxford Circus, while servicing strategies for nearby pedestrian zones should be coordinated to avoid operational pinch points. Cycling routes should connect seamlessly with north-south links, and taxi rank adjustments should be planned in collaboration with representative bodies and BID partners.

While we note the consultation proposals are around traffic management, we would like to stress the importance of high quality, sustainable and future looking public realm design. The Council's recently adopted Public Realm Supplementary Planning Document, produced in consultation with local residents, businesses and landowners, is a good starting point and will help TfL give due consideration to how people move seamlessly through this scheme and into wider Westminster. We would also suggest TfL and MDC collaborate with other schemes and initiatives such as District Heat Networks, measures that mitigate the effect of climate change, such as cooling and shading, and how we consider carbon sensitive design.

The Council looks forward to continuing this constructive dialogue with TfL as the proposals evolve. We are committed to working together - through a joint working group and regular design and operations reviews and the like - to deliver a scheme that enhances Oxford Street's role as a world-class destination while safeguarding the needs of residents, businesses and visitors, and balancing local, national and Council priorities.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G Barraclough', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Councillor Geoff Barraclough

Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development
Westminster City Council