

OXFORD STREET TRANSFORMATION CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Response from: BusinessLDN, One Oliver's Yard, 55-71 City Road, London EC1Y 1HQ

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INTRODUCTION

1. BusinessLDN is a business membership organisation with the mission to make London the best city in the world to do business, working with and for the whole UK. BusinessLDN works with the support of the capital's major businesses in key sectors such as housing, commercial property, finance, transport, infrastructure, professional services, ICT, and education. We welcome the opportunity to respond to this consultation about establishing a Mayoral development Corporation to lead the transformation of Oxford Street.
2. This consultation response is submitted on behalf of BusinessLDN's West End Streets Steering Group (WESt). WESt brings together business leaders, local landowners, and Business Improvement Districts to drive the delivery of high-quality public realm improvements in one of the UK's most significant commercial, retail, and tourist hubs.
3. Following our initial letter of support for the transformation of Oxford Street, WESt members remain fully committed to the project and this response reconfirms our support for the transformation of Oxford Street.

Q1. The Mayor has proposed the designation of a Mayoral Development Area (MDA) and the establishment of a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) to help regenerate Oxford Street in line with his vision for the street. We would like to know your views on this.

4. Transforming Oxford Street will deliver wide-reaching economic benefits in the immediate area, across London and the rest of the UK. As a strategic site that spans borough boundaries, the establishment of an MDC for Oxford Street is a welcome step to delivering a transformative scheme set against a long-term vision.
5. Pedestrianisation of Oxford Street will help increase footfall, creating a more welcoming and sustainable street in one of the UK's most important commercial hubs, reinforcing the West End's vibrancy and status as a world-class tourist destination, and helping London to compete against other global cities.
6. The MDA boundary rightly includes key activity hubs along Oxford Street — Marble Arch, Bond Street, Oxford Circus, and Tottenham Court Road. These are all critical to the area's revitalisation, offering significant opportunities for enhancement and improved amenity, and we therefore welcome their inclusion.

7. While the MDA boundary appropriately covers key locations, it is essential that the MDC engages with landowners who have significant schemes just outside its limits. This will help ensure the transformation of Oxford Street does not have unintended negative impacts on these developments. Many members of WESt have significant projects within or near the MDC boundary and should be actively involved to ensure all schemes complement each other effectively.
8. It is also important to consider how servicing and local area management are affected on boundary streets; setting boundaries at building lines, rather than street centres, could help minimise day-to-day management conflicts.
9. With regard to the MDA's reach north and south of Oxford Street, we have some concerns that key side streets — often referred to as oases or amenity streets — may be split by the boundary. These streets present valuable opportunities to introduce alternative uses into the predominantly retail environment of Oxford Street. A cohesive design approach along their full length, supported by a single authority, will be important to successfully deliver any regeneration plans. Dividing responsibility between the MDC and the local authority could risk complicating the design, delivery and long-term management of these important spaces.
10. We support the MDC assuming planning powers within the MDA to establish a cohesive vision for Oxford Street and ensure that strategic objectives can be met. A unified approach will ensure that all developments align with the broader revitalisation strategy, enabling new schemes to contribute positively to the area's economic, social, and environmental goals. Clear transitional arrangements for transferring powers from Westminster and Camden councils to the MDC will be essential in providing certainty for all involved in the planning process.
11. With reference to planning powers and the side streets, as per para 9 above, we have concerns that creating a planning authority boundary through some of these important streets will hinder their cohesive development and their contribution to the wider ambition.
12. If the MDC were to grant discretionary relief from non-domestic rates, it should be targeted to support innovative uses of space within the MDA, enhancing the vibrancy and diversity of Oxford Street and its district.
13. WESt supports a Planning Committee and Board structure for the Oxford Street MDC that reflects the successful approach taken by other MDCs, such as OPDC and previously LLDC (which no longer holds planning powers). Bringing together board members, independent experts, local authority representatives and political representation from the GLA helps ensure decisions are informed by expertise, grounded in local knowledge and aligned with strategic priorities to support growth, sustainability and community benefit. In addition to defining the structure of the Board and Planning Committee, the MDC must be sufficiently resourced to deliver upon its ambitions.
14. Clarity is needed on developer contributions, including the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 payments. The MDC must explain who will collect these contributions and, crucially, whether they will be reinvested within the MDC's boundary or

allocated more broadly across Westminster and Camden. Clarity on CIL and Section 106 is essential for transparency, accountability, and the effective coordination of infrastructure investment.

15. Finally, the Oxford Street MDC must establish a clear and credible funding strategy. Without a funding package for the proposed improvements, the project risks stalling. Securing financial backing, or at minimum a plan to obtain it, is essential for building stakeholder confidence and ensuring successful delivery.
16. The exemplary management and maintenance of Oxford Street as the regeneration is delivered will be critical. The future revenue funding regime will need to be defined from an early stage and we would recommend that a committee or board be established from the outset to ensure delivery of this ambition.

Q2. The Mayor considers the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street would help to deliver his vision for the area and support its regeneration. What are your views on the principle of pedestrianising Oxford Street?

17. We support the principle of pedestrianisation along Oxford Street to create a welcoming and sustainable destination for all. The pedestrianisation has the potential to transform the area, diversifying the space and opening it up to different commercial uses that will positively contribute to the vibrancy of the area.
18. As the consultation highlights, footfall on Oxford Street is just 57% of its 2006 level, compared to 98% on Bond Street and 83% on Regent Street. This underscores the need for bold action to revitalise Oxford Street and restore its status as a premier global destination. Pedestrianisation is precisely the kind of ambitious change needed to boost footfall and drive consumer spending in the area.
19. The pedestrianisation will present some challenges for the surrounding area, but if managed effectively, the benefits will far outweigh the drawbacks. The most significant impact will be rerouting traffic, and it is essential that Transport for London works closely with local landowners, businesses, and communities to minimise any disruption. This should include clear alternative routes, measures to prevent bottlenecks, and considerations for public transport access. With the right approach, the long-term benefits, including improved air quality, increased footfall, and a more vibrant, pedestrian-friendly environment, will far outweigh any short-term disruptions.
20. It should be recognised that partial pedestrianisation of Oxford Street – which may be necessary – could risk creating a two-tier quality environment across different zones. It will be important to maintain a consistent end-to-end experience that preserves the overall offer and identity of Oxford Street, helping to safeguard the future success of the entire district. This may require particular focus on enhancing the three hubs and their adjoining side streets, especially in areas where traffic flows are retained.