

Response to TfL Consultation on Oxford Street West – Transport and Highway Proposals

Introduction

Heart of London Business Alliance (HOLBA) welcomes the opportunity to respond to Transport for London's consultation on the proposed transport and highway changes to support the transformation of Oxford Street.

HOLBA represents over 500 businesses across Piccadilly, Piccadilly Circus, Haymarket, Leicester Square, St Martin's Lane and Jermyn Street – the 'Heart of London' area, forming the commercial and cultural core of London's West End. This area plays a central role in London's experience economy, creative industries, visitor economy, retail, hospitality and night-time economy, and is a nationally significant driver of employment, tourism, business rate income and economic growth.

HOLBA supports initiatives that enhance the performance, attractiveness and global competitiveness of Oxford Street and the wider West End, provided they are delivered in a coordinated way that supports the effective functioning of the wider district.

Scope of the Consultation

HOLBA notes that this consultation relates specifically to the section of Oxford Street between Orchard Street and Great Portland Street, referred to throughout the proposals as Oxford Street West. Any transport and highway changes required to enable the transformation of the remaining sections of Oxford Street would be subject to separate consultation at a later date.

HOLBA considers it essential that any future proposals for Oxford Street East are brought forward with detailed assessment of the implications for Piccadilly, Haymarket, Leicester Square, St Martin's Lane and the wider Heart of London area.

HOLBA supports the detailed consideration that has been given to highways changes, bus and taxi arrangements and the servicing of commercial premises to facilitate the Oxford Street West proposals. However, HOLBA also notes that the current consultation necessarily focuses on a single section of Oxford Street, and emphasises the importance of ensuring that this phase is progressed within the context of a clear, coordinated framework for the wider West End and the full length of Oxford Street as the programme evolves.

Oxford Street functions as part of a highly interconnected network of streets, destinations and economic activity. Changes to movement, servicing, public realm and activation on Oxford Street West will inevitably have implications for adjacent streets and surrounding areas. As future phases are brought forward, it will therefore be important that proposals are designed to integrate seamlessly, minimise ongoing disruption, and provide confidence to businesses and landowners that transformation across Oxford Street and the wider West End will be delivered in a coherent and well-managed way.

HOLBA encourages TfL and the Mayor's team to continue developing an area-wide approach as the programme progresses, ensuring that proposals for Oxford Street are aligned with the long-term operation and performance of the wider West End. This should include careful consideration of side streets and adjoining areas, which play an important role in supporting a diverse mix of uses, providing quieter environments and enhancing the overall visitor experience. A cohesive and coordinated approach will be critical to ensuring that the benefits of transformation are fully realised while avoiding unintended impacts elsewhere in the West End.

Scheme Benefits and Strategic Alignment

In principle, HOLBA supports the ambition to transform Oxford Street West and agrees with TfL's assessment of the potential benefits, including increased footfall and dwell time, higher consumer spend, job creation and GVA growth, and strengthened international competitiveness. These objectives align closely with the London Growth Plan and HOLBA's ambitions for the West End, which recognise the Experience Economy, creative industries and visitor economy as core drivers of London's long-term growth.

HOLBA's West End International Centre proposal is grounded in sustaining the West End's global competitiveness through an interconnected, high-performing central London destination. In this context, a high-quality, well-managed, pedestrian-focused Oxford Street West has the potential to act as a catalyst for wider West End recovery and investment, provided delivery is framed around the performance and connectivity of the wider West End rather than the immediate scheme boundary alone. The importance of this integrated, area-wide approach was also recognised at the inaugural Oxford Street Development Corporation Board meeting on the 7 January 2026, reinforcing the need for coordination beyond individual phases or streets.

Traffic and Regent Street

HOLBA notes that based on the information provided, TfL's modelling indicates that most routes would experience limited journey time changes. However, based on the modelling and information provided, the proposals also forecast increases in traffic volumes on Regent Street, particularly in the southbound direction. Given Regent Street's key strategic role within the West End, these forecast changes warrant careful consideration as the proposals progress.

Regent Street performs a critical function within the West End, accommodating visitors, workers, buses, taxis and servicing traffic. At this stage, however, the modelling reflects assumptions based on the current network configuration, and the future design, phasing and detailed traffic arrangements for Regent Street are not yet finalised. As a result, there remains a degree of uncertainty around how traffic impacts will ultimately be distributed across the wider network.

HOLBA therefore considers it important that, as proposals for Regent Street are developed, the combined effects of the Oxford Street proposals and any future changes affecting Regent Street and neighbouring streets are assessed together. A holistic assessment at that stage would help ensure that traffic impacts are understood in the round and managed effectively across the wider West End, rather than being displaced elsewhere within the network.

Air Quality – Piccadilly

HOLBA notes that 85 receptor locations have been modelled across the study area. The modelling shows that, both with and without the Proposed Scheme, there are predicted exceedances of the nitrogen dioxide annual mean in some of the receptors in the Piccadilly area. Concentrations at all other selected representative receptor locations are predicted to be below the objective value.

Given Piccadilly's central role within the Heart of London, and its direct relationship with Piccadilly Circus, Haymarket and Leicester Square, this finding is of particular concern for HOLBA. While TfL highlights longer term downward trends in air pollution across central London, HOLBA considers it essential that future phases of Oxford Street transformation are carefully designed and assessed to ensure that air quality conditions in the Heart of London are not adversely affected.

Freight Servicing and Deliveries

HOLBA notes that servicing on Oxford Street West would largely be restricted to a midnight to 7am window, and that the direct operational impacts on the Heart of London area are therefore likely to be limited at this stage. HOLBA considers this approach to provide a useful test case for more coordinated and consolidated servicing arrangements within the West End.

TfL has indicated that it would support businesses to operate more efficiently in relation to freight and servicing. HOLBA strongly supports this principle and considers that lessons from the Oxford Street West proposals should inform a broader rollout of improved servicing practices across the wider West End, rather than being applied in isolation.

HOLBA continues to advocate for a comprehensive review of freight and servicing operations across the West End, using this opportunity to enhance amenity while improving efficiency for everyone in the West End. This should include greater use of freight consolidation hubs, more tightly coordinated and time-limited delivery windows within the overnight period, targeted support for small businesses to consolidate deliveries, and continued progress towards last-mile zero-emission delivery solutions. As night-time servicing arrangements are developed, it will also be important that appropriate management and monitoring measures are in place to minimise noise and disturbance and ensure that the benefits of consolidation are realised in practice.

Buses and Taxis

HOLBA recognises the importance of buses and taxis in maintaining accessibility to the West End for visitors, workers, residents and those with reduced mobility. Public transport and taxi access are critical to an inclusive city centre, particularly for older people, disabled users and late-night visitors. Based on the assessment and modelling provided, HOLBA notes that the rerouting of buses serving Oxford Street West is forecast to result in only limited changes to overall journey times.

While HOLBA does not seek to comment in detail on specific route changes at this stage, it remains important that the proposals do not reduce accessibility to the wider West End or create barriers to safe and convenient movement. Bus and taxi arrangements should continue to support clear, legible access to key destinations and contribute to a safe and welcoming environment, particularly during the evening and night-time economy.

HOLBA encourages TfL to ensure that accessibility, safety and security remain central to the development of the proposals and are reviewed again as future phases, including Oxford Street East, are brought forward.

Looking Ahead

While HOLBA supports the direction of travel for Oxford Street West, it is essential that future proposals for Oxford Street East are progressed with full assessment of traffic impacts, careful consideration of air quality implications, robust servicing and freight arrangements, and a clear understanding of impacts on the wider Heart of London area.

As set out through HOLBA's West End International Centre work, the long-term success of Oxford Street is closely linked to the performance and connectivity of the wider West End as a globally significant destination. Future phases should therefore be developed in a way that supports an integrated, high-performing West End, rather than treating individual streets in isolation.

HOLBA looks forward to continuing to engage constructively with Transport for London, the Mayor of London and Westminster City Council as the programme evolves.